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HISTORY

OF THE

PARISHES OF BALLYSDARE AND KILVARNET.

HISTORY,
ANTIQUITIES, AND PRESENT STATE
OF THE
PARISHES
OF
BALLYSADARE AND KILVARNET,
IN THE COUNTY OF SLIGO;
WITH
NOTICES OF THE O'HARAS, THE COOPERS, THE PERCEVALS,
AND OTHER LOCAL FAMILIES.

BY T. O'RORKE, D.D., P.P., ARCHDEACON.

ILLUSTRATED.

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AND
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HISTORY

ANTHONY AND ALBERT BLAIR

OF THE
DUBLIN

ANTHONY AND ALBERT BLAIR

OF THE COUNTY OF DUBLIN

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IN THE CITY OF DUBLIN

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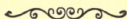
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# PLANTATIONS

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## PREFACE.



THE following pages are a small tribute of love and duty to a district which has the strongest claims on the services of the writer, as being at once his native place and his ecclesiastical charge. Hardly any other motive except the sense of obligation, resulting from this special connexion with the subject, could bring him to put hand to a task, so light in appearance and common estimation, but so troublesome in reality, as the one here undertaken.

For it is not so simple as some think to write the history of an Irish parish. On the contrary, strange as the saying may sound, it might be easier to draw up a readable account of an Irish county, than of an Irish parish. For numerous passages, regarding the county, may be had in published histories of Ireland and other books ; and, by extracting these passages, recasting them, and arranging them in chronological sequence, adding here and there a little local colouring and description, one would produce a history, not, of course, original or profound, but far from being, for all that, devoid of interest for the run of readers. But it is quite another thing in

respect to the parish ; for there being, as a general rule, nothing, or next to nothing to hand, in publications of any kind, one has to go to the original sources ; to rummage manuscript surveys, inquisitions, patent rolls, and such documents ; to acquaint oneself by actual inspection with the remarkable objects natural and artificial of the district ; and to gather together and sift local traditions and legends, so as to find out, as far as may be, the facts they contain.

This at all events is what has been done in the present instance, no pains having been spared to procure information. For this purpose every perch of the two parishes has been examined ; the manuscripts of the Public Record Office, of the Royal Irish Academy, and of Trinity College, have been consulted ; and inquiries have been made of all kinds of persons, from the village rustic, with nothing but the rude tradition of his native village to communicate, up to Mr. W. M. Hennessy of the Public Record Office, with the rare acquisitions of his own mind and the unrivalled resources of the great repository with which he is connected, equally at the disposal of every student of Irish history and archæology. Under these circumstances it is hoped, that the following narrative will not only be welcome to the parishioners of Ballysadare and Kilvarnet, and the inhabitants of the County Sligo generally, but will also be acceptable to many others besides, as containing authentic information on interesting incidents or episodes of important national

events, such as the ministry of Saint Patrick, the labours of Saint Columba, the wars of Elizabeth, the insurrection of 1641, the Cromwellian settlement, the invasion of the French, and the ravages of the cholera.

Anyhow, these parishes are free for the future from any share of the reproach lying on the province of Connaught. The Rev. Dr. O'Connor, in the Prolegomena to the Catalogue of the Stow library, complains that "there is no history of the province of Connaught, neither is there of any town or district in that most populous part of Ireland, except this unpublished chronicle (i.e. *Annales Connaciæ*). The barren Orkneys, and the wilds of Caithness, Sunderland, and Morey, can boast of their histories; while the rich plains of Roscommon, Maio, Sligo, and Galway, and their towns and capitals, are unrecorded and undescribed." Since these lines were written things have greatly improved; for Hardiman, by his *History of Galway* and learned edition of O'Flaherty's *West Connaught*, and O'Donovan, by the *Tribes and Customs of Hy Many*, the *Tribes and Customs of Hy Fiachrach*, the copious notes to the *Annals of the Four Masters*, and his other publications, have cast great light on the history of the province.

But much remains still to be done, and not less by Sligo men than others. "*Noblesse oblige*;" and lagging behind in the good work ill becomes a county that has done more, perhaps, for Irish history than any other in Ireland; for you would

search in vain elsewhere for services equal to those rendered, by Sligo, in giving to the world the *Book of Ballymote*, the lost *Book of the O'Duigenans*, the *Book of Lecan*, and the *Yellow Book of Lecan*; in forming such masters of ancient lore as Solomon O'Droma, Manus O'Duigenan, and the long line of the MacFirbises, from Giolla Iosa MacFirbis in the thirteenth century to Duald MacFirbis in the seventeenth; and in furnishing the Four Masters with a patron, in the person of Ferghal O'Gara, Member of Parliament for the County Sligo in 1634, without whom they never could produce their invaluable *Annals*, as Brother Michael O'Clery himself thus testifies in the dedication of the work:—"I, Michael O'Clery, a poor brother of the order of Saint Francis, have come before you, O noble Farrell O'Gara . . . to write this book in your name and to your honour, for it was you that gave the reward of their labour to the chroniclers by whom it is written; and for every good that will result from this book, in giving light to all in general, it is to you that thanks should be given." With such examples before them, County Sligo men can badly afford to be ignorant or indifferent on the subject of Irish history.

With respect to the contents of this volume—It gives an account of the chief occurrences that have happened in the two parishes concerned; of all the curious objects, natural and artificial, belonging to these parishes; and of distinguished natives and inhabitants of the district; and when it is remem-

bered that some of these occurrences are of considerable civil, ecclesiastical, and military moment, that the curious objects include two of the *Mirabilia Hiberniæ*, or Wonders of Ireland, and that among the names of inhabitants treated of are those of Saint Nathy, patron of the diocese of Achonry, of the great Saint Fechin of Fore, of conspicuous members of leading county families, and of the Parish Priests and Protestant Vicars of Ballysadare, it will be seen that this little history has far more than a local importance.

The plan adopted is, to treat the two parishes separately, beginning with Ballysadare and following on with Kilvarnet. Starting from the town of Ballysadare, the writer passes through Collooney, Markrea, Cloonamahon, Carrickbanagan, Tullaghan, Beltra, Coillte-Leyney, Streamstown, and Abbeytown, stopping at each of these places to tell all that is known about it, and continuing thus till he has completed the circuit of the parish and got back to Ballysadare. And proceeding then to Kilvarnet he moves about in the same way till he has given a detailed account of the chief portions of that interesting parish, including the picturesque and historical localities of Templehouse and Annaghmore.

Those who know the writer need hardly be told that the following pages are perfectly free from party and sectarian bias. If there is one man in the County Sligo that dislikes, more than another, the antipathies and animosities, on the score of



religion, which are, or used to be, so common in the county, it is the man that traces these lines. All through life, a chief object with him has been, as far as limited influence extended, to allay or put an end to such bad and bitter feelings; and the same impartiality towards Catholic and Protestant, towards high and low, that has always guided his conduct, shall now guide his pen, the thorough impartiality of Dido's famous maxim :—

“Tros Tyriusve mihi nullo discrimine agetur.”

It is well to observe that a few paragraphs, in the division of the volume that is occupied with the parish of Ballysadare, have appeared already in a local newspaper, but, substantially, even that portion sees the light now for the first time, as does every word of the part devoted to the parish of Kilvarnet.

Before closing these remarks, the writer takes occasion to perform a pleasing duty, in acknowledging the obligations he lies under to Colonel Cooper and Mr. O'Hara for allowing access to family papers, and for evincing friendly interest, in other respects too, in this publication.

PARISH OF BALLYSDARE.

LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

# HISTORY, ANTIQUITIES, AND PRESENT STATE

OF THE

PARISHES OF BALLYSDARE AND KILVARNET.

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PARISH OF BALLYSDARE.

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## CHAPTER I.

BALLYSDARE.

SECTION I.—EARLY ANNALS.

BALLYSDARE, *the Town of the Cataract of the Oak*, has its name from the waterfall, or rather the series of waterfalls, over which the river Uncion discharges its waters into the sea. *Daire*, or oak, forms part of the name, because, according to some, the bridge or pass over the river, in olden times, was made by intertwining the boughs and branches of the oak trees that grew on the opposite banks; or, according to others, because both sides of the cataract produced superior timber of that species. There are some, however, who maintain a different etymology of the word, and assert that it signifies “the town of the cataract of Darra,” an Eiremonian druid, who was slain in the river by Lewis the Long-handed.

Ballysdare has not always occupied the site on which it stands at present—partly on the east and partly on the west side of the river. Until a comparatively recent period it was entirely confined to the left bank. In 1361\* the

\* *Annals of Four Masters*, Anno 1361.

town was connected with the Sligo side of the river by a stone and mortar bridge, which was erected that year by Cathal O'Connor, and which spanned the Uncion about one thousand yards below the present bridge, as appears from the discovery some years ago of its foundations, on the spot on which the eel-house now stands, within a hundred yards or so of the waterfall.

Before the rise of the town, the spot on which it subsequently stood was called simply Easdara—cataract of the oak—without the prefix *Bal*, town. It is this name it bore when honoured by the visit of St. Columbkille and a multitude of other saints; which is the first important event in connection with the place of which we have any record. This visit happened in the year 585 (Reeves's Adamnan, lxvii). The Saint left Ireland for Scotland in the year 563, which was the forty-second of his age, and established the great monastery of Hy, or Iona, from which came forth the missionaries that converted the North of Great Britain. He revisited Ireland in the year 575\* to assist at the famous convention of Drumceat, at the close of which meeting he repaired to Drumcliffe, and founded there a church and monastery. From Drumcliffe the Saint proceeded to Easdara, where immense numbers, from all parts of Ireland, had come to receive him and do him honour. We may form some idea of the crowds in Ballysadare, on this occasion, from the following extract of Colgan's Life of St. Farannan †:—"Before the Saint (Columba) returned to Britain he founded one church in the district of Carbury,

\* Dr. Reeves in Adamnan's *Life of Saint Columba*, p. 91.

† *Acta Sanctorum*, 337. This meeting Father O'Hanlon calls "The great Council of Ballysadare."—*Lives of the Irish Saints*, February 17, Article xxii. Colgan gives the names of many of the saints or holy men who were in Ballysadare on this occasion; and adds, in a note, "What is said of '*the multitude that could hardly be counted*' may give rise to doubt in some minds, as it did in mine, till I ascertained, by great labour, that most of the saints mentioned flourished about this time."



and proceeded from thence to a place called Easdara, where all the prelates of the neighbouring regions, and vast numbers of holy men and women had come to meet him ; and, *to say nothing of the rest of the multitude, which was almost beyond counting*, a great many distinguished saints of the race of Cumne are recorded to have been present." All these, Colgan adds, received Columba "with the kiss of peace and the welcome of the heart," and accompanied him across the strand, called Traigh Eothaile, and on to the district of Tireragh. Ballysadare has seen many remarkable days in its time, but assuredly the most remarkable and honourable in its annals is that on which St. Columba entered it attended by a retinue of twenty bishops, forty priests, fifty deacons, and thirty students in divinity,\* and met before him so many anchorites, doctors, virgins, and bishops, who had flocked from rath and valley and island, to greet one who was regarded as a "second Patrick," as the "head of all the monasteries of Ireland," as the "Patriarch of the monks and nuns of the West." And if a procession is generally imposing in proportion to the numbers and dignity of those who take part in it, it is hard to conceive one more solemn than that which formed at Easdara to escort the Saint to Tireragh, consisting, as it did, of hundreds of thousands from all parts of the country, and filling nearly all the space between the sea and the Ox Mountains, as it wended, with slow and measured step, bearing banners and chanting hymns and canticles in honour of God and His great servant, Columbkille.

It is doubtful whether there was any church in Ballysadare at this time, as there is no mention of one in the

\* Keating's *History of Ireland*. See, also, Reeves's *Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Down and Connor*, p. 132, where an old poem is cited as authority for these numbers :

"Two score priests was their number,  
Twenty bishops of excellence and worth ;  
For singing psalms, a practice without blame,  
Fifty deacons and thirty students."

accounts of Columbkille's visit; though, on the other hand, it is not likely the Saint would select, for the rendezvous of himself and friends, a place where they could not assemble together round the Altar of God. The first church of Ballysadare of which we have any account is that founded by Saint Fechin,\* which was commonly called the *great church* of Ballysadare; an appellation, perhaps, which tends to show that there already existed a smaller.

\* It is strange that Dr. Lanigan should deny, or seem to deny, in the teeth of tradition, of the Annals of the Four Masters (*Anno* 1230), of Colgan (*Secunda vita S. Fechini*), and of our other hagiologists, that Saint Fechin founded the monastery of Ballysadare. The absence of allusion to a monastery at Ballysadare, in Colgan's First Life, is the great argument that tells with Dr. Lanigan against Fechin being the founder of the institution; but there is really nothing in this argument, for the so-called Life is not a biography at all, but merely a short account, in declamatory language, of the Saint's *miracles*, as appears from the very first paragraph of the production, which is as follows:—"The holy and venerable abbot Fechin, illustrious for the stock he came from—having Colcharna for his father, and Lasrea for his mother—was famous, from his infancy, for the *great number of his miracles, of which we shall glance at a few*, as it would be quite beyond our strength to enumerate them all." Colgan and Dr. Lanigan have formed very different estimates of the two lives, as the doctor evidently regards the first as the chief authority on the history of the Saint; while Colgan calls the same publication "a mere short compendium of the Life of Saint Fechin," composed "by a rather modern author—Augustine Magraidin, who died in the year 1405;" and the Second, which Lanigan sets little store by, Colgan, who compiled it, regards as of the highest authority, as well on account of the sources from which it was derived, as because it "tallies perfectly with all the authentic history of the country." And this Second Life, compiled by most competent authors, out of materials the most abundant and authentic, at a time when there were traditions and other helps that have long since ceased to be available, recognized and approved by all our leading antiquarians and historians—such as Ware, Ussher, Harris, O'Flaherty, Keating, and the Bollandists—and harmonizing wonderfully with all the known facts of the period of which it treats, we must, according to Dr. Lanigan, throw aside in favour of a production that looks like a rambling sermon on the Saint; that makes no pretence to be a Life at all; that merely purports to make some passing allusions to a few of Fechin's miracles; and that is characterised by competent critics as a "short and mutilated epitome of his acts." In treating of Fechin, Dr. Lanigan has two weights

The monastery of Ballysadare was the origin, so to speak, of the town. What occurred so generally near other religious houses, as at Kildare, Derry, Lismore, etc., happened also at Ballysadare, and a town soon rose up under the walls of the abbey. The inhabitants of the little town were the tenants or retainers of the monastery; and as the monastery was then not only what a monastery is now, but also what a church, an alms-house, a dispensary, and a school are now; so the inmates of the abbey were not only the landlords of the neighbourhood, but also its clergymen, guardians of the poor, doctors, and schoolmasters.

The following are some of the more remarkable events that have taken place in the town and the monastery of Ballysadare, as they are recorded in the annals of the country:—

In 1158, according to the Annals of the Four Masters, O'Duillenain, Erenach of Ballysadare, brehon, professor of law, and chief of his territory, died. It would seem that this family obtained hereditary authority at Ballysadare, for we meet in the Annals with several of the name holding office in connection with the abbey.

In 1179, according to Archdall, quoting some anonymous annals, Ballysadare was burned “by the men of Moylisha and Moyleterary,” dwellers somewhere on the banks of the Moy.

In 1188 the redoubtable John de Courey and the English made an incursion into Connaught, accompanied by two degenerate Irishmen, Conor O'Dermot and a son of Roderick

and two measures. He will not admit him to be the founder of Kilgarvan—reckoned in the Second Life among the Saint's foundations—because, forsooth, “its name indicates that its founder was not Fechin, but one Garvan;” while he quite forgets his own argument when coming to speak of Ballysadare, which he will not allow to be the work of Saint Fechin, though it is called in the old annals of the country—*Tempul Fechin* and *Tempul mor Fechin*, and though its abbot is expressly styled “Comarb of Saint Fechin,” in the *Annals of the Four Masters* (A.D. 1230), and in those of *Loch Ke* (A.D. 1229).

O'Connor. They first bent their steps towards the western parts of the province, setting fire to such churches as fell in their way, but they soon wheeled round in the direction of Ballysadare, intending to pass through it to the north, but finding, when they had reached the town, that they were pursued by the Munster and Connaught forces, who had nobly joined against the common enemy, and that the troops of Cinell Connell were ranged round Sligo to repel invasion, the proud De Courcy, thus caught between two fires, had to submit to the humiliation of flight, and led his followers across the Curlews; taking care, however, before quitting Ballysadare, to burn the entire town, with its religious establishments. The exasperated Irish hastened after the fugitives, and, coming up with them near Boyle, inflicted heavy losses—"Many of their principal men," says the Annals of Loch Ke, "were slain. Murchadh, son of Ferghal O'Mullrooney, and Maelsechlainn O'Matadhain fell there also, *et alii multi cum eis*, and the foreigners left this country without injuring much of it on this occasion." If Irishmen had combined elsewhere as at Ballysadare how different would have been the fate of the invaders? The union that forced John De Courcy, the great hero of mediæval history and romance, to turn his back, could easily sweep every Norman and Saxon in Ireland into the sea.

In 1199 another battle was fought at Ballysadare, but this time, unfortunately, the combatants were, for the most part, Irish. On one side were Hugh O'Neill, O'Heigny, Prince of Fermanagh, and the men of the North; and on the other—Cathal Caragh O'Connor, William Burke, and their respective followers. The Northerners were defeated, O'Heigny and many others slain, and O'Neill detained a close prisoner in the church of Ballysadare until he made peace and gave hostages to Cathal Caragh. From this incident we learn that churches were sometimes used for prisons, as we learn from other occurrences that they were made to serve as fortresses.

In 1228 Ballysadare was laid waste in the war that raged between Hugh and Turlogh O'Connor, as was almost the entire of the two present baronies of Leyney and Tireragh.

In 1230 Gilla-Coimdeadh O'Duillenain, Coarb of St. Fechin, and Abbot of the Church of the Canons at Eas dara, died. This *obit* is given in the Annals of the Four Masters and in those of Loch Ke; and as the latter were compiled within a few miles of Ballysadare, their authority is quite decisive as to the connection of Saint Fechin with the church of that place.

In 1235 large parties of English, under the leadership of William Burke and the Lord Justice, Maurice Fitzgerald, ravaged many parts of Connaught. They laid waste Ballysadare, and took from it a great prey of cattle that belonged to O'Donnell. Their object was to punish that chieftain for the asylum he gave their enemy, Felim O'Connor.

In 1239 O'Donnell's territory was again despoiled by the English. Ballysadare, which was subject then to that chief, was occupied by the Lord Justice, Maurice Fitzgerald, whose troops overran Carbury, as far as Drumcliffe.

In 1249 an attack was directed against the castle of Sligo by a party of English, in the interest of the Berminghams. Felim O'Connor defeated the attempt, and slew Pierce Poer, David Drew, and some other English noble youths, who were conveyed for interment to Ballysadare.

In 1261 the Berminghams profaned the church of Ballysadare (styled again *Tempul mor Fechin in Eas dara* both by the Annals of the Four Masters and those of Loch Ke, under the year 1261), slew Cathal O'Hara and five other Leyney men within its walls, and carried away, as booty, some sacred objects belonging to it. This outrage was avenged the same year by Donnell O'Hara. He conducted an expedition against the Berminghams, or Clan Feoaris, and slew Sefin Bermingham, who had on his head, at the time of death, the bell, or bell-cover, taken from the

church of Ballysadare, thinking, doubtless, that the sight of this object would alarm the conscience and arrest the arm of O'Hara.\*

In 1267 Ballysadare was plundered by the English and Welshmen of West Connaught. This was in retaliation for injuries inflicted on the foreigners by the O'Connors and O'Haras, who exerted themselves greatly about this time to dislodge the strangers from Tireragh and Tirawley. In 1266 Lochlan O'Connor, and the son of Donnell Dhu O'Hara, brought back from the west of Connaught thirty one heads of "Britons," and presented them to O'Connor Sligo; and in the same year, "Donnell O'Hara, King of Leyney, was slain while burning Ardnaree against the foreigners."

From another quarter † considerable light is thrown on these proceedings, which, viewed in themselves, and as they are given in the *Four Masters*, look like mere outrages, without other object or plan than the gratification of wanton cruelty, but, regarded under this new light, turn out, like most Irish outrages, ancient and modern, to be connected with land; the Berminghams striving to wrest from the O'Haras the abbey lands of Ballysadare, and the O'Haras trying to maintain their rights and punish the aggressors. It would appear that for some centuries after

\* The Irish word that John O'Donovan translates "bell," in the *Annals of the Four Masters*, Mr. Hennessy translates "bell cover" in the *Annals of Loch Ke*. In a paper on "Ancient Irish Bells" in the *Kilkenny Archæological Journal* (vol. ii, p. 5,) the writer says, "The *Four Masters*, at the year 1261, relate that Donnell O'Hara plundered the sons of Bermingham in revenge for the killing of Cathal O'Hara and violation of the Church of Saint Fechin at Ballysadare, in the County Sligo; and the Annalists add, that he slew Sefin, son of Bermingham, *the weapon with which he killed him being the bell which Bermingham had carried away from the Church of Ballysadare*. This, truly, was a murderous and sacrilegious use to be made of the relic of Saint Fechin!!!" To this it is enough to say, that the author of the paper has quite mistaken the meaning of the *Four Masters*.

† *Evidence on Athenry Claim of Peerage*, p. 13.



the English invasion the invaders felt themselves free to take from the Irish, and, at times, from one another, such lands as they could secure with the sword, on Rob Roy's

“ Simple plan  
That they should take who have the power,  
And they should keep who can.”

The Berminghams were like their countrymen in this respect, and, not content with fine possessions in Galway and Roscommon, laboured to appropriate in Sligo the fertile barony of Tireragh, as well as the lands belonging to the abbey of Ballysadare; and that their efforts were in great measure effectual, we learn from an ancient deed containing the settlement of the family estates of Gilbert de Bermingham in 1330, by which he disposes of parts of Tireragh and all the abbey lands of Ballysadare (*totam terram del Tearmuynd de Assdara*), in the same way as he disposes of his lands in Athenry and Roscommon (*Evidence on Athenry Peerage*).

It is pretty certain that the Berminghams were not suffered to enjoy pacific possession either of Tireragh or Ballysadare; for we find the O'Haras and O'Dowdas, sometimes separately, sometimes conjointly, assailing the invaders. We find the O'Haras attacking them separately in the case mentioned by the Four Masters, in which “Donnell O'Hara was slain while burning Ardnaree against the foreigners.” We have an instance of united action in the same Annals, under the year 1278, where it is stated that “Brian O'Dowda and Art na g-Capal O'Hara, Lord of Leyney, gave battle to, and defeated, the Clann Feorais.” And, under the year 1371, we read that Donnell O'Dowda, single handed, “took the castles of Ardnaree and Castleconnor, drove out all the English that were in them, and parcelled out the country amongst his kinsmen and his own people.” This, no doubt, was the time at which the Berminghams were driven definitively from Tireragh and

Ballysadare, after holding precarious possession of these places for about a century and a half, if not longer, as we read in Baron Finglas's *Breviate of Ireland*:—"Item, As concerning the Porcion of *Connaught*, *Gilbert de Clare*, Earl of Gloucester, whyche marryed the secunde Daughter of *William Earl Marshall*, *Sir William de Burke*, and *SIR WILLIAM BERMINGHAM Amery* under King *Henry Fitz-Empresse* wer the principall conquerors of *Connaught*; who wyth their complices did inhabitt the same, and made it English, and obey the Kyng's Lawes, from O'Brien country to Sligoe, in length above sixty Miles and more; which continued so in Prosperity forty Yeres to Kyng Edward III<sup>d</sup> his Dayes" (*Harris's Hibernica*, p. 85). From this it would appear that this part of *Connaught* was not only tributary but peaceful and obedient to English law for at least the forty years specified.

In 1258 a battle was fought at *Lec-essa-dara*—the flag of Ballysadare—between the English of West *Connaught* and *Adam Cusack* on the one side, and *Manus O'Connor* and the Irish on the other, in which the former were defeated and many of them slain. *Colin Cusack*, brother of *Adam*, was detained as hostage for the fulfilment of the conditions imposed on the vanquished. The *leac* or flag of Ballysadare is not identified, some placing it at the water-fall, some a little to the south-east of the spot on which *Mr. Middleton's* flour mill stands, others in the bed of the river, and others again, supposing, not improbably, that *Lec-essa-dara* was only another name for the town.†

In 1291 *Cathal O'Connor's* people plundered Ballysadare and the whole of *Carbury* to *Knocklane*. The pillage took place immediately after a battle fought at *Collooney*, between *Cathal* and *Manus O'Connor*, in which the former was victor.

\* See *Tribes and Customs of Hy-Fiachrach*, 359.

† *John O'Donovan* applies *Leac-essa-dara* to "a flat rock in the river." *Annals of Four Masters*, Anno 1308, note.

In 1308 the sons of Donnell O'Connor, who had been assailed this year on several occasions by the M'Dermotts, the O'Dowds, and their English allies, seizing the opportunity afforded by the retirement of the Irish, gave chase to the foreigners, pursued them to Lec-essa-dara, and slew there Thomas M'Walter, constable of the castle of Bunfinne, in the present parish of Dromard, his brother, and many others.

In 1360 a bridge of lime and stone was built across the Ballysadare river by Cathal O'Connor, as has been already mentioned. This was one of the first stone bridges erected in Ireland, these structures having been previously made of wood—such as the wicker bridges erected by Turlough O'Conor at Lanesborough and Athlone, across the Shannon, the bridge of plank across the same river at Killaloe, and the bridge of boughs, said by tradition to have existed at Ballysadare.

In 1444 the Abbot of Ballysadare, son of Melaghlin Fitz-Cormac M'Donagh, died at Rome. Great numbers of the clergy of Connaught and Ulster went to Rome this year, including Wm. O'Hetigan, Bishop of Elphin; Thady M'Donogh, Abbot of Boyle; William O'Flanagan, Prior of Roscommon, and the Abbot of Ballysadare, and most of the pilgrims left their bones in the Eternal City. According to Archdall, in his *Monasticon Hibernicum*, Edmund, Abbot of Ballysadare, died in the year 1450, but this is a mistake, as the Edmund mentioned was not abbot of Ballysadare, but of Assaroe, or Ballyshannon.\*

In 1544 Conatus O'Shigal, who was, according to Archdall and Ware, Abbot of Ballysadare, was appointed Bishop of Elphin. He was a nominee of Henry VIII; and as a canonical incumbent, Bernard O'Higgins, sat in the See at the time—O'Shigal must have been a schismatic. In this case, Ballysadare men would fain suppose that Archdall

\* *Annals of the Four Masters*, Anno 1450.

and Ware are in error as to his abbey, as Archdall certainly is with regard to the monastery of the aforesaid Edmund, and that, in one case as well as the other, there is a question of Assaroe and not Assadare. Nor is the supposition devoid of all show of foundation. For the name O'Shiagal, or O'Shiel, is rare, or rather altogether unknown in the neighbourhood of Ballysadare, while it is quite common in and around Ballyshannon. Again, the office of chaplain to Manus O'Donnell, which O'Shigal filled, points in the direction of Assaroe, the head-quarters of the O'Donnells, and not to Ballysadare, of which the O'Haras and the O'Connors were patrons. Nor was it strange that a Bishop of Elphin should be taken from Assaroe at the time, as a bishop for the neighbouring See of Achonry—Nicholas O'Hedran—had been appointed previously from the same abbey. All this would have considerable force if there were nothing except what has been alleged from Archdall and Ware to be opposed, but it must be stated, that O'Shigal is not only called Abbot of Assadare, but is also said to have been "Prior of Achros;" and as this monastery (if there be question of the one so called in Tireragh) seems to have depended on that of Ballysadare, his connection with one place would imply connection with the other, unless, indeed, we say that he was called at one time, "Abbot," another time, "Prior," and that Achros was put for Ashroe—another form under which we sometimes find the town and abbey of Ballyshannon designated in history.

In 1586, according to the Annals of Loch Ke, the "Bridge of Ballysadare was finished by O'Connor Sligo." Bridges, like those who pass over them, are mortal; and this is the second bridge recorded to be erected at Ballysadare, both structures being built by the O'Connor Sligo. The builder of the one at present under consideration was Donnell, or, according to his English title, Sir Donald O'Connor, who took a very active part in the politics of

the period. His rule extended from the Moy, on the one side, and Keash Cargin on the other, to the river Bundrowes, taking in Tireragh, Leyney, Corran, Tirerill, as well as his hereditary patrimony of Sligo and Grange. Over the former territories he had only a chiefrie, the immediate rulers being the O'Dowds, the O'Haras, and the M'Donoghs; and he himself had to pay tribute to O'Donnell, as lord paramount of all Lower Connaught.\*

In 1599 Red Hugh O'Donnell passed through Ballysadare with his creaghts, on the way to Ballymote. The inhabitants of Ballysadare were already sufficiently accustomed to the sight of Red Hugh, as he had often traversed their streets in expeditions against the English and their Irish allies, but from this time he lived, for the most part, in the neighbourhood. Having purchased the castle of Ballymote for £400 and 300 cows from the M'Donoghs of Corran, who offered it for sale to the highest bidders, be they Celts or Saxons, he made that splendid fortress his chief residence up to the close of his career in Ireland. It was in it this great chief organized some of his most brilliant enterprises, as it was from it also he started, at the head of the Cinel Connell and Connaught men to the disastrous battle-field of Kinsale.

In 1602 Roderick O'Donnell and O'Connor Sligo encamped at Ballysadare, while at war with the English. After the departure of Hugh Roe for Spain, Roderick, his brother, liberated O'Connor Sligo from captivity, in Lough Esk, near Donegal, and these two chieftains acted in concert till they both submitted to Lord Mountjoy at Athlone. It was at Ballysadare they made their last stand against the Saxon.

There is reason to believe that the Canons had quitted the Abbey before this date. The absence of all mention of

\* This superiority was repudiated by O'Connor, who made the pretensions of the O'Donnells a matter of complaint to Queen Elizabeth.

them in the documents of the period suggests this, and the state of ruin into which the building had fallen confirms the supposition. The act for the suppression of monasteries became law in 1537; a commission to carry out the law was issued in 1539; the richer and more accessible establishments were immediately seized or surrendered; and though several institutions continued to exist, if not to flourish, for fifty, and some even for a hundred years after the legal suppression, in less frequented parts of the country where they were practically beyond the reach of the law, the situation of Ballysadare, exposed by sea and land, and adjoining one of the chief thoroughfares of the kingdom, deprived it of any such immunity.\*

And the injuries which the place had been sustaining for centuries left it unfit to offer or organize resistance. Welshmen from Tireragh and Tyrawley; the Berminghams of Athenry, and Burkes of Iar Connaught; the Normans of the Pale, and the unnatural Irish themselves burned or plundered and profaned it by turns; and the wonder is, how it was able to survive so many attacks, and to rise so often from its ashes. Nothing, perhaps, so afflicts and startles the Christian reader of our medieval history as the outrages he finds constantly offered to churches. It is natural enough that Pagans should attack and demolish Christian temples, as the Danes did in Ireland; it is conceivable that professing Christians of one denomination should, in their false zeal, commit excesses against the places of worship of other denominations; but that Catholics, belonging all to the same religion, professing to hold the humblest church in which Mass is celebrated as precious and holy, should still profane and destroy these churches, should make them the chief object of attack,

\* But the work of suppression was so vigorously and effectually carried out under William and Mary, and, more especially, under Anne, that Burke, in the *Hibernia Dominicana* (page 155), writes—"Nulla tamen religiosa domus in universo, qua late patet regno haud suppressa evasit."



should count the number ruined with the feelings of triumph with which the barbarous Indian reckons the scalps struck off in a savage foray, is a fact so bewildering and shocking that one could never believe it if it were not proved beyond doubt in all our annals. The only thing to explain or excuse this conduct, if anything can extenuate such enormities, is the fact that, in times of war these churches were used as storehouses of valuables, as prisons, and as fortresses, so that, in attacking them the assailant turned away his thoughts from their sacred character, and regarded them merely as strong places of the enemy. But though Ballysadare had to bear more than its full share in the calamities of the times, it was not abandoned without a struggle; for we learn from certain unpublished documents that the O'Connors of Sligo tried hard to avert or stay the spoliation decreed against it. In an inquisition, taken at Sligo on the 8th of June, 1588, before John Crofton, in the matter of Donald O'Connor, lately deceased, we read, that "Charles *alias* Cahall Oge O'Connor, on the day of his death was seized of the Abbey of Ballassadara, and that the aforesaid Charles intruded on the possessions of the queen, in respect to the said monastery, under pretext of certain bulls of the Roman Pontiff, commonly called the Pope's Bulls, and that the aforesaid Charles entered into and received ecclesiastical minor orders, viz.: Bennet and Collect (*sic*) . . . and that the aforesaid Charles, while thus in forcible possession of the Monastery of Ballysadare by intrusion, departed this life on the 16th of May, 1582."

It is clear from this that the Pope and the O'Connors acted in concert to baffle the designs of the queen, and it is quite certain that no nominee of Elizabeth got footing in Ballysadare during the lifetime of Cathal Oge; nor did the "forcible possession" cease at his death; for we learn, from an inquisition (taken in the town of Ballyasadara) before Nicholas Brady, on the 11th September, 1607 (4th

of James the First), that intruders occupied the monastery in despite of the authority of the king. To use the words of the inquisition, the jury and witnesses having been duly sworn, aver "that King James is seized of all abbeys, and among them of the abbey, or house, of the Canons, at Assadara; that there are three houses within the precinct of the glebe, commonly called the church-yard of Templemore, that is, the Great Church of Assadara, belonging to the aforesaid monastery, which have been for a long time concealed (*concellatta*) both from the said king and from Edward Crofton, the farmer of the same monastery, and are now in the occupation of Laurence M'Gilleboy and Thady M'Gilleboy, and unjustly detained by them without leave or licence from the king."

But though the O'Connors and others used every effort to save the venerable "house of the Canons," nothing could keep her prey from the Imperial lioness, and, accordingly, we find her, in spite of all opposition, disposing of the abbey and its appurtenances in 1588. An inquisition was taken the preceding year, 1587, the 29th of Elizabeth, before John Crofton, at Sligo, to ascertain the property of the abbey, and to make out an inventory of its possessions; and on that occasion the abbot was found seized of a church partly thatched, a dormitory, and the ruins of two other buildings; three cottages, with their curtilages or gardens, and a cemetery in a state of ruin, and of little value; three small quarters of land of every kind, with their tithes, etc., situate in the townland of Assadara; forty acres of arable and pasture, and sixty of stony mountain, value 20s.; and the townland of Trinebally, in the barony of Leyney, containing thirty acres of arable and pasture, with the tithes, etc., annual value, 6s. 8d.; the rectory and vicarage of the parish of Ballyassadara (commonly called Templemore), containing three parts of the tithes in the land called the Termon lands, annual value, besides the curate's stipend, 13s. 4d., all English money;

the vicarage of Enagh, in the barony of Tinerill;\* the vicarage of Drumrat, in the barony of Corren; the vicarage of Kilnegarvan, in MacJordan's country, all which, besides the stipends of the curates, were of no value."

All this property was granted by lease, dated 26th August, 1588, for the term of 21 years, to Bryan Fitzwilliams, Esq., "one of her Majesty's servants," a relative, probably a son or brother of Sir William Fitzwilliams, who succeeded Sir John Perrott as Lord Deputy, on the 30th June, 1588, and whom history stigmatises as one of the most avaricious and rapacious Englishmen that ever set foot in Ireland.

The abbey and its appurtenances formed only a small portion of the property granted by the lease to the aforesaid Bryan Fitzwilliams, "one of her Majesty's servants;" for we find countless broad acres in Tipperary, Galway, and Roscommon, as well as seven quarters of land in Leyney, (forfeited by the attainder of Donald O'Hara,) made over in the same instrument to this minion of the Deputy. The document is too long to be given here in full, but the

\* The other places mentioned in this inquisition are well known—but no one can tell where the vicarage of "Enagh" lay. There was an Enagh, or Annagh, in the Barony of Carbury, (the place now called Hazelwood), another in Leyney, (now Annaghmore, the residence of Mr. O'Hara), but the Enagh of the inquisition could be neither of these, as it belonged to Tinerill. The writer conjectures and believes that the Enagh in question is the spot now known as Springfield, or Carrowmire; for, first, this spot is in Tinerill; secondly, Springfield, or Carrowmire, signifies the same as the Irish word Enagh, which, according to Dr. Joyce, "means literally a watery place" (*Irish Names of Places*, p. 415, First Series); thirdly, a part of Springfield is known as Cuilnabragher—the wood of the friar; fourthly, the place contains the foundations and some other ruins of an old church; and fifthly, it passes in the neighbourhood, and always passed as having belonged to the monastery of Ballysadare.

Since this note was written, the conjecture put forth in it has been confirmed by the witness of two inhabitants of Glanegulough. One of these says that his father, who died about forty years since, being very old at death, and who was tenant under the Coopers of what is now called *Culnabraher*, used always to name the place *Annagh-na-braher*. The other inhabitant states that, when a little boy, he often heard the spot spoken of as *Annagh-na-braher*.

following are the portions that relate to this part of the country and to the matter in hand: The lease after mentioning "Carrownakippie and seven more quarters of land, of late belonging to Donald O'Hara, attainted," next conveys to the lessee "the site, circuit, and precinct of the late monastery or priory of Balliassadara, otherwise called Astara, in the county of Sligo aforesaid, containing one ruinous church, covered with straw, one ruinous dortoir, two houses, one churchyard, with three small gardens, three small quarters of land with appurtenances, being parcel of the temporal land, to the said priory belonging, the third part of the tithes of the said rectory or church belonging, yearly collected, and gathered in the towns and villages of Termons, the vicarage of Erenagh (Enagh) in Tirerill, the vicarage of Erumratt (Drumratt) in barony of Corran, the vicarage of Kilnagarvan in MacJordan's country, with their appurtenances, all which are parcels of the possessions and lands of the aforesaid priory of Balliassadara, in the county of Sligo aforesaid, and of long time concealed and detained from her Majesty . . . . all manners of mines and minerals, &c., the tithes and altarages due to the curate of Balliassadara only excepted, allowing him, the said Bryan Fitzwilliams, sufficient hedge-boat and plough-boat, from the day of the date of these presents, for twenty-one years, the said Bryan giving £11 8s. of the current money of Ireland every year, to be paid at Easter and Michaelmas, viz. . . . . (here are given the rents for lands in various counties), and for the quarters Carrownakippie and seven others of Donogh O'Hara, late of Carrownakippie, 26s. 8d., and for site and precinct of Balliassadara, spiritual and temporal, 8s. 4d., he finding, keeping, and maintaining upon the premises one able horseman of the English nation, with the ordinary clauses, and with the clauses of forfeiture and double value of the rent, to be paid within six weeks, &c."

If Fitzwilliams, "one of her Majesty's servants," was only a lessee under this grant, he could not, at least, com-

plain that he was rackrented. He held the richest lands in the most fertile counties in Ireland, at an annual rent of less than one halfpenny an acre. Eight shillings and four pence was an odd rent for the hundreds of acres belonging to the abbey, and for all its rectorial and vicarial tithes in the Counties of Sligo and Mayo, to say nothing of the concession of "hedge-boat" and plough-boat," a concession by the way, from which we may infer that Ballysdare was then well wooded.

Bryan Fitzwilliams did not continue in possession of the abbey lands and other property for the full term of the lease, for, in the year 1605, the third part of the vicarage of Ballysdare, and the third part of the tithes of the rectory or church, were granted, by King James, to John Crofton, Ballymurry, County Roscommon, who had come over to Ireland as Auditor-General with his friend and patron Essex, and who is the common ancestor of the Sligo, Roscommon, and Leitrim Croftons. In 1618, Edward Crofton, son and heir of John, received a Royal Patent creating the manors of Ballysdare and Ballymurry, and giving the right of holding fairs and markets in these places; and, by a deed dated 10th September same year, this Edward granted to certain persons the parsonage and vicarage of Ballysdare, the vicarage of Drumrat, the parsonage and vicarage of Enagh, the vicarage of Kilnegarvan, and the prebend and two quarters of Killasser in the County of Sligo.\*

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#### SECTION II.—REMAINS OF CHURCHES.

THE buildings mentioned in the preceding documents still exist, and in wonderful preservation, considering the time that has elapsed since they were thus described and the situation on which they stand, where they are greatly

\* Killasser is the place, so called, that lies between Annaghmore and Billa, and must not be confounded with the parish of Killasser, in the County of Mayo.

exposed to the injuries of the weather. They must have been very solidly constructed; and it would seem, that at the time of their erection Ballysadare builders and tradesmen had already acquired the cunning of hand for which they are so distinguished at the present day. Two of those buildings are commonly regarded as the remains of churches. One of them stands on the rock that rises perpendicularly to a height of sixty feet above the basin of the waterfall; while the other, popularly called *The Abbey*, reposes five or six hundred yards to the west in the lowest part of the valley.

The former is an oblong quadrangular structure, measuring externally seventy feet in length, and thirty-three in breadth.\* The door entrance is on the south side, at a



OLD CHURCH OF BALLYSDARE.

\* "Our very early churches appear to have had no chancels."—Brash's *Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland*, p. 16. The illustration was drawn on the wood by W. F. Wakeman, F.R.H.A., A.J., from a photograph taken by Mr. Edward Smith, and was engraved by Mrs. Millard, Dublin.



distance of eighteen feet from western gable ; the height of doorway is nine feet six inches from sill to apex of arch, and the breadth, five feet ten inches on the outside face of the wall, but contracted by jambs to four feet on the inside ; the head of door consists of a double Norman arch, filled in with masonry, and is three feet three from line of springing to apex of lower arch, and three feet eleven from the same line to the apex of the higher ; eleven carved human heads project, in bold relief, from lower arch, and there are two more, one at each side of springing, making in all thirteen, and representing, in all likelihood, our Lord and the Twelve Apostles ;\* there are three windows, one in eastern gable and two in southern sidewall ; the latter are lancet, each four feet nine inches high from sill to soffit of arch, and seven inches wide on outside of wall, but splayed to four feet ten inches on inside ; the eastern window seems also to have been of the lancet kind, but owing to a part of the gable having fallen, one cannot be now sure of its dimensions.†

There is a marked resemblance between this church and that of Killaspugbrone, near Dorrant's Island. The former is larger, stronger, and statelier, but still, the likeness between them in the general cast of construction, and in many of the details—such as the situation and size of windows, the position of door, the character of the masonry, and the quality of stone in quoins—is so striking that one looks like a copy of the other, or both like copies of a common original. In Killaspugbrone there is a recess for sedilia, which is not found at Ballysadare ; but in both there is the same provision for a gallery, as well as a peculiar open of about four feet four inches high by one

\* Carved human heads are also over the door of Cormac's Chapel in Cashel.

† Since writing the above it has been ascertained that this window had a mullion, and consisted of two lights. The sill remains still *in situ*.

foot eleven inches wide in the western gable.\* This would indicate a high antiquity for Ballysadare; for, if Dr. Petrie has any grounds for his opinion that "the present church of Killaspugbrone may be well supposed to be the original church erected for Bishop Bronus, by St. Patrick, in the fifth century," we should have good reason to suppose that the edifice now under consideration is the church built by Saint Fechin in the seventh century. This observation applies only to the body of the building; for it is plain that the structure, some time after its erection, underwent alterations. In looking at the southern side wall one sees traces to show that breaches were made in it, and that the present door and windows were inserted.† The change probably was made in the thirteenth century.

Two other houses, or what remains of them, stand on

\* This open, though pretty high in the wall, the sill being five feet from the ground, would seem to have been the primitive doorway. There was a church in the North of Ireland with the door similarly placed. "A church and monastery," says a writer in the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, vol. i, p. 306, "were erected at Banagher, near Dungiven, in the eleventh century, by a man named O'Heney; the walls of the church are still standing and a part of the monastery, which is remarkable for having its door several feet from the ground like those of the Round Towers. Killaspugbrone is another example of the door being placed high in gable. Is it not likely that churches, with doors of this kind, were intended to subserve the purposes of round towers as well as of religious edifices? The door in the Round Tower of Antrim is "four feet four inches in height, one foot ten inches in width at the top, and two feet at the bottom" (Petrie's *Round Towers of Ireland*, p. 400), about the exact dimensions of the door or open of Ballysadare church. It should be mentioned that this open or door has inclining sides or jambs, as the circumstance goes to prove the antiquity of the structure.

There are also in this church two "Peep-holes," as they have been termed—one in western gable, the other in the northern side wall—through which the inmates could descry the approach of enemies, the church thus serving one of the purposes of the Round Towers, which, whatever else they may have been, were certainly watch-towers.

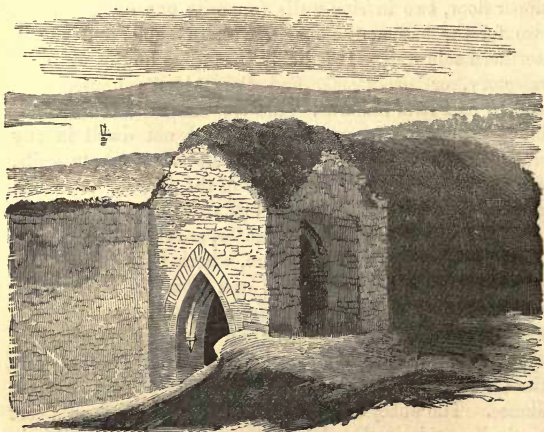
† The more this church is examined, the more extensive the alterations that happened in it are found to have been. The masonry of the northern side wall belongs to three different periods, and it is clear that this wall was lengthened more than once after the original erection.

the cemetery plot, along with the church, one on each side of it, but distant about twenty feet. The three buildings lie in an easterly direction, and are nearly parallel, but the church is further east than the others, its western gable being nearly on a line with the eastern gables of the other two. The dimensions of the southern house are—fifty-two feet long, and twenty-three wide, measured externally. The northern structure is, internally, thirty-three feet long, and fourteen wide. Both these buildings were vaulted with stone, and contained each two apartments at least—one in the basement, and the other a croft, between vault and roof. The northern house was singularly well lighted for so old a building, having three opens for the upper floor, two in side walls (opposite one another), and two for the basement—one in western gable, and one in northern side wall. It is likely that these houses were the refectory, or *prointeach*, and the Abbot's house, both which, as Petrie remarks, "always existed in those cenobitic establishments, where monks did not dwell in any single building, but in a multitude of separate cells, arranged in streets in the vicinity of the church," to which class, tradition informs us, Ballysadare belonged.\*

The church, known as *The Abbey*, stood at the west end of the town, quite near the shore, where its ruins are still seen. It was a tower church; and from the style of the building it would seem to date from the thirteenth century, or thereabouts, and is manifestly a more recent structure than that on the hill. It was built of quarried stone, while the other was constructed with boulders or large surface stones. The abbey is ninety-six feet long, and twenty feet six inches wide in the clear. The northern side wall is in

\* Speaking of the earlier times of the Church in Ireland, Sir William Wilde says, "All the clergy, and, possibly, a portion of the people, lived in community round the little church in cells, oratories, cloghauns, wattled huts, caves, or forts."—*Kilkenny Archæological Journal*, vol. xi, p. 51. Archdeacon Lynch tells us that Ballysadare contained 300 monks, —*Pii Antistitis Icon*. p. 84; Duffy, Dublin.

good preservation, and is thirty-three feet high ; but there are only a few feet of the southern wall standing. Neither of the gables exists. The distance from foundation of western gable to the tower arch is fifty-four feet ; the tower arch, at the springing, is twelve feet two inches ; and ten feet eight inches beyond the tower there is an arched recess for sedilia in the side wall, eight feet seven inches long. It is certain that cloisters or lateral chapels were attached to the southern side wall, in accordance with the common practice of the period ; but they can no longer be traced, as more than twenty feet deep of quarry rubbish is now accumulated on their site.



TOWER OF ABBEY OF BALLYSDARE.

But it is necessary to notice here a difficulty, suggested by the inquisition and lease that have been given above. Hitherto we have been speaking of *two* churches—that on

the hill and the *Abbey*; but in these documents there is only mention of *one*. Why, then, talk of a second when there is no mention of it in the records? If there had been two, would not the legal instruments have included both? And yet, the inquisition and the lease are equally precise in mentioning only "the church covered with straw," the "dormitory, or dortoir," and the "two other buildings." This is a serious objection, though raised now for the first time, and it seems to go the length of proving that, at the time in which the documents were drawn up, there was only one church—that called *The Abbey*. And yet, there can be little doubt that the building over the waterfall, if not used as a place of worship *at the time of the suppression*, had been so used at an earlier date. The usage of the inhabitants of the district, giving it always the designation of "the church," or the "old church," the style and attributes of the edifice—with its orientation, its sanctuary and chancel windows, and its striking resemblance to the ruins of Killaspugbrone; and the adjoining cemetery, marking, as old cemeteries always do, the site of a "kil," or "tempul," all go to show, beyond any reasonable doubt, that the structure was once a church.

But when or how did it cease to be such? Probably, at the time the *Abbey* was built, and this time the writer would be inclined to fix in some part of the thirteenth century, and towards the end, rather than the beginning of that period; as there was little opportunity of building during the first sixty or seventy years of that century, Ballysadare being then the theatre of almost perpetual war. But the closing years of the thirteenth century were comparatively undisturbed in the neighbourhood (Harris's *Hibernica*, p. 86); and, most probably, it was in these years the abbey was built. John D'Alton, in his *History of Ireland and Annals of Boyle*, writes, that the "Monastery of Ballysadare was, *in the beginning of the thirteenth*

century, restored, and so existed until the general Dissolution;” but he gives no authority for the statement, which it is hard to reconcile with the character of the time. Whenever the abbey was erected, the old building, at that time, ceased to be a house of worship, and was adapted to the use of a dormitory.\* The discipline, too, of the community was changed, and the Canons, who had lived in separate cells through the town, began to dwell under the same roof; and the place, from being, in great part, an heremical establishment, became cenobitical. A similar change took place, about the same time, all over Ireland, owing to different causes—such as the example of Saint Malachy, the English Invasion, and the diffusion of the Carthusian Order; and in this way old establishments, founded by primitive Irish Saints, conformed to the spirit of the times by adopting such improvements in discipline as they observed in the new order, without, however, relinquishing their own independent existence and self-government.

It is right to give here a word of explanation with regard to a difficulty arising from the denomination of the townland on which the buildings, above described, stand. It is commonly called, by the inhabitants of the district, *Kilbolasley*, but is written in Erck’s Ecclesiastical Register (1830) “*Kilmollash, alias Killvolasley.*” An old man of

\* A somewhat similar change occurred in other places; as, for instance, at Cashel, of which Dr. Milner writes: “His cathedral, Cormac Cuillinan consecrated to God, in honour of Saint Patrick, A.D. 900. A much more spacious and elegant cathedral was added to this above two centuries later, being consecrated and a synod held in it, A.D. 1134, at which time the former church began to be used as a chapter-house.”—*Milner’s Inquiry into certain vulgar opinions concerning . . . the Antiquities of Ireland*, p. 130; London. In these times the Canons were obliged to sleep in one dormitory. We read, in a Commission of Primate Colton’s, addressed to the Abbot and the Convent of the Black Abbey, Derry, the following injunction:—“We ordain that thou and the Canons eat together in the common refectory, and sleep together in one dormitory.”—*Ulster Journal*, vol. 1, p. 237.



the neighbourhood, on being asked the meaning of the word *Killbolasly*, said, it signified the “church of the grey fort of the cow,” (from *kill*, a church; *las*, or *lis*, a fort; *ly*, or *ley*, grey; and *bo*, a cow); and that it alluded to some legend, associating the hill on which the old church was erected with a cow; but when pressed for his authority, he admitted there was none, and that the interpretation offered was altogether of his own invention. Erek’s version of the name points to another solution: “Killmolash” signifies the church of Molash; and as Saint Molaise (pronounced, at least in this county, Molash) lived in the neighbourhood, founded and governed a monastery at Aughriss, in Tireragh, and is said to be buried in Innismurry Island—places about half a-dozen miles each from Ballysadare, it looks as if one of the Ballysadare buildings was dedicated to that Saint, and thus occasioned the denomination of the townland. According to this view the two churches would have had different patron saints. From what has been already said, Saint Fechin was certainly the Patron of *Tempul Mor Fechin*; and if Erek’s version of the name of the townland be correct, Saint Molaise would seem to be the Patron of the other church. But if we regard Kilbolasley as a corruption of *Kilbolaisè*, the *l* in *ley*, coming from the second syllable *las* (a change very natural in spoken language), we shall, probably, have the true solution. Kilbolasley, then, like *Kilbolaisè*, (*Kil-bailè-easa*) would signify the *church of the town of the cataract, or fall*.\*

That the inmates of the “house of the Canons at Ballysadare” became Canons Regular of Saint Augustine, and the house passed under the rule of that Order, as some suppose, is doubtful, or rather improbable; for of the his-

\* This seems the correct explanation of the appellation. There is nothing in tradition or in Irish history to warrant the supposition that Saint Molaise left his name to the place. Erek is singular in the spelling of the word, and must have mistaken his original.

torians that treat of the Canons Regular, Lubin only sets down Ballysadare as belonging to them. Herrera, Torelli, Ware, Allemand, Lanigan, and others, exclude or omit it from the list of Augustinian houses ; and Lubin is notoriously so extravagant in what he writes of the Canons Regular in Ireland, that his statements carry little weight when unsupported by others. The more probable opinion then is, that the "house of the Canons" at Ballysadare, as the place is called in the annals of the country, belonged to secular canons, that is, to secular priests living in community, ruled by a superior, called *Prior*, joining at stated times in prayer and ecclesiastical offices, and performing missionary duty by themselves, or by vicars, or curates appointed by them.\* The livings of Ballysadare, Drumrat, Attymas, Kilnegarvan, and Killasser, belonged to the abbey. In them the Canons exercised the cure of souls ; and this is the reason why the incumbents of these places, under the rule of the late established church, were called vicars and not rectors, the rectory residing all the time in the venerable house of the Canons.

The tombstones of the graveyard attached to this church are all of more recent erection than one would expect in so old a cemetery, the place having served as burying-ground for about a thousand years. If there formerly existed others, and some of a more ornate character than any we now see, as there is good reason to suppose, considering the fine quarry of the locality, and the carving that is still visible on the old church and the abbey, these monuments may have been destroyed about the time of the change of religion, in the sixteenth century, as happened elsewhere, or may have been covered with earth ; the present level of the ground, both within and without the walls, being several feet above the old level. It is said that, when the Protestants took possession of the old church of Ballysadare,

\* It was so with all the older religious houses in Ireland.

the Catholics suspended interments there, burying their dead, for the time, in Kilnemonogh, Bille, Cloonmucduff, and other places; but, that they came back to this cemetery about the beginning of the eighteenth century, we learn from the tombstones, the dates of which range from the first decade of that century down to the present time.

The epitaphs on the monuments, with one or two exceptions, are sufficiently commonplace. Besides the poetic effusion (see *Lives of Parish Priests*) that is found on the vault of Father Wat Henry—there are one or two other inscriptions in verse. On the handsome sepulchral structure belonging to the Milmos—one of the oldest, as it is one of the most respected families of the parish of Ballysdare, though its representatives now live in Ballymote—we read the acrostic lines:—

May heaven rest the souls of those  
 In peaceful bliss who here repose;  
 Let angels come their souls to meet;  
 May heaven's queen with welcome greet;  
 On them may Jesus God of love  
 Serenely smile in realms above.

They fought the fight they gain'd the prize  
 On which on earth they kept their eyes;  
 May we like them when life is o'er  
 Be crown'd with bliss for evermore.

On the tomb of an old mariner, named John Benson, who died in 1808, aged 80 years, may be read this sprightly sally:—

Laborious blast on Neptune's waves has tossed me to and fro,  
 But spite of all, by God's decree, I harbour here below;  
 And now at anchor here I lie with many of our fleet  
 I hope to sail some day again our Saviour Christ to meet.

This was probably the composition of Benson himself who was what is commonly called a "character." It is told of him that such was the love of cleanliness he had

brought with him from the navy, that on a cow coming one day casually into his dwelling-house, and soiling the floor of the kitchen with her droppings, he took up an axe in a rage, and slew the peccant beast on the spot.

The oldest epitaph in the interior of the ruin is this:—  
 “Here lyeth the body of Will<sup>m</sup>. Thomson who dyd Dec 1708.” The next oldest is that of John Braxton, running thus:—“Here lyeth the body of John Braxton who parted this life 5th day of April 1729—80 years his age.” The oldest monument on the outside of church, and the oldest yet discovered in the parish, if we except Sir Albert Conyngham’s, is that of the Horans, which bears the inscription:—“Here lyeth the body of Green Horan, Edward Horan, Henery Horan, John Horan, and the rest of the children of Edmund Horan and Moad Connor, 1704.” Besides the Latin inscription on Father O’Connell’s tombstone (see his Life,) there is one other in Latin in the churchyard. It is on a stone in the plot of the late Charles Gilhooly, and runs as follows:—

An. Dom. MDCCLIII ult,  
 Kal. Feb. ætatis vero suæ  
 lxxvii obiit Thadeus  
 M<sup>c</sup> Mulrunisin - hic  
 tumulatus.  
 Ora pro eo. Req in pace  
 De Profundis.

## SECTION III.—SIR FREDERICK HAMILTON.

THE next grave event in the history of Ballysadare is the raid and ravages of Sir Frederick Hamilton. The memory of this monster is as odious in Ballysadare as that of Cromwell in Drogheda and Wexford. The period from 1641 to the Restoration, so prolific in men of "blood and iron," such as Cromwell, the two Cootes, Sir William Cole, Lord Inchiquin, etc., did not produce a heart more corrupt and sanguinary than that of this Sir Frederick. The "reduction" of Sligo, and one or two of the neighbouring counties, was committed by the Lords Justices, chiefly to the three furies, Sir Charles Coote, Sir William Cole, and Sir Frederick Hamilton. There is extant a kind of diary of Sir Frederick's doings, or rather misdoings, from October 1641 to the close of 1642, and from beginning to end it is only a sickening repetition of scenes of slaying, spoiling, burning, and wasting. His chief aim was to exterminate the O'Rorkes of Breffny, who had been the owners of the lands he occupied, and who struggled to recover their possessions; but while attending to this object he found time to visit every district, within twenty or thirty miles, that showed signs of national or religious spirit. The diary has no account of the attack on Ballysadare, nor is it detailed in any published history, so that we are left to tradition alone for our information on the subject. The date of the occurrence is not fixed, but it happened probably in some part of 1642, as Hamilton was very busy in the neighbourhood during that year. It was in 1642 he swooped down upon Sligo, burning a good part of the town, and filling its sewers with the blood of more than three hundred men, women, and children, put indiscriminately to the sword; and he would have proceeded to still greater extremities, had he not been called suddenly away to defend Manor-

hamilton castle, which was attacked by the O'Rorkes, for the double purpose of avenging their own wrongs, and of creating a diversion in favour of friends in Sligo. In regard to Ballysadare, the tradition is, that he fell on it when he was quite unexpected, and when there was no resistance; that he murdered all he met, without distinction of age or sex; that he pursued with the sword fever patients, who fled tottering away, covered with the blankets which they had snatched from the sick bed; and that he burned, or ruined in some other way, every house which the town contained. It is certain that Sir Frederick put an end to *old* Ballysadare. Of the town that had lasted for a thousand years—from the middle of the seventh to the middle of the seventeenth century—that had survived the less ruthless attacks of Dane and Norman, and that was venerable for so many associations of holiness and learning, not as much as one house was left habitable by this barbarian of bigotry, the most barbarous of all barbarians.

Though the foundations and other remains of edifices that are still traceable—extending through most of the valley that stretches from the river to the abbey, and covering a good part of the hills on either side—would of themselves prove the place to have been very considerable, it is pretty certain that the town was much more extensive than the present traces of it indicate. Indeed the traditions respecting the size, antiquity, and importance of Ballysadare, are so strong as to make one think that it is the site of the famous Nagnata, of which Ptolemy makes such special mention, calling it a “noble city,” *episemos polis*. About the situation of Nagnata there is great difference of opinion, some placing it in or near the city of Galway, some in the village of Mayo, others in Drumcliffe, and others in Sligo. But there is little probability in any of these opinions. To say nothing of other formidable objections against Galway and Mayo, they lie far to the



south west of the position assigned by Ptolemy to Nagnata ; as to Drumcliffe, it has no marks of having been a great city, at least in the first century ; while Sligo is much too modern a place to make good its claims to the distinction. But Ballysadare agrees well in geographical situation with Nagnata, of which Sir James Ware remarks :—“ Ptolemy calls this a noble city, and by the situation seems to point out *some place not far from Sligo.*” \*

And the probability derived from geographical position is greatly strengthened by the admitted antiquity and fame of Ballysadare, which is thus referred to by Lady Morgan :—“ The literal meaning of the word *Sligo* is the *town of the shells*, and the derivation of the epithet is traced by local history and oral tradition to the following curious origin. Many of the inhabitants of Esdara (now Ballysadare) a *flourishing and neighbouring town*, having been driven by civil dissensions from their native place, fled to the shore, and of the shells and pebbles, flung by the violence of the tide along the coast, erected a *number of huts which formed the infancy of Sligo.*” † Further proof for the historic past of Ballysadare may be drawn from the name of the hill, *Knockmildowney*, that rises over the fall, on the right bank of the river ; the name signifying “ the hill of the whirlpool of the Domnans ‡ or Firbolgs, thus associating the place with colonists that came to Ireland more than two thousand years ago. These arguments are not indeed conclusive on the subject, but it is confidently submitted that they are much stronger than any that have been alleged by writers who would identify other places with Ptolemy’s *επισημος πολις*.

\* Ware, by Harris, vol i, p. 42.

† *Patriotic Sketches*, vol i, p. 7.

‡ Joyce’s *Irish Names of Places*, p. 91.

## SECTION IV.—CONFLICT OF JACOBITES AND WILLIAMITES.

A SMART action was fought in Ballysadare during the siege of Sligo, in 1690, between the respective followers of William and James, commanded by Colonel Mitchelburne and Sir Teague O'Regan.

The occasion of Sir Teague's coming to Ballysadare was this. Mitchelburne meditated some surprise from that direction on Sligo, and invited the assistance of Colonel Ramsay, governor of Enniskillen, a very able and efficient officer. Ramsay answered the call, and moving at the head of five hundred men, part belonging to the militia and part to the line, came round through the lower part of Leitrim, and proceeded to Tireragh, pretending that the object in coming from the North was to procure a supply of cattle. But Teague was too "old" and experienced to be thrown thus easily off his guard, and knowing well it was no light matter which had brought Ramsay from the important post of Enniskillen, marched to Ballysadare, at the head of eighty horse and two hundred foot soldiers, to meet any attack that might be made from that quarter. If Ramsay, on return from Tireragh, expected to steal a march on Sligo, he was soon undeceived on reaching the bridge of Ballysadare, where the enemy was most advantageously posted to receive him. A conflict immediately ensued. They fought with great resolution on both sides; but after an hour's engagement, the Enniskilleners made no impression on the immovable array of the enemy, but on the contrary were themselves driven back from their first positions, and were retiring in disorder, when overwhelming reinforcements arrived.\* On their arrival the action was

\* The reinforcements, according to Harris, consisted of "a party of the militia under Sir Francis Hamilton, supported by a troop of Colonel Wynne's dragoons."—*Life of William III*, p. 330.

resumed. Sturdy Sir Teague still held the bridge, with a heart as fearless

“As his who kept the bridge so well  
In the brave days of old;”

but feeling the evils of further exposing his men without necessity, he directed them to fall back on Sligo, and conducted them in good order to the town.

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SECTION V.—SOCIAL STATE.

No event of public importance took place in Ballysadare during the eighteenth century.

Ireland improved greatly during the second half of the eighteenth century, and Ballysadare shared fully in the general prosperity. About the close of the century there were five mills in the place—three for grinding oats and one for making flour—and as many kilns. There were also several kilns in the neighbouring villages, as those in the town were unable to keep the mills agoing. There was a saltpan a little below Ballysadare, and another, to the east, at Streamstown. The town had a brewery, and a tanyard—the former on the left and the latter on the right bank of the river. There were three small mills for dressing frieze and flannel. At the same time the silver-and-lead mine was worked, and the grass land that now adjoins the town was in tillage—so that between tilling, milling, brewing, tanning, and saltmaking, there was brisk employment.

And linen-making gave occupation to considerable numbers. Thirty looms were constantly at work, and there was hardly a house in the town but had a spinning wheel or two. The woman, or mistress of the house, spun as well as the daughters; and spinning formed so large a part of the work of servant girls, that wages was usually

regulated by dexterity at the business. A shilling a cut, per quarter, was the proportion of wages to work, so that the girl that produced twelve cuts of yarn in the day was hired at twelve shillings a quarter.

Tobacco from America, and potteen from Teelin Hill, formed the staple of the trade. The leaf was made up into oblong parcels of about half a hundred-weight each, well wrapped and sewed in canvas covers, and thus taken away across horses' backs to convenient depots. There were no carts in those days, but by carefully packing and padding the tobacco in a sack, the contents were made to look, when on the horses' backs, like oats on the way to the mill or the market.

Indoors, there was "full and plenty of everything" in Ballysadare. Oatmeal stirabout was the ordinary breakfast; oatmeal bread was the staff of life, the great *piece de resistance* of the dinner, and with milk or butter or eggs, or all three together, as often happened, afforded a palatable and wholesome meal; flummery, an extract and decoction of meal seeds, served for supper; and, before going to bed, it was usual to fortify the stomach with a posset of groats, diluted with sweet milk when available, and seasoned with salt and sugar, according to means or taste. Several "mangers" killed a pig occasionally, and saved their own bacon; and on Sundays and Thursdays sat down at dinner with their families to a goodly piece of it, well garnished with white cabbage or greens, and served up on a large wooden platter. Those who were fond of fish could indulge the taste, for they might easily procure for two or three pence a fine trout, which would cost as many shillings at present, and purchase salmon in abundance for a penny or three halfpence a pound.

## SECTION VI.—THE CHOLERA.

THE most remarkable event that has ever occurred in new Ballysadare was the ravages of the cholera in 1832. No spot in the three kingdoms suffered so much from this terrible visitation. Bad, however, as was its true condition, the most exaggerated reports got abroad, and magnified the evil a hundred fold.

The first victim of cholera in Ballysadare was a stranger from Sligo, who had come to see a relative, and who died of the epidemic the second day of the visit. A respectable inhabitant, Mr. James McDonald, was the next person affected. The attack was so severe that the patient was already pronounced dead by the doctor, and ordered to be coffined, when he was saved from the horrid fate of being buried alive by the affection and energy of an intelligent and devoted wife. She refused to comply with the directions of the doctor and the entreaties of others, to give up what they called *the corpse*; and as the medical man retired in great indignation at the slight offered him, there was nothing for it except to take the case into her own hands. Having, accordingly, had a large pot of water warmed, she rubbed the already rigid limbs and arms of the sufferer, assisted by one or two charitable women in the devoted work; and after continuing for a couple of hours the friction and warm applications, she had the happiness of seeing her husband open his eyes and hearing him speak, and thus give hope of the recovery that had already begun, and that was complete in a few days.

With such an instructive case in the outset there should be little danger, one would think, of premature interment during the visitation, and still there are grounds for fearing that several persons were committed alive to the grave. This, at least, is what one is led to infer from a remarkable

instance: Mrs. Doyle took the disease, and after great suffering was believed to have expired. A messenger was sent off for a coffin to Collooney, on whose return the body was coffined and taken from the bed; there was difficulty in getting the corpse down from the second floor, as the stairs were narrow and tortuous, and while those who carried it struck it against the ballustrade and the wall, and made great noise in shouting their directions and wishes one to another, the lid was suddenly started from the coffin, and the poor wretch enclosed screamed. Of course, she was brought back to her room, and that person lives hale and active at the present moment. The visitation lasted for a fortnight, during which fifty-eight cases are said to have proved fatal in a population numbering, at the outbreak, five hundred and forty-six, but reduced, by departures from the town, to four hundred or something over. As many as could take themselves away fled in the beginning, but, later, there was no egress, and such persons as tried to escape were forced back by the inhabitants of the surrounding districts, who left nothing undone to keep their respective localities clear of the infection.

Meantime the people of Ballysadare seemed doomed to inevitable destruction, without leave to seek safety in flight, and without the prospect of any relief from without. All business was suspended; the mills were stopped; the shuttle and spinning wheels were abandoned; and for the hundreds of vehicles that used to pass daily through the street not as much as one was now to be seen. People lived constantly in their houses, and no one appeared outside except those who were engaged in removing the plague-stricken to the temporary hospital. One man fancied he had heard unearthly sounds; another, that he had seen portentous sights in the heavens; and all agreed in saying that a dark cloud hung over the devoted town—an opinion which derives probability from the well-known dependence of cholera on the electrical condition of the



atmosphere. In the midst of these evils, real as well as imaginary, and under this fearful strain on intellect and feelings, the chief, almost the "only strength and stay" of the people, under God, was the presence and services of their faithful clergy: Very Reverend Dean Durcan, Reverend James Henry, and, particularly, Reverend Michael Flynn, to whose charge Ballysadare district more especially belonged.

When the leading inhabitants fled Father Flynn hastened to the post of danger. Though lodging in Collooney, the priest spent most of his time in Ballysadare. It was a puzzle to all whether the good man took any sleep, for his cheery and sonorous voice was constantly heard in the streets and houses, solacing the sick, reassuring the timid, and comforting all. In this way Father Flynn proved a temporal, as well as a spiritual benefactor; and while smoothing the pillow of the sick and dying by surrounding it with the helps and consolations of religion, he toned and fortified the minds of such as were still free from the disease, and thus served to prevent Ballysadare from becoming that "habitation of the dead," so graphically described by Mr. Senior.\*

Dr. Courtenay, too, the medical man sent down by the Government, discharged his duty in a way that deserves the highest praise.

Speaking of the cholera at Ballysadare, it would be unfair to omit a passing tribute to the volunteer attendant on the infected, a kind and stout-hearted blacksmith, Billy Tighe. The priest and the doctor may have acted under a strong sense of professional duty, but the only pressure which this heroic man could feel was that of his own manly and Christian heart. Placing himself at the disposal of the clergyman and doctor, he carried out their

\* JOURNALS, CONVERSATIONS, and ESSAYS relating to Ireland, by Nassau William Senior, vol. ii. p. 35.

directions through the place—assisted such sick as had nobody else to look after them ; administered to them the prescribed medicine ; cleansed their persons and beds ; put them, sometimes single-handed, in the coffin ; and, like good Tobias, had on more than one occasion to rise at midnight to commit the dead to the grave. Praise as you will, and as he deserves, the hero of the battle field, but for the highest kind of Christian courage, for that which approaches nearest to the divine courage of the Cross—giving the life for the fellow-man—commend me to the faithful clergy of Ballysadare in the dread days of the cholera, and to their worthy fellow-labourers, the humane Dr. Courtenay and the brave Billy Tighe.

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SECTION VII.—SCENERY AND CAPABILITIES.

It will not be amiss to say a word or two here of the scenery and capabilities of the place. It would be hard to find a spot combining so largely the useful and the beautiful. If Horace's line—

“ Omne tulit punctum qui miscuit utile dulci—”

could be applied to localities as well as to authors, the eulogium would well suit Ballysadare. Like all the founders of primitive churches in this country, Saint Fechin exhibited consummate taste in the selection of a site for his religious foundation. Standing near the ruin over the fall, you have around you a prospect very extensive, and as varied as extended. Under you the river wends its way on to the bar, a distance of three or four miles, in bold and singularly graceful curves ; just the other side of the channel rises the stately and symmetrical Knocknarea, the Olympus of County Sligo, with the famous *Misgan Meidhbhe* on its summit ; in the distant background are several ranges of mountain, all converging towards

Knocknarea as a centre, and looking as if they were drawn up there in lines to keep watch and ward before *Misgan Meidhbhe*, the tomb or the cenotaph of the renowned Semiramis of Connaught; within these bounds there is great variety of landscape—the bold hills of Knockroe and Union, the timbered tracts of Union Wood and Tanrago, the well-fenced tillage farms of Coolerra, and the neat, white, and smiling cottages and offices of Lord Erne's tenants.

After all, the gem of the collection of objects before you is the Owenmore, from the bridge to the bay. You have not here, to be sure, the volume of water which the Shannon rolls from Athlone to the sea, nor the wooded banks that impart such ornament to the Blackwater, between Youghal and Cappoquin; but, notwithstanding those advantages in their favour, you will look in vain to either of those rivers for as many beauties, in the same length, as this part of the Owenmore discloses. A score of cataracts, rising in nearly measured gradation to the topmost; the diversified movements of the waters, now floating smoothly on the horizontal plane of some spacious ledge, again, playfully whirling in the numerous eddies of the stream; here rushing noisily and precipitately through gaps in the rocks, and there falling softly over a sloping cascade, like a covering of lace; the ascending vapour, glittering in the sun, and reflecting all the tints of the rainbow; the thousand sounds, arising from the multiplied action of the waters combining with the great bass of the waterfall and making a natural symphony; all those sights and sounds together form a picture and a scene which cannot be surpassed, at least in those countries. It is no wonder that travellers of taste greatly admire the view; and lest any one should take the above appreciation to be the worthless estimate of a local enthusiast, it will be of use to give here the judgments of one or two competent and disinterested critics. Arthur Young visited Ballysdare a century ago,

and wrote as follows at the time :—“ Went to Ballysadare, when I had great pleasure in viewing the falls ; the river breaks over rocks in the most romantic manner from edge to edge in many falls for the space of two hundred yards before it comes to the principal one, which is twelve or fourteen feet perpendicular ; the scenery about it is bold, the features of the mountains are great, and Knocknaree in full relief. If the falls were through a dark wood *the scenery would be among the finest in the world.*” Lady Morgan, when Miss Owenson, visited Longford House, the seat of Sir Malby Crofton, and lived most of the years 1806 and 1807 there, partly as governess, and partly, to use her own words, “ as a poor relation, in consideration of the credit she had become to the family.” She became well acquainted with the scenery and antiquities of the neighbourhood, and acknowledges herself indebted to them for some of the best things in her two early works—“ Patriotic Sketches ” and “ The Wild Irish Girl.” She passed often through Ballysadare, on the way to and from Sligo (where, by the way, she was near marrying one of the Everards, leading merchants of the town) ; and in the *Prefatory Address* to her “ Wild Irish Girl ” she gives the following highly complimentary description of the scenery and surroundings of Ballysadare :—“ Such are the picturesque views, caught and lost at intervals, along the road that passes directly through the village of Ballysadare : an old hamlet lying on the banks of a river, which has its source in the mountains, and forms, in its rapid course over a steep and unequal bed, a beautiful succession of waterfalls, which wear the singular appearance of an aquatic amphitheatre ; the rapid and repulsed stream breaking over rocks from point to point till it reaches the principal steep, which is upwards of fifteen feet perpendicular. These romantic cataracts when seen through the dark woods which once surrounded them, and with the full relief of Knocknaree in the rear, *must have ranked amongst the noblest scenic*

*features in the world.*" The artists, Messrs. Beranger and Bigari, in their *Tour through Connaught . . . in 1779*, write: "Viewed the cascade of Ballysadare, occasioned by several falls over rocks of the river Owenbeg; the principal one is about fifteen feet high, very perpendicular, and, with the rocks about it, affords *a most romantic sight*. We sat down almost fronting it, and enjoyed for some time *this charming scene*." \* It is needless to add other testimonies, which are at hand in abundance.

The business capabilities of Ballysadare are particularly favourable. Its situation on the great high road, by which most of the agricultural produce of Lower Connaught is brought to market, gives its merchants a great advantage. Nor is the place less adapted for the sale and delivery of the manufactured grain, there being peculiar facilities of sending it on by road or rail, either in the direction of Tireragh and Tyrawley, or in that of Upper Sligo and Roscommon. And if home consumption should leave a surplus to be exported there is water enough in the channel for vessels of moderate draught to take it out to the bay, and on to the English or Scotch markets.

But the most precious possession of Ballysadare is its superb water power—unsurpassed, probably unequalled in these kingdoms. At no time, however, was the quantity of water utilized equal, nor is it equal at present, to the quantity running uselessly to the sea. In the 1,000 yards or thereabouts lying between the bridge and the fall there are a dozen sites for mills or factories, and water enough and to spare for working them all. † All this water,

\* Beranger adds to his remarks on the cascade, the following, "On the bridge of Ballysadare we were shown a stone on which a beggar used to sit constantly, who, on receiving alms, used to bestow on the giver a blessing, which is become a famous toast, under the name of the *Beggar's benison*." Unfortunately there is no recollection in Ballysadare of this famous beggar or his benison.

† "*Letters on the Condition of the People of Ireland.*" By Thomas Campbell Foster, (the TIMES Commissioner).

however, did not prevent accidental fires, or render them innocuous when they occurred. To omit others it may be mentioned that Mr. M'Donnell's corn kilns and mill were burned to the ground in 1826 by a fire which is supposed to have been lighted for the purpose of drying malt by persons who entered the premises without the knowledge of Mr. M'Donnell. About 1840 Mr. Culbertson's new mill was burned down with immense quantities of oats and meal that it contained; and in 1856 an explosion took place in his flour mill—the largest and best appointed in Ireland—which blew off the roof with a stunning sound, shot sheets of flame in an instant through all parts of the building, destroyed vast stores of bread stuffs, and caused the loss of nine lives. It is supposed that this calamity was occasioned, in some way not discovered, by chemicals, which, it seems, were freely used for colouring the flour, and were kept under lock and key in a room of the mill. The person who had care of this department was absent in England at the time of the explosion.

The names of those who lost their lives on this occasion are, James Brennan, James Tighe, Mark Brown, John Connington, Edward Drummy, William Boyd, William Boyd, jun. (son of preceding), William Taylor, and William Smith. Those who suffered, but survived, are Edward Rochfort, Robert Mulvagh, John Brothers, Thomas Tiernan, James Carter, John Carroll, and John Johnston.

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SECTION VIII.—BALLYDREHID.

BETWEEN the town of Ballysadare and the north-eastern boundary of the parish lie the village and townland of BALLYDREHID, the place being so called from the bridge standing over the stream that runs from the *Curragh*, and divides the barony of Tirerrill from the barony of Carbury, and the parish of Ballysadare from that of Kilmacowen.



The denomination of Ballydrehid, which is at present confined to the south side of the stream, formerly designated a portion of the north side as well; for the castle, called the Castle of Ballydrehid, stood in a field which goes still by the name of the "castle field," and is in the parish of Kilmacowen. And we meet the same extension of the name in a grant made by James I, in the third year of his reign, to Sir John King, of various lands in the parish of Saint John, under the denominations of:—"The ruinous castle or fortress of Bealdrohide, Rathe, 1 qur., Leighcarrow,  $\frac{1}{2}$  qur., Carrowmore, 1 cartron, Carrowhill, 1 qur., Gobbatagh, 1 qur., Carguy, 1 qur.; out of every quarter of which was paid 13s. 4d. to Donogh O'Connor, Sligo; all being parcel of the estate of Bryan O'Connor of Bealdrohide slain in rebellion."

Anciently Ballydrehid was called *Drehid Martra*—the bridge of slaughter, or, the bridge of martyrdom—and we find the place under this name in Colgan's Life of Saint Cormac, as also in an old poem on the exploits of Raghallach, King of Connaught, in which the king's poet, Fintan, informs us that Drehid Martra was so called from a bloody defeat inflicted by Raghallach on Ninde, Prince and Lord of Tyrconnell, who had invaded Connaught:—

"The defeat of the flood we gave  
To Ninde and his shouting hosts;  
We changed the name of the cold cataract;\*  
From thenceforth it is called Martra."

The defeat of Ninde happened about the middle of the seventh century; and since that time, as well as then, Ballydrehid has been often the scene of blood and warfare, as one might expect, considering the situation and nature of the place. In 1495 a great battle was fought here between O'Donnell and O'Rorke on the one side, and the

\* *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Irish*, by E. O'Curry, vol. ii. p. 343.

O'Connors of Sligo, the M'Donoghs of Tirerrill [called the Clann Donogh], the Mac Dermotts, the O'Dowdas of Tireragh, the O'Garas of Coolavin, and other chieftains of Lower Connaught on the other. O'Donnell and O'Rorke were victorious; and many of their enemies, including members of the M'Donogh, O'Dowda, and O'Gara families were slain or drowned in the battle. After naming some distinguished individuals who fell on this occasion the Four Masters add:—"Besides these, many others of the nobles and plebeians of Connaught were slain, drowned, or taken prisoners in this defeat of Bel-an-Droichit."\*

In 1526 another, and a still greater battle took place at Ballydrehid between O'Donnell, with his partizans, and the chieftains of Lower Connaught, in which, as in that of 1495, the former were victorious, Melaghlin M'Donough being slain, and Brian O'Connor thrown from his horse in the *melee*, so that he owed his escape with life to the closeness and fastness of the wood by which the battle field was surrounded," according to the *Annals of the Four Masters*. And the same authority further observes:—"The Connacian army left great spoils of horses, arms, and armour to the Kinel-Connell on that occasion; and from the time that Hugh Roe, the son of Niall Garv, had gained the battle of Ceideach-droighneach over the Connacians, where many of them were slain, the Kinel-Connell had not given a defeat to the Connacians which redounded more to their triumph, or by which they obtained more spoils, than this defeat of Bel-an-droichit.†"

In 1536 we again find O'Donnell and the Connacian chiefs in conflict. This time O'Donnell was in such force that O'Connor and the allied chiefs, instead of giving battle, remained encamped in the strong position of Ballydrehid, while the Ulster prince ravaged all the neighbourhood of Sligo, and passed three nights destroying and

\* *Annals of Four Masters*, A.D. 1495.

† *Annals of Four Masters*, A.D. 1526.

burning "the country of the descendants of Brian O'Connor." After thus wasting the territory of his enemies; O'Donnell crossed the strand (apparently without passing through Ballydrehid and Ballysadare),\* marched along the foot of Slieve Gamh, (Ox Mountains), and took such spoils of cattle in the march that two beeves came to be sold in his camp for one *bonn*, or fourpenny piece.†

Though Ballydrehid had its share of the general excitement at the periods of 1641, of the English revolution, and of the French invasion in 1798, nothing special occurred in that place on these occasions. Great changes, however, have gradually happened in it since the time it used to receive the disagreeable visits of the martial O'Donnells. The castle that then existed has entirely disappeared; the wood, whose "closeness and fastness" favoured the escape of O'Connor Sligo, in 1526, has vanished, leaving hardly a twig behind; and the ownership of southern Ballydrehid passed, under the Acts of Settlement and Explanation, to Lord Bellamont and Edward Cooper, in two separate lots, the whole becoming the property of Mr. Cooper's descendant at the sale of Earl Bellamont's County Sligo estate in 1727. We are told that a family named Ferguson, that lived in Ballydrehid something more than a hundred years ago, owned a patch of the place, but having neglected to pay the Crown rents,

\* It was not unusual with the Northern Chieftains to lead their troops direct from Carbury to Streamstown by the shallows, now called "the flats."

I have reason to believe, says John O'Donovan, *Ulster Journal of Archæology*, p. 305, vol. 3, "that fords or *farsats* were still rendered more firmly fixed by the ancient Irish, who inserted heavy stones into them, to give them permanent fixity. In the Barony of Tyrawley, County Mayo, near Killala, and in the Barony of Tireragh," (should have been, Barony of Leyney) "near Ballysadare, County Sligo, there are bars, *forsats*, or sand-banks of this nature, which were of vast importance to the people, as they were enabled by them to cross tidal rivers, in certain states of the tide."

† *Annals of Four Masters*, A. D. 1536.

and having even assaulted the officers of the law who had come to distrain for payment, they had to give up the land, when they sold their title to the Mr. Cooper of the day. Towards the close of the last century a gentleman named Johnston occupied, under lease, the greater part of Ballydrehid, as well as two acres of Knockmuldowney, on which he built a salt pan, the ruins of which may still be seen a little to the west of Arthur Mullen's house. Before Mr. Johnston's time Ballydrehid was almost uninhabited, being merely a grazing run, but he settled on it seven families that he had taken with him from the County Leitrim to work the salt pan; and that, by the way, were, with one exception, all Protestants. Mr. Johnston's interest passed to Mr. Chambers of Cloverhill, whose son still holds the place under Mr. Cooper. In conclusion it may be remarked, that if this place got the old name from its bridge, it may well now receive a new one from its bridges and be called *the town of the bridges*; for the stream of the village is at present spanned not only by the famous old building, which still stands, but also by a fine metal structure, that connects the two parishes, at a height of thirty or forty feet above the surface of the water; while the high road is here crossed by a bridge of massive masonry that is unequalled, for size and solidity, in the whole length of the Midland Great Western Railway line.

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## CHAPTER II.

## COLLOONEY.

## SECTION I.—SITUATION AND NAME.

COLLOONEY must be always a place of some importance. Standing in the chief pass between Connaught and Ulster, it will hold on while there is intercourse between those regions. And apart from its suitability as a place of accommodation for travellers, the very picturesqueness and healthfulness of the situation could not fail to make it, and to keep it, the site of a village or little town. One should travel far to find so noble a prospect as it affords, including all the elements of the perfect landscape—woods, water, bold mountains, tranquil valleys, pretty cottages in the distance, venerable ruins, symmetrical tillage fields with luxuriant crops, and the greenest of pasture lands, dotted with flocks and herds. There is a profusion of mountain and hill visible—the Ox Mountain, starting just opposite Collooney, and stretching away to Croagh Patrick; Knocknarea, with its plump outline and its famous Miskan Meave perched on the summit; Union Rock, erect, like a sentinel, watching the gap of *Bearnas Hua Noillella*;\* Slieve-da-En, so famous in legend and

\* “And mountains, that like giants stand,

To sentinel enchanted land.”—Scott’s *Lady of the Lake*.

Though *Bearnas Hua Noillella* is here taken to be the valley that runs from Collooney to Ballysdare, in deference to the opinion of John O’Donovan, the writer is unable to acquiesce in that opinion; first, because this valley is not in the district of Tirerrill at all, but in that of Leyney, and, secondly, because this valley is not called, and never was called, a *gap* or *bearnas* by the inhabitants. The *Bearnas Hua Noillella*, or Gap of the Sons of Oillill, seems to be that which runs through the *Slieve-da-En* mountains, from Lough Gill to Ballintogher. This

history; Benbulbin, as fresh and majestic as when it witnessed the sports and the prowess of the renowned Conal Gulban, from whom it derives its name; and the Curlews and Keash, with those mysterious coves or caves, which have puzzled all our archæologists and antiquarians; while to the east rises ridge after ridge, like the billows of the ocean, till the extreme horizon is bounded by the distant ranges of Leitrim and Cavan.

The Owenmore, as seen from Collooney, offers some charming views. Coming slowly and gravely into the town; passing demurely by the beautiful glebe of Ard-cotton; leaping playfully, after it gets from under the vicar's eye, over two or three hundred yards of fantastic ledges, till it makes a splendid plunge, of twenty feet, at the fall, and throws up a cloud of glittering globules to hide its antics; then darting rapidly away to the east, in a bold and graceful curve, to pay respects to the ruins of M'Donogh's castle; and after receiving the waters of its tributary the Arrow, or Uncion, moving with a sense of new dignity majestically along under the overhanging trees of Union Wood, and like Galatea in the Eclogue,

“Et fugit ad salices et se cupit ante videri,”

coming out, now and again, from under the shade, to show itself to admirers before disappearing finally from view at Ballysadare, our river discloses, in a run of two miles, as many beauties as any other river in Ireland in the same length.\*

remarkable opening is always called “The Gap,” and is situated in Tirerrill, so that it is in reality the Gap of the Sons of Oíllill, and might, with the greatest propriety have been so named.

\* “The river Marne, meandering through Chalons and the finest parts of France, does not in the same distance embrace more charms than the Unshion does descending from Lough-arva and Hollybrook, by Cooper-hill, Mercury, and the Onion woods, till determined to die, as it lived, in pleasure, it expires in the beautiful cascade of Ballysadare, and there



In such a situation, and in the complete absence of marshes and swamps, it were to be expected that Collooney should be extremely salubrious; and, as a matter of fact, we have the authority of several distinguished physicians, and, among them, of the celebrated Dr. Higgins in the last century, and the late Dr. Carter, both intimately acquainted with the locality, that Collooney is the healthiest spot in the County Sligo. Precipitated by the waters of the Owenmore, or filtered by the leaves of the trees, whatever impurities may be in the atmosphere are destroyed before the air is inhaled. The Ox Mountains are supposed to contribute a large share to this healthfulness, by breaking the cutting winds of the north, and tempering the winter breeze of the Atlantic.

No epidemic can effect a lodgment in this favoured spot. In 1832 when Ballysadare was ravaged by the cholera, Collooney escaped unharmed. Though two strangers brought the disease into the village, and died of it, the evil ended there, as if the virus had lost its venom in the pure

mixes with the waters of the ocean."—*Statistical Survey of Sligo*, by Dr. M'Parlan, p. 7.

While mindful of the good old maxim, *De gustibus non est disputandum*, one cannot still help saying of this laudation of the Unshion, that it is *un peu trop*. The Doctor should have kept to statistics, for he had no great sense of the beautiful in scenery. The truth is, the Unshion is a rather common-place river, while treading its sluggish way on to Collooney, where, to be sure, it is inspired with a new life by the air of the place, and by contact with the dashing Owenmore; but the stream loses its individuality at the confluence, near M'Donogh's castle, so that the river between that point and Ballysadare is rightly called the Owenmore and not the Unshion, as Dr. M'Parlan and some others would have it.

The Doctor adds, "The house of Mercury stands in the centre of the demesne; it sees this river in a variety of pleasing views, and most of the woodlands it pervades. Mr. Cooper is about to modernize the approach; if judiciously laid out and continued through the Onion woods towards Ballysadare it could be made to exceed anything of the kind in Ireland." These alterations have been effected, and are a great improvement, as they give a magnificent drive from Markrea Castle, through rich and picturesque lands, on to Ballysadare, and, if one desire it, to Sligo.

air of the place. On the occasion of the second visitation of the calamity, in the year 1849, Collooney enjoyed a similar immunity, though there were several cases in Tubberscanavin and other parts of the neighbourhood. And fever can do no more ill than cholera. At times when the surrounding villages were festering with typhus, Collooney continued as healthy as ever. The sporadic cases that occurred in recent years can be clearly traced to bad lodging; for it must be admitted that the great drawback about the place is insufficient and insalubrious house accommodation.

The present writer would much rather praise than blame anything connected with Collooney, but he feels that to be silent on this great glaring defect would be to forget the interests of the honest and industrious poor, as well as the good name of the little town; for the want of decent lodging not only injures such poor by virtually banishing them, but also disgraces Collooney by attracting to it tramps and loafers, who are the reverse of nice as to how or where they herd, and rather affect tumble-down places.

The name, Collooney, never occurs in its present form in the old Irish or Latin annals of the country. *Cuilmaile* is the name by which the place is commonly designated in the Four Masters, in Dudley M'Firlis, and even in some annalists who wrote in English, such as O'Flaherty, in his *Chorographical description of West Connaught*; but why it was so called is not stated. *Cuilmaile* may signify the angle of Mael (a man of that name); it may mean the angle of the saint or holy person; or it may signify, and, most probably, does signify, the angle of the whirlpool, in reference to the town's situation at the confluence of the rivers Arrow or Uncion, and the Owenmore. We have a noted instance of this meaning of *maile* or *mael* in the well-known *Maelstrom* off the coast of Norway.

We find *Kulmunium* in O'Sullivan, and *Cuilmuine*, which is a corruption of *Cuilmaile*, twice or thrice in the

Four Masters, and it is evidently from Cuilmuine we have the present word Collooney. In the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries the place was often styled Cashell, and sometimes Killinbridge, at least in legal or public documents. \*

Nor does the Collooney of the present day occupy the site of the old town. The latter stood between the Owenmore and the Uncion, near M'Donoghs castle, the remains of which form the large mound, that one leaves to the left in passing over the bridge to Union Wood. There is in the Royal Irish Academy the trace of a map, drawn at the close of Elizabeth's reign, or in the beginning of that of James the First, in which "Cowlowney" is marked in the position indicated. There are two other maps in the same repository, in which "Cashell" is given in the place of Collooney; and in the map of the Down Survey, Cashell lies between "Clonmucdu" and "Rathrippon," the precise spot on which old Collooney lay. At the present day the neighbourhood of M'Donoghs castle is commonly called the "Castle," which is an anglicised form of Cashell, but it may be doubted whether this name comes from the castle mentioned in the Four Masters, as built in 1124, † or from M'Donoghs castle, built in 1408, ‡ or from some

\* Killinbridge is the name given in the *Census of 1659* as also in the *Hearthmoney Returns of 1662-3*.

† "Three castles were erected by the Connaughtmen—the castle of Dun-Leodhar, the castle of the Gaillimh, and the castle of Cuilmaeile."—*Four Masters*, sub anno 1124.

‡ In the *Annals of Ireland*, from the year 1443 to 1468, as translated by Dudley M'Firbis, we read, under the year 1467, that "the castle of Culmaly (called corruptly Cooluny) was taken by Cormac Ballagh M'Donnaghyes sons from the sept of Cormac M'Donnaghy."—*Irish Archæological Miscellany*, vol. 1, p. 262. The *Annals of the Four Masters* records the erection of this castle under the year 1408.

What a pity that the walls of this building do not survive to attest the former importance of Collooney? Two castles were built in this place—one by the Irish, before the arrival of the English, the other by the Irish also, but after the English invasion, and little or none of either now remains! Much of the castle of 1408 was pulled down and carted away

other structure older than either of those buildings. It is very probable that the entire district, which has been broken up into the sub-denominations of Cloonmacduff, "Castle," and Collooney, was all comprehended formerly under the name of Cuilmaile.

The first house that arose in the *present* Collooney was erected by Baron Collooney for himself, about 200 years ago, on an admirably selected site, adjoining the spot where Mr. George Allen's cottage stands, and where a portion of the baron's mansion is still to be seen. His Lordship had resided previously in M'Donoghs castle, which he was obliged to quit from its ruinous condition; and it is said that most of the stones that built the new house, were taken from the venerable pile of the M'Donoghs—an old trick of the Saxon, to build up his fortune with material appropriated from the Celt. But this is to anticipate, and as it is better to proceed in chronological order, we shall begin with the beginning, separating, however, civil and military from ecclesiastical events, and considering the former in the first place, then the others.

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#### SECTION II.—EARLIER CIVIL AND MILITARY EVENTS.

THE first allusion to this district in the annals of the country is contained in the work of the Four Masters, under the year of the world 3503, where we read—"The

to build Lord Bellamont's mansion in Collooney; and though some of the walls were still so high about fifty years ago as to serve for a ball-alley, they also were thrown down, and used as material for the bridge over the Uncia at Union Wood.

The following extract from Baron Finglas's *Breviate of Ireland* shows how few were the castles in Ireland before the Anglo-Norman invasion:—"Englishmen have grete advantage to get this londe (Ireland) now, which they had not at the conquest; for at that Tyme, ther was not in all Irelaund out of City's five Castles ne Piles, and now ther be five hundreth Castles and Piles."—Harris's *Hibernica*, p. 88.

second year of the reign of Eremhon over Ireland, the eruption of the three Unions of Hy-Oillella," which are certainly the three rivers—the Owenmore, the Owenbeg, and the Arrow or Uncion, which unite at Collooney, in their passage to the sea. It is true, John O'Donovan, in his edition of the *Four Masters*, observes in a note under this year—"There is no river bearing the name of Union at present in the barony;" but the eminent topographer was led into this error from want of local knowledge; for the Arrow is commonly called the Unsinagh or Unsign, by those who dwell on its banks, or in the neighbourhood.

The situation and surroundings of Collooney fit it for a battle field, and, accordingly, we find it to have been the scene of several hostile engagements. If we assume Cul Maine to be one of its names—and we have the high sanction of the late John O'Donovan, and of the first living authority, William M. Hennessy, for so doing—we learn from the *Chronicon Scotorum*, that a conflict took place in Collooney, in the year 673, of which however no details are given, except that "two sons of Maelachdain were slain" in the fight.\*

Under the year 844 we read, in the *Annals of the Four Masters*, of the "plundering of Cuil-moine by the fleet of the Cailli;" and it is probable that Collooney is the place here indicated. This is the opinion of John O'Donovan; and taking the opinion as well founded, Collooney must have been a place of some wealth in the ninth century to thus attract the rapacity of this party of Danes.†

An important engagement was fought at Collooney (Cuilmaile) or, as the *Annals of Loch Ke* have it, at the weir of Collooney, (*Caraidh-Cuilmaile*) in 1291, between Manus O'Connor, King of Connaught, and Cathal

\* *Chronicon Scotorum*, A.D. 673.

† O'Donovan's *Annals of Four Masters*, sub anno 844 (note).

O'Connor, with English and Irish auxiliaries on each side, in which Manus was, at first, defeated, many of his troops slain with the sword, and many drowned. He escaped with difficulty himself; but, receiving next day reinforcements from Roscommon, gave battle again and was victorious.

Passing over some intermediate occurrences, which are not of much moment or interest, a visit of Hugh O'Donnell to Collooney, in 1526, deserves to be recorded. At this time the O'Donnells claimed and exercised authority over Lower Connaught, as well as over Tirconnell or Donegal. O'Connor Sligo and the M'Donoghs submitted with great reluctance to this rule, and rose up against it as often as opportunity allowed. As Hugh O'Donnell had his hands full in 1526, there was a rising of the O'Connors and M'Donoghs; but the Northern chieftain lost no time in putting down and punishing the insurgents; and, as soon as he had brought recalcitrants in Donegal and Tyrawley to their senses, hastened to Collooney, at the head of an army. The local chieftains resisted as best they could; but the Northerners overwhelmed them, destroyed their corn and provisions, imposed hard conditions of peace, and took away hostages to secure the fulfilment of the stipulated terms.\*

There were stirring times in and around Collooney towards the close of the sixteenth century. Sir Richard Bingham, who was made Governor of Connaught in 1584, hearing that two thousand Scotch mercenaries had landed in Inishowen, and had already reached the Erne, on their way to aid the Burkes, hastened by forced marches to Sligo, which he reached on the 27th August, having passed on the way through Roscommon, Boyle, Ballinacfad and Collooney, and left troops in each of these places. Meantime the Scotch moved cautiously from Bundrowes to

\* *Annals of the Four Masters*, A.D. 1526.



Kilronan, where they remained for a fortnight, leaving Bingham uncertain and puzzled as to the route to Mayo which they intended to take, that by Collooney or the one by the Curlews. Learning from spies that the enemy had broken up their camp, and would probably reach Collooney on a day named, Bingham made dispositions to receive them. He divided his troops, stationing part in M'Donoghs castle, to watch the bridge and the Rathrippon road (then a thoroughfare), and took the rest with him to Knockmullen or Cartron, where there was, at that time, a castle. Here he remained out of doors, and on the alert, till ten o'clock at night, when he and the troops retired to rest. As a storm raged, and torrents of rain had fallen during the day, he concluded that the enemy would not, or, from the nature of the roads, could not, march that night, which was an error quite unworthy of so experienced a commander. Nothing could be more opportune for the Scotch than the storm; and under shelter of it, if one may so speak, they passed unmolested through the whole line of march, and on arriving at Collooney, found everything so favourable that some hundreds of them had crossed the bridge before intelligence of their presence reached M'Donoghs castle. The troops posted there, made what haste they could to the bridge, and, on arrival, left nothing undone to retrieve their negligence and to stop the enemy. A collision at such a place, between two considerable bodies of troops, would, under any circumstances, be a formidable encounter; but the horror was greatly aggravated, as the river over which they fought, and into which some were precipitated from time to time, was swollen and impetuous from the recent rains, and the atmosphere was pitch dark, so as to make it nearly impossible for the combatants to distinguish between friend and foe. The majority of the Scotch had passed to the Leyney side before Bingham came on the scene. He lay in bed when news was brought of the conflict, and in a minute buckled on his

harness, jumped into the saddle, and was, with his troops, rushing like a whirlwind along the old road leading from Cartron to Collooney. Unable, from the darkness, to survey the situation, he darted, with characteristic intrepidity, to the spot, which the cries of the combatants, the report of fire arms, and the clash of swords, indicated as the very middle of the *melee*. He came, however, too late to turn the tide of victory, and in a short time the Highlanders were safe on the north side of the river, large numbers of them having passed over by the ford at Knockbeg.

It was a disgrace to Bingham to leave so important a point as the ford unguarded, and to save him from the blame so richly deserved, friends gave out everywhere, and particularly in England, that this ford was unknown till discovered by the Scotch that night.\* Sir Richard marched

\* The following is Sir Henry Docwra's relation of those events:—"Att the Length, although Sir Richard kept the Passage straightlye upon the Scotch (ffor the watchinge of which he was driven to divide his companies) yett in an exceedinge fflowle Tempestuous and darke night, they deceyved him; ffor after he had Watched and waighted for their cominge till Ten of the Clocke at night (hearinge before night that they had removed their campe, and weare eyther goeing backe agayne, or comeinge towards him, he left to watche abroad any longer, and Bestowed himselfe and his companyes in places of succoure, which he did supposeinge thatt by reason of the abundance of raigne that ffell that eveninge, their longe Absence tyll that time of the night, and the words of Oconnor Sligo, which assured him that the said Scotts had encamped themselves agayne ffor that night. But shortly after this, when the Scotts, by reason of some espyalls of their owne, or some Trayterous intelligence, out of the Governour's campe, had understandinge that Sir Richard and his companye had reposed themselves to rest; stale Towards the bridge of Kilnowney, neare to which at a Castell nott far of, Sir Richard ffor the defence thereof had placed his ffootmen and ffiftie Irishe horsemen, and soe beinge come noislye to the Bridge Three or iiiier Hundred of them gote over the same, beffore the Englishe Horsemen came at them, whoe as soone as they came in, Beate the Scotts, and wanne the Bridge; But the Irishe Horsemen did noe servyce at all, when the Allarum was Sir Richard himselfe was at a place called Knockmilleyn, about a Myle ffrom the Bridge, beinge also another Passadge where it was thought the Scotts would have sooner passed over than at the Bridge. At this place the

after the enemy for a day, but took good care to avoid a collision, and to keep a safe distance in the rear; and, when he learned that they had reached Ardnaree, turned back, boiling over with rage and disappointment, but resolved to strike a second blow on some other spot, that might prove more propitious than Collooney ever showed itself to the foreigner.

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SECTION III.—O'DONNELL AND O'RORKE.

FIFTEEN years later, Collooney was the centre of important events. At that time M'Donogh's castle obeyed the Queen.\* From hatred of O'Donnell, rather than from any preference for the foreigner, O'Connor Sligo took the side of the Queen; and as the M'Donoghs, the immediate owners and occupiers of the fortress, acknowledged O'Connor as Lord Paramount, they held the castle for him and his friends. That chief had returned about this time from England, where he had kept hanging about the court for more than a year, urging sundry charges against O'Donnell, and promoting selfish objects at the expense of the country's interests. English statesmen, glad to find so useful an instrument ready to hand, sent him back to sow disunion among Irishmen, and to withdraw as many of them as possible from the

Bridge were the only straight and Passage that Sir Richard Knew the Scottes could find to pass over; but they contrarelye waded over at a floude not far from the Bridge, never before knowne by any of the cuntrye that had or would confesse the same to the Englishe. Sir Richard and the Horsemen, upon the Allarum, hasted with great speed to the Bridge, and roade over the same without damage, ffor the night was exceedinge darke and the bullets and Arrowes flew to and froe; yet he charged the Scotts and Kyllled and drowned about lxtie or ltie of them."—*Miscellany of the Celtic Society*, 1849, p. 206.

\* In the Report, presented by the Council of Ireland, to the Earl of Essex, in 1599, it is said: "In the county of Sligo, only the castle of Calony held for the Queen."—Moryson's *History*, vol. i, p. 76.

national cause. Coming over from England in the suite of the Earl of Essex, O'Connor proceeded to Connaught; and, having visited at Athlone Sir Conyers Clifford, the Governor of the province, advanced by rapid journeys to Collooney, reaching it in the month of July. O'Donnell no sooner heard of O'Connor's arrival in the castle than he ordered troops to surround it, and as the place was too strong to be taken by a *coup de main* he laid regular siege to it.

Intelligence of the siege and of the critical position of O'Connor was soon conveyed to Essex, who decided that arms, ammunition, and provisions, should be conveyed by sea from Galway to Sligo, under the command of Theobald na Long Burke, and that Sir Conyers Clifford should proceed by land with a large body of troops to the deliverance of O'Connor.

Meantime O'Donnell and his sturdy ally, Bryan Oge O'Rorke, were not idle. They placed troops in Sligo to receive Theobald na Long; they left a sufficient force in Collooney to guard the castle and carry on the siege; and instead of waiting the arrival of Clifford, they proceeded themselves to the Curlews to be beforehand in offering the compliments of the occasion. Clifford reached Boyle on the 15th of August, the Feast of the Assumption, and hearing that the Curlews were unguarded, resolved to pass them that very day. But Red Hugh and Bryan Oge were no such novices in the art of war as to leave the passage open to the enemy. On the contrary, they added great artificial obstacles to the natural difficulties of the place by felling trees and disposing of them in such a way along the pass, as to make it impracticable to the English cavalry. If this were the occasion it would be interesting to dwell on the stirring speech addressed, before the battle, by Red Hugh to his people, equal almost to anything we find in Thucydides or Livy—on the solemn spectacle presented by the whole army hearing Mass and receiving

Sacraments together—on the critical incidents of the contest—on the spirit with which Bryan Oge O'Rorke, to avenge the recent murder of his father\* in London by Elizabeth, dashed into the thick of the English ranks—on the self-sacrificing heroism of Sir Conyers Clifford, preferring death to the dishonour of turning the back on the foe; but, in an account of Collooney, it would be out of place to enter at length into the details of this battle; and it will be sufficient, under the circumstances, to add that the English were not only defeated but disgraced. Sir Conyers, who was a brave as well as an honourable man, was so enraged by the cowardice of his followers, that, though officers tried to force him off the ground, he tore away, and threw himself on the swords of the enemy rather than survive so inglorious a day. There was great jubilee that night in Collooney, for the inhabitants rejoiced exceedingly that the reproach of disaffection to country was taken away from among them, and that their town had proved once more disastrous to the aims and interests of the foreigner.†

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#### SECTION IV.—1641 AND 1691.

IN the upheaving of 1641, Collooney was tranquil. Bryan M'Donogh of the castle, and Patrick Plunket of Markrea or Rathgran, took a prominent part in promoting the movement, but as there was no opposition any nearer than

\* When O'Donnell urged O'Rorke to pursue O'Connor Don after the battle, "No," exclaimed the patriotic Bryan Oge, "I have no enemy, and I never will, but those Saxons, who were the murderers of my father."—*Memoirs of Charles O'Connor, etc.*, p. 118.

† The "conqueror (O'Donnell) conveyed O'Connor Don in triumph to Coloony, where O'Connor Sligo was besieged, and sent Clifford's head into the castle with a message, that if Coloony was not immediately surrendered, O'Connor Don's head should be sent in likewise. The castle of Coloony was, therefore, surrendered."—*Memoirs of Charles O'Connor, etc.*, p. 119.

Sligo, on the one side, or Templehouse on the other, the immediate neighbourhood was exempt at least from active military operations, and enjoyed comparative quiet. Bryan M'Donogh and Patrick Plunket received captain's commissions from the government of the confederation, and fought bravely in the cause of the Confederates.\*

Poor M'Donogh lost his life in the streets of Manorhamilton, while leading on Collooney men to an attack on Sir Frederick Hamilton's castle. Both paid dearly for devotion to the national cause; for it brought ruin on their posterity as well as on themselves; and since that time no M'Donogh or Plunket has ruled the picturesque slopes of Collooney, or the brown plains of Markrea. Richard Coote, third son of Sir Charles Coote, the elder, obtained the inheritance of the heirs of Bryan M'Donogh, and when raised to the Peerage in 1660, took the title of Baron Collooney. Markrea fell into the hands of Edward Cooper, a cornet in Sir Charles Coote's regiment of dragoons, and ancestor to the Coopers of Markrea Castle.

It is well known that before the country was parcelled out to Cromwell's soldiers and to the adventurers, courts of Inquisition were held to collect evidence against the old proprietors. Of course deponents in abundance were forthcoming to prove all that was wanted. Satan was not more ready to put in an appearance against Job than were men and women, without number, to bear any testimony that was needed; but when we bear in mind that much of

\* In the 14th year of James I, "Bryan M'Donogh of Coolevoney," received a grant of lands from that monarch, and by this grant, "All the lands of Coolevoney are created the manor of Coolevoney, with 200 acres in demesne; power is given to create tenures, to hold courts leet and baron; to have free warren and park; to enjoy all waifs and strays; to hold a Wednesday market at Coolevoney, and a fair there on St. James's day, and the day after, unless such days occur on Saturday and Sunday, in which case the fair is to be held on the Monday and Tuesday following, with a court of pie powder and the usual tolls."—*Patent Roll, James I, 14°.*



this evidence was unsworn; that it came from fierce, religious, political, and private enemies; that it was often the mere echo of hearsay and idle rumour; that it was taken frequently by commissioners who had themselves designs on the lands in question; that it was given behind the backs of the accused, when they were dead, or out of the country, or in prison; and that the Government of the day desired above all things to get rid of the old proprietors, we shall be prepared to find, what is certainly the case, that the depositions taken at the time throughout Ireland contain more falsehoods and perjuries than can be found in the records of any other proceedings that ever took place on this earth. Witnesses in plenty offered themselves in the County Sligo to swear away the properties of the O'Connors, O'Haras, O'Rorkes, M'Donoghs, and other chiefs; but as the narrative regards Collooney it will be enough at present to glance at the evidence against M'Donogh and Plunket. Jane Stewart, wife of Thomas Stewart, merchant of Sligo, deposed before Henry Jones and Henry Brereton—that “among those who robbed and despoiled herself and her husband of their ‘household goods, wares, merchandize, specialities, cattle, horses, plate, money, and other goods and chattels,’ was Captain Patrick Plunket, near Killooney; a Justice of the Peace.” Edward Braxton, of Sligo, testified before the same commissioners—that “Sligo was taken in November, 1641, by Captain Bryan M'Donogh and Captain Patrick Plunket.” Hugh Gaffney deposed, before Richard Coote—that “when Patrick Plunket was asked to escort a party of English to Boyle, he replied, ‘I will escort them to the gallows.’” These depositions cleared Collooney and Markrea for Richard Coote and Edward Cooper. Nor were Lord Collooney and Cornet Cooper the only new proprietors in the parish at the time. Indeed, the change of ownership that took place at this period was so sweeping as to make the term Plantation-parish, which is sometimes given to it,

an appropriate one for Ballysadare.\* We see this by comparing the list of old proprietors with that of the new, as they are both given in the Book of Distributions belonging to the Down Survey.† The following is the former :—

Kean O'Hara, Irish Protestant.  
 Edward Crofton, English Protestant.  
 The Bishop of Achonry.  
 Pat French, Irish Papist.  
 Errill O'Hara, Irish Papist.  
 John Bourke, Protestant.  
 Heirs of Bryne M'Donogh, Irish Papists.  
 Jasper Fallon, Irish Papist.  
 Patrick Plunket, Irish Papist.  
 Patrick French, Irish Papist.  
 O'Connor Sligo, Irish Papist.  
 Daniel M'Cahelroy, Irish Papist.  
 Dominick Martin, Irish Papist.  
 George Redcliffe, religion not given.

And the names on the second list are :—

Sir Edward Crofton, Protestant.  
 Lord Collooney, Protestant. ‡

\* Total of forfeited land in Leyney, part of Ballysadare parish, 2213A. 1R. 8P., whereof bishop's land, 1358A. 1R. 24P.—*Down Survey Map*, by William Morgan, 1657.

Total of forfeited land in Tirerrill, part of Ballysadare parish, 3057A. 0R. 0P. The total of forfeited land, in both parts of parish, 5270A. 1R. 8P.

† “Connaught, though held by men of ancient English descent, under patents from Queen Elizabeth and King James, had scarcely any English Protestants. In Sligo, there were not above one hundred and forty altogether, about as many in Mayo and Roscommon, and in Galway, of Protestants of estate and influence, there were not one thousand.”—JOHN P. PRENDERGAST in *Kilkenny Journal*, v. i, p. 398; giving for authority Carte's Ormond, v. i, p. 212. Carte, however, in the passage referred to, sets down the number of Protestants in Roscommon as about a thousand, or “a like number to that of Galway.”

‡ The grant to Richard Baron of Collooney, under the Acts of Settlement and Explanation, is dated 8th August, eighteenth year of Charles II, and was inrolled 21st January, 1666. The elder Sir Charles Coote was

Kean O'Hara, Protestant.

Edward Cooper, Protestant.

John Bourke, Protestant.

John Boswell, Mortgagee, Protestant.

The new settlers lived tranquil and secure on their estates till the year 1688, when they felt, or affected to feel, alarm at the signs of the times. The Protestants of the North had just formed County Associations for self-defence, as they alleged, and for "securing the Protestant religion, their lives, liberties, properties, and the peace of the kingdom, disturbed by Popish and illegal counsellors and their abettors;" and the Protestants of the County Sligo inaugurated a similar association on the 4th January, 1688, under the command of Lord Kingston and Captain Chidley Coote. Lord Bellamont and Mr. Arthur Cooper, son of the cornet, were leading members of this body, and formed garrisons, the former at his mansion of Collooney, and the latter at his castle of Markrea.\* This association rendered good service to William while it lasted, but it seems to have been virtually broken up in April, 1689, when Kingston, by command of Colonel Lundy, of Derry notoriety, led his associates from Sligo to Ballyshannon, and, a few days later, despatched them to Enniskillen, under Colonel Lloyd, where they formed a most important element in the famous garrison of that place.

appointed Vice-president of Connaught in May the 17th, 1620. In 1645, May 12th, Sir Charles Coote, the younger, was appointed President of Connaught. The same was appointed President for life, on March 28, 1661, under the title of Charles Earl of Mountrath.

\* "Garrisons were put into New-Town and Manor Hamilton to keep correspondence with Inniskillen, my Lord Bellimont's house at Killoona, Dr. Leslie's, and Mr. Cooper's at Mercury, was the frontier garrisons toward the Boyle and Ballymoat, to prevent the incursions of the Irish from those parts."—*Statement of Lord Kingston in M'Kenzie's Siege of Derry*, page 16.

Lord Kingston was the last Governor of Connaught. The patent appointing him is dated May the 5th, 1666.

Nothing worthy of mention occurred in the locality till September, 1691 ; but before passing on to that date it may be stated that, in the Act of Attainder, passed in the Parliament which James II held at Dublin in 1689, the names of Richard Coote, baron of Collooney ; Arthur Cooper, Markrea, gent. ; Richard Cooper, Markrea, gent. ; Stephen Wagget, of Cooluny, yeoman ; Thomas Crocar, of Cooluny, yeoman ; James Nipper, of Tubberaghoirn, gent. ; and Thomas Cashoe, of Ballysadare, gent., are on the list of the attainted.\*

\* As it will be interesting to many to see a full list of all those belonging to the county Sligo who were attainted at this time, the names are here copied from the Act of Attainder :—“ Arthur Cooper of Markrea, gent. ; Richard Cooper, of the same, gent. ; William Ormsby, of Court, gent. ; Francis King, of Ballysadare, gent. ; Charles Dodd, of Tyrillel, gent. ; Robert Foliot, of Doonderry, gent. ; Henry Hughs, and Thomas Hughs, of Crahane, gent. ; W. Harlowe, of Rathmullen ; Thomas Hart, of Ballinspor ; George Cooper, of Tyrillel, gent. ; Morgan Hart, of Ballinspor, gent. ; Robert Hart, of the same, gent. ; James Nipper, of Tobberaghoirne, gent. ; Richard Brookes, of Tullybég, gent. ; Doctor John Lesley, of Ballytogher, clerk ; Stephen Ormsby, of Castlelaghdaregin, gent. ; Roger Smith, of Knocknasamer, gent. ; Henry Nickleson, of Ballenegergine, gent. ; Roger Nickleson, of the same, gent. ; Adam Ormsby, of Comine, gent. ; Francis Ormsby, of Carnecrow, gent. ; Richard Smith, of Coolany, gent. ; Francis Gore, and William Gore, of Sligo, gent. ; Coote Ormsby, of Sligo, clerk ; Pearce Geating, of the same, esq. ; Philip Cox, of the same, gent. ; Humphrey Booth, of the same, esq. ; Humphrey Booth, junr., of the same, gent. ; Antony Colly, of Moyhgara, gent. ; Richard Phillips, of Sligo, gent. ; James Anthony Ely Soder, of Grange, gent. ; Jeremy Jones, of Ardnagless, esq. ; Lewis Jones, of the same, esq. ; John Urwing, of Tenregoe, gent. ; Alexander Urwing, of the same, gent. ; Thomas Griffith, of Bellingcharra, esq. ; Thomas Griffith, junr., of the same, gent. ; William Griffith, of Sligo, gent. ; Richard Nesson, of Grange, gent. ; Ensign William Story, of Rosse ; Thomas Osborne, near Sligo, gent. ; Henry Osborne, of the same, gent. ; Henry Griffin, of Sligo, gent. ; William Nickleson, of Ardtarmaine, gent. ; Charles Nickleson, of Lerrass, gent. ; Edward Hunter, of Ballyelly, gent. ; Richard Wood, of Lacca, esq. ; Edward Wood, of Court, esq. ; Stephen Wagget, of Cooluny, yeoman ; Thomas Crocar, of the same, yeoman ; Samuel Nickleson, of Castle Canure, gent. ; Roger Walton, of the same, tanner ; Michael Jones, of Leghane, clerk ; William Mortimer, of Tyrillel, gent. ; William Mortimer, junr., of the

On the 5th of September, 1691, an encounter took place at Collooney between the Williamites and the Jacobites, in which, as always happens in that place, the unpopular side came to the wall. At this date Sligo had been invested for some time by the partizans of the Prince of Orange, and as his friends desired to capture the town before the winter, they sent Sir Albert Conyngham from Galway to co-operate with Mitchelburn, who conducted the siege. Sir Albert was accompanied from Galway by the mysterious Balldearg O'Donnell. Numbers of Balldearg's men abandoned him on the road, and joined Colonel Con O'Rorke, who had belonged to the division of O'Donnell, and who not only left when that traitor changed sides, but also used every effort to induce others to follow his own patriotic example. Sir Albert reached Collooney on the 30th of August, being unaccompanied by O'Donnell, who, on the march, had struck off in the direction of Tireragh, to secure cattle for the subsistence of the troops. This we learn from the following interesting letter of Sir Albert's, which throws light on the state of things in Collooney and Sligo, and which is now published for the first time:—

FROM SIR ALBERT CONYNGHAM to BALLASIS, Galway.

“Culowny, 1st Sept., 1691.

“O'Donnell's regiment which was detached to stop provisions, has not yet joined my dragoons, which occasions so long halt here. Other we had been nearer Sligo by this time. The morrow, we expect they will join us, two miles nearer Sligo. And O'Donnell and we will march to a place, where we can encamp, with as much security as here . . . . . If there were English money to give deserters, the garrison of Sligo would be weakened soon. They are fond of silver rather than gould; for they believe all gould to be counterfeit, as do the country people here, and will sell nothing for guineas. There are 16 guns mounted in the fort

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same, gent.; Thomas Cashoe of Ballysadarra, gent.; Thomas Burne, of Castle Canure, tanner; Arthur Gore, of Sligo, gent.; John Palmer, of Knockmullin, gent.; and Thomas Ormsby, of Comin, gent.—King's *State of the Protestants of Ireland*. Appendix, p. 16.

of Sligo, and there are between 40 and 50 barrels of gunpowder and only 13 barrells of musket ball, tho' the gunner, who deserted, says they have good store of cannon ball."

"A. CONYNGHAM." \*

Such was the state of affairs in Collooney on the 4th September. Sir Teague O'Regan, and Colonel Edward Scott, the first and second in command at Sligo, were very efficient officers, and knew well how matters stood in the neighbourhood. They had heard that Sir Albert Conyngham and Baldearg had come to attack Sligo; and learning, perhaps from O'Donnell himself, the double dyed traitor, that he had separated, for the moment, from Conyngham, they resolved to strike a blow before the two commanders could combine their forces. A *sortie en force* was organized that night in Sligo, and before daybreak on the morning of the 5th seven hundred picked men were on their way to Collooney, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Scott; and, almost before their approach was noticed they had advanced, under cover of a friendly fog, into the middle of Sir Albert's tents, which lay here and there in all directions between the two Knockbegs. There was little or no organized resistance. Sir Albert was asleep in his tent when the Irish arrived; and having got out he was hindered, partly by the confusion that prevailed, and partly by the ungovernable fury of his own horse, from going into the saddle. While trying to mount, he was recognized by an Irish halberdier, who at once transpierced him, on a spot still pointed out, observing when he made the thrust, "Halbert is your name, and by a halbert you shall die." After Conyngham's fall it was a regular *suave qui peut* with the dragoons. In the effort to save life they abandoned everything—tents, arms, and ammunition, to the enemy. The fugitives made what haste they could to Boyle; and

\* Clarke's *Correspondence*, being a manuscript preserved in the library of Trinity College, Dublin.



the following official letter or report, written by an officer from that town on the evening of the misfortune, gives a vivid idea of what happened, and of the demoralization that ensued :—

From H. GEORGES to Colonel LLOYD, Governor of Athlone.

“Boyle, Sept. 5.

“We have been attackt at Killoon by a strong party of firelocks, and been unfortunately taken at a great disadvantage, for in the morning was so great a ffog that they were amongst our tents before we were any way prepared; and it being a country full of ditches and bogs, our men, when mounted, could do no good, so that we were forced to retreat to this place and leave all our tents and all our other luggage behind, and what was our greatest loss, our colonel, poor Sir Albert, as he was mounting, his horse was unruly and broke away, and in spite of what we could doe was made prisoner, and was carried off. We are in an ill case as you can imagine, for our men have not a tent or cloak amongst them, and neiter they nor us anything but what is on our backs, and here we are surrounded and know not what to doe till we hear from you,

“I am, dear Colonel, yours,

“H. GEORGES.”

Sir Albert was buried in the old church at Mr. Sims' mills, which was used at the time of the affair at Knockbeg as a place of Protestant worship. His son, Major-General Henry Conyngham, erected over him, a handsome mural monument of marble, which was transferred afterwards to the new Protestant church, and which still forms a conspicuous object in that edifice. It bears the following inscription :—

M. S.

Alberti Conyngham equitis aurati,

Armamentarii regii,

Sub montis Alexandrini comite præfecti,

Vixerat aurei ingenii et industriæ agilis

Probitatis eximiæ, urbanitatis summæ,

Et inter generosos, non togatos,

Eruditionis & doctrinæ plus quam vulgaris,

In gloriosa rerum conversione sub invictissimo Arau-  
sienense,

Religionis afflictæ et libertatis casum miseratus,  
 Propriis sumptibus dimacharum legionem conscripsit,  
 Quot, tribunus militum, pericula fortiter adivit  
 Quam improvisa morte quam patria,  
 Tribulibus et bonis omnibus luctuosa oppetivit  
 Haud te viator, nec seram posteritatem latere potest  
 Pro patria cecidit in villa hujus vicina,  
 5°. die Septembris, A.D. 1691,  
 Monumentum hoc posuit Henric Conyngham,  
 Legionarcha, Major General, maximus ejus natus,  
 Nunc unicus filius.

Idem Henricus, Alberti filius,  
 Sereniss. Annæ Angliæ Reginæ copiarum in  
 Hispanias missarum præfectus sub Petriburgensi  
 Comite duce, cum parva manu, nimirum 1150, Britan-  
 norum et Belgarum, 5000 Gallorum, post grave  
 prælium, in fugam vertit prope Leridam in  
 Aragoniæ Regno :  
 Ille in glorioso isto prælio vulner  
 ratus mortem obiit postriduo  
 Nempe 10°. die Januarii,  
 Anno Dom. 1705-6.

The reader has now under the eye a faithful narrative of what happened at Collooney in 1691, as drawn from the most authentic sources ; but to give an idea of how history is sometimes written, it may not be amiss to mention the version of the transaction which we find in Lodge and Archdall, writers who are regarded as superior authorities on the subjects of which they treat. "At the siege of Limerick," they write, "Sir Albert was ordered with his men, to join the forces intended for the reduction of Sligo ; but staying in the camp to receive some necessary orders, he followed, accompanied only with ten men as a guard, crossed the Shannon at Athlone, and marching through the mountainy country near Boyle, in a thick fog he mistook his way and, near Coloony, in County of Sligo, fell into the

hands of 200 or 300 Rapparees, who immediately attacked them. Sir Albert made a resolute defence, and killed 25 of the banditti; but being at length overpowered by numbers, he and his men fell a sacrifice to these lawless insurgents, within the hearing of Balderog O'Donnell, who came up with his party. He however arrived too late to rescue a brave and worthy officer." There is hardly one of the many assertions crowded into this paragraph that must not have been a deliberate falsehood. It was not from Limerick Sir Albert started, but from Castlebar; he did not cross the Shannon at Athlone or elsewhere; he did not march near the mountains any more than the plains of Boyle; instead of mistaking the way in a fog he lay composedly in his tent, surrounded by dragoons; and as to the twenty five banditti that the colonel killed in his resolute defence, they were about as real as the man in the moon.

The Cootes abandoned Collooney in 1727. On leaving they sold Collooney, *alias* Cashel, and several other denominations of land in the County Sligo to Joshua Cooper of Markrea. The indenture of sale bears date the 5th of June, 1727, and is quadripartite:—between Earl Bellamont, first part; Reverend John Pelling, D.D., one of his Majesty's Canons of Windsor, second part; Arthur French, Dublin, third part; and Joshua Cooper, Marera, fourth part. The purchase-money was £16,945 5s. 6d. From that time the Coopers have owned all Collooney, with the exception of the spot on which the Methodist chapel now stands, which was sold as a barrack plot on the 21st of March, 1729, for £60, by an indenture between Lord Bellamont and Joshua Cooper, on one part, and the trustees of barracks, on the other part. The Government sold this plot by auction some years ago, when it was secured, very spiritedly, for his co-religionists, by Alderman Williams of Sligo.

## SECTION V.—BATTLE OF CARRICKNAGAT.

NOTHING material happened in or near Collooney from 1727 till the 5th of September, 1798, when the battle of Collooney, or, as it is locally called, the battle of Carricknagat, was fought between the French and British. Three French frigates, containing one thousand and twenty troops cast anchor in the bay of Killala, on Wednesday the 22nd of August; and, on the evening of the same day, a portion of this force disembarked and took possession of the town, after some opposition on the part of its little garrison.

After having remained in the West longer, perhaps, than he ought, Humbert set out from Castlebar early on the morning of the 4th of September, at the head of his army, having sent orders to the garrisons of Ballina and Killala to join the troops on the march. About eleven o'clock on the morning of the 5th the vanguard reached Collooney, preceded by two equestrian figures that attracted the attention of the spectators, and contrasted strongly with each other. One was a dejected old man, who seemed quite indifferent to the circumstances in which he was placed, and startled those near, by exclaiming, from time to time, "My son!" The horse he rode was a contemptible nag, with mane and tail cropped to the skin; a wad of straw served for a saddle; and the bridle was a straw rope tied grotesquely round the animal's head. The rider of this jade was Mr. Knott of the Sligo yeomen, and his lamentation was for a son, whom he had just seen slain in Tubbercurry. The two Knotts, father and son, were together in the street, when a messenger or pioneer of the French came suddenly into the town, but the stranger had scarcely appeared when he was shot dead by the younger Knott. The youth soon paid the penalty of this forward-

ness, being shot in retaliation on the instant. And the father, for the part he had, or was supposed to have had, in the son's act, was treated with great indignity, and paraded through the country in the way described: a proceeding which redounds little to the credit of the French.

Lieutenant Knott's travelling companion was a French amazon, armed cap-a-pie, and seated on a magnificent and superbly caparisoned charger. Two richly-mounted pistols shone in the housing of her saddle; in her hand she carried a glittering sword, which she brandished from time to time; and from under her helmet streamed over her shoulders, down to the horse's back, a profusion of jet black hair, that excited the wonder of the spectators, and gave some a superstitious idea of her prowess. Such a sight, and the song sung by the Irish recruits, could not fail to impress the imagination:—

“ Erin's sons, be not faint-hearted,  
 Welcome, sing, then, Ca, Ira,  
 From Killala we are marching  
 To the tune of Vive la.  
     Vive la, united heroes,  
     Triumphant always may we be,  
     Vive la, our gallant brethren,  
     They are come to set us free.\*

When the head of the French column had crossed the bridge of Collooney the general ordered a halt for breakfast. The word was at once passed along the line, which stretched several miles back; and the soldiers instantly quitted the ranks, stacked arms, kindled fires on the road and in the adjoining fields, and, in a few minutes, were as engrossed in making soups, roasting fowls, and dressing vegetables, as if cooking formed the chief business of their lives.

Meantime a movement was in progress on the road

\* Sir Richard Musgrave's *Rebellions in Ireland*. Second Edition. Appendix, p. 76.

below Ballysadare, which was destined to spoil their meal on the French. Colonel Vereker, of the Limerick militia, was in garrison with his regiment in Sligo, and hearing that the French were coming that way, resolved, like a brave and able man as he was, to go out and meet them. Having set himself at the head of about three hundred of the Limerick City militia, a troop of the 24th Light Dragoons, twenty of the Essex Fencibles, and a number not specified of mounted yeomen and yeomen infantry, he was already in full march when the French began to prepare their refreshments. It was at Carricknagat the Colonel resolved to make a stand.

Having reached the ground Vereker despatched one hundred men under Major Ormsby to occupy the slopes to the right. The dragoons he stationed on the public road, and, behind them, but much nearer to Ballysadare, the cavalry yeomen. The main body of troops he disposed very skilfully, so as to have them covered by the inequalities of the ground, and by a high stone wall, that ran at right angles from the road to the river. One of the two cannon brought from Sligo was placed near the river, and the other on a small hill to the west, in a position to command the whole line of road to Collooney.

If the road lay in 1798 where it lies now, and if the stone and mortar walls, some of them of formidable height and strength, that at present cut up and intersect the place in all directions, had then existed, it would have taxed the French to the utmost to capture the position of their antagonists.

It was Vereker that began the battle. That able officer seems to have completed arrangements before the enemy was aware of his presence. A man named Michael More Gildea, an inhabitant of Coney, happened that day to be on the Ox Mountains, and descrying, on the Sligo road, the glittering bayonets of Vereker's troops, hastened to Collooney to inform Humbert of the danger; and the story



runs, that Gildea was still talking to the General when the same news was announced by a discharge of Vereker's cannon, which was near doing great damage, as the balls fell on a spot in Rinn where several groups of the French were sitting about engaged in breakfast. The alarm was sounded; and French and auxiliaries came trooping round their commanders, from Rinn, from Collooney, from the "Castle," where some had gone to eat apples in the orchards, all quite resolved to punish the enemy for taking them so unceremoniously from breakfast.

At first both sides observed great caution, as each overestimated the numbers of the opposing force; Humbert thinking he had to do with the army of Lake; Vereker supposing that the entire French force was on the field. The British kept strictly on the defensive, but used their muskets and cannon very vigorously. It was remarked, that the cannon on the hill, which was managed by a gunner named Whitters, was handled very effectively, and that it did great harm to the French. Humbert, in accordance with the advice of persons acquainted with the locality, ordered a column of troops to cross the river at Knockbeg; to proceed through Ardotton to Beal Ban, near the summit of the mountain; and, swooping down, to take the enemy in flank. A second column he moved forward by the left edge of the battle field, bidding them advance slowly, so as to give time to the others to reach the mountain, and co-operate in the attack. This body proceeded very slowly, not only because such was their orders, but also to avoid Whitter's cannon, which proved very destructive when they exposed themselves.

It soon appeared to be a matter of importance to silence this gun, and with that object several Frenchmen took deliberate aim at Whitters, but without hitting, or even disconcerting the formidable gunner. Under those circumstances Humbert's aide-de-camp, Bartholomew Teeling,

performed a feat unsurpassed for its daring nature, and for the heroism with which it was accomplished.

Little more than twenty years of age, tall, handsome—a very Mars in military bearing—Teeling was the most conspicuous figure on the field as he dashed about on a “gallant grey” with the orders of the general. This chivalrous soul chafed with indignation and impatience on observing the faltering of some in presence of Whitter’s cannon, and resolved to remove the cause of their anxiety or perish in the attempt. Accordingly he struck away towards the centre of the open field, and, setting spurs to horse, galloped straight to the mouth of the gun. There was a solemn pause, and every eye in the two armies was upon the horseman as he pulled up the fiery grey. On the moment, Teeling raised his pistol as coolly as if on parade, took steady aim, and shot the formidable Whitters dead behind the cannon. In the twinkling of an eye the intrepid youth was returning, and though hundreds of muskets were discharged, he and his horse, as if spirit and not matter, passed through the shower of bullets unharmed back to the French, who received the hero with a shout of enthusiastic welcome, like that with which the Romans of old greeted Horatius when swimming to land, after saving Rome by the defence of the Milvian bridge.\*

This was the turning point of the battle. The troops despatched from Knockbeg had reached Beal Ban and

\* No sound of joy or sorrow  
Was heard from either bank;  
But friends and foes in dumb surprise,  
With parted lips and straining eyes,  
Stood gazing where he sank;  
And when above the surges  
They saw his crest appear,  
*All Rome sent forth a rapturous cry,*  
*And even the ranks of Tuscany*  
*Could scarce forbear to cheer.*

Macaulay’s *Lays of Ancient Rome*; *Horatius*, stanza lx.

were already rushing down on the British flank. The other column was advancing at a rapid pace against the front. There was no safety for Vereker from this double danger except in retreat; and as the Ballysadare road was no longer practicable, he ordered his men to cross the river and make for Sligo. They broke off in disorder, abandoning their cannon, and on getting out of Union Wood, scattered over the country, each taking the path that pleased him best. The French dashed after them into the river, and followed for some distance, but on reaching Springfield, and seeing the mountains and morasses in the way, gave up the pursuit, and hastened back to Carricknagat. The yeomen and dragoons must have been near Sligo when the order for retreat was given; for they had hardly seen the French uniform appearing on the heights when, without drawing a sword or firing a shot, they turned their horses' heads, and scampered as fast as they could to Sligo.

Humbert, still in doubt as to the numbers opposed, and convinced, if those he had defeated were only the vanguard of an army, that he would soon be attacked by the main body, arranged his men in order of battle as they returned from the pursuit or came up from the Tubbercurry road. They remained some time in this position, but when he learned that Colonel Vereker's troops were an independent body, and that no other British force was in the neighbourhood, he gave orders for a march. Before leaving, Humbert released Mr. Knott and some other prisoners who were placed under guard near the Protestant church of Collooney while the battle was going on; and he also buried the dead, leaving under the care of a French surgeon eighteen men, who were too seriously wounded to be removed. The British official reports state that twenty-eight were slain on the side of the French (not including Irish), and great numbers wounded; while Colonel Vereker sets his own loss down as seven killed, among whom was

one officer, Lieutenant Rumley, and twenty-two wounded, including himself and four officers. These returns hardly tell the whole truth.

Both sides acquitted themselves at Carricknagat with great credit. The French praised Colonel Vereker as the only officer worthy of the name that they had met in Ireland. The Government rewarded his services by raising him to the peerage, as Lord Gort. The Corporation of Limerick, elated by the news of the battle, held a meeting on the 8th of October; passed resolutions of thanks to Colonel Vereker and his troops; voted for presentation to them a medal, bearing on the obverse the arms of Limerick, and on the reverse, the legend—"To the heroes of Collooney;" named a leading street of their city, "Collooney Street;" and inscribed in the Council Book a letter of Colonel Vereker's, which furnished them with a detailed account of the engagement.\*

In this battle the French displayed the courage and dash for which they were famous over the world; and the raw Irish recruits, who a fortnight previous had, perhaps, never handled a gun nor seen one discharged, bore fire in a way not unworthy of the bronzed veterans by whose side they stood. The campaign, that opened at Killala and closed at Ballinamuck, whatever else it may show, establishes two facts on which Irishmen may think with complacency and pride; first, that the insurgents exhibited an absence of personal, political, and sectarian animosity, perfectly unparalleled in movements of the kind; "not a drop of blood being shed," to use the words of the Protestant bishop of Killala, "during the whole time of this civil commotion, by the Connaught rebels, except in the field of war;" and, secondly, that they displayed on all occasions the highest military qualities and virtues—courage, discipline, obedience, and contempt of death;

\* *Kilkenny Archaeological Journal*, vol. xii.

“running upon death,” says the same authority, “with as little appearance of reflexion or concern as if they were hastening to a show.” \*

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SECTION VI.—NOTEWORTHY HOUSES.

BEFORE quitting this part of the subject, a word or two on a few noteworthy houses of Collooney will not be out of place. In the house, now occupied by Dominick Brennan, resided, a century ago, Dr. Higgins, the most distinguished physician of Connaught, or, perhaps, of Ireland, in his day.

Major Leech, the famous patron and promoter of rifle

\* Dr. Stock's *Narrative of what passed at Killala*. London, 1800; p. 147.

Another extract or two from this able and impartial production will not be uninteresting: “To do them justice, the peasantry never appeared to want animal courage; for they flocked together to meet danger whenever it was expected. Had it pleased heaven to be as liberal to them of brains as of hands it is not easy to say to what length of mischief they might have proceeded; but they were all along unprovided with leaders of any ability;” p. 127.

Speaking of “a party of the king's army,” the good bishop writes: “A train of fire too clearly distinguished their line of march, flaming up from the houses of unfortunate peasants;” p. 135.

And describing what occurred *after the defeat* of the insurgents, Dr. Stock says: “A considerable number was cut down in the streets, and the fugitives were swept away by scores, a cannon being placed on the opposite side of the bay, which did great execution;” p. 150-1.

“Nor was it till the close of the next day that our ears were relieved from the horrid sound of muskets, discharged every minute *at flying and powerless rebels* ;” p. 153.

Again this fearless writer observes: “The regiments seemed to think they had a right to take the property they had been the means of preserving, and to use it as their own. Their rapacity differed in no respect from that of the rebels, except that they seized upon things with somewhat less of ceremony or excuse, and that his Majesty's soldiers were incomparably superior to the Irish traitors in dexterity at stealing;” p. 163.

shooting by Irishmen, inhabited the house held at present by Miss Kerr for the few years that he acted as agent to the late Mr. Cooper. The major was esteemed and respected in Collooney; and if he forfeited some popularity by the rise of rent on the Markrea estate that occurred under his agency, people continued to admire him for his urbanity, his sympathy with the suffering, his warm interest in the Markrea tenantry, and the honest, even hand with which, as well in the rent office as out of it, this humane and high-minded gentleman held the balance between Catholic and Protestant; a virtue that is said to have been rather the exception than the rule on County Sligo estates.

The spot on which the police barrack stands is the birth-place of the late Alderman Farrell, of Dublin, who leaving Collooney in search of fortune when already a grown up man, rose to fill the office of Lord Mayor of the capital, and to reflect on the office as much honour as it conferred.

More than forty years ago Mr. Pat Quinn lived in a house, that stood between the dwellings of Pat Barret and Dominick Brennan, but which has recently disappeared. Mr. Quinn was married and had one child when he resolved to emigrate to America, though having little capital to take there, except that which Fergus Farrell brought to Dublin, enterprise, virtue, and ability. Providence has blessed Mr. Quinn; for he is now one of the most respected citizens of the important city of Rochester, New York, enjoying all the private and official honours that his fellow citizens can confer. Alderman Quinn in Rochester, and Alderman Farrell in Dublin, afford evidence that Collooney talent will assert itself under all conditions.

Prior to quitting this country for America, Dr. Sweeny, late of Mott Street, New York, lived in the house now rented by John Whitesides, and was remarkable for skill as a physician, and gratuitous professional services to the poor. The doctor's emigration was greatly regretted



by the clergy and laity, for they felt they thus lost not only an able doctor, but a cordial and loyal friend. This excellent man died full of years and honours in the year 1873, with the love of the parish of Ballysadare as fresh at heart, after fifty years' residence in America, as it was on the day he departed from Collooney. It is gratifying to know that the deceased left a son, a doctor too, that is well able to support and augment the professional and social honours bequeathed by his worthy father.

In the house of Alexander Munro was born Sir John Benson, who came of a talented family, and was first cousin of the late Rev. Charles Benson, rector of Shinrone, and of Doctor Benson, ex-president of the College of Surgeons, both natives of Collooney. Sir John was a man of undoubted ability; and though without the advantage of that long and laborious training, which engineers and architects usually pass through, he soon shot ahead of competitors by sheer force of mind. A prize having been offered in 1850 for a design of the Exhibition building, about to be erected in Dublin, Sir John carried off the honour, though the architects of England, Scotland, and other countries were invited to compete, and many of the ablest of them did compete. It was on this occasion the Queen conferred on Mr. Benson the honour of knighthood, to mark her sense of his eminent talents. After a brilliant career, both as architect and engineer, Sir John died in 1874, at Brompton, London, and was buried there, much to the regret of the inhabitants of Collooney, who expected the honour of having their distinguished townsman's remains among them.

The building called the market-house, which has been recently restored, is the oldest structure in Collooney. Erected about the beginning of the last century by the Earl of Bellamont, for the use of the buyers and sellers attending the Collooney linen market, it was repaired and re-roofed towards the close of the century by the Right

Honourable Joshua Cooper. Indeed the owners of Collooney have generally been nursing fathers to the town. Bryan M'Donogh solicited and obtained from James the First patents for holding two fairs and one market in the place; and the edifice under consideration is a standing monument of the friendly interest of the Cootes and the Coopers.

The business transactions of this house were interrupted in 1798. Instead of being the peaceful haunt of commerce, the place became for a time the quarters of ill conditioned and intolerant soldiers, who sallied from it to the neighbourhood as to an enemy's country, and kept all the poor people around in perpetual fear for their lives.

The linen trade reached its height in Collooney about the time of the battle of Waterloo. In and close to the little town there lived fifty or sixty weavers, who were in constant work, and who sold the produce of the loom in the market-house. The market was held on Thursday, and on that day every week the town presented a pleasant and animated spectacle, being crowded with weavers, sellers and buyers of linen and yarn. It was not uncommon on a market day in Collooney for four or five hundred pounds to change hands—some of which money remained in town with the shopkeepers, but most of it went home to meet the rent, to pay daughters' fortunes, to boil the pot, or to go into the stocking for the rainy day. It was good for Collooney while this state of things lasted, and it is due to the memory of Mr. Edward Synge Cooper to say, that he did everything in his power to prolong it. This model landlord not only employed his great personal influence to stimulate the exertions of weavers and dealers, but gave out of his pocket premiums in cash, for first, second, and third qualities of linen and yarn, which amounted annually to about £100.

The market-house was converted in 1841 by the late Mr. Cooper into a school of trades, in which "sons of

tenants were to learn at his expense to become carpenters, smiths, tailors, or shoemakers.”\* Unfortunately the school failed after lasting for two years, and entailing on its generous founder the loss of £1000.

It must be told with regret that the building we are considering was often used for party celebrations in times when there did not exist the same good sense and good feeling that prevail at present. These exhibitions, which the Roman Catholics of the neighbourhood, generally speaking, had the good taste to overlook, were near having serious results on the 12th of July, 1816. On that day a company or party of the 20th regiment were billeted in Collooney; but as the men, who were, for the most part, Catholics, were kept indoors during the day, everything passed off quietly till evening, when one of a batch of the Rev. Mr. Duke’s labourers who were standing on the Leyney end of the bridge, snatched an orange lily that, he alleged, was flaunted in his face by an Orangeman, and trampled it on the ground. This being more than the votary of the lily could bear, the Orangeman hastened to the lodge and called on the brethren to come and avenge the common outrage. In an instant the inmates of the lodge, after arming themselves with pistols, swords, and even fleshforks, hurried to the bridge, and hunted the retreating labourers into the parson’s kitchen, where, however, the assailants were kept at bay by the butler, Tom Healy, who armed himself with a pitchfork, and held it like a *chevaux de frise* before the invaders. The officer of the military party happening to be dining at the moment with the Rev. Mr. Duke, both came out to see what was the matter, and found the place in a state of insurrection; and when the parson, who was also a magistrate, saw excited Orangemen rushing violently about, and threatening to use their arms, he ordered the officer, whose name

\* Letter of Mr. Cooper, dated, “Brighton, 10 December, 1840.”

was O'Donnell, to call out the military and clear Collooney of all but its inhabitants. The word was no sooner given than the bugle sounded; and the moment the soldiers had mustered and received the word of command they trundled, in a very unceremonious way, every stranger they laid hand on to a considerable distance beyond the town. It is well that this rough handling was borne quietly; for, had resistance been offered, these scenes, which were not without their comic aspect, would have ended in a deplorable tragedy.\*

An incident in another "Twelfth" may be mentioned. On that day, in 1839, there was a collision between the stonecutters—about one hundred in number—that worked in Knockbeg quarry for the new works then in progress at Markrea castle, and the Orangemen. As the former were coming home after the day's labour they met, about the

\* Not long after this Mr. O'Donnell sold the military commission and entered the ecclesiastical state, for which he had made studies previously to joining the army, having been a student in one of the seminaries of France or Spain when the revolution invaded those retreats of piety and study and scattered their inmates. While still on the continent he rendered some signal service to the Duke of Wellington, which that general requited by the offer of a commission; an offer that the young levite gladly accepted, being, no doubt, of opinion that a child of the church could not be better employed than in doing battle against the enemies of religion and society—such as most of the continental liberals were at that time. After ordination Mr. O'Donnell served in the diocese of Derry, being a very hard-working and zealous priest though, not quite able to put away military manners and ideas; as an anecdote, communicated by a fellow-labourer on the mission, sufficiently shows. One day a little dog of his was killed by a party of police who happened to pass the priest's house while the priest was absent on clerical duty; but returning immediately after the outrage, and learning that those who had acted so disgracefully were not far off, the ex-officer put on the military uniform and sword (kept always in the presbytery), and mounting the charger that he used to ride in the army, galloped across the country to intercept the offenders; and drawing the sword on coming up with them, threatened to treat them as they had treated the dog unless the sub-inspector, who was present, offered a formal apology; terms which that officer made no scruple of accepting, to avoid a greater unpleasantness.

spot where the railway bridge now stands, the Orangemen returning from the market-house, in which they had passed the day, Mr. Cooper, the County Sligo grand master, having been present with them a good part of the time. On the two parties meeting, one of the Orangemen, it is said, cried out—"To hell with Pope and Popery;" but the words were hardly uttered when the speaker was collared and thrown violently on the ground by a stonecutter named Fitzgerald, one of four brothers who worked in the same job, and who were remarkable for physical powers and for decision of character. While the Orangeman was on the ground he snatched at and seized a cane that had slipped from his hand in the scuffle, but this object was wrenched from him in a moment by Fitzgerald, who, on finding that it contained a concealed weapon, broke it into pieces on the wall of the road-side. The *melee*, already, was general, and dangerous missiles were flying about, when a horse policeman started at full gallop to Markrea Castle for Mr. Cooper, who lost not a moment in hastening to the spot, which, from the horrid noises, the many hand-to-hand encounters, and the numbers wounded, resembled, at his arrival, the corner of a battle field rather than the outskirts of a peaceful village. And yet, such was the respect entertained for Mr. Cooper, even by those who felt, and had good reason to feel sore with him for partizanship during the day, that on the appearance of that gentleman the combatants separated, and stood hushed in silence, thus exemplifying Virgil's lines:—

“Ac, veluti magno in populo cum scæpe coorta est  
Seditio, sævitque animis ignobile vulgus;  
Jamque faces et saxa volunt; furor arma ministrat:  
Tum pietate gravem ac meritis si forte virum quem  
Conspexere, silent; arrectisque auribus adstant.”

But if the bad odour of sectarian celebrations sometimes infected the air of the market-house, the edifice was annually purified by the sweet perfume of genuine charity;

for on New Year's Day, each year, Mrs. and Mr. Cooper entertained at dinner under its roof the poor of the neighbourhood, and, after dinner, gave every poor man and woman present such articles of dress as he or she needed. On those happy occasions the Misses Cooper reserved to themselves the duty, or—as they seemed to esteem it—the privilege of waiting on the humble guests; thus, not only causing the poor to forget their miseries in the honour conferred but also giving the parish lessons of humility and charity that the most zealous preacher would find it hard to inculcate as effectually. In view of this touching scene one can easily afford to forgive the market-house other doings that it has sometimes sheltered.

It is a pleasing duty to observe, that Mrs. Colonel Cooper has established on the premises a depot or school of sewing, and that through it this good lady has conferred and is conferring great benefit on the neighbourhood, as well in improving the industrious habits of a large number of girls, as also in enabling them, by the liberal remuneration she bestows, to bear, with their parents, some hand in meeting domestic calls and expenses.\*

Before taking leave of this structure, one cannot help regretting that its capabilities, and more especially those of its upper apartment, formerly the *Linen-Hall*, are not turned to wider account. At a time when popular lectures have become so common a means of diffusing information through the country, it were to be wished that the lecturer sometimes showed himself in this fine room, and thus afforded the intelligent inhabitants of Collooney those opportunities of acquiring knowledge that are so numerous in other localities.

Another purpose that this apartment might well serve, and without any interference with its present uses, or even with its use as a market-house, in case a market was again

\* It is gratifying to be able to add, that the work of this school is esteemed very highly in London, and other parts of England.



established, is that of a village—or parish—or estate—or other small local museum. The first requisite for the place would be a map of the district, drawn on as large a scale as convenient, and coloured or shaded, so as to bring well out to the eye the physical configuration of the selected area, as well as the other peculiarities of the surface.

Flanking the map, it would be desirable to have views, sketches, or photographs of the principal objects, natural and artificial, of the district, such as, bits of landscape, ruins, gentlemen's residences, places of worship, mills, etc. ; and with shelves running round the room for specimens of the earths, rocks, minerals, and fossils, of the neighbourhood ; with cases and trays to hold "finds," such as implements, ornaments, coins, urns or other objects discovered in ancient graves ; and with some other small matters, that could be easily supplied, the market-house would become a source of useful and refining knowledge to Collooney and the vicinity. Of course some little effort and sacrifice would be needed in order to realize the suggestion here thrown out ; but, considering the landlord, Colonel Cooper's, culture, and love of historical and antiquarian pursuits, more especially of those that concern the County Sligo, and the enlightened ideas of the good people of Collooney themselves, it would not be hard to overcome such difficulties as should arise.

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#### SECTION VII.—ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY OF COLLOONEY.

COLLOONEY enjoys the honour of having had Saint Patrick himself for the founder of its first church. This assertion will doubtless seem bold, if not false, at first view, being devoid of sanction in the modern biographies of the saint, as also unsupported by the ecclesiastical historians and annalists of the country, not one of whom can be quoted in its favour. But its truth nevertheless may be deduced from

the *Vita Tripartita* of Colgan, which is admitted on all hands to be the chief authority on the missionary movements of the Saint. And as the passage relied on has puzzled those who have written about Saint Patrick, and has been much misunderstood, it is necessary to go at some length into the subject, and to give, in the first place, the words of the *Vita Tripartita*; secondly, the observations of writers upon these words; and, lastly, the new view of them. The following is the passage, as it lies in Colgan:—*Reversus est denuo Patricius ad jam memoratam Cal-rigiæ regionem, et in loco tunc Druimdaire\* vocato, baptizavit Mac-Caerthanum. Et cum idem locus in usum sacrum convertendus ei donatus esset in eo excitavit monasterium Druym-lias postea nuncupatum a multitudine casarum et ædicularum quas S. Patricius et discipuli ibi commorantes extruxerunt. Abbatem isti monasterio præfecit S. Benignum alumnum suum, qui annis viginti ejus curam administravit.*

Inde progressus versus orientem venit ad regionem *de Glinne*, in qua hodie stirps Muinremarii principatum tenet. E duobus ejus naribus ibi profluxit sanguis in via; ibique saxum *Leac-Padruic*, et arbor nux *Col-Phadruic* appellata visuntur; adjacentque versus orientem ecclesiæ quam ibi extruxit; quæ olim *Domnach-Sratha* id est, ecclesia prædicta; hodie *Srath Padruic*, id est Pratum Patricii vocatur. Mansit in ea Patricius Dominica die; estque unica ejus in ea regione ecclesia.

Lambens vir apostolicus et indefessi laboris oras extremas maritimasque Connaciæ a Caisseal-Irra per *Druim-chliabh* venit in Magene et limites maritimos qui Rosse appellantur. Et in agro de Magene extruxit ecclesiam quæ *Domnach-mor*, id est, ecclesia magna appellatur.†

\* “The place formerly called Druimdaire is situated near the eastern extremity of Lough Gill, in the barony of Dromahaire, and County of Leitrim.”—*Lives of the Irish Saints*, by Rev. John O’Hanlon, vol. 2, p. 434.

† Colgan’s *Trias Thaumaturga*—Septima Vita S. Patricii, lib. 11. cap. ciii.

The English of the above is :—“ Patrick returned to the district of Calry, and baptized MacCaerthan in the place then called Druimdaire. And as that place was presented to him for religious purposes, he erected on it the monastery subsequently called Druymlias, from the number of cells and huts constructed by Saint Patrick and the disciples that dwelt there with him. He set over the establishment, as abbot, his beloved disciple Benignus, who continued to govern it for twenty years. Proceeding then in an easterly direction, he came to the district of *Glinne*, where the descendants of Muinremar bear rule at present. His two nostrils bled on the road. The rock called *Leac-Phadruic* (Patrick’s stone) and the hazel tree called *Col-Padruic* are to be seen there, and they are near the church, in an easterly direction, that he erected, and that was anciently called *Domnach-Sratha* (the church of the river pasture), but that now goes by the name of *Srath-Padruic* (Patrick’s pasture). Patrick remained in the place on a Sunday; and this is the only church of his that there is in that region. Moving along the extreme sea coast of Connaught the indefatigable apostle passed from Cashel-Irra through Drumcliffe, on to Maghene and the Rosses. And in Maghene he erected the church called *Domnach-mor*, that is, the great church.”

In a note on the words, “ versus orientem,” in the above passage, Colgan observes, “ Est regio potius Septentrionalis quam Orientalis Ultoniæ, hodie etiam *Glinne*, i. e., valles dicta; in qua stirps Eochadii Muinremarii, tempore Patricii et aliquando postea, principatum tenuit.” (It is a northern rather than an eastern district of Ulster, and is called at present also The Glynnns, that is, the valleys. The descendants of Eochy Muinremar governed it in the days of Patrick, and continued to govern it for some time after).

Dr. Lanigan disposes of this passage in his usual off-hand manner, by saying, that it is out of its proper place. “ There is indeed, he says, one passage, which is evidently

misplaced; for, after mentioning Saint Patrick being at Drumlias in Leitrim, he is made to appear in the north of Antrim, and then immediately after we find him travelling along the coast of Sligo from south to north.”\*

Dr. Reeves adopts Lanigan’s view of the subject, though, as usual, he expresses himself more cautiously. “There is another passage also, he observes, in the Tripartite Life, which, although introduced in the narrative of the Saint’s proceedings in Connaught, appears to be out of its place, and to belong rather to the Glynnns, a territory formerly comprehended in Dalriada, or the Route.”†

Now Colgan’s opinion or, rather, what would at first sight seem to be his opinion, is utterly untenable; for, according to it, the Saint would start straight from Leitrim to the Glynnns of Antrim, return at once to the neighbourhood from which he had just set out, and hurry back again to the North without rest or pause, founding Drumlias, visiting the Glynnns, and moving by Caisel-irra on the same occasion, and in the same breath. Anything so preposterous our great hagiologist never did, and never could, maintain. Movements so rapid are out of the question even in these railway times, but, in the fifth century, they would be almost as miraculous as the translation of the prophet Habacuc from Judea to Babylon by the hair of the head.

Nor is the conjecture of Doctors Lanigan and Reeves much less improbable. The paragraphs of a book, either in print or manuscript, are not arranged like cards in a pack, some of which may drop out of their place and get mixed up elsewhere; and there is no conceiving how the sentence or two in question could part from their regular context and settle down in a quite different portion of the work. And after this extraordinary supposition those

\* *An Ecclesiastical History of Ireland*, vol. i, p. 258.

† *Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Down, Connor, and Dromore*, p. 323.

writers are as far off as ever from the solution of the difficulty; for they cannot identify any of the places mentioned in the text. They do not even attempt this identification except in reference to the *regionem de Glinne*, which they take, without assigning any reason, to be the Glynnys of Antrim.

It is with regret the writer differs, on a point of Irish history, from those learned and eminent historians. Had they all the evidence at hand, when pronouncing their opinion, he would himself feel almost compelled to bow to the decision. As it is, all that he does now is to put forward a view, which these able men would have maintained themselves were they sufficiently acquainted with the locality. It is submitted then, that, according to the statement of the above passage, Saint Patrick did not go to Ulster at all on this occasion, but merely travelled through Calry, along the northern shore of Lough Gill; moved about in the district to the east and south-east of the lake; and returned by the southern shore, passing through Cloonmucduff, Coolerra, Sligo, Drumcliffe, on to Magh-eni.

This view is free from the difficulties attached to the idea, or apparent idea, of Colgan, and to the conjecture of Lanigan and Reeves. It offers no violence to the text, but issues naturally from the words just as they lie; and, according to it, the places mentioned are identified as clearly as can be expected after such a lapse of time. The *regio de Glinne*, then, is the region or tract of country that surrounds the head of Lough Gill, and that was so called from the numerous glens or valleys with which it abounds. For several miles around the top of the lake, through the parishes of Drumlias, Cloonclare, Killargy, and Killenumery, the leading feature of the landscape is the glens that intersect the country. The *Gazetteer of Ireland*, in its article on Cloonclare, says—"The parochial surface comprises a large portion of the most scenic district in the county, and contains a rich series of glen and mountain

landscapes. Dark moorland hills, craggy and precipitous escarpments, bold and broken slopes, winding glens, narrow ravines, fertile vales, green declivities, and luxuriant demesnes are presented in such richness and variety of composition as to produce a large amount of at once beauty, grandeur, and romance." And as these observations apply, in great part, to the neighbouring parishes, it is plain that the *regio de Glinne* is the most graphic phrase which the author of the *Tripartite* could employ to describe that country. One might well speak of such a place as the glen-district in the same way as English writers at present speak of the lake-district, the fen-districts, etc.

It is strange that Lanigan and Reeves should be induced by this phrase to transfer the scene suddenly from Leitrim to Antrim; and the more so, as there is no evidence that the part of Antrim now called *The Glynnns* was known by that name at the time the *Vita Tripartita* was written. The contrary, indeed, may be fairly inferred from the absence of the name in that portion of the work which describes—and describes with great minuteness—the movements of the Apostle through that district; for, if the expression was current it would necessarily have come to the writer's pen while narrating the proceedings and journeyings of the Saint through Dalaradia—the word which he always uses when speaking of the place called at present *The Glynnns*.

Druimdaire or Drumlias is somewhere in the district of Calry. Of this we are certain, as it is expressly stated; but it is now impossible to fix the exact site of the old foundation, though we know the limits within which it must have stood. Some assume that Druimdaire and the modern Drumahaire are one and the same spot, but this is by no means a matter of course, nor even probable. Druimdaire—the ridge of the oak; and Drumahaire (*Drum-da-ethar*)—the ridge of the two demons—have



different etymologies, and in consequence designate, very likely, different localities. According to all appearance the *Druimdaire* of the *Vita Tripartita* lay to the north of Lough Gill, and within the limits of the present parish of Drumlease.

*Leac Phadruic* is the spot which bears the beautiful ruins of Creevelea abbey, and which, as we learn from the Four Masters,\* Ware, Archdall,† and Dr. M'Parlan,‡ went also by the name of *Carrick Phadruic*. *Carrick Phadruic* seems to be a somewhat modern variation of *Leac Phadruic*; and it is curious, that a similar change of phrase has taken place in regard to the celebrated *Leac Phadruic* of Cashel, or, the Rock of Cashel, which, Eugene O'Curry says, "to this day is called *Caraig Phatraic*, or Patrick's Rock, but which was also anciently called *Leac Phatraic*, or Patrick's Flagstone."§

The name *Col-Phadruic* does not survive, but there are several *coills* or *culleens* near Dromahaire, one of which is, doubtless, that referred to in the text. Probably it is the spot in the present parish of Killenumery, mentioned by the Four Masters, under the year 1435, as *Coille-an-anma*—wood of the soul.

*Pratum Patricii* or *Srah Phadruic* is manifestly *Patrick's-pasture* in the peninsula called Cloonmacduff,|| which is formed by the river Uncion, and which adjoins the present townland of Collooney. The name, *Patrick's-pasture*, was

\* Sub anno 1508.

† *Monasticon Hibernicum*, p. 407.

‡ *Survey of County Leitrim*, p. 95.

“The once splendid monastery of Creevelea was founded in 1508 by Owen O'Rorke, Prince of Breffny, at the instance of his wife, Margaret O'Brien, daughter of Conor, King of Thomond.”—*Franciscan Monasteries, etc.* By Rev. C. P. Meehan.

§ Professor O'Curry's *Lecture on the MS. materials of Ancient Irish History*. Appendix, p. 623.

|| Cluain, which is the general prefix to the names of our churches and bishops sees, means a lawn, an insulated meadow, or level, fertile

disused and nearly forgotten when the writer heard it from a man of about one hundred years of age. The spot so designated lies at the eastern extremity of Cloonmueduff, and resembles the segment of a circle—the Uncion being the arc, and a stream running from south to north forming the chord. The character of the spot could not be better hit off than by the epithet, *Srah*. The Irish word *Srah*, like the Saxon word *Holme*, denotes a low tract of rich land in the vicinity of a river; and a more graphic description than this could not be given of the fine alluvial soil of *Patrick's-pasture*, lying on the left bank of the Uncion, and known as one of the best fattening lands in the county. Midway between the stream mentioned and the river stands a fort or rath of one hundred and forty feet in diameter, and five or six feet in height, though somewhat depressed and dilapidated in parts, and particularly at the edge, which was formerly faced with large stones, forming a cashel. On the centre of the fort rests a great stone, five feet five inches long, five feet two inches broad, and two feet deep, which is called, by persons acquainted with the locality, the *Druid's Altar*. In this stone there is a slit about twenty inches long and three wide, which was probably made for the purpose of receiving the blood of the victim sacrificed. Fifty feet to the south of the central stone there is a cluster of five others, all about the same size; an average one measuring five feet six inches in height, two feet four inches in breadth, and ten inches in depth. These and a few other large stones lying about seem to be the remains of cromlechs, and to prove the place to have been a haunt of the Druids; and looking at the spot, situated in the midst of a great

plain, surrounded by a bog or marsh; in fact a kind of oasis, as we know is the general appearance of such localities in Ireland."—Sir William Wilde's *Boyne and Blackwater*, p. 58.

Cloonmueduff, no doubt, signifies the cluain or meadow of the black big; for the passage of that legendary animal through this district holds a prominent place in the traditions of the neighbourhood.

solitude, fenced round by the deep and silent Uncion, and almost beyond the reach of human sight or sound, one feels that it would be hard to find a scene more fitted for the sombre and sanguinary rites of Druidism.

It was doubtless these impious and inhuman practices that occasioned the visit of St. Patrick. At the time of the journey which we are now considering, the Saint was on the point of leaving Connaught, after seven years stay and labour in it; and the holy man would not quit the province till he had visited and destroyed this nest of sin; acting in this on his well-known system of seeking out the objects and places of Druidical superstition, purifying them, and then devoting them to the worship of the true God. Such was his manner of proceeding at Cashel and a hundred other places, as well as at Patrick's-pasture; and from this, most probably, it comes, that the large central stone, which is commonly called the Druid's Altar, is sometimes also named Patrick's Altar, the different names implying, that the stone, after having served the Druids for their unholy rites, was also made use of by the Apostle for the celebration of the Christian oblation.\*

That the place was called Patrick's-pasture from the Saint himself building a church there, and not, as might be suggested, from others building one in the Saint's honour, appears, not only from the express assertion of the Tripartite ("*ecclesiæ quam ibi extruxit*") but also from the first

\* This would seem to have been the usual course with Apostolic missionaries. It was so in Great Britain. It was a precept of Pope Gregory," says Edmund Burke, "that the heathen temples should not be destroyed; but that, first removing the idols, they should be consecrated anew by holier rites and to better purposes, in order that the prejudices of the people might not be too rudely shocked."—Burke's *Works*, Bohn's edition, vol. vi, p. 243. See also, Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, Lib. i. c. 30, and Dr. Newman's learned *Preface*, to the new edition of his *VIA MEDIA*, p. lxxviii., where he relates a most striking instance of accommodation to the notions and habits of the people on the part of St. Gregory Thaumaturgus.

name of the structure, *Domnach-Srah* ("quæ olim Domnach-Sratha, id est, ecclesia prati dicta;") for it is well known that all the churches into which the name of *Domnach* enters, such as *Donagh Patrick*, *Donaghmoyne*, *Donaghcloney* etc., are the work of St. Patrick himself. They were so called, we are told, from the word "Dominica," because the Saint built them in places where he passed the Sunday or Dominica. We find this explanation in the Tripartite, where it speaks of the proceedings of the Saint in Keenaght, County Derry;—"In regione Kennactie Septem diebus Dominicis commoratus Septem Domino sacrarum ædium jecit fundamenta; quas *proinde Dominicas appellavit.*" He passed one Sunday in Patrick's-pasture, "Mansit in ea una Dominica."

The church he raised on this occasion must have been of wattle, or some such frail and humble material.\* Later his converts or their descendants, desirous to worship on a spot consecrated by the presence and the prayers of the Saint, erected a solid and durable structure. And they were the more zealous to frequent this holy ground, as it is the only spot in the district on which he erected a church; for it is remarkable, while the neighbouring dioceses of Killala and Elphin abound in sites of the Saint's foundations, that Patrick's-pasture should be perhaps the only one in the entire diocese of Achonry. And this makes it the more gratifying to identify the *Pratum Patricii*, or *Shrah Phadruic* of the Tripartite, as the identification not

\* The dwellings of the Ulster *Creaghts*, even in the sixteenth century, are described as "made of wattles, or boughs of trees, covered with long turves or sods of grass."

Mr. John P. Prendergast in the *Kilkenny Archæological Journal*, vol. iii, p. 423—Wattles and sods were probably the material usually employed by St. Patrick in his churches—See *Colton's Visitation*; by Dr. Reeves, p. 123. In regard to churches, the names of which begin with *Domnach*, John O'Donovan observes;—"Every church in Ireland whose name begins with *Domhnach*, was originally erected by St. Patrick."—O'Donovan's *Four Masters*, A.D. 1508; (note.)

only clears up an obscurity in the Saint's life, but also vindicates for this venerable diocese the honour of having Saint Patrick for the founder of its first church. It is right to mention, though there is no building or part of a building at present on the rath, that there is a map in the Royal Irish Academy, belonging to the last years of Elizabeth, which shows a church or the ruins of a church on the spot.

In order to give a fuller idea of Srah Phadruic it is well to add, that to the north of the large rath we have been considering, but joining it, there is, on a lower level, a smaller one of sixty-six feet in diameter; and to north of this there is a cave, now greatly dilapidated, that consisted of two rude walls covered with flags stretched lengthwise from wall to wall; while about thirty or forty feet to the south of the great fort there is a well, which is called Patrick's well.

The situation of Caisel-irra is too well known to need any observations to identify it. From what has been said, then, the itinerary of the Saint on the present occasion is clear beyond any reasonable doubt; for the places mentioned, Leac Phadruic or Creevelea, Col Phadruic or Cul-an-anma, Srah Phadruic or Cloonmueduff, Caisel-irra or Kilaspugbrone, Sligo, Drumcliffe, Magheni, point out, like so many finger posts, his movements during the journey which is under consideration, and which was also the last journey of the Saint in the province of Connaught.\*

About a mile to the west of Patrick's-pasture is the site of another Collooney church, which, most probably, comes

\* To the account of the journey mentioned in the text the Tripartite Life adds the remark:—"Thrice Patrick went across the Shannon, into the land of Connacht. Fifty bells, and fifty altar chalices, and fifty altar cloths, he left in the land of Connacht, each of them in his church. Seven years was he preaching to the men of Connacht, and he left them a blessing and bade them farewell."—*The Tripartite Life of Saint Patrick*, translated by W. M. Hennessy, Esq., M.R.I.A. In Miss Cusack's *Life of Saint Patrick*, p. 432.

next in the order of time to that founded by Saint Patrick. There is not the smallest sign or trace of the structure \* at present; but the great solitary stone near the northern end of the avenue, through Cloonmueduff, marks the spot near which it stood, and adjoins the site of a *cashel* with which this, like most other early ecclesiastical establishments, was surrounded. The inclosure was used, in the early part of the century by the Markrea stewards as a haggard for the hay that grew on the surrounding meadows, and continued to be so used till the time of making the avenue, about forty years since, when the place was levelled off, and the stones that formed the *cashel* were removed from their position and sunk underground.† On a map in the Royal Irish Academy, drawn in Elizabeth's reign, a church is shown on this spot, and the space within the *cashel* served for a burying ground down to about the end of the last century. A row of brick coffins or sarcophagi, of uniform size, such as are often found in the cemeteries of the larger monasteries, was discovered, some years since, by labourers who were making drains in the place; and this circum-

\* "In many cases," says the judicious Dr. Reeves, *Ulster Journal of Archæology*, vol i, p. 168, "we look in vain to present local conditions in order to discover any remaining indications of early greatness, or even a trace of ancient existence."—This reminds one of Ausonius's lines—

"Miremur periisse homines? Monumenta fatiscunt;  
Mors etiam saxis nominibusque venit."

and of the words of Rutilius—

"Non indignemur mortalia corpora solvi  
Cernimus exemplis oppida posse mori."

† This illustrates another observation of Dr. Reeves, to the effect that "too often the hand of time acquires double powers of demolition from the hand of man, and all vestiges of antiquity perish."—*Ibid.*

There were two *cashels* in this place, the larger surrounding the ecclesiastical establishment, and the other enclosing the solitary stone mentioned. This stone, which is fifteen feet long, twelve broad, and four deep, seems to be the top stone of an earth-fast cromlech, as one end of it rests on the earth, while the other is supported by a stone five feet long, four broad, and three deep. The large stone slopes to the north, and forms with the ground under it an angle of about twenty-five degrees.



stance of itself would show the establishment to have been of some importance.

The writer is of opinion that this religious house is no other than the "*ecclesia duorum agri rivorum*" (the church of the district of the two rivers) which Adamnan mentions as visited by St. Columba, and about the site of which there is great diversity of opinion—O'Donnell placing it in the north, as *Mainistir-anda-Shruth*; Colgan making it the church of Teernacreeve in Westmeath; and Dr. Reeves, in his learned edition of Adamnan, giving it as his decision "that there can be no hesitation in pronouncing the famous monastery of Terryglass, in the barony of Lower Ormond, County Tipperary, to be the place in question." (Adamnan's Life, p. 153.)

It is hard to differ from such distinguished authorities, but it is the less difficult, in the present instance, as they differ from one another; and the following reasons seem to warrant one in thinking for one's self and breaking fresh ground. The first reason for the opinion now advanced is, that the situation of the church answers the description of the *ecclesia duorum agri rivorum*, for it stood in the angle of land formed by the Uncion and Owenmore, within two or three hundred yards of their confluence, and would therefore be most appropriately described as the church of the land of the two rivers. The second reason is, that the actual name of this religious house was *the church of the two rivers, the Owenmore and the Uncion*. The only man now living in Cloonmueduff says that when a little boy he heard his father, who lived in the same place to a great age, call the burying ground *Kil eder da Owen*.

A strong argument in favour of the idea here advocated may be drawn from the time at which St. Columba paid his visit to the *ecclesia duorum agri rivorum*, which was, according to O'Donnell's life, immediately after the convention of Drumceat. According to this authority, the Saint went direct from Drumceat to Drumcliffe to found a church, and

from Drumcliffe proceeded to Ballysadare, where the "Saints of Ireland" had assembled to receive him. Being at Ballysadare, Columba was within two miles of Cloonmucduff; and it was a matter of course that the monks of that place would beg him to honour their house with a visit, a request with which the Saint would hardly fail to comply. In this supposition, then, we have the time and the place of the visit corresponding exactly with what is laid down in Adamnan and O'Donnell: the time—that immediately after he had left Drumceat; the place—the church of the two rivers.\*

But the other opinions can hardly be reconciled with what is stated by these writers. As to *Mainistir-anda-Sruth*, the place has never been identified nor known to exist, and Colgan regards it as a pure invention of O'Donnell's. *Teernacreeve* (*Tir da chroebh* in Irish) has its name from two branches and not two rivers; and Colgan's conjecture that *duorum rivorum* is an error for *duorum ramorum* "savours," according to Dr. Reeves, "of that school in literature which fits the author to the theory." Dr. Reeves' own view is open to serious objection, at least on the score of time. Columba's stay in Ireland on the occasion of the meeting at Drumceat was only for a few days, (*aliquantis in Scotia diebus conversatus*) and it was not in his power to make a journey all the way to Tipperary. The rush to Ballysadare of the more celebrated Saints of Ireland, and of the "vast multitude of people that no one could count," mentioned in the life of Saint Forannan,† proves the shortness of Columba's visit, and the limited sphere of his movements; for if people could find the Saint in Tipperary or Westmeath, or on the road to either of these places, why come from these neighbour-

\* "O'Donnell," says Dr. Reeves, in his admirable edition of Adamnan's *Life of Saint Columba*, p. 152, "places this visit immediately after the Saint's departure from Drumceat."

† Colgan, *Act. Sanctorum*, p. 337.

hoods the great journey to Ballysadare to meet him? But it was known throughout the country, that after visiting Drumcliffe, Ballysadare, and Skreen, Columba would return forthwith to Hy, and his admirers hastened in consequence to avail themselves of the only opportunity they could have of paying their respects. This view is sustained by the words employed by the writer of Forannan's life. "*Before returning,*" says this author, "to Britain, Columba founded one church in the district of Drumcliffe, etc.," a form of phrase which seems to imply that his proceedings in the County Sligo preceded *immediately* the return to Scotland.

There is no mention of the church under consideration in any of our ecclesiastical writers, Usher, Ware, Harris, Colgan, Lanigan, Reeves, etc., with the single exception of Archdall, who speaks of it in the following botchy paragraph,\* "Cashel; a village in the barony of Corran, between the rivers Uncion and Owenmore and six miles south of Sligo. St. Bronan or Bronius, a disciple of Saint Patrick, was bishop of Culiorra, or Cashel-irra, and died 8th January, A.D. 511. St. Biteus, the son of Assicus, another disciple of the Saint's, was also bishop here." That allusion is here made to this church is clear from the the statement that it lies "between the rivers Uncion and Owenmore and is six miles south of Sligo," in which its situation is exactly described; but Archdall is mistaken in placing this house in the barony of Corran, instead of Tirerrill; and, in supposing Cashel and Cashel-irra or Cuil-irra to be the same he blunders egregiously, as they are notoriously different places, and six or seven miles asunder. Indeed the object of the affix *irra*, in the words *Cuil-irra*, and *Cashel irra*, (the western *Cuil*, and the western *Cashel*) would seem to be to distinguish these localities from the other *Cashel*, and *Cuil-maail*, which lie to the east, and which were, as has been seen, old names of Collooney.

\* *Monasticon Hibernicum*, p. 629.

At first it might seem that an important argument in proof of the identity of the "*ecclesia duorum agri rivorum*" and the church of Cloonmueduff, could be drawn from an inquisition respecting the diocese of Achonry, that was taken *apud Aghconnor* on the 18th of August, 1584, before the bishop of Kildare. In this inquisition there is mention of a benefice styled "The rectory between the two rivers" ("*Rectoria voc. Inter duos amnes*"); but it appears that this benefice lay in the parish of Kilmacteigue, as we read in the Royal Visitation Book of 1615 the following words:— "*Rectoria inter duos amnes, ALIAS, Enlmeteg,*" where "Enlmeteg" refers to what we now call Kilmacteigue.

The next church built in Collooney lay about three quarters of a mile due west of *Kil eder da Owen*; but there is nothing about it in books, and next to nothing in tradition. It stood on the burying ground that adjoins Mr. Sim's residence, where the ruins may still be seen, and in fair preservation. There is a weak tradition that this house was built by the O'Haras, who, of old, were the chief church-builders in this part of Ireland. The belief also, is that the church was of a monastic character, and inhabited by friars; and this opinion is supported by the following satirical distich, well known formerly in Leyney and Tirerrill:

*Brathair mor o Drehid a cilleen*  
*Do Bhaist Poldoba ar Probus o Lineen.*  
 A big friar from Drehid-a-cilleen,  
 Christened you Dirt-bag, Probus O'Lineen.

*Drehid-in-cillin*, which, strictly speaking, is the name only of the bridge of Collooney—so called from its proximity to the church—served also often for the name of the village; and seems taken in this sense in the above lines.\*

\* *Drehid-in-cillin* was sometimes Englished *Killinbridge*, the form under which we find Collooney in the *Census* of 1659, and in the *Hearth-money* returns, 1662-3. *Droiched-in-chillin* is the name the *Annals of Loch Cé* give the bridge, when speaking of the battle between Sir Richard

And it was sometimes used for the name of the church.\*

Soon after the Reformation this church was taken from the Catholics and used as a place of Protestant worship; and it is said to have been in it that the first O'Hara who changed his religion made a public profession of the new faith. Sir Albert Conyngham was buried in it, and over the remains was erected the monument that is now to be seen in the Protestant church of the town. The cemetery within and attached to the church serves as burying place for some of the leading families of Tirerrill. The Coopers of Cooper-hill are buried in the interior, near the eastern window, in a handsome vault that bears on its pediment the words—"The Cooper-hill Family." In the western end is interred Mr. Rutledge of Cloonamahin; and the tombstone that covers his remains bears the following inscription:—"Here lieth the body of Thomas Rutledge, Esq., late of Cloonamahin, who departed this life the 23rd of February, 1762; aged 29 years;" and lower down on the same stone is the following:—"Underneath are deposited the remains of Joseph Meredith of Cloonamahin, Esq., who departed this life the 22nd of January, 1811; aged 69 years." Between this grave and the northern side wall stands the tomb of the Phibbs family, bearing the inscription that follows:—"Beneath this stone lieth interred the remains of the late Thomas Phibbs of Dunamurray, Esq., who departed this life on the 17th day of

Bingham and the Scotts:—"And the Albanachs retreated to Culmhain, and some of the Clann-William came to meet them; and they advanced to Droiched-in-chillin. And when the Saxons heard that the Albanachs had gone past them, down they followed them, and they encountered one another at Droiched-in-chillin, and delivered a vigorous battle to each other there."—*Annals of Loch Cé. Edited by William M. Hennessy, M.R.I.A., vol. ii, p. 473.*

Droiched Cul-maoile is the term the *Annals of the Four Masters* employ when describing the same transaction. *Annals of Ireland, by the Four Masters, vol. v, p. 1853.*

\* Some very old persons still call the church *Drehid-in-cillin*.

March, 1816, in the 77th year of his age; of whom it may be truly said—he lived and died an honest man; also the remains of Alicia Phibbs alias Griffith, his wife, who departed this life on the 20th of August, 1796, in the 42nd year of her age; to whose memory this stone hath been erected by their youngest son, Burton Phibbs, Esq.” A tomb near this has the inscription: “This stone is placed over the mortal remains of the late Rowland Carter, Esq., and his wife, Sarah Carter,\* as a respectful tribute of affection to their memory by their son, B. Carter, Esq., M.D., July 13, 1817.” The oldest tombstone in the place lies near the south side wall, on the outside, with the inscription in raised letters: “Here lieth the body of Thomas Forast, who parted his life in the aighthente of March, 1707.” Outside the eastern end of the church is the tomb of the M’Kims, who are the oldest family in Collooney, unless the O’Connells are older; and the stone is inscribed with the words: “Here lieth the body of Robert M’Kim, who departed this life the 22nd of March, 1807; aged 80 years.” And the monument of the Nobles, who are the oldest family in Tubberscanavin, is hard by, and bears the inscription: “Here lyeth the body of John Noble, who departed this August 7th, aged 63 years; 1740.” There are several other monuments within and without the ruins, all over Protestants; and there is no evidence that Catholics—with the exception of Mrs. Carter—were ever buried in the churchyard. *Drehid-in-cillin* was abandoned as a place of worship early in the last century, when the existing Protestant church was built.

\* Sarah Carter, *alias* Conlon, lived and died a Catholic. The parish priest, Very Rev. James Henry, performed the funeral service in the grave yard, for which he had the consent of the Reverend Mr. Duke. The priest and parson accompanied the funeral arm-in-arm together, they being great friends; and on the procession reaching the cemetery, Mr. Duke said to Father Henry, “Go now and bury your parishioner.” Had the priest officiated without this consent he would have violated the law of the land, as every one knows, and become liable to heavy punishment.



About two centuries had passed from the time when the Catholics were evicted from *Drehid-in-cillin* before they could raise a new house of worship in Collooney. Meantime, everything had changed in and about the village except its natural features; its rivers, hills, vallies, and plains. Its old chiefs, the M'Donoghs, were gone, and their descendants for the most part emigrated; while such as remained were forced to perform menial offices to earn their bread, and, in some instances, to herd cattle for hire on the lands over which their ancestors ruled with almost sovereign authority, like the reduced Roman nobles, of whom Juvenal gives an instance:—

“Laurenti custodit in agro  
Conductas Corvinus oves.”

The patrimony of these chiefs had been conferred on a family notorious for hatred to everything Catholic and Irish; for, after that of Cromwell, there is no name that grates more harshly on an Irish and Catholic ear than that of Coote.\* The castle, too, of the M'Donoghs had become a pile of rubbish; and even the town, that used to surround the keep of its chiefs in more prosperous days, had abandoned the prostrate walls and followed its new master up the hill on which the village now stands. *Srath Phadruic* had become a desert; *Kil eder da Owen*, a haggard; while *Drehid-in-chillin* excluded Catholics, whether living or dead, from its precincts. The castle then, the

\* It is due to the recent and present bearers of the name to say, that the Cootes of the nineteenth century are very different from those of the seventeenth, as far as the Catholic religion is concerned. The greatest benefactor of this religion in the Queen's County is Sir Charles Coote, of Ballyfin, the actual head of the Coote family. On visiting, some time since, the chapel of Mountrath, he observed to the parish priest, who accompanied him, “You want an altar-piece and seats or benches; and I shall be glad, with your leave, to supply them.” Of course the priest accepted the generous offer, and Sir Charles lost no time in sending the painting and benches to the chapel. This good gentleman also gives the parish priest of Mountrath £50 a year for the poor of the parish.

churches, the lords of the soil, the town itself, had altered or disappeared; everything, in a word, had passed or varied, except the old religion, which remained always, and remained unchanged, with children still as fervent as those who had received baptism at *Srah Phadruic* from Saint Patrick, or invoked blessings on their knees in *Kil eder da Owen* from Columba of the Churches.

These zealous souls longed to have an altar near them to kneel at; and on Father Wat Henry devolved the duty and honour of supplying this want. There was no law at the time forbidding or hindering the erection of a Catholic place of worship. The landlord too, the Right Honorable Joshua Cooper, whose family had succeeded to the Cootes in the ownership of Collooney, was equitably and even favourably disposed towards the Catholics and their clergy. At first there was great difference of opinion, and some angry words as to the most suitable site for the intended building, the inhabitants of Lackagh and Carrickbanagher going in for Tubbercanavin or Tubberbrida, and the parishioners that lived between Collooney and Coolany holding out for Collooney; but Collooney was selected, chiefly through the influence of Mr. Cooper, who urged the delays and other inconveniences it would cause him and his household, if the servants who drove the family to Collooney to Church should themselves have to go to Tubbercanavin or Tubberbrida to perform religious duties. This representation had the desired effect; and with that deference which the humbler classes of the Irish always feel towards those above them—when these are friendly or even fair in their dealings—the Lackagh and Carrickbanagher people renounced opposition—choosing rather to inconvenience themselves than to be the occasion of it to a gentleman who had proved himself a well-wisher and a benefactor. Mr. Cooper gave the site and large pecuniary aid; the parishioners taxed themselves, and paid in proportion to their means; and Father Wat Henry and his

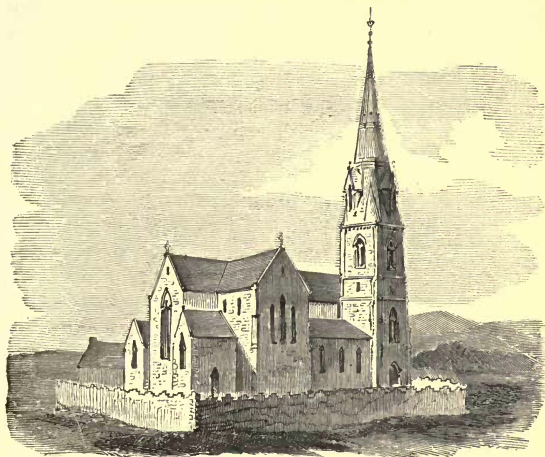
good people had the happiness of seeing a substantial slated chapel finished and opened for divine service in the year 1798. This was an humble structure in itself; but, to him that reflects, it will appear a more striking testimony to the indestructible vitality of religion than the most gorgeous edifices of the present time, inasmuch as it marks the epoch at which the English persecutor gave up the continuous effort he had been making, for more than two hundred years, against the Irish Church, and virtually acknowledged his impotence and discomfiture.

Though there was no house of Catholic worship in Collooney between the early part of the seventeenth century and the year 1798, still the Holy Sacrifice was generally celebrated on Sundays and holidays during that time somewhere in the neighbourhood. At first it was offered on the Ox Mountains; one day in a spot between Glen and Largan, called *Leim na heile*; on another, by a large ledge of rock over the village of Coney; this time beside a rock in Kinnigrelly, which is still called *Cloghan-sogarth*; and again at *Bealach-ban* on a rude altar of stone within an earthen enclosure, which exists up to the present. Towards the middle of the eighteenth century Catholics assembled for worship at Largan in a barn, which stood in the valley, that runs for a good distance along the south side of the mountain; and it often happened that while the priest was at the altar two sentinels were posted—one towards Collooney, the other in the direction of Coolany—to watch the priest-catchers. The barn was well placed for the purposes of concealment, for the whole side of the adjoining mountain so abounded in tall brushwood at the time, that persons coming to mass could easily pass through it unobserved. After abandoning this barn, about 1770, priest and people betook themselves on Sundays to a plain thatched house, which was built between the mountain and the sea, within a few yards of James Donnelly's present residence, and which continued to be a

place of worship up to 1798, when Father Wat erected in Curhownagh a small slated chapel, part of which remains incorporated in the one in use at present.

All these altars were situated to the north of Collooney ; but there were also to the south of the village places in which the inhabitants of that region assembled for mass in the dark days of the past : first, in the townland of Lisaneena, by the side of a well-known ditch in the open field ; next, in the same townland, in a mud-wall structure covered with reeds or rushes, in a portion of John Gunning's holding that is still called the chapel-field ; and, finally, in a long thatched house, erected on the side of the old road that leads from Tubberscanavin to Cartron, just at the angle where the road turns up the hill.

The chapel of Collooney, built by Father Wat Henry, lasted from 1798 to 1843, when it was removed to make room, on the same site, for the Church of the Assumption, which was founded in that year by Dr. Durcan, and which is the first of that series of churches with which His Lordship enriched all the districts of the diocese. Sir John Benson was the architect ; and though this talented man was then only at the beginning of his career, the church bears clearly the marks of his great mind. The edifice is admitted, on all hands, to be as fine a parish church as there is in Ireland, at least outside of the chief cities. Judges of the largest experience and the most correct taste are loud in praise of all its parts and surroundings : the beautiful gates and railing of its outer area ; its stately and symmetrical façade ; its soaring spire, unequalled in the county for beauty and boldness of design, and unsurpassed in the kingdom ; its lofty and spacious interior ; the style and finish of its groins and arches ; its tall and slender columns carrying so gracefully the superincumbent weight ; its lateral chapels to Our Lady and Saint Patrick—both gems of art ; its high and side altars, so rich in material, workmanship, and ornament, and so accordant with the



CHURCH OF THE ASSUMPTION.

requirements of the liturgy; its neat font near the chief entrance; the long row of elegant and solid seats on either hand as you pass up the nave; the exquisite pulpit; the elaborate wrought-iron and brass railing, that spans the space before the altars; and, if last, certainly not least, those fourteen stations of the cross, painted in oil, set in rich Gothic frames of oak, and at once so elegant and so devotional as to excite your admiration equally, whether you regard them as works of art or as helps to piety. About one hundred and twenty feet long, eighty wide across the transepts, and fifty-four in nave and aisles, fifty feet or more high, from floor to intersection of groins, the proportions are very fine and effective. It is the only church in the diocese that has transepts; and these striking appendages, taken in connection with the noble tower, give an air of strength and solidity that you must

always look for in vain in an edifice consisting only of a long, unbroken, naked nave. Such a house, in some respects, throws Patrick's-pasture, *Kil eder da Owen*, *Drehidin-chillin*, and all that preceded it in the locality into the shade ; and is a rich object of pride not only to Right Rev. Dr. Durcan and Sir John Benson, but to every one who had a part, directly or indirectly, in raising it. And above all it is a crown of honour to the people of the parish, who, while contributing most of the money, supplied all the talent that built it ; for, what cannot, perhaps, be said of any other parish church in Ireland, may be affirmed of that of Collooney—that the architect, the builder, the stonecutters, the masons, the plasterers, the carpenters, the labourers—all, in one word, engaged in its erection, were parishioners. Nor is it their own church alone which inhabitants of this parish have built, but they generally have had, and still have, the chief hand in building all the neighbouring churches as well.

This goes far to sustain the opinion often advanced, that the inhabitants of Ballysadare parish are remarkable for talent. And this in all classes from the day labourer up to the late Mr. Cooper, one of the first astronomers in Europe, who was also a native of the parish. Nor is the gift confined to one creed ; and if there are young Catholics of the neighbourhood in the college of Maynooth and elsewhere, who are asserting the intellectual superiority of their native parish, there are also, in the educational establishments of England and Ireland, young Protestants who reflect equal honour on old Collooney.

And Collooney men are as exemplary in behaviour as they are distinguished for talent. Punctual in attendance at their different places of worship, they are seldom seen in courts of law ; and if quarrels ever take place in the village, these disturbances are sure to be the work of externs. Drunkenness, which is so much on the increase in other parts of Ireland as to excite the solicitude of



ecclesiastical and civil authorities, is almost unknown in the locality. Even on fair days, when temptations are multiplied, and on Saint Patrick's day, which, unfortunately, is too often abused elsewhere, there is hardly a drunken man to be seen. And what renders this freedom from the vice of drunkenness the more creditable is, that it is the outcome of conviction, of a sense of duty and of self respect, and not the result of artificial and external restraints, which, if they occasionally effect a little temporary good, often end, like quackery in medicine, by leaving the patient many times worse than he was before.

Another circumstance, connected with Collooney, that deserves especial notice, is the general absence at present of sectarian animosity. There was a time when bigotry was the cause of alienation and ill-will; when one side was as ready as the other to give and to take offence; when the silly drawl of a ballad singer, or the antics of a mountebank, were occasion enough for a party scuffle; when Orangemen commemorated the battle of Aughrim by flying flags and parading lilies, and Roman Catholics celebrated the supposed victory of Father Tom Maguire over Rev. Mr. Pope by carrying flaming tar barrels alongside of Orangemen's houses; but that day seems to have departed for ever. Though the inhabitants, in point of numbers, are not very unevenly divided into Catholics and Protestants, and though there are influences in existence that tend to keep alive ill-omened distinctions, still there are counter-acting influences, and there is, above all, among the people themselves a considerable amount of that culture which refines and softens manners, as Ovid tells us:—

*“ Ingenuas didicisse fideliter artes  
Emollit mores, nac sinit esse feros.”*

Coming now, after this little digression, to the Protestant ministers and places of worship, in the parish of Ballysa-

dare, the first Protestant vicar of the parish mentioned in *Cotton's Fasti*, and the first, probably, that existed, was Robert Whitlaw, who is said by Cotton to have resigned in 1605 the prebend and vicarage, which were united under the Established church, as they continue to be at present; the benefice of Ballysadare, with cure of souls, forming the corps of the prebend. It is certain that no vicar of this parish existed in 1633, as the regal visitation book of that year informs us that George Crofton was impropriator of the vicarage of Ballysadare, and that there was no curate.\* We learn from the same authority, that the annual value of the living was £20 sterling, a large sum for those times. Of course the rectory and vicarage were separate, and the former, which was also impropriated by George Crofton, was worth £30 per annum, in 1633. †

To Mr. Whitlaw succeeded, in 1696, the Rev. Tobias Caulfield, a member of the Charlemont family, being grandson of Sir William Caulfield, the second baron of Charlemont, and son of Captain Thomas Caulfield, of Dunamon, in the County of Roscommon. In the year that he received the prebend of Ballysadare in the diocese of Achonry, Mr. Caulfield was presented to the union of the nine vicarages of Tawnagh, in the diocese of Elphin; while, shortly after, he was created archdeacon and vicar general of Killala. This gentleman married Anne, daughter of Adam O'Hara, of Nymphsfield, or Annaghmore, by whom he had two sons, Rev. Adam Caulfield and Lieutenant Caulfield, of Ardree, as well as other children. ‡ It was during his incumbency the present

\* The entry in the Visitation book is:—"Vicaria de Balledara, valet £xx Ster. per annum. Georgius Crofton, Ar., Impropriator. Nullus curatus."

† The entry in the Visitation book of 1633, regarding the rectory of Ballysadare, is the following:—"Rectoria de Ballisedara, valet xxx. Ster. per annum, Georgius Crofton Ar. Impropriator."

‡ Lodge's *Peerage of Ireland*, by Mervyn Archdall, A.M., vol. iii, Article, "Charlemont."

Protestant church of Collooney was built. He died in 1735.\*

There would seem to have been no successor appointed to Rev. Tobias Caulfield for seven years after his death, when his son, Adam,† was collated in 1742 to the vacant

\* The notices in Cotton's *Fasti Ecclesiæ Hibernicæ*, vol. iv, p. 111, are as follows:—

“16— Robert Whitlaw was Prebendary, and resigned in 1695 [D. Reg.]”

“1695-6, Tobias Caulfield, M.A., (grandson of Sir William Caulfield, second Baron Charlemont), collated\*February 18th [D. Reg.] In 1704 he was one of the Clergy's Proctors to Convocation, In 1716 we find him holding a prebend in Raphoe. In 1724 he was Vicar-General of this Diocese (Achonry), and shortly afterwards became Archdeacon of Killala. He died in 1735.”

See also the account of Rathmore for further information regarding Rev. Tobias Caulfield.

† In Reverend Adam Caulfield's time there were priest-catchers in Collooney, with whom this clergyman was as disgusted as were his parishioners.—See the *Life of Father Hinnegan* in the chapter on “Parish Priests.” To the honour of human nature be it told, that no persons were so infamous in the eyes both of Catholics and Protestants as those who pursued this abominable calling, if one can speak of such an occupation as a calling. “Towards the close of the reign of Anne and the beginning of that of George the First there arose several persecutions against Catholics, but more especially against priests, as well seculars as regulars, which would have been still more violent and numerous, had not Providence so disposed it that no one, not even the common hangman, was so infamous in the eyes even of non-Catholics, as the wretch that got the opprobrious name of priest-catcher. It so happened, therefore, that, once a man turned informer against a priest, he could no longer appear in public, except at the imminent risk of his life; a fact that I myself often witnessed while a little boy, when I saw crowds both of Catholics and Protestants pursue the priest-catcher and pelt him with all kinds of missiles. Notwithstanding, however, all this, vile men were found so overpowered by the greed of gold, that they went about searching for and capturing priests, both secular and regular, as if they were the worst of criminals. Notably, in the year 1718, as I well remember, seven priests—of whom one was a Dominican, two Jesuits, one a Minorite, and the remaining three Seculars—were arrested in Dublin by a Portuguese Jew, named Garzia, who passed himself off as a priest, the better to worm himself into the confidence of ecclesiastics. The whole seven were transported, having been enjoined never again to set foot in Ireland

prebend. As might be expected in the case of so near a relative of the O'Haras, this clergyman was a general favourite ; and, in proof of his great popularity, the remarkable feat is handed down by tradition that, though there were no carts at the time, all the parson's turf was carried home from the bog in one day, by the people who had assembled from all quarters, without distinction of creed, for the purpose of giving this mark of their affection. The most remarkable event in this incumbency was the obtaining by Mr. Caulfield, on the 3rd of November, 1756, for himself and successors for ever, at a rent of £5 *per annum*, from Richard, Bishop of Killala and Achonry, a glebe, which is thus described in the legal documents. "Twenty acres set off in the land demised on the 14th November, 1753, to Robert Lord Kingsborough, and called Tanny-William half quarter, Killmolash *alias* Kilvolasly half quarter, Cony half quarter, Killnamanagh three half quarters, and Ardcotton four quarters, situate in the barony of Leyney, whereof 1A. 2R. lie on the east side of the road going to Sligo, and are measured from the wall opposite the pound, extended nine perches northward, and at right angles with the said line are measured twenty-six perches seven-tenths eastward, forming with the opposite side an oblong square containing 1A. 2R. ; and 14A. 1R. 10P. lie in the fields of Ardcotton, bounded on the east with the lands let to the miller of Colooney, on the south by the river, on the west

on penalty of death. They all, however, returned, taking new names, and were left unmolested. At length, under a Hanoverian monarch, who was naturally clement, and was accustomed to the toleration of Catholics, magistrates leaned more to mercy, and all general persecutions ceased, except in the year 1744. I have used, however, the word *general* advisedly, because partial persecutions have often occurred, directed against individual ecclesiastics, or particular religious establishments, which was natural, as they could be raised by any Protestant, and at any time ; and as a matter of fact they have been often so raised. I made an exception also of the year 1744, for a general and a very violent persecution raged that year."—*Hibernia Dominicana*, p. 160-1.

by that part of Ardcotton held by Mr. William Phibbs,\* and on the north by the road leading from Colooney through Ardcotton; and 4A. 30P. lie on the north side of the said road, bounded on the east by the land held by Thomas Moore, on the south by the said road, on the west by a line formed from an angle in the road, bearing five and a-half degrees, the length thereof 34P. four-tenths, and on the north by a line bearing ninety degrees, 20P. in length, and falls in Moore park." † Mr. Caulfield died in 1772, and was buried in St. Mary's, Dublin. ‡

The next vicar and prebendary of Ballysadare was Rev. Robert Shawe, who was collated on 16th December, 1772, and of whom we know nothing else except that he continued to hold the dignity and benefice up to 1817, the year of his death. § Two of Mr. Shawe's children are buried at Ballysadare, in the interior of the old church.

\* This name is written Phipps in Ere's *Ecclesiastical Register*, but the editor is in error, as the true name is Phibbs.

† Ere's *Irish Ecclesiastical Register*, 1830; p. 255. With these data it would not be hard to make out the old globe land, though the alteration of roads that has taken place might cause some difficulty; for neither the Coolany road nor the high road to Sligo were in existence at the time this survey was taken.

‡ Lodge's *Peerage*—article, "Charlemont." The entry in Cotton is: "1742. Adam Caulfield, M.A. (son of his predecessor), appears to be Prebendary.—[*Vis. Book.*] He died in June, 1772 [D. Reg.]; and was buried at St. Mary's, Dublin." Rev. Adam Caulfield's relation to the Charlemont family is thus given in Lodge: "Captain Thomas Caulfield, the seventh son of Lord Charlemont, was seated at Dunamon, in the County of Roscommon, and 29 March, 1655, appointed a master in Chancery. He married Anne, daughter of Charles, the second Viscount Moore of Drogheda, and by her had issue two sons and three daughters, viz.: William, his heir; Rev. Toby Caulfield, who, in 1696 was presented to the union of the nine vicarages of Tawnagh, in the diocese of Elphin, and County of Sligo, was Archdeacon of Killala, and by Anne, daughter of Adam, son of Cain O'Hara of Nymphsfield, Esq., had the Rev. Adam Caulfield, A.M.; Lieutenant Richard Caulfield of Ardree, County of Sligo, and other children."—*The Peerage of Ireland*. By John Lodge, etc., vol. iii, p. 138.

§ Cotton's *Fasti Ecclesiæ Hibernicæ*, vol. iv, p. 111:—"1772. Robert Shawe, M.A., collated December 16th. He held the prebend forty-five

On September the 23rd, 1817, Rev. Joseph Verschoyle, junr., (who must not be confounded with Rev. Joseph Verschoyle, the late archdeacon of Achonry and vicar of Killoran,) was collated to the prebend and vicarage of Ballysadare. It was in his time was built the glebe-house of Ardcotton, which cost £800, of which sum £400 was subscribed as gifts, and £400 raised on loan.\* Rev. Mr. Verschoyle had resigned before the 21st of February, 1820, as Rev. Thomas Kingsbury obtained at that date the dignity and benefice of Ballysadare; but Mr. Kingsbury in turn resigned after one year's incumbency, and died in 1846.

The next incumbent was Rev. William Handcock, B.A., who was collated on the 15th June, 1821,† but resigned in 1829, in consequence, it is said, of annoyance received from certain parishioners who had taken offence at his conduct on a Twelfth of July. The Twelfth in question fell on a Sunday; and Mr. Handcock, when he entered the pulpit, finding orange lilies set before him and all round him, had them removed, on which large numbers of the congregation rose and retired from the church. To make matters worse, the Roman Catholics of the parish took up the quarrel, with which, by the way, they had no call to meddle; and, remembering the compliment formerly conferred on Rev. Adam Caulfield, they assembled in force, and carried in one day from Carrickbanagher to Ardcotton every sod of

years, till his death in 1817." It is strange that after so long an incumbency there should be no tradition whatever of Mr. Shawe in the parish of Ballysadare; very likely he resided elsewhere. Rev. Mr. Duke was his curate, and is one of the best remembered clergymen that ever passed through the parish.

\* Erc's *Ecclesiastical Register*, 1830; p. 254.

† Cotton, p. 111. The record in the *Fasti* of these two vicars is:—  
"1820. Thomas Kingsbury, M.A., archdeacon of Killala, collated February 21st [D. Reg.] He resigned in 1821."

["1821. William Handcock, B.A., collated June 15th. He resigned in 1829."]



the parson's turf, the parish priest's horse leading the way, and drawing the first crib. After this exhibition the feelings of Mr. Handcock's enemies became daily more estranged, as was natural enough, so that he determined to leave the place, and soon effected with another clergyman an exchange of benefices. The exchange was probably all the better for him, and at all events did not shorten his days, for he was alive last year, and, for aught the writer knows to the contrary, may be living still.

Rev. Charles Mulloy, B.A.,\* succeeded Mr. Handcock on the 21st of December, 1829, and died in 1832, the parish priest, Very Rev. James Henry, dying in the same year. Mr. Mulloy is buried in the graveyard attached to his church, under a tombstone, on which we read this inscription:—"Mrs. Susanna Mulloy depd. 21 of April, aged 80. Revd. Charles Mulloy, A.M., Vicar of this Parish, depd. 11th of May, 1832, aged 46."

The Rev. George Truelock, M.A. and curate-assistant of Killoran was collated, on the 27th October, 1827, to the prebend of Lackan, in the diocese of Killala; passed to the vicarage of Ballysadare in 1832; became subsequently vicar-general and archdeacon of Killala; and died on the 22rd of September, 1847.†

On Mr. Truelock's resignation in 1834, Rev. Lewis Potter, M.A., was collated to the vacant prebend and vicarage on the 5th of June that year. He, in turn, resigned in 1838, and passed to the rectory and vicarage of Dromard, in the diocese of Killala, and died in 1850.‡

\* Cotton's entry is—"1829. Charles Molloy, M.A., collated December 21st.; installed December 26th [D. Reg.] He died in 1832."—*Fasti, etc.*, vol. iv, p. 111.

† We read in Cotton—"1832. George Truelock, M.A., prebendary of Lackan, in Killala; collated May 28th. In 1833 he was appointed vicar-general of the united dioceses. In 1834 he resigned, and became archdeacon of Killala."—*Fasti Ecclesiæ Hibernicæ*, vol. iv, p. 111.

‡ Cotton's record—"1834. Lewis Potter, M.A., collated June 5th. He resigned in 1838."

Since Mr. Potter's time there have been three prebendaries and vicars of Ballysadare; all happily still living: Rev. William Newton Guinness,\* M.A., collated the 28th of February, 1838, who resigned in 1858, and lives now in Australia; Rev. W. C. Townsend, who succeeded Mr. Guinness in 1858, and resigned in 1872 with the view of accepting the living of Castlebar, which he now enjoys; and the Rev. Joseph Barker, B.A., the present respected incumbent, who was collated in 1872, being the first prebendary and vicar of Ballysadare appointed since the disestablishment of the Irish Protestant Church.

It has not been so easy as one might expect to obtain information regarding the erection of the present Protestant church of Collooney, though a comparatively recent structure. After inquiring in vain with the oldest inhabitants of Collooney for some tradition about it, and searching as ineffectually in the neighbourhood for documents to throw light on it, the writer had the good fortune of finding, among the Council Orders in the Public Record Office, Dublin, a packet of six papers on the subject. The first of these is—"The humble petition of the minister, churchwardens, and the major part of the parishioners of the parish of Ballysadara, in the diocese of Achonry, County of Sligo, to their Excellencies the Lords Justices and Council of Ireland;" the second—the petition to the same parties of Earl Belamont, proprietor of the town and land, signifying consent; the third—the order of Privy Council of Ireland referring those documents to the committee of the Board for carrying out the Act for Union and Division of parishes; the fourth—the letter of Edward, Archbishop of Tuam, giving his advice, approbation, and consent; the fifth—the letter of Henry, Bishop of Killala and Achonry, giving advice,

\* Cotton writes—"1838. William Newton Guinness, M.A.; collated February 28th. He is the present prebendary." Mr. Guinness is the last incumbent of Ballysadare mentioned in the *Fasti Ecclesie Hibernice*.

approbation, and consent; and the sixth—the petition of proprietors of the land of said parish, which is signed by C. Burton, Joshua Cooper, and John White.\*

Of these documents the five last are merely of a formal character, and can be sufficiently understood from the summary just given of their contents; but as the first is sure to be interesting to the readers of those pages for its topographical information, and under other aspects, it is given here at full length. This petition then “Humbly sheweth that in pursuance of an act for the reall union and division of parishes, wee the said minister, churchwardens, and parishioners of the said parish of Ballysadara or the major part of them, after being assembled in vestry do hereby declare that the old church or the walls of the old church of Ballysadara in the diocese of Achonry and county of Sligoe aforesaid is in a ruinous condition and remote from much the major part of the Protestant inhabitants † of the said parish, and inconvenient for the public service of Almighty God, and that the market town ‡ of Collooney in the said parish is the most convenient place for erecting a church in the said parish for the publick service of God, as by the advice and approbation of the Most Rev. Father in God, his Grace Edward, Lord Archbishop of Tuam, Primate of Ireland, and of the Right Rev. Henry, Lord Bishop of the dioceses of Killala and Achonry, by a certificate under their hands and seals hereunto annexed may appear.

“Wee the said minister, churchwardens, and parishioners assembled in vestry, do hereby signify our earnest desire and consent to remove the place of publick divine worship

\* John White lived in Spotfield, and was a near relative of the Ferralls that owned Carrickbanaghan in his time.

† The “Protestant inhabitants” of the parish of Ballysadare resided, nearly all, in the neighbourhood of Collooney at the time the petition was drawn, where they were introduced and favoured by the Cootes.

‡ Unfortunately Collooney has ceased to be a “market town,” to the great regret of the inhabitants, who are very anxious to see a market re-established in it.

from the old ruinous church or walls of Ballysadara to a more convenient place in the market town of Collooney upon the plott of ground in the quarter land of Cashell commonly called Sweeny's park, on the North adjoining Thomas Hue's his garden and on the West adjoining the great road leading from Collooney to Toberscannovan,\* by the consent of the Right Hon'ble Richd. Earle of Bellamont, Proprietor of the said place; and wee, Toby Caulfield, the present minister and incumbent, and the churchwardens for the time being, and major part of the parishioners of the said parish of Ballysadara hereby certifie that the said parish is collative † and therefore no consent of any Patron besides the bishop be required, and wee do most humbly beg your Excellencies and Lordships by vertue of the said act of Parliament to order the removal of the said place of publick divine worship from the old church or walls of Ballysadara aforesaid to a convenient place for the Protestant inhabitants of the said parish of Ballysadara, upon the said plott of ground in the quarter of Cashell in the said town of Collooney, and that the church, or place of publick divine worship to be erected there be to all intents and purposes in construction of law for ever hereafter deemed the parish church of the said parish of Ballysadara, and that the said old church and walls of Ballysadara, or

\* The "great road leading from Collooney to Toberscannovan" is now the little lane that passes by the church door, and stretches between these two places. The "new road" from Collooney to Tubberscanavon was made in the first years of this century. "Ten miles of a mail-coach road," says Dr. M'Parlan, in the *Statistical Survey of the County of Sligo*, printed in 1802, "very broad and level, and directed towards Boyle (from Sligo), so as to avoid hills, are already made. The remainder of the line to Boyle is presented and paid for. The mail-coach undertakers, after it is finished, will no doubt vie in contracting for keeping horses and every accommodation for running a mail coach from Dublin to Sligo."

† Under the late Established Church all the benefices in the diocese of Achonry were collative, the bishop being patron, except the perpetual curacy of Ballysadare, of which Mr. Cooper first, and the Misses Cooper next, were patron.

any other place heretofore made use of for publick divine worship in the said parish be never hereafter esteemed or reputed the parish church of the said parish. Witness our hands and seals this 8th day of April, 1720. And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

Tobias Caulfield,  
 Js. Bronton,  
 Thomas Rutledge, } Churchwardens.  
 Joshua Cooper,  
 Thomas Jenkins,  
 Ino. Palmer,  
 H. Loriman,  
 Edwd. Braxton,  
 John Audley,  
 Matt Phibbs,  
 Lau. Bettridge,  
 Thos. Sweeney,  
 Thomas Maxfield,  
 Alexander Morrison,  
 Edward Fletcher,  
 John Chapman,  
 Philip Vint,  
 Mauris Freeman,  
 George Thompson,  
 John Leacock,  
 William Ginks,  
 James Wither,  
 Archibald Hamilton,  
 James Lindsay,  
 John King,  
 John Adcox,  
 Thos. Hinds,  
 James Ewing,  
 Pat Gilmor,  
 John Maxfield,

Bryan McGowan,  
 John Jinks,  
     <sup>his</sup>  
 Owen † Maglone,  
     <sup>mark</sup>  
 Thomas Hall,  
 George Dorrان,  
 Ino. Thomb,  
 James Hamilton,  
     <sup>his</sup>  
 George † Harrison,  
     <sup>mark</sup>  
 Charles Jackson,  
 Thomas Millington,  
 John Hamilton,  
 James Armstrong,  
 John White,  
 John White, junr.,  
 John Knott."

From this petition, which is dated 8th April, 1720, as well as from the other documents, which are dated the same month or the May next following, we may infer that the church was built soon after 1720 ; probably in 1721 or 1722, as it is certain that an application signed and supported by so many Protestants, including two or three of commanding influence, would not lie long without effect.\*

Though the petitioners claim the old church of Ballysdare as their parish church, there is no reason to think that Protestant worship ever took place habitually in that building, considering its ruinous condition even in the time of Elizabeth ; † and the very words of the petition, " the

\* It is strange that the date of the erection, opening, or dedication of this church should not be recorded, but still this seems to be the case, for there is no such account in the documents belonging to the church, or in the Record Office, Dublin.

† *Supra*, p. 16.



old church or the walls of the old church of Ballysadara," would seem to prove this, as showing that no part of the house existed except "the old walls," in which it is unlikely a minister would have officiated. It is not, however, impossible, or even improbable, that the functions of the Protestant service were celebrated, even amid the old walls, on one or, perhaps, on a few occasions, as a form of taking possession. Though there is no express mention in the petition of the building at Mr. Sim's as a place of Protestant worship, it is pretty certain that the phrase, "or any other place heretofore made use of for publick divine worship" is intended for that structure, for the tradition of the parish is quite clear and conclusive on the fact, that it was in this house\* the Protestants of the neighbourhood had divine service before the erection of their present church, which, by the way, is sometimes called the church of St. Paul, or St. Paul's church, from, no doubt, its having been dedicated in honour of that Saint.

St. Paul's was at first, a plain, oblong, low roofed house, eighty feet long and thirty broad, including walls, with the square tower we still see at its western end. In the year 1817 this tower was surmounted with a timber spire, made of the best red pine, and covered all over with lead, which was fastened on with large headed copper nails, driven so as to form diamond patterns, that had a pleasing effect as they glistened in the sun. It was three years after the putting up of the spire when a copper ball or globe of fourteen inches in diameter, was set on its apex, the delay, it is said, having arisen from the difficulty of

\* There is also some tradition that a proselytizing school of one kind or another existed near the church. The pupils attending the school are said to have worn a uniform, in which a black cap was a conspicuous item; and, so late as forty or fifty years ago, a woman named May lived in Collooney who was often called "Dolly Black-cap," because it was believed that an ancestor of hers frequented that school.

finding any one adventurous enough to fix the ball in its place. Local gossips tell that advantageous offers were made in vain to several sailors to tempt them to undertake the perilous job. But the grand feat was at last accomplished by a cool-headed millwright and carpenter of Collooney, named John O'Reilly, who had himself and the copper ball raised by pulleys to the top of the spire in a wicker crib or basket, resembling the *nacelle* of a balloon, and thus deftly set and secured the globe in position, to the great admiration of "the size of a fair of people"—to use the words of a spectator—who had assembled from far and near to witness the exciting spectacle.\* Thirty-two years after its erection the spire was thrown down by a storm, in the year 1849; and as some Protestant banterers of the parish, on hearing that the Pope had fled that year to Gaeta, gave out that the Roman Church was without a head, the Catholic humourist took occasion from the fall of the spire to retaliate on Protestant wits, that their church had now lost *its* head, and would hardly ever recover it. This church was improved and enlarged in 1837 by the late lamented Sir John Benson, who repaired and raised the old walls, inserting new window opes and windows, re-roofed the building, added transepts, put up a handsome groined

\* John O'Reilly was regarded by all the neighbours as a man of very rare talent. He was particularly clever in adjusting mill machinery, so that, though he had very little acquaintance with the improved machinery of modern times, the English and Scotch millwrights that came across the water to work at the new mills of Camphill and Collooney were often glad, with all their experience and opportunities, to learn a lesson from him.

It would seem that his children inherited his talent. One of the sons, James, who died on the 6th of December, 1877; at North Ipswich, Queensland, erected extensive saw mills there, and had realized at his death a fortune of £12,000. This James, before emigrating, had one son, John, who remained in Ireland; and, as his father died intestate, if John should fall in with these lines, he may find in them, as the advertisements say, "something to his advantage." The writer has further important information on this subject, and shall be happy to communicate it to any member of the O'Reilly family that shall apply to him.

ceiling; and thus imparted to the structure such architectural merits as it possesses.\*

The east gable contains a fine stained glass window, erected by the filial piety of the Misses Cooper, in honour and memory of their worthy father.

\* The following remarks on Sir John Benson, which appeared in the *Sligo Champion* of November the 7th, 1874, on the occasion of his death and burial in London, may be given here, as they were sent to the newspaper by the present writer :—

“COLLOONEY—Sir John Benson was buried in Brompton, London, on Friday, the 23rd inst., to the great disappointment of the people of this neighbourhood. From the time the news of his decease arrived it was believed that the remains would be conveyed to the family vault here; and the inhabitants of Collooney were resolved to honour, in every way they could, the memory of their distinguished and gifted townsman. Though it is now nearly thirty years since Sir John removed from Collooney as a place of residence, old neighbours never ceased to take the liveliest interest in their absent friend, and to feel the warmest affection for him up to the day of his death. They were proud of his genius, and when they heard of his successes in Cork, Dublin, or London, they felt that a portion of the honours acquired came home to themselves; and his genial nature endeared him as much as his talent. Wherever or whenever Sir John could oblige he invariably did so; and it is touching in the extreme, now that the good man is gone, to hear old labourers and tradesmen recount, sometimes with tears in their eyes, numerous instances in which this employer's benevolence came to the relief of themselves and their little ones.

“Nor is this attachment to Sir John Benson confined to one creed or class. His own thoughts were too elevated and his feelings too generous to make any difference in social relations on the score of religion or party; and in employing hands to carry out his undertakings he gave no thought to the faith or politics of the applicants, but considered solely their fitness for the employment sought. Leaving narrow-minded bigots to limit even their alms to those of their own way of thinking on these subjects, Sir John found place enough in his own big heart for all neighbours, to whatever religious or political denomination they belonged. And as he made no distinction in regard to Catholics, Catholics never made any distinction in regard to him; nor was their admiration the less intense, or their love the less cordial because of their knowing him to be a sound Protestant, and, if he had any politics, to be a politician of different principles from their own.

“Sir John's principal works were executed in and around Cork, where

The cemetery of this church has been, for seventy or eighty years the chief burying-place in the parish for the Protestant parishioners. The following inscriptions are copied from the stones :—

Here Lyeth ye. Body of  
Frances Stringer wife  
to Adron Stringer who  
Departd. ys. life April ye.  
20 1738 Aged 30 years

he was constantly engaged for more than twenty years as an architect, and engineer. His mind was of large grasp and versatile, so that roads, railways, waterworks, and architecture in all its branches—domestic, civil and ecclesiastical, fell equally within its range. The taste of the deceased was perfect, and seemed an instinct; and considering that his early education was defective, owing to a delicacy of constitution that showed itself all through boyhood, it is surprising what a mastery he acquired in the sciences appertaining to the profession of the architect, such as pure mathematics, mechanics, and hydraulics.

“ Every building worth looking at in Collooney and the vicinity comes from him. The fine pile of Markrea Castle is indebted to him for much of its present proportions and beauties. It was he that erected Mr. Sim’s magnificent mills, that gave the market-house its handsome portico, that added transepts to the Protestant church, and, above all, that designed the beautiful Church of the Assumption, with its inimitable interior. And, in and near Sligo, memorials of Sir John’s abilities are not wanting. He was the architect of the new bridge, of the Dominican convent, of the pretty Protestant church of Coolerra, and of Colonel Barrett’s picturesque cottage. There are several other structures of our townsman’s through the country, all remarkable for grace of form as well as fitness and elegance of design. It is easy to see his mark on everything he had done. In truth it may be said of this talented man, as Johnson wrote of Goldsmith, that whatever he touched he adorned, and as one can know Hercules from the foot, so a competent critic can trace Sir John’s genius in the smallest as in the largest works; in the Camphill linen office, or Mr. George Allen’s tasteful little cottage, as well as in the Great Exhibition building of Dublin, or the Benson bridge and Catholic cathedral of Cork. Such a man was a credit to the whole country, though it is natural that his fellow-townsmen of Collooney should take to themselves the chief honour of his career, and have his name as a household word for themselves and their children.”

Here lieth the Body of William Martin  
of Ardcotton who departed this life  
February 10th 1769 aged 35 years Also his  
Mother Alice Martin alias Bennett (da  
ughter of George Bennett Esq Provost  
of Sligo) who departed this life August  
14th 1786 aged 89 yrs

Erected by her son James Martin of  
Coloony in memory of them and of  
his daughter Elizabeth Martin who  
departed this life April 25th 1815 aged  
18 years. And of his wife Elizabeth  
Martin alias Brown who departed  
this life Augt. 16 1816 aged 55 years

Samuel Patterson  
died January 18th 1869  
aged 69 years

---

Here Lieth the  
Body of Letty  
Flanagan alias  
Tunichft Who dep  
This Life 28th June  
1777 Aged 30 years

---

In affectionate remembrance  
of the family of  
William and Susan Shaw of Cloonen  
Called away in the bloom of life

|           |               |
|-----------|---------------|
| James     | Aged 19 years |
| Elizabeth | 13            |
| John      | 28            |
| Maryanne  | 18            |
| William   | 25            |
| Samuel    | 30            |

Here is deposited the remains  
of Margret Martin who Exe  
changed a Transitory life for an  
Eternal happiness Sept 1  
1786 aged 45 years  
Erected by her Inamoured  
husband Stephen Martin

---

Here lieth the Body of  
John Newton who departed  
this life March ye. 21st 1795  
in the 35th year of his age

---

Richard Craig of Collooney  
died 9th of June 1841 aged 64 years

---

Here lyeth the body  
of John Stokes  
who departed this  
life Feby. 25 1774  
Aged 14 years

Also his Brother George Stoks  
who departed this life Sept  
12 1775 Aged 12 years

Also their father george  
Stokes of Arcee who  
departed this life december  
the 2 1777 Aged 60 years

---

Erected by  
Ion. Armstrong Barber  
in Collooney in memory of his  
son William Armstrong who Dpd.  
this life Jany. 1st 1771 Aged 2 years



This monument was Erected by Bryan  
 Corristine in memory of Margaret  
 Corristine alias Carter who exchanged  
 a transitory life for Eternal happiness  
 August 16th 1776 aged 56 years  
 Also Peter Corristine who departed  
 this life Jany 4th 1783 aged 81 years  
 Also Anne Corristine alias Jackson  
 who departed this life March 6th 1795  
 aged 36 years

---

Here Lieth the body of John  
 Lowe who departed this life  
 December the 26th 1807  
 Aged 80 years Erected by  
 his son Ralph Lowe

---

Beneath this tombe lieth the remains  
 of Stephen Burk who exchanged a  
 transitory life for an Eternal happiness  
 On March 1st 1806 aged 48 years  
 Erected by his Son Thos Burk

---

This stone has been placed  
 Over the Grave of Mr. Mungo  
 Ewan by Edward Synge  
 Cooper Esq of Markrea  
 to testify the respect of this  
 Family for the memory of a faith-  
 ful steward

He departed this life at Mark  
 rea Castle the 11th of Jan 1815

In memory of  
 Alexander Meredith  
 who died on the 1st of June 1839  
 aged 28 years  
 Also his wife Mary Meredith  
 who died on the 13 Dec 1869  
 aged 80 years  
 Erected by their sons Thomas  
 and William Meredith

---

Here lyeth the body of  
 Jane Phetypace alias  
 Shaw who departed this  
 life 7th of June 1795 aged 37  
 yrs

---

Sacred to the memory  
 of John Petepies died Jany  
 9th 1837 aged 37 yrs Erected  
 by his wife Sarah Petepies

---

Robert Barber died  
 April 27th 1828 Aged 74 years  
 This stone was erected to his  
 memory by his son James Barber

---

Beneath  
 this stone lieth the body of  
 Abm Lawson of Knockbeg  
 who departed this life Feby 5th 1837 aged 70 years  
 Also his daughter Cathne Lawson who depd  
 this life August 19th 1837 Aged 19 years  
 And also his son John Lawson who departed  
 this life October 15th 1857  
 Aged 27 years

Underneath are deposited the  
Remains of Mr. Charles Benson  
who exchanged this life for a  
better the 4th of August 1819

To pity the distress'd inclin'd  
As well as just to all mankind  
To some he gave to others lent  
Yet blessed by Heaven's King he spar'd  
More than his charity impair'd  
The sweet remembrance of the just  
Shall flourish when he sleeps in dust

---

In  
Memory  
of

Robert Tighe  
of Knockbeg in this parish  
and of Belfast county Antrim  
Obiit 28th April 1869 Aetat 37 years  
also in memory of

Mary Tighe (alias) Carter  
Obiit 27th September 1799; Aetat 72  
Carter Tighe

Obiit 16th November 1855 Aetat 19  
Catherine Tighe

Obiit 30th May 1863 Aetat 67

---

Celia Irwin Alias Tigh  
departed this life 18th May 1844  
Aged 74

also her daughter

Elizabeth Wallace departed  
this life 18th April '47 Aged 47

Erected by her son Charles Tigh

Richard Charles Tigh

fell asleep in Jesus June the 5th 1864  
aged 15.

Here lieth the remains  
of Thomas Walker  
who departed this life  
September 24th 1833  
aged 80 years  
Erected by his wife  
Mary Walker

---

Robert Barber died  
April 27th 1828 Aged 74 years  
This stone was erected to his  
memory by his son James Barber

---

Sacred  
to the memory of the children  
of  
John and Jane Pirrie. Viz. Isabella and William  
died in infancy. Sarah Frances died May 15th 1834  
aged 21 years.

---

Here lieth the Body of  
Josph Raymond who departed  
This Life October 25 1832  
Aged 42 years  
This stone was erected by his  
Wife Mary Raymond Alias Burrows

---

John Benson  
Aged 86 years died 11 Novr 1838  
Ismena Whiteside  
Aged 28 years died 30th 1838  
Charles Benson  
Aged 20 years  
Died 16th October 1839

Here lies the remains of George Smith  
 who departed this life 10th of November 1843  
 Aged 62 years  
 Erected by his affectionate Wife Jane Smith

---

Francis Reynolds died Jan'y 14th 1814  
 aged 39 years  
 John Reynolds died Nov 22 1841  
 aged 10 years

---

Sacred  
 to the memory of  
 Philadelphia  
 the beloved wife of Sergt R Tigh  
 who exchanged this life for a better  
 Dec 16th 1866 aged 57 years  
 A loving mother and a faithful wife

---

Moses Lindsay  
 died June 2nd 1861  
 Aged 32 years

---

Adam Simpson M D  
 Royal Navy  
 died March 5th 1862

---

Here lieth the remains of  
 Sergt R Tighe  
 who departed this life the 3 of April 1875  
 in the 75 year of his age  
 leaving a wife to mourn his loss

Sacred to memory  
of Joshua Tighe  
who exchanged Mortality  
for life

10 of June 1859

aged 23 years

---

Anne C. Graham  
Fell asleep in Jesus

4 June 1857

Aged 18 years

---

James Shaw  
of Ballyfaghy  
died 9 June 1870

Aged 72 years

---

Charles William Blyth  
son of the late  
Lieutenant Charles Blyth R N  
died October 6th 1865

Aged 21 years

Jane Blyth widow of the late  
Lieutenant Charles Blyth R N

Died Dec 25th 1875

Aged 70 years

---

Maria McCullagh  
died in the Lord

Jany 22nd 1863

aged 26 years

Erected to her memory by  
her bereaved husband

Also

William Robert McCullagh  
died Feby 24 1868

aged two years



To the memory  
of  
Anne  
The beloved daughter of  
William Allen  
who departed this life  
March 17th 1866  
Aged 22 years  
Also of  
James Taylor  
youngest son of the said  
William Allen  
of Theur  
Who went to his eternal rest  
4th October 1872 aged 37 years

---

Sacred  
to the memory  
of  
James Morland a native of Scotland  
who departed this life the 16th of April 1849  
aged 51 years  
Robert Munro  
fell asleep in Jesus May 17th 1872  
Aged 18 years

---

William Armstrong  
medical officer of  
Collooney dispensary district  
died on Friday  
April the 16th 1875 of fever taken in  
the faithful and fearless  
discharge of his duty  
aged 36 years

This monument is erected to his  
beloved memory by many friends  
who knew and loved him well

If all epitaphs were as modest and truthful as this last one, these certificates of character to the dead would never have incurred the suspicions that they generally lie under at present. Dr. Armstrong was not only "faithful and fearless in the discharge of his duty," but brought to the practice of his profession an amount of ability and cultivation that would have earned fame and fortune, had his lot been cast in a wider field than a rural dispensary district of Ireland supplies. And his heartfelt sympathy with the poor, and genial urbanity to all were on a par with his talents and attainments, so that while the latter commanded general respect, the former awakened everywhere, and particularly among the humbler classes a warm personal attachment that was not felt perhaps for any other doctor in Ireland. Hence the grief diffused through the neighbourhood by the announcement of his premature death resembled rather the sorrow felt in the domestic circle for the loss of a near relative, than the passing regret usually bestowed on the demise of those with whom one has only professional or official relations. To the credit of those who had charge of the funeral, they appreciated becomingly this state of things; and it was a graceful recognition of the popular feeling that, though the doctor's family burying place is Sligo, his remains were left in the midst of the "many friends" who, to use the language of the epitaph, "knew and loved him well."—Peace to his ashes.

This may be the most suitable place for giving some account of the Protestant Church of Ballysadare, which is built on the Sligo side of the river, and adds much to the appearance and importance of that side. That part of Ballysadare is comparatively modern. The town that Sir Frederick Hamilton destroyed stood, as has been seen already, on the left bank of the river, in face of the church, but as if Sir Frederick's presence had infected the place with malaria, or people feared even the ghost of this

notorious trooper, not a single human habitation has been erected since his day on the site of the old town. Those that had been evicted by him raised about two or three hundred yards further south some new houses, which went also by the name of Ballysadare. Additions being made to the number from time to time, and in the same direction, the new town kept moving towards Collooney till it had reached some short distance beyond the spot on which the elegant residence of the Rev. Mr. Jameson now stands, when, about a hundred years ago, it wheeled back, crossed the bridge, and began to extend itself on that side. Thirty or forty years since, there were persons living who remembered the time when there were only two or three cabins on the right bank of the river; but that section of the town spread fast under the fostering care of the Right Honorable Joshua Cooper, who, in his day, was one of the most improving landlords in Ireland. In the late Mr. Cooper's time, a man named Busby built the row of houses one finds to the right hand on crossing the bridge; others added houses here and there, including the fine residence that Mr. Middleton now occupies; Mr. Culbertson built the mills and dependent structures; and Mr. Cooper contributed most of all to the beauty of the place by erecting the church and adjoining schoolhouse.

This church, though of small proportions—forty-eight feet long and twenty-eight wide—is a neat Gothic building with a handsome square tower at the western end, and a semicircular apse at the eastern, the whole structure costing it is said, £2,000, all contributed by Mr. Cooper, who was its founder and patron. It was built in 1839, was dedicated in 1840 by Right Reverend Doctor Plunket, Bishop of Tuam, Killala and Achonry, and opened the same year for divine service, the Reverend Lewis Potter, vicar of Dromard, receiving the appointment of officiating clergyman from the patron, Mr. Cooper, as that gentleman's chaplain and almoner. The most intimate and affectionate

relations subsisted between the Reverend Mr. Potter while he was vicar of Ballysadare, and the Markrea family, who were attached to him both as clergyman and friend; and it is said to have been the desire to secure the continuance of those relations that chiefly prompted Mr. Cooper, on Mr. Potter's appointment to the vicarage of Dromard, to erect the new place of worship at Ballysadare. The Rev. gentleman on his side was so anxious to meet the kind wishes of his friends as to employ a curate to perform divine service at Dromard, and thus leave himself free to officiate at Ballysadare. And Mr. Potter continued to do duty in the new church up to his death, which took place in 1850, in a very tragic manner; for having gone that year to Scotland, on a missionary tour, he fell suddenly dead of heart disease, before his congregation, while preaching in the pulpit.

Reverend Mr. Potter was succeeded in the chaplaincy by Reverend Mr. Ellis, who after a few years was obliged to resign the charge from ill health.

The Rev. Mr. Hamilton was the next chaplain, and continued in the office till 1860, when, strange to say, he died exactly similarly to Mr. Potter, the first chaplain, having fallen dead in the pulpit, while addressing his flock at Ballysadare.

Mr. Hamilton's successor was Rev. Thomas Jameson, A.B., the present incumbent, who, if the good wishes of neighbours—Protestant and Roman Catholic—can do it, will long enjoy health and happiness.

The condition of the clergymen serving this church has undergone considerable alterations in the course of time. The house was at first intended as a chapel-of-ease for the convenience of Mr. Cooper, his family, and tenants; and the income of the first chaplain came entirely out of Mr. Cooper's pocket. After Mr. Potter's death the Markrea family appealed to relatives and friends; raised funds for a partial endowment, and had the district constituted a

perpetual curacy; Mr. Cooper, and, since his demise, the Misses Cooper, being patron, and supplementing the small annual sum that the endowment allowed, so as to make it a reasonable stipend for the incumbent. We are not aware what effect Mr. Gladstone's Act has had in regard to the Ballysadare church, or whether the supplement just referred to still comes from the Misses Cooper or is taken out of the "General Sustentation Fund."

The ground attached to the church, or rather the portion of the ground then in occupation of Mr. Cooper, was consecrated for a cemetery in December, 1862, a few days previous to Mrs. Cooper's death, and in anticipation of that event, which took place on the 27th of the month. Some more land has been since added, and has, it is said, been also consecrated, the officiating prelate, on both the occasions, being Right Rev. Dr. Bernard, the present Bishop of Tuam, Killala, and Achonry.

Mrs. Cooper was the first person buried in the new cemetery; in less than a year the remains of her good husband were committed to the same vault; and since that time there have been several interments.

In looking at the interior of the church, which is extremely neat, and very tastefully furnished, you observe a handsome stained-glass memorial window, erected in memory of Robert Culbertson, Esq., J.P., and three mural tablets bearing the inscriptions that follow:—

## 1.

In memory of  
 The Revd Robert A. Hamilton  
 who was suddenly removed from this world  
 During the performance of his duty  
 To his Lord and Master  
 And in the presence of his congregation  
 August 19th 1860.

## 2.

This Tablet  
 is erected to the memory of  
 The Revd Lewis Potter  
 who opened this chapel in the month of  
 August 1840  
 And who died in Scotland in the month of  
 November 1850  
 Those who have enjoyed for ten years  
 The advantage arising from a connection with him  
 As a Christian minister and Friend  
 Offer this simple tribute to his memory.

## 3.

Sacred  
 To the memory of  
 Robert Culbertson Esqr J.P.  
 of Avena Ballisodare  
 who departed this life  
 the 9th of May 1862  
 Aged 52 years

—  
 Optimo conjugii  
 Conjux maerens  
 —

“He walketh with God and he was not  
 for God took him.”

Gen. 5 v 24.

—  
 The Methodist chapel, which stands two or three hundred feet to the north of Saint Paul's church, Collooney, was erected in 1861 on a spot of ground that the Government of the day had purchased, in 1727, from Lord Collooney and Mr. Joshua Cooper, for the purpose of building



a barrack upon it; and though the public authorities changed their minds after the purchase, and decided not to build, they held possession of the plot down to the year 1858, when it was publicly sold, and Alderman Williams of Sligo bought it for the Methodists. This chapel, which is a plain, unpretending, but substantial structure—forty-six feet long, and twenty-six wide, and capable of seating one hundred and forty people—was opened for worship the same year it was built. The services commence on Sunday at four o'clock, p.m.; and on week days at seven o'clock, p.m.; and are conducted by circuit ministers and local preachers.

This house gave great umbrage to the late Mr. Cooper, partly, it is said, because that gentleman regarded the purchase of its site—in the midst of the Markrea property—as a kind of encroachment on landlord rights, and partly, it would seem, because the Methodists refused to regulate the time of their religious services according to his good pleasure. Whatever may have been the point of view from which the deceased looked on the transaction, he felt so hurt as to resolve, in consequence, never to set foot in Collooney; a resolution, unfortunately, which was kept to the end. But had Mr. Cooper lived a few years longer, his generous nature would have brought him to think better of a proceeding, which, if examined dispassionately, appears to have been void of all offence. The Methodists could hardly be blamed for the purchase, seeing that Mr. Cooper declined to bid for the little spot, and thus seemed to leave others free to buy or not, as they liked. Nor should they be censured for following the dictates of conscience, and declining his intervention in regulating their services, however much they esteemed and respected him, as it was clear, that a man who felt so strongly and sensitively what he considered the evil of a second place of Protestant worship in the town, could hardly help having, however unconsciously, some bias in the matter.

## SECTION VIII.—STATISTICS.

To satisfy the more curious reader some statistics may be added. The number of inhabitants in Collooney according to the census of 1871 was three hundred and ninety-one, (one hundred and seventy-eight males and two hundred and thirteen females) which was hardly half the population that the village contained about the beginning of the century, when there were several rows of houses that have since disappeared. And the census of 1871 showed a considerable falling off from that of 1841, when the population was six hundred and fifty-one; from that of 1851 when the number of souls were five hundred and sixty-eight; and even from that of 1861, when the inhabitants numbered four hundred and sixty-five. The heads of houses consisted in 1871, as they consist at present, of— one merchant and mill-owner; one medical doctor; one land-agent; five publicans and grocers, including one hotel-keeper and one wholesale spirit dealer; one draper, grocer, and postmaster; two bakers, grocers, and provision dealers; one National school teacher; one Bible reader; two Church Education Society teachers; one clerk; one land surveyor; one plasterer; two millwrights; four millers; two carpenters; two tailors; one smith; one cartwright; one nailor; three shoemakers; one mill steward; one oats-buyer; two constabulary pensioners; one Markrea estate bailiff; one water bailiff; one process-server; one fiddler; one constable and three sub-constables; twelve mill labourers; two chemical work labourers; six job labourers; two farmers; and one parish priest.

The population of Collooney, though less in 1871 than in any previous year of the century, was larger then than in 1727, when Mr. Cooper purchased the place from Lord Bellamont. In a document connected with the purchase,

for which the writer is indebted to the courtesy of Colonel Cooper—the following heads of families are given as residing in Collooney in 1727, and as having the several interests attached to their names—

Lord Bellamont, owner, living in a mansion, called “My Lord’s own house.”

Hugh McLouvain, Two tenements.

William Monagh; One house with six acres of land.

John Braxton; Tuck mill, house, and garden.\*

Thos. Rutledge; House and garden with 22A. 1R. 2P. land.†

Swudy; House with 20A. 0R. 6P. of land.

Thos. Hughes; House, plot, and office house with 46A. 0R. 0P.

Swiney; Corn mill, and fairs, customs, and markets of Collooney.‡

John Hall; Partner of Swiney.

Alderman Mason; Part of Cashell and Knockbeg.

Ed. Fletcher; House and garden.

Ed. Watts; lands of Stravenagh.

\* There is a John Braxton buried in Ballysadare in the interior of the old church. An Edward Braxton is found as a witness in the “Depositions” taken after the Insurrection of 1641, the records of which are in Trinity College. And the name of Edward Braxton is found among those appended to the Petition, addressed to Lords Justices, for the removal of the parish church from Ballysadare to Collooney (see p. 121).

† Thomas Rutledge was a man of considerable means, so that he became the purchaser of Cloonamahon, Lisaneena, and Knockmullin. The two former places are still held by his descendants. Thomas Rutledge, junior, was churchwarden in 1756. And one of the churchwardens of 1820 was Thomas Rutledge, no doubt, the person mentioned above, and father of Thomas, *junior*.

‡ The Swineys or Sweeneys seem to have taken good root in Collooney, for we know that the land adjoining the Protestant church was formerly called “Sweeny’s Park,” and we find a Thomas Sweeny churchwarden in 1753, and the same, or another Thomas, in the same office, in the year 1757. After that they disappear from the records of Collooney, till we come to Dr. Sweeny, who was of a different family, and a native of Cloonamahon.

John Swiney ; House and garden.

Margaret Gallagher, *alias* Vere ; House and garden.

James Lindsay ; House and garden.

John Leacock ; House and garden.

Arthur Hamilton ; A park of 4A. 2R. 0P.

John Braxton ; House, plot, and garden.

Peter Carrigan ; House and plot, with six acres of land in Rathrippon.

Thady Finn ; Plot.

John Collery ; House, plot, and garden, with twenty acres in Rathrippon.

Daniel McFarlane ; A plot.

John Rutledge ; House and garden.

John Adcock ; House and garden.

Hugh Carrigan ; House and garden.

Taking the above list to include all the heads of families in Collooney in the year 1727, though there may have been others, such as lodgers, labourers, or caretakers, and allowing thirty souls to Lord Bellamont's house, and an average of six to each of the others, we get a total of one hundred and seventy-four inhabitants, a number that has a larger ratio to the one million six hundred and sixty-eight thousand one hundred and forty-two persons supposed to be in Ireland, at that time,\* than three hundred and ninety-one bears to five million three hundred and thirty-eight thousand nine hundred and eighty-six, the population of the country at the census of 1871. From the names we may fairly conclude that all the inhabitants of Collooney in 1727, with scarcely an exception, were Protestants, for even Sweeny, the name most likely to be that of a Roman Catholic, belonged, as we learn elsewhere,† to a

\* *Tracts and Treatises on Ireland.* Reprinted by Alex. Thom and Sons, 1861, p. 355, vol ii.

† Petition of minister, churchwardens, etc., to the Council of Ireland. See page 121.

Protestant. And the floating character of the population of Collooney comes out well in the fact that, of all the names borne in the village at that time, not so much as one survives in it at the present moment; nor is there in the place, as far as can be ascertained, a single descendant, lineal or collateral, of the twenty-four heads of families that resided there when Collooney, *alias* Cashel, was purchased by Joshua Cooper, just one hundred and fifty years ago.\*

The population of Collooney, as of the rest of Ireland, reached its lowest point at the period of the Cromwellian triumph, when war first, and famine and pestilence afterwards, made the country a wilderness. "In the years 1652 and 1653," writes the learned Mr. Prendergast, "the plague and famine had swept away whole counties, so that a man might travel twenty or thirty miles and not see a living creature. Man, beast, and bird, were all dead, or had quit these desolate places." † According to the official census of 1659, the number of souls at that time in Collooney or Killinbridge—as the place was then called—was only seventy-six; and of these thirty-seven belonged to "Coo loony castle," which was the residence of Richard Coote, Esq., who became Baron of Collooney at the Restoration.‡ It would appear that some increase of

\* The names of the present householders of Collooney are:—Sim, Allen, Moore, Gilhooley, O'Connell, O'Donoghue, Hargadon, Conolly, Drury, Bree, Scanlon, Martin, M'Donald, O'Rorke, Brennan, Barrett, Moran, Kilbride, M'Kim, Burrowes, Latimer, Cullen, Healy, Morrow, Conry, Lang, Kilcoyne, Whitesides, Coleman, Monroe, Cogan, M'Andrew, Tighe, Linton, Hart, Higgins, Noble, Gregg, Hunt, Long, Reed, Denison, Kemmit, M'Manus, Drummy, Irwin.

† *Cromwellian Settlement of Ireland*, p. 149. First edition.

See in *Appendix* the Hearth-money returns for the parishes of Ballysdare and Kilvarnet, as also the Census of 1659, as far as relates to these parishes.

‡ Richard, the *second* Baron Collooney, did not reside in M'Donogh's Castle, but in the new mansion, of which the ruin still remains. As he was one of the first to join the Prince of Orange, James II proscribed

population took place between this period and 1662, as we learn, from the hearth-money returns of that year, that twelve householders—not counting Lord Collooney—paid the tax in Killinbridge: a number, in all likelihood, that did not include the whole of the inhabitants, as, no doubt, there were some poor who were not liable to pay hearth-money, or who, if liable, failed to pay, and would not be

him by the following patent:—“Whereas, Richard, Lord Baron of Coloony, who being a Peer of our kingdom of Ireland, by his faith and allegiance to us, ought to live and reside in the said kingdom, to assist us and our chief governor with his counsel and advice, when thereunto required, yet hath transported himself beyond the seas out of our dominions; and that several others of the nobility and gentry of the said kingdom have committed the like misdemeanour, which tends much to our prejudice, and to the impoverishment of the people of said kingdom, much of the revenue thereof being by this means consumed in foreign countries; and we being graciously pleased to prevent the mischief that upon this occasion may happen, our will and pleasure is, and we do hereby (pursuant to privy seal dated at Westminster-hall 17 October, 1687) require and command the said Richard, Lord Baron of Coloony, by the duty of his allegiance to us, forthwith to repair unto our said Kingdom of Ireland, in order to inhabit and continue there, under the penalties that may thereupon ensue; and to the end the said Richard, Lord Baron of Coloony, may pretend no excuse, under colour of any license or licenses he may have, or pretend to have for his said absence, we do hereby revoke, annul, and make void every such licence, or pretended licence, that he, the said Lord Baron of Coloony, hath, or may pretend to have, to countenance his said absence; and in case the said Richard, Lord Baron of Coloony, will prove refractory or disobedient to this our command, we do hereby require and command our chief governor and governors of Ireland, for the time being, to order that he be proceeded against according to law for such his disobedience.” Baron Coloony seemed indifferent to those proceedings, and only attached himself the more to the Prince of Orange, who showered favours on his lordship, making him treasurer and receiver-general to the Princess, appointing him Governor of the County Leitrim, and advancing him to the dignity of Earl of Bellamont. In 1695 King William named the earl Governor of New York, which legal office he held till death, which took place at New York on the 5th of March, 1700. On his decease the deputy-governor and council proclaimed ‘a general fast to be observed throughout the province, to bewail the loss of such a governor, as a publick calamity, so much were his virtues known and esteemed.’”—*Lodge's Peerage of Ireland*: by Mervyn Archdall, A.M., vol. iii, page 213.



returned.\* It should however be observed that the name, Killinbridge, was applied to both ends of the bridge, for in the census of 1659 we find Killinbridge, in the barony of Tilerill, set down as containing thirty-nine people, and Killinbridge, in the barony of Leyney, as having fourteen; and as some of the twelve, who are given in the "returns" as having paid the tax in Killinbridge, may have lived, and very probably did live at the Leyney end of the bridge—the place now called Camphill—we cannot infer with certainty from these returns the exact population of Collooney—the Tilerill Killinbridge—though we are pretty safe in concluding, that the inhabitants were somewhat more numerous in the decade of years beginning with 1660, than in the previous decade of years, which was probably the most disastrous period through which even long-suffering Ireland has ever passed. May a kind Providence save the country in general, but Collooney in particular, for all future time, from so agonizing an ordeal.

\* Thom's *Tracts and Treatises*, vol. ii, page 412.

## CHAPTER III.

## MARKREA.

## SECTION I.—FORMER OWNERS OF MARKREA.

MARKREA\* adjoins the townland of Collooney on the south-east, and is so called from two Irish words—*magh* and *reagh*—signifying, the brown plain. There is a silly tradition that the name is derived from one Mark Rea, some former owner, it is alleged, of the place; but this is pure invention, and comes of the custom, unfortunately too common in Ireland, of fabricating derivations of local names when the true origin is unknown. But that the genuine signification of Markrea is that here given is confirmed by the decisive authority of Mr. W. M. Hennessy, who writes: “From both forms—MARCRE and the *alias* MACKREAGH—

\* “Mercury,” says Dr. MacParlan, in his *Statistical Survey of the County of Sligo*, page 7, “the residence of Colonel Cooper (Joshua), lies within about seven miles south of Sligo; this demesne is equally convenient and handsome; the soil is deep and exuberantly rich; when connected with the Onion Woods, the whole will consist of about 1200 acres. It is composed of small sloping hills of different shapes and sizes, swelling alternately with woods and verdant lawns; the river Unshion wanders in mazy windings through the whole, and imparts while it receives a great deal of ornament.”

The name “Collooney” is explained by some in the same fanciful way as “Markrea.” There was a chieftain once of the M'Donoghs, so the story runs, who had two daughters, one called Una, and the other Anna; and as he gave the lands of Collooney to one sister, and the lands of Coolany to the other, these places got their present denominations from that fact, Collooney signifying the “portion of Una,” and Coolany the “portion of Anna.” This fancy is not only inconsistent with the true derivation of Collooney from one of the old names of the place, viz., *Cuilmuine*—the district of the shrubby places—but is also at variance with the facts of history, for Coolany was always a part, and an important part, of the territory of the O'Haras, and never belonged to the M'Donoghs.

I conclude that the old name of Markrea was Magh-Riab-hach, pronounced Magh-Reagh.”\*

At present the owner of Markrea has a chiefry on Cloonamahon, but formerly it was Cloonamahon that gave the law to Markrea; for the first mention we find of the place occurs in an inquisition, sped at Sligo, on the 26th September, 1614, before Sir John King and others, which informs us that Markrea was the property, in 1598, of Maurice Caech M'Donogh Trowse † of Cloonamahon. It may interest County Sligo men to know the names of the jurors in this case, as they were the leading men of the county at the time; they are: Laurence Hart of . . . . .

\* Letter of Mr. Hennessy to the writer.—Markrea, or in English, the brown plain, was most probably so called from the dark colour imparted by the rushes that formerly covered the land, and that are not quite extirpated yet.

† A trouse, or trowse (probably from the French word *trousser*, to truss or tie up), was a tight fitting article of dress, that comprised in one piece “britches, stockings, and socks, or sandals;” and Maurice Caech must have got the name of “Trowse” (of the trowsers) from continuing to wear this garment after others of his class had given it up, or perhaps, *vice versa*. As we learn from the *Life of Sir John Perrot*, page 198, Irish chiefs laid aside the trouse with great reluctance, though their own clergy, as well as the English authorities, did what they could to discredit it. Sir John would not admit members habited in the Irish mantle and trouse, to attend the Parliament he had convoked in 1586; and to induce those summoned to that assembly to appear in English attire “he bestowed both gownes and cloakes of velvet and satten on some of them as Turlough Lenough, and others;” a full dress, whatever it might be now, not being an inappropriate gift for a gentleman, at a time when a rich robe was often a most acceptable present to the Queen. “And yet,” continues the *Life of Sir John Perrot*, “the Irish chiefs thought not themselves so richly, or at least so contentedly attired in their new costume as in their mantles and other country habits. Among whom we may remember one, who being put into English apparel, came unto the Lord Deputy and besought one thing of him, which was, that it would please his lordship to put one of his chaplains, whom he termed his Priest, to accompany him arrayed in *Irish apparel*, and then, quoth he, they will wonder as much at him as they now do at me; so shall I pass more quietly and unpointed at.” This Irish chief was a wag.—See *The Works of Sir James Ware*, vol. ii, page 177.

(place illegible in MS.) ; Andrew Crean, Annagh (Hazelwood) ; Phelim O'Connor, of Glan ; Thomas Green, of Bricklieve ; Donogh O'Connor, of Lavally ; Torlogh Daragh O'Connor, of Drum ; Cormac Oge MacWilliam Hart, of Ardtarmon ; Robert M'Wine, of Ballinfull ; Ferdaragh O'Connor, of Dunally ; Carbry M'Dowaltagh M'Donough, of Tullough ; Erril O'Hara, of Moymelough ; and Owen M'Swine, of Dunecontratin. Having been duly sworn, the jury found " that Maurice Caech M'Donough Trowse, of Clonmahine, with divers other false traitors unknown, entered into rebellion on the 1st May, 1598, and was slain in the same rebellion on the 17th August, 1598 ; and that the aforesaid Maurice Caech M'Donough Trowse was seized of the ' trine of Marcrea with its appurtenances ; the town of Ardeurley, with its appurtenances ; Mullaghbrian, the town and parcel of Lishconagh, Derryglis (Red Fort), Augheculback, Knockroe, Knockraver, Kinaghan, Rathgran, in barony of Tirerril ; Knockrenge, Drumdurly, and Clonbuynagh, in barony of Corran.' This Maurice Caech was the son of ' Morryshe M'Donoghe, of Clonemahyne, gent.,' one of the signatories of the Indenture between Sir John Perrott and the chieftains of Sligo."\*

\* The following persons were the parties to the Indenture :—" Right Honorable Sir John Perrott, Knight, Lord Deputy-General of Ireland for and on the behaulfe of the Queen's most excellent Majesty, of the one partye ; and the reverend fathers in God John Bishop of Elphine—Owyn Bishop of Aconry—Owine electe Bishop of Killalae—Sir Donyll O'Connor of Sligo, Knight—Pheolyme O'Harte of Ardtarmon otherwise called O'Hart, chief of his name—Owin O'Connor of the Grawndge, gen.—Edmond O'Dowey (O'Dowda) of Kilglasse, otherwise called O'Dowey, chief of his name—Hubert Albanaghe of Rathly, gen.—Breene McSwyne of Ardneglasse, gen.—Davy Dowdy of Castle-Connor, gen.—Cormocke O'Harey (O'Hara) of Cowlany otherwise called O'Harey buy, chief of his name—Ferrall O'Harry of Ballinefennock, otherwise called O'Harry reoghe, chief of his name—Breene O'Harry of Tulwy, gen.—Owene O'Harey of Cowlany, gen.—Ferrdorrage McDonoghe of Cowleae, otherwise called McDonoughe Tyrreryll, chief of his name—Mellaghlyne McDonogh of Ballydownne, gen.—Melaghlyne McDonoghe of Cowlwonye, gen.—Morryshe McDonoghe of Clonemahyne, gen.—Cene

In the 11th year of James I, the year of the above inquisition, the recited lands were granted by the king to Alderman Weston, Dublin.\* The alderman did not hold possession long, for we find the property passing, six years later—the 17th of James I—to Sir Francis Annesley. In that year the king, by letters patent, authorised the Lord Deputy to cause “a grant to be made to Lord Cromwell or to any person or persons to be named by him, of land and tenements to the amount of £400 per annum, and the said Lord Cromwell, by deed dated 9th June—17th year of the king—named Sir Francis Annesley to accept lands and manors to the amount of £50 sterling out of this grant;” who, accordingly, had the forfeited lands of Maurice Caech M'Donough Trowse granted to him in 1620, under the following denominations:—“the trean or quarter of Marcre *alias* Macreagh; the trean of Ardcurley; Mullaghvrien, otherwise Mullaghbrien or Tubberscanman; Lishconae, otherwise Inchynasowle or Lurganboy; Dearglish, otherwise Tournalodan or Cartronreagh; Achculback; Knockroe, otherwise Lishemullura; Knockenarrow; Kinaghan, otherwise Inchynegappul; Rathgrany in Tirerill barony; the quarter of Drumdruly, otherwise Derrangregie; and the quarter of Clownebuyneagh al., Clownebuyne, in Corran barony, parcel of the lands of Morish Kaegh M'Donogh M'Teigue Trowse, slain in rebellion.”

McHughe of Bryckleawe, gen.—John Croftone of Ballymote, gen.—George Goodman of Taghtample, gen.—Manus Reoghe of Rathmollyne, gen.—Manus McTeig bwy of Lysconnowe, gen.—Alexander McSwine of Loughtnevynaghe, gen.—Urryell Garry of Moye, otherwise called O'Garry, chief of his name—Rory O'Garry of Kearowercoghe, gen.—and Manus M. Bryne Reogh of Levally, gen.—of the other partie.”—O'Flaherty's *West Connaught*, by James Hardiman, M.R.I.A.; p. 341.

\* In Weston's grant, the lands mentioned are, “Lishconae, Dearglish, Aghulback, Knockrohe, Drumedrully, 1 qur. each; Knockenarrow, Cunnychaine, Rathgranny, Knocekroy,  $\frac{1}{2}$  qur. each; Clownbonagh, 1 qur.; Marcrea, Ardcurley, Mullaghbriney, 1 treane each; rent £2 13s. 4d. This grant is dated 7th January, 11th year of James I.

These lands were to be held "in free and common soccage by fealty only;" the rents "for the tream of Marcre and all the other lands in Sligo," being £3 sterling. By Annesley, Markrea and most of his other acquisitions in the County Sligo, were transferred to one of the Plunkets, in whose family they remained till 1641, when Patrick Plunket, as has been mentioned, took an active part in the insurrection, and forfeited his fine estate.

The lands of Markrea, as well as of various other forfeited districts in the County Sligo, were assigned to Cromwell's soldiers in satisfaction for arrears of pay, and fell to the share of Sir Charles Coote's regiment of dragoons, in which Edward Cooper was cornet. In the preliminary arrangements of the Cromwellian Settlement it was agreed that all Connaught, with the exception of the towns and a four-mile belt \* around the province, should be reserved for the transplanted Irish; but as the execution of the settlement progressed it was found that the three other provinces were insufficient to satisfy the claims, real

\* "By the Act of Parliament which assigned Connaught for the habitation of the Irish nation, the only parts reserved from them," writes Mr. Prendergast, the highest living authority on this portion of Irish history, "were the towns and a belt of ground four miles wide beginning at one statute mile round the town of Sligo, and so swinging along the sea coast, to be planted with soldiers, in order to shut out relief by sea from abroad. This belt, as land became scarce, was reduced first to three miles, and finally contracted to one mile. The baronies of Tirrera and Carbury in Sligo, then Tirerril, Corran, and Leyney, were first taken away, and set out to satisfy the disbanded. And the transplanters who had received assignments there had to gather up their flocks and herds, and with their weary and heart-broken wives and children to begin their wanderings again. The ancient proprietors, too, who had probably been comparing their happier lot with the poor transplanted, to lose only part of their lands to afford the exiles a maintenance, while they still kept their old mansions, had now to transplant to make way for the English soldiery. . . . The officers now took a good part of Tyrawley, on the ground that by such an English plantation the sea coast would be greatly secured."—*The Cromwellian Settlement of Ireland*: by John P. Prendergast, Esq., pp. 187-8.



and fictitious, of the soldiers and adventurers, so that it became necessary not only to diminish the four-mile line to a one-mile line, but to give them, in addition, a part of the County Sligo\* and other districts, whatever might become of the Irish. Here, as in the other provinces, the soldiers obtained their debentures by lot,† and as soon as they had obtained them, offered them for sale. The price asked was generally small; often little more than nominal; and it was by purchase under these circumstances—far more than by the debentures accruing to themselves—that Cromwellian officers gained the large estates that many of their descendants still hold.

\* Mr. Prendergast quotes the following curious document, which must have special interest for County Sligo readers:—"A list of several persons of Captain Lewis Jones's troop of horse that desire satisfaction for their arrears in the county of Sligo:

|                                   |    | £   | s. | D. | A.  | R. | P. |
|-----------------------------------|----|-----|----|----|-----|----|----|
| Colonel John Jones,               | .. | 43  | 19 | 0  | 97  | 3  | 24 |
| Alexander Irwin,                  | .. | 22  | 14 | 4  | 45  | 1  | 24 |
| Christopher Jones,                | .. | 21  | 15 | 8  | 43  | 2  | 0  |
| Richard Jones,                    | .. | 20  | 8  | 2  | 40  | 3  | 8  |
| James Hugh,                       | .. | 21  | 3  | 5  | 42  | 1  | 8  |
| Quarter Master Nicholas Goulding, |    | 232 | 14 | 9  | 465 | 1  | 24 |

"These are to certify that the arrears of the above persons are stated, and amount to the several sums according to their names respectively annexed, for which proportions of land are required at the rate of £500 for 1000 acres; as is likewise to their sums affixed, which amounts in the whole for the said £367 13s. 0d. to the sum of 735A. 1R. 8P. 30th March 1655. William Digges.

"To Major W. Shepherd, Major John King, and the other Commissioners for setting out lands in the County of Sleigo, that they be added to the list of those to be satisfied there and be permitted to draw lots as if they had been named in the original list."—*Cromwellian Settlement*, p. 87.

† "On debate of the matter whether they should take their lands by lots or have them assigned to them respectively by some competent authority they resolved for the former mode, declaring that they had rather take a lot upon a barren mountain as a portion from the Lord, than a portion in the most fruitful valley upon their own choice."—*The Cromwellian Settlement*, etc., p. 83, where Mr. Prendergast quotes *Petty's Down Survey*: by Larcom, p. 91.

## SECTION II.—THE COOPERS IN MARKREA.

CORNET COOPER was a prudent and ambitious man, and availed himself of the favourable circumstances of the country, to secure an estate and found a family in Ireland. Even before Cromwell's time the cornet had acquired some land in this country, for in an Exchequer inquisition taken in Mallow, on the 10th October, 1631, we find Edward Cooper given as the possessor of the lands of Ballet Knockane, Conello barony, County Limerick; but the chief part of the lands left to his family by the cornet at his death, had been purchased as soldiers' debentures. It is pretty certain that the prices paid were extremely moderate,\* though there is no official account of them; but, fortunately, there is extant a document containing the names of the parties from whom Cornet Cooper bought his debentures, the amount of arrears of pay for which these debentures had been made over to the soldiers, the denominations and qualities of the lands thus transferred, and the names of the proprietors that owned them in 1640. This information we find in a Report and Decree of his Majesty Charles the Second's Commissioners for putting in execution the Acts of Settlement and Explanation. In their decree, which is dated the 19th September, 18th year of his Majesty's reign, and which was inrolled on the 20th September, 1666, the Commissioners certify that "they have compared and examined the Petition and Schedule of Cornet Edward Cooper† and found that the claimant has purchased the debentures hereafter mentioned, from the parties hereunder and hereafter named, whose lotts fell in the County Sligo."

\* Debentures were freely and openly sold for 4s. and 5s. per pound.—Prendergast's *Cromwellian Settlement of Ireland*, p. 99.

† By the Act of Settlement every one who had received land under the usurper's rule was obliged to send in his claim."—Prendergast's *Cromwellian Settlement*, p. 212.

This Schedule of the Cornet's purchases is a somewhat lengthy Document, but we must not omit it as it relates to a family of such standing in the County, and throws interesting light on the history of the parish: it is as follows:

|    | Debenture Holders.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Arrears.                                                                                                                                                                                                | Denomination of Land.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | MEASUREMENT                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                  | Proprietors in 1640.                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Profitable Land.                                                                                                                                         | Unprofitable Land.                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 1  | { Michael Cooper, . . .<br>John Noble, . . .<br>Wm. Smith, . . .<br>Edward Wallis, . . .<br>John Glasse, . . .<br>John Troope, . . .<br>Wm. Mulconry, . . .<br>Wm. Crossadan, . . .<br>Thomas Noble, . . .<br>Robert Roger, . . .<br>James Gilpatrick, . . .<br>Wm. Roger, . . .<br>* Connor Reynolds, . . .<br>Cornet Gilbert Carton, . . .<br>Robert Brown, . . . | £ s. D.<br>33 2 9 }<br>40 10 0 }<br>43 5 5 }<br>22 1 10 }<br>46 18 11 }<br>35 19 0 }<br>46 18 1 }<br>28 10 8 }<br>46 18 1 }<br>25 15 6 }<br>27 12 3 }<br>40 10 0 }<br>27 1 3 }<br>135 8 0 }<br>46 0 0 } | Marcie one and a third }<br>quarter, }<br>Ardeurly' one a half }<br>quarter }<br>Half quarter of Ragrany,<br>Three cartrons of Car-<br>rowmire, Ballindrite,<br>Half-quarter of Cloony,<br>Half townland of Mul-<br>laghbrin,<br>Half-quarter of Ragrany,<br>The quarter of Ramigrane<br>Cloonanaghmore one and<br>a third quarter,<br>Cloghfin one quarter, .<br>Cloonenroe one quarter,<br>Corray one quarter, . .<br>Knoekrawer one quarter,<br>LEYNEY BARONY.<br>Part of two quarters of<br>Moylough, | A. R. P.<br>146 0 0<br>129 0 0<br>39 0 0<br>87 0 0<br>86 0 0<br>56 0 0<br>39 0 0<br>58 0 0<br>154 0 0<br>84 0 0<br>82 0 0<br>87 0 0<br>84 0 0<br>308 0 0 | A. R. P.<br>24 0 0<br>.. ..<br>.. ..<br>.. ..<br>.. ..<br>.. ..<br>.. ..<br>.. ..<br>.. ..<br>.. ..<br>.. ..<br>.. ..<br>.. ..<br>.. ..<br>.. .. | Pat Plunket.<br>Pat Plunket.<br>Pat Plunket.<br>Wm. Crean.<br>Heirs of Bryan M'Donagh.<br>Pat Plunket.<br>Jasper Ffallon.<br>Pat French.<br>O'Connor Sligo.<br>Pat French.<br>C. M'Donnell.<br>John French.<br>John French.<br>Paul Higgins. |
| 10 | { Quarter-Master Chas.<br>Cartwright,                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 263 0 0                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 11 | Owen O'Gallagher, . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 46 18 11                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 12 | Archibald Naper, . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 39 11 7                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

\* Lots 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11, were claimed by the Earl of Strafford, and decreed to him.

## Schedule (continued).

| Debenture Holders.                 | Arrears. | Denominations of Land.                                   | MEASUREMENT.     |                    | Proprietors in 1840.             |
|------------------------------------|----------|----------------------------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|
|                                    |          |                                                          | Profitable Land. | Unprofitable Land. |                                  |
| 13 James Black, . . . .            | 28 10 8  | CARBERRY BARONY.<br>Templebreigh one-fourth quarter,     | 24 0 0           | .. ..              | Garret Baxter & Andrew Clean.    |
| 14 Wm. Provml, . . . .             | .. ..    | TIERILL BARONY.<br>Third part of Knockroe,               | 102 0 0          | .. ..              | Pat Plunket.                     |
|                                    |          | CORRAN BARONY.<br>Drumdroley, <i>alias</i> Derry-negryg. | 75 0 0           | .. ..              | Carbry M'Donagh.                 |
|                                    |          | In the quarter of Tawn-enamore,                          | 140 0 0          | .. ..              | Hugh O'Gara & Owen Herehoney.    |
| 15 Owen Downey, . . . .            | 46 18 11 | Clonbanagher one qutr.                                   | 130 0 0          | .. ..              | Carbry M'Donagh.                 |
| 16 Garry O'Cahan, . . . .          | 50 2 0   | Lissanahela, . . . .                                     | 107 0 0          | .. ..              | Cahill M'Donogh.                 |
| 17 * Michael Mahony, . . . .       | 38 19 1  | Cashel half a quarter, . . . .                           | 51 0 0           | .. ..              | Pat Plunket.                     |
|                                    |          | Ardskenney, . . . .                                      | 47 0 0           | .. ..              | Charles Cartwright.              |
|                                    |          | Urliare, . . . .                                         | 99 0 0           | .. ..              | Daniel M'Nogley & Der-mot Crany. |
| 18 Michael Poskeridy, . . . .      | 191 15 0 | Russin, . . . .                                          | 156 0 0          | .. ..              | Connor M'Donogh.                 |
|                                    |          | Ardkeere, . . . .                                        | 63 0 0           | .. ..              | Daniel M'Nogley.                 |
|                                    |          | LEYNEY BARONY.                                           |                  |                    |                                  |
|                                    |          | Carrowkeel, . . . .                                      | 117 0 0          | .. ..              | Hugh O'Hara.                     |
|                                    |          | Roscanbad, . . . .                                       | 16 0 0           | .. ..              | John O'Hara.                     |
| 19 { Ensign Morgan<br>Farrelly + } | .. ..    | Sheshbegarry and Shesh-benaclevry,                       | 383 0 0          | .. ..              | Bryan O'Hara and Manus M'Aliny.  |

\* Ensign Cartwright had some lien on this lott.

+ Farrelly is sometimes written Farrell, and this Ensign Morgan Farrelly seems to have been the same person as Morgan Farrell, gent., who is given in the Census of 1659 as the Tituladoc of Carrickbeanaghan, and who was, no doubt, ancestor of the Farrells that owned that property down to the year 1854.

From these figures we find that Cornet Cooper purchased in the County Sligo, 2823 acres and 3 roods which had been given to Cromwell's soldiers in discharge of a total debt of £1387 12s. 3d. In Kerry he bought debentures to the extent of 1368 acres 3 roods and 30 perches; and in Limerick, between what was purchased and what fell to his lot for personal arrears, Mr. Cooper became owner of 1013 acres of the best land in that fertile county. All his lands in Sligo, Limerick, and Kerry, amounted to 5205 acres 2 roods and 20 perches. At death, the cornet left the Limerick and Kerry estates to his third son, Richard; the eldest, Edward, having died without issue, and the second son, Arthur, inheriting the Sligo property.

From the beginning, the Coopers took up a foremost place among the chief families of the county, and have ever since maintained that position. Along with owning the Markrea estate, Cornet Cooper held high public office in his day, being *Receiver of Crown rents for the County Sligo*, an office held later by Lord Bellamont, and now filled by the "Land Revenue Department."

In the second year of James II, that monarch granted, by letters patent, to Arthur Cooper, son of the cornet, and his successor in the possession of the estate, various denominations of land; created these lands a manor, to be known as the *Manor of Markrea*; and granted power and authority to hold, in the said manor, a court leet twice in every year; a court baron every three weeks, or seldomer; and a law day or court of record, at such times and places within said manor as should be thought fit. Mr. James Noble, Tubberscanavan, was the last seneschal of the manor court, his commission from Edward Joshua Cooper bearing date the 30th day of April, 1855. The king, by the same letters patent, granted Arthur Cooper power to keep a prison, to empark 500 acres, and "to hold two yearly fairs for ever on the lands of Tubberscanlon (Tubberscanavin), one on Trinity Monday, and the other on the fourth

day of September, and on the following day next after each, with the usual tolls and customs" (date of Patent, 27th May, 2nd year James II; inrolled 15th June, 1686).

This Arthur Cooper took an active part in the proceedings of the neighbourhood during the period of the Revolution, not only keeping a garrison at Markrea Castle, but also moving about at the head of dragoons with the object of promoting the interests of William III. On one occasion we find him reconnoitring the vicinity of Ballymote, and driving beyond the drawbridge, and within shelter of the castle, some Jacobite troops that were under the command of the famous Counsellor Terence M'Donogh, the counsellor having one man killed and five wounded in the rencounter (MacKenzie's *Siege of Londonderry*, p. 16). For these proceedings, Arthur Cooper and his brother, Richard Cooper, were attainted in James the Second's Parliament of 1689, but after the treaty of Limerick they came back to the castle and became more firmly rooted than ever in the estate.

By the purchase of the Coote estates in 1727, at the departure of Lord Bellamont from Collooney, and the addition of them to the Markrea property, Joshua Cooper, the son of Arthur, became one of the largest landed proprietors in the County Sligo, and thus acquired commanding political influence in the county; and as a result of this influence, we find him soon installed in the office of member of Parliament for the County Sligo—an office in which he has been followed by all the members of the family that have since succeeded to the possession of the estate, namely, his son, the Right Hon. Joshua Cooper; his grandson, Colonel Joshua; his great grandson, Edward Joshua; and his great great grandson, the present Colonel Cooper.

It was the cornet that erected Markrea Castle, but the building at first was small in comparison to the noble pile we now see, and it owes its present proportions to Joshua



Cooper, the son of the Right Hon. Joshua and Alicia Synge ; to the late Edward Joshua, who added considerably to its size, and much more to its beauty ; and to the present owner, Colonel Cooper, who has encompassed it with battlemented walls, that look like the outworks of a fortified place, and give the castle the appearance of a fortress quite as much as of a private mansion. The cornet's descendants have inherited his love of land, and while they retain every acre transmitted by their ancestor, they have been constantly adding, whenever opportunity offered, to the original estate, so that at the present moment, Colonel Cooper is the owner of near 40,000 acres in Ireland. Since the days of the Revolution the possession of Markrea by the Coopers has been all through pacific, and unmarked by any incident that calls for detailed notice.

Mr. Froude\* states that in 1793, during what is locally called the *Horn War*, " Marcray Castle in Sligo, the house of Mr. Cooper, a staunch Protestant member of Parliament, was sacked, the arms carried off, and the cellars emptied." Those who are acquainted with the characteristic qualities of *The English in Ireland*, will not be surprised to learn that this weighty assertion is unfounded in all its parts. The castle was *not* sacked *nor* attacked ; the arms were *not* stirred ; the cellars were *not* emptied, nor most probably, entered at all. When a neighbour mentioned Mr. Froude's statement to a man who worked as a labourer about the castle in 1793, Michael Gray, who still survives, and is hale and hearty, of sound mind and memory, in his 103rd year, he exclaimed indignantly, " It's all a big lie, sir ! All that happened was this. The right honourable was away when the horn boys were up, and most of the servants too. The labourers were in and out of the castle, and drank beer or something which they found in the servants' hall, or some place. One or two of them got drunk—and a half fool of a fellow

\* *The English in Ireland, in the Eighteenth Century* : by J. A. Froude, vol. iii, p. 109.

named ———, went up-stairs to the window, as the right honourable used to go, and called out, “*Go back, go back, go back.*” Now, he did this to imitate the right honourable, who was always saying to the people, that used to be travelling through the demesne, on a kind of pass, *go back, go back, go back.* And the right honourable paid a man, Bryan Beg Lynch, who had no other work to do but to hinder the people from passing. And it’s the way the right honourable had for giving Bryan his orders, to say, “Bryan keep them all back, but let *Doorla* pass.” Now, *Doorla* was Father O’Connor, for his reverence lived in *Doorla*, and the priest was the only one allowed to go that way. So that the right honourable was a good man after all. A turkey or two were stolen at the same time by some ould woman or another. And that’s the whole affair. Pshaw! much about it!” And when asked again, whether the arms were taken away, and the cellars invaded, Michael answered energetically, “Not at all, sir;” and added in language neither pious nor polite, “whoever said that is a ———.” But no matter, the ardent old man’s asseveration came at all events to this, that Mr. Froude is a very untrustworthy authority on matters at Markrea in 1793.

And this is the mouse which the historian metamorphoses into so enormous a mountain. Given the drinking bout of a few ignorant labourers, the silly window exhibition of a simpleton, and the petty larceny of a couple of turkeys, and *presto*, you see these rather commonplace occurrences issue from under the pen of Mr. Froude, as the sacking of a castle, the pillaging of arms, and the emptying of cellars. Let no one for the future give the palm for burlesque to Cervantes, for surely here is a feat that throws everything written in *Don Quixote* into the shade.

Arthur Young visited the Right Hon. Mr. Cooper, at Markrea, in 1776—just a century ago—and devoted to what he saw and heard during the visit, a dozen pages of

the *Tour in Ireland*, which are full of interest for those who belong to this part of the country. We note here a curious statement or two. "In less than a century," he writes, "almost the whole county, as well as Roscommon, was a moor."\* Of rent, he says, "about this place the rent of land on an average is 15s. per acre; some of the mountains, that are not limestone, let for very little, 2s. per acre." In his concluding observation on Markrea, he tells us, "Mr. Cooper has remarked that the great improvement of this part of Ireland commenced about the year 1748, and that rents now are, to what they were before that period, as fifteen to six." †

\* Arthur Young's *Tour in Ireland*, vol. i, p. 327.

† It will not be amiss to give here another extract or two, which will show that the Right Honorable Joshua Cooper was a very improving owner of land: "Mr. Cooper has reclaimed," says Arthur Young, "and is reclaiming sixty-five acres of bog, which is twelve feet deep, and was so wet and rotten that no animal could go on it without being swallowed up; much of it had been so mangled and cut in holes, to get turf, that the levelling in order for the plough was put out at £1 10s. an acre. A great drain was made round it—nine feet broad at top, ten deep, and quite narrow at bottom—and repeated these drains, but not so large, at the distance of sixty yards from each other. A drain of nine feet wide at top, and six deep, costs 10d. a perch. The above drains were done by the day. In one year after the bog was dry enough to plough, which he did, and burnt the furrow, and sowed rape; the crop middling, eat it with sheep. The second year ploughed and burnt it again, and had a second crop of rape; after which another year of rape and turnips, and it now lies with the grasses that came of themselves after these operations, . . . . To such as have bogs to improve he would recommend to surround the space to be improved with a drain so deep as to go to the gravel, which is a point he thinks very necessary; as when this is done, if there is any fall at all for the water, the drain will keep open, and not close up, as it will do if not so deep, for want of a hard surface for the water to run on. . . . Oxen he has used for tillage, etc., eighteen years, instead of horses; works them in common yokes, and bows four or six in a plough; but he thinks that four horses will do more work in a day than four oxen; yet finds the latter incomparably the most profitable. Mules he finds of the greatest use. They are much longer-lived than horses, hardier, easier fed, and more profitable; but this is principally applicable to the small Irish mule, and not the large ones from Spanish asses, which

The Right Hon. Joshua Cooper was not only member of Parliament for Sligo, but also a member of the Privy

are not so hardy, and more liable to disorders. They are never fed so well as horses, yet go through more labour, and are much superior to them for carrying burdens. One caution, however, should be used in relation to their food. If wheat straw is cut into chaff and given, it will kill them; the late Bishop of Elphin lost all his mules by it. Mr. Cooper has fattened many hogs on potatoes, and he has found that raw potatoes will fatten them very well, but the fat will be flabby and greasy; but if the potatoes are parboiled, and well sprinkled with salt, the flesh will be firm and perfectly good. He once tried fattening a cow on them, and she did admirably, but eat so much, that at the very lowest price it would not answer to give them."—*Tour in Ireland*, p. 335.

At a time when, unfortunately, grazing is so prevalent, an extract from the same work, and from the part of it relating to Markree, showing the dealings of graziers 100 years ago, will not be out of place: "The system of cattle is various; the graziers upon good grass buy in cows in the month of May, at £3 10s. average, and sell out in November and October, at a profit of £1 10s., also buy oxen three years old in October, give them coarse hay, and sell them fat or in good order the autumn following; buy in at £4 10s., and sell out at £7, and he will take for meadow half an acre of hay, and one and a half for summer; besides which there will be one sheep and a half per acre the year through, which will pay 12s. Upon worse land they go into the succession system, which is—buying year-olds at 25s. on an average; these as well as the preceding for cattle, which at four years old come to 5 cwt., which is the common size of the county."—*Tour in Ireland*, p. 331.

As to the "Rise of Rents," Mr. Young says: "Lord Longford more than doubled in thirty years—Earl of Inniskilling quadrupled in ditto.—Mr. Cooper almost trebled since 1748—Mayo trebled in forty years—King's County two thirds since 1750—Tipperary doubled in twenty years—Barony of Owna and Ara doubled in ditto—Rich lands of Limerick risen a fourth in twenty years, and two thirds since 1748."—*Tour in Ireland*, 2nd vol.; Appendix, p. 183.

In 1776 the wages at Markree was, of a labourer, per day, 6d.; of a carpenter, 1s. 6d.; a mason 1s. 7d.; and a thatcher 1s. 7½.—*Idem*, vol. ii, Appendix, p. 39.

In the same year beef cost, per pound, in the neighbourhood of Markree, 2¼d.; mutton, 2d.; veal, 3½.; pork, 1¾d.; butter, 5d.; while a chicken was to be bought for 2d., a turkey for 8d., and a goose for 8d.

When to these items of information it is added, that the Right Hon. Mr. Cooper had in constant work sixty labourers, twenty-five horses, and twelve oxen, one will have some idea of the state of things at Markree 100 years ago.

Council of Ireland. As member of Parliament, he opposed vigorously the projected Union, and voted all through against that measure. By his wife, Alicia, the daughter and heiress of Bishop Synge, Mr. Cooper is said to have received a very large fortune, which that shrewd prelate accompanied with an advice, that recommended the Coopers to buy up always all the land they could; an advice, certainly, that was not thrown away. Along with being a patriotic member of Parliament, and a most improving landlord, Mr. Cooper took an enlightened interest in everything that conduced to the benefit or the credit of the country; and accordingly, as has been already seen, we find him in 1776, entertaining Arthur Young for several days at Markrea Castle, and in 1779, laying the artists, Monsieur Beranger, and Signor Bigari, under such obligations, by hospitalities and attentions, that they returned public thanks to him in their work entitled *Tour through Connaught in 1791*.\*

An instance may be mentioned of this gentleman's firmness and impartiality as a magistrate. Three "Bucks," †

\* *Kilkenny Archeological Journal*, vol. xi, page 259.

† These bucks were generally well born, though ill-bred. "*Ireland Sixty Years Ago* contains a good account of them. 'Among the gentry of the period,' says the author, 'was a class called 'Bucks,' whose whole enjoyment, and the business of whose life seemed to consist in eccentricity and violence. There were three noblemen, brothers, so notorious for their outrages, that they acquired singular names as indicative of their characters. The first was the terror of everyone who met him in public places; the second was seldom out of prison, and the third was lame, yet no whit disabled from his buckish achievements. They were universally known by the names of 'Hellgate,' 'Newgate,' and 'Cripplegate.' Others met under the appellation of 'Mohawk,' 'Hawkabite,' 'Cherokee,' and other Indian tribes, then noted for their cruelty and ferocity; and their actions would not disgrace their savage archetypes.'" *Sketches of Ireland Sixty Years Ago*, pages 11 and 12.

These gentry sometimes "got more than they bargained for," and in quarters where they might least expect it. The reception they met with from Father Fitzmaurice, is an instance of this; and a similar chastisement was inflicted on them by a late Bishop of Achonry, Right Rev. John

belonging respectively to three leading families of the neighbourhood, came by night to demolish a pretty railing that stood before the residence, in Collooney, of the parish priest, the Rev. John Fitzmaurice. While these filibusters were committing the outrage, Mr. Fitzmaurice, who, though a priest, was a man of very high spirit, and of great physical powers, sallied from his house, and in a short time laid the three wreckers as prostrate and helpless as the rails that they had just succeeded in tearing up and levelling. A few days after the transaction, when they had recovered somewhat from the mauling, they betook themselves to Mr. Cooper, and laid before him a long indictment against the priest for the treatment received; but the moment that honourable and just man learned by a little cross-examination, that they were the aggressors, he praised warmly Father Fitzmaurice, denounced in scathing words the complainants, and bade them begone, and, remember, that if they ever attempted any act of retaliation for what they had so deservedly suffered, he would employ all his interest and influence to transport the trio out of the country. Mr. Cooper died in the year 1800, and was buried in the new churchyard of Collooney, in a modest tomb bearing this inscription: "Beneath this tomb lie interred the remains of the Right Hon. Joshua Cooper, who departed this life, the 16th December, 1800, in the 71st year of his age, universally lamented."

The Right Hon. Mr. Cooper was succeeded in the ownership of the estate by his eldest son, Colonel Joshua Edward Cooper, whose memory is not so popular as that of other members of the family. This disadvantage attaches to the colonel: first, for evicting tenants from the lands of the present deer-park; secondly, for substituting Protestant for Roman Catholic tenants in the neighbour-

Flynn, who having been attacked, while parish priest of Sligo, by those worthies, retaliated in self-defence, and punished his aggressors in a way that was the talk and admiration of the town and county.



hood of Collooney; and thirdly, for causing a man of his regiment (the Sligo militia), named James Kelly, to be flogged for going to hear mass after the man had been ordered to attend Protestant service. Though the colonel cannot, perhaps, be absolved from all blame in regard to these transactions, a word or two may be urged in mitigation of censure. As to the evictions, it should be recollected: first, that the lands were required for a deer-park—a reasonable appendage to a gentleman's demesne—and, secondly, that he provided the evicted tenants with holdings elsewhere on the Markrea property. As to the substitution of Protestant for Catholic tenants, this occurred, it is believed, when the colonel was managing the estate for his father; and, probably, came from a desire to acquire voting power and not from bigotry.\* And with regard to the

\* The practice of evicting Catholics and giving their lands to Protestants was common with landlords in Ireland towards the close of the eighteenth century. "That, however, which the Established Church could in no degree effect, owing to the reasons already assigned, was in some degree put in progress of being effected by a great political and constitutional measure, which was carried about this time—I allude to the passing of the Octennial Bill, which was carried, I believe, in the year 1768. Previous to this measure, the Irish Colonial Parliament had its existence limited solely by the demise of the Crown, so that the members of the House of Commons were very seldom sent home to an election, and, consequently, county influence and electioneering politics seldom occupied the minds of our country gentlemen; but the Octennial Bill, which limited the duration of Parliament, and of course sent the members back more frequently to their constituents, compelled them to attend more closely to their county influence. But how did this effect the *religion* of the people? How did this affect the Protestantism and Popery of the population? This question finds an answer by recollecting that at that time the elective franchise was confined exclusively to Protestants—the Romanists had no franchise—from this it very naturally resulted that every gentleman of property, who was ambitious of county influence, either for the election of himself or for the election of his friends, was necessitated to promote Protestantism among his tenantry—a Popish tenantry could not vote, could not strengthen his influence at an election, and became a dead weight on his hands; while a Protestant tenantry, by being able to vote in their capacity of Protestant freeholders, became an object of the greatest desire to all our country gentlemen (for many of

flogging of poor Kelly—in this matter the colonel had bad examples to tempt him, and, perhaps, government pressure to egg him on, as we may infer from the following extract of a letter from Cork, quoted by Edmund Burke:—“Government’s ingratitude, in an absolute refusal of any further boon to the Catholics, has roused the resentment of the quietest spirits; and the severe punishments inflicted in some places on the militia for going to mass instead of the Protestant church, is surely—not to give it a worse appellation—impolitic in the extreme.”\* Another, and a still better excuse for the colonel’s conduct may be found in the ill-health that incapacitated him for the transaction of business a great part of his life. This gentleman succeeded his father in representing the County Sligo, being member of the county from 1801 to 1806. His death occurred in 1837.

In contrast to the colonel, his brother, Mr. Edward Synge Cooper, was the most popular and beloved member of the entire Cooper family, at least with Roman Catholics. Though this gentleman never owned the family estate—having died before the elder brother—he resided at Markrea Castle during the brother’s illness, and discharged, in regard to the estate, the duties commonly discharged by the landlord. Singularly free and affable for one of his rank, Mr. Cooper liked to be among the tenants and labourers—called them familiarly by their names—showed interest in everything that concerned them—joked with them—and gave freely, to favourite cronies here and there, pieces of silver for tobacco or some such treat. In these attentions this just man never made any distinction between Pro-

them brought from the North of Ireland—that swarming hive of Protestantism—large numbers, and colonized them on their estates, while others brought them from England for the same purpose.)”—*Speech of the Rev. Michael Seymour*. Dublin: J. O. Bonsall, pp. 13-14.

\* *The Works of the Right Honourable Edmund Burke*, vol. viii, p. 113. Bohn’s edition.

testants and Roman Catholics, but hated, with a special hatred, all members of secret societies, and, if anything, Orangemen \* still more than Ribbonmen.

Professing it to be a duty to provide for the decent accommodation, in chapel, of those Roman Catholics that belonged to the Markrea estate, he sent the parish priest, Very Rev. James Henry, twenty pounds towards the repairing of the old chapel; put up, at his own expense, an imposing and costly entrance gate; and settled on the chapel clerk an annual stipend of four pounds, the same sum as was allowed, in parish vestry, to the sexton of the Protestant church. To the parish priest Mr. Cooper was particularly kind and attentive, both in public and in private, sending often for him on Petty Sessions' days, and getting him to sit on the bench while cases bearing on the peace and order of the parish were disposed of; meaning, no doubt, thus to impress the people with respect for the priest, as also, perhaps, to show both priest and people the justice and impartiality with which the law was always upheld and administered by him; justice and impartiality which the upright magistrate never failed in, as this somewhat amusing anecdote will help to show: Coming one day from Markrea to the Petty Sessions at Collooney, and finding on the way a countryman driving a nag on the side path instead of the high road, Mr. Cooper ordered the man to follow, and on reaching the court, fined him five shillings for trespassing on the path. The countryman, hear-

\* If reference is made here and in other places to Orangemen, it is only because the course of the narrative calls for it, and not that the writer has any ill-will to those men, whom he has always found as civil and kind as other people. At the same time his conviction is, that secret societies are an evil, whether they be found among Protestants or Roman Catholics; and that this is his impartial opinion, he has practically proved by pledging every man, woman, and young person in the congregations of his three chapels, against these societies—the males to avoid membership with them, and the females to withdraw and dissuade their male relatives and friends from all connexion with such associations.

ing privately that Mr. Cooper sometimes allowed his own horse to amble along the footpath, concealed himself by the roadside, at a suitable point for the purpose in view, and, catching the austere magistrate *in flagranti*, came forth and said playfully, "I fine you, sir." "Quite right, my man," rejoined Mr. Cooper; "and to save you the trouble of coming to Collooney to prosecute, here's the fine for you," handing him a thirty-shilling note, and adding—"I hope we shall both observe the law better after to-day." Mr. Cooper represented the County Sligo in parliament from 1806 to his decease, a period that comprised six general elections—those of 1806, 1807, 1812, 1820, 1823, and 1826.\* This just, and excellent, and most respected man died in the sixty-seventh year of his age, and was buried in the graveyard of the Protestant church of Collooney, in a tomb that contains also the remains of his wife, and that bears the following inscription:—"Edward Synge Cooper, M.P. died, August 16th, 1830, aged 67. Also Anne his wife, who died at Dunboden, Co. Westmeath, November 17th, 1861, aged 92."

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### SECTION III.—EDWARD JOSHUA COOPER.

EDWARD JOSHUA COOPER, the first of all the Coopers in intellect and attainments, and second to none of them in largeness and goodness of heart—was born in May, 1798, of Edward Synge Cooper and Anne Verelst, daughter of Governor Verelst, the immediate successor of Lord Clive in the government of India, and "one of the honestest men that ever served the East India Company," says Edmund Burke in the impeachment of Warren Hastings.† Though

\* Thom's *Directory*, 1853, page 367.

† Burke's *Speeches*, vol. i, p. 90.—Bohn's edition. The Rev. G. R. Gleig, in his *History of the British Empire in India*, says of this dependency while under Governor Verelst, "It may fairly be questioned,

there exists some little doubt as to the place of Mr. Cooper's birth, it is nearly certain that to Markrea belongs that honour, as we may fairly conclude from this well-known fact—that when the French visited Collooney in September, 1798, Mrs. Cooper deeming, like the mother of the Gracchi, her child to be her most precious jewel, abandoned all other treasures, and hastened away from Markrea Castle with the infant, Edward Joshua, in her arms. This good mother, who was a woman of uncommon understanding and great mental acquirements, took charge of the early education of the child, cultivated carefully the inclination for astronomy and kindred studies that he already evinced, and continued to give lessons till her son was of age to go to a public educational establishment, when he was sent to the endowed school of Armagh.\* From Armagh, the lad passed to Eton, whence he went up to the university of Oxford, which was then fitter for “fast” than for “reading” men, being as devoid of the religious thought and aspirations awakened, a few years later, by John Henry Newman, Richard Hurrell Froude, John Keble, and Dr. Pusey, as of the vast intellectual activity that pervades its halls and chairs at the present day, under the impulse of its Jowets, Max Mullers, and Ruskins. But the lessons in religion and science of the mother and the Armagh professors, stood the young man in good stead, for he left Oxford, at the end of the university course, with religious impressions as fresh, and a passion for knowledge as keen, as he felt on the day of matriculation.

indeed, in spite of many acknowledged grievances, whether the condition of the people of Bengal has ever been, since they passed under the rule of the English, more prosperous than it was then.”—*History of the British Empire in India, etc.*, vol. ii, p. 204.

\* “Edward Joshua Cooper, one of our most distinguished amateur astronomers, received the first impulses which made him pursue that science from his mother's early teaching, and from his visits to the Armagh observatory while at the endowed school of that city.”—*Obituary Notice of Mr. Cooper in the proceedings of the Royal Society*, 1864.

After quitting the university, Mr. Cooper took with him, says the obituary notice in the *Proceedings of the Royal Society*, for 1864, "a sextant chronometer and telescope as constant companions," and passed several years in travel, visiting Egypt,\* Persia, Russia, Turkey in Asia, as well as the countries of Europe, and not only inspecting, like the run of travellers, the national curiosities, he fell in with on the tour, but studying diligently all the institutions, scientific, artistic, and philanthropic, of the countries through which he passed, and accumulating, as we are informed by the authority just quoted, "a great mass of observations of latitude and longitude" on the way.

Settling down at Markrea soon after the death of his father in 1830, Mr. Cooper divided the time between the cultivation of science, and the discharge of social duties. Making astronomy his special study, he built an observatory at Markrea in 1834, fitted it up and furnished it regardless of expense, and erected in it the most powerful achromatic telescope then in the world, with a focal length of 25 feet 7 inches, an object glass of over 13 inches aperture, the largest existing at the time, the whole instrument, when put together and mounted, weighing 47 cwt. 1 qr. 26 lbs.†

\* "While at Naples in 1820," says the *Obituary Notice*, "he met Sir William Drummoud, some of whose wild inferences from the Dendera Zodiac he showed to be inconsistent with sound astronomy. Sir William replied that these objections were based on the inaccuracy of the existing drawings; and Mr. Cooper met that by going to Egypt, securing the services of an accomplished Italian artist, and bringing home correct plans of the Dendera ceiling, which, with many other drawings, he printed for private distribution under the title, "Egyptian Scenery."

† "In the year 1831 he purchased, from Cauchoix of Paris, an object glass of 13.6 inches aperture and 25 feet focus, the largest then existing, which in 1834 was mounted with perfect success at his magnificent mansion of Markrea, on an equatorial constructed by Mr. Grubb of Dublin. It is of cast iron (the first application of that material to astronomical instruments) and stands in the open air, encircled by the walls of a first-rate observatory which contains, among other *chef-d'œuvres*, a fine



In this observatory, Mr. Cooper passed nights and days, observing, calculating, recording, corresponding with other astronomers, and in general, working so energetically and successfully that, in a short time, Markree observatory came to be known and honoured in all the scientific institutions of Europe and America. It is but fair to state that in these labours he was aided most effectually by a singularly able and indefatigable assistant, Mr. Graham, first assistant at present in the observatory of Cambridge University; but on the other hand, it should be known that Mr. Cooper, while mapping out the general course of proceedings and study in the observatory, never shirked a full share of hard work; for we have abundant proof of laboriousness, as well as of great ability in the piles of manuscript he has left on the shelves of the observatory; in the papers he contributed to the Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy and the Royal Astronomical Society, of both which associations Mr. Cooper was member, as well as of the Royal Society; and, especially, in his and Mr. Graham's inesti-

meridian circle by Ertel, with eight microscopes and eight-inch object glass."—*Obituary Notice, etc.*

*The Dublin Penny Journal*, vol. iv, page 132, thus refers to the great Markree telescope:—"In our Report we mentioned, as an appropriate *finale* to the proceedings of the Association in Ireland, that in the course of the week following that in which the meetings were held, a large party of the members, chiefly those engaged in geological pursuits, proceeded on a visit to Lord Cole, at his noble residence of Florence Court, while another, principally such as were interested in astronomical observations, accompanied E. J. Cooper, Esq., M.P. for Sligo, to his seat at Markree, where they had an opportunity of inspecting the very superior astronomical instruments belonging to that distinguished and scientific individual; one of them, his achromatic telescope, of which there is an engraving on the opposite page, is the finest in the world; the object glass, which is 13.3 inches in diameter, being the largest ever made. Indeed it is a matter calculated to afford gratification to Irishmen, that a private gentleman, residing in a remote district of the country, should have, in a complete and well-appointed observatory, the most efficient telescope in the universe."

And if Irishmen, in general, should feel proud of Mr. Cooper, how much more the inhabitants of the "remote district" he has made famous?

mable Catalogue of Ecliptic Stars,\* describing upwards of 60,000 stars; a work of such merit that the Royal Irish Academy awarded it their Cunningham medal, and the Royal Society had it published by aid from the Government grant at their disposal.

The big telescope soon became one of the modern *Mirabilia Hiberniæ* (Wonders of Ireland), and attracted crowds of the scientific and the curious from all quarters; and in 1835, when the British Association assembled in Dublin, the moment its meetings were ended and its proceedings closed, half the members hastened away with Mr. Cooper to Markree to inspect the great instrument; on which occasion *savants*, acquainted with the public observatories of Vienna, Paris, and London, were loud in their admiration on finding the appointments and resources of these establishments thrown—in not a few matters—into the shade by the observatory of an Irish country gentleman. This noble creation of Mr. Cooper's still exists—thanks to the devotion of Colonel Cooper to both the interests of science and the memory of his uncle—and it is gratifying to be able to add, that the learned labours of Dr. W. Doberck, M.R.I.A., of the Russian observatory, Pulcowa, the astronomer in charge; and of his accomplished

\* “One result of their labours was the discovery of the planet Metis; but his greatest work is his ‘Catalogue of ecliptic stars.’ This (which was published by aid from the Government grant placed at the disposal of the Royal Society, and which the Royal Irish Academy honoured with their Cunningham Medal), contains upwards of 60,000 stars down to the twelfth magnitude, of which very few had been previously observed. The places are reduced to 1850, and though only approximate, possess a sufficient degree of precision for the use to which they were destined. The value of this catalogue to future astronomers can scarcely be overrated, for many facts tend to show that much is to be learned by studying these minute stars. As an instance, it may be stated that fifty stars of his own catalogue, and twenty-seven others were found to have disappeared during the progress of the observations. Many of these, no doubt, are variable; many probably are unknown planets; some perhaps have great proper motion. But when shall we have such a survey of the whole sky as that of this comparatively small zone!”—*Obituary Notice, etc.*

sister, Miss A. Doberck—a brother and sister that remind one forcibly, by their common love of science and their mutual affection, of William and Caroline Herschel—are not only maintaining, but extending daily the fame and usefulness of Mr. Cooper's great foundation.\*

But Mr. Cooper was not a man to allow even science, dear as the study was to him, or any other pursuit that he engaged in, merely as an *amateur*, to keep him from discharging the weighty duties attached, both by natural and divine law, to high station. Far from being an egotist, thinking only of personal tastes, interests, or enjoyments, and without a becoming sense of social obligation, this high-minded man felt keenly what was due to tenants, labourers, and others, whom Providence and society had put in his power. In most respects Mr. Cooper was a model landlord. Consulting always for the well being of tenants, he not only let land at its value, introduced on the estate the best kinds of live and dead stock, and encouraged agricultural improvements by advice, by reward, and by

\* Dr. Doberck's papers on *Double Stars*, are printed in the *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, and the *Astronomische Nachrichten*, in which latter periodical near half a hundred papers from his pen appear. This astronomer has also published six papers on COMETS. Miss Doberck, after starting and working, at Markree, a meteorological observatory, in accordance with the international regulations, is now elaborating, on the Continent, an *Essay on the Climate of Ireland*.

We often find Dr. Doberck's name in the scientific periodicals of the day. For instance, *Nature*, May 24, 1877, refers to him, in its astronomical column, "*The Revolving Double-Stars*. We are now indebted to Dr. Doberck for orbits of thirteen of the revolving double-stars, calculated in every case in the most complete manner possible from the available data, and which have been communicated from time to time to the Royal Irish Academy. . . . Dr. Doberck may be congratulated on the success which has attended his efforts."

The same periodical contains highly interesting papers from the pen of the same astronomer on *Variable Stars*, on *Spectroscopy*, etc. We mention in particular one on the *Orion Nebula*, in which the great importance of the late Mr. Cooper's observations has been referred to.

holding annually a show of cattle and farm produce, but also cultivated kindly personal relations with the people by attending, once a fortnight, at Collooney, an estate court, to acquaint himself with their wants and wishes ; by meeting them on gale-days at the rent-office, and hailing them with the ready joke and kind inquiry ; by entertaining them, from time to time together at dinner ; and by providing them with races, fireworks, and such like amusements. It is easy to understand the calming and refining effects of meetings and entertainments like these, in which landlord and tenant, rich and poor, Protestant and Catholic, priest and parson mixed freely together, and forgot wretched party or sectarian differences in common enjoyments.

And if Mr. Cooper's first thoughts were for tenants and demesne labourers, he felt scarce less interest in the working men and mechanics that dwelt on the estate, and more especially in those of Collooney. If that gentleman lived in days like the present, when Government, by its loans, gives such facilities for building, and when the necessity of decent house accommodation for the humbler classes is constantly proclaimed by princes, statesmen, philosophers, and legislators, he could carry out the project that he had very much at heart—of remodelling Collooney—by erecting, on the rising ground over the bridge, a crescent of workmen's cottages ; and, higher up in the town, from the crest of the hill to the market-house, a row of a better class of houses, with hanging gardens sloping down to the river's edge. What a pity that circumstances prevented him from realizing a design which would make Collooney what nature meant it to be—a model village—and would bring the houses into harmony with the site and scenery, instead of leaving them, as too many of them are at present, a contrast ; the houses being mean and squalid to a degree, and the situation the most salubrious and picturesque

in the province. As Mr. Cooper had, however, only a restricted life interest in the estate, no one could expect that he would undertake, single-handed, the cost of the contemplated change ; \* but his feelings on the subject appeared well on the occasion of the testimonial, presented in 1856 by the tenants of the Markrea estate, when he urged, as strongly as possible under the circumstances, that the money collected, which was a good round sum, should go to build some model dwellings for working men on or near the spot now occupied by the Methodist meeting house. Though it was, doubtless, native kindness of heart that inspired this friendly interest in the working men of Collooney, still Mr. Cooper used often to say, that it was due to them, as a debt, for being always the most punctual of the Markrea tenants—on gale days—in paying rent ; a compliment highly honourable to those humble men, and an answer to such calumniators as should maintain that working men and artizans are bad rent payers.

Nor was it in respect of house accommodation alone that this good man showed sympathy with the poorer classes, but in everything else, as well, that concerned them. If individuals of those classes got into trouble he would lend a hand to extricate them ; if they fell sick he would furnish a doctor and other needful assistance ; if sudden misfortune overtook them he was soon at hand with sympathy and aid. When hydrophobia struck down, in 1831, a woman named Honor Burns, in Collooney, who had been bitten by a rabid dog, and a thrill of pity for the sufferer pervaded the county, no one was more sympathetic than Mr. Cooper. This good Samaritan visited the wretched

\* No one, it is hoped, will think that it is intended, while thus excusing Mr. Cooper, to cast blame in other directions. Nothing indeed of the kind is meant ; for there is reason to know, if others have not been prevented from moving in the matter under consideration by the obstacles which stopped Mr. Cooper, that they have been hindered hitherto by obstacles of a different kind, such as the pressure of more urgent duties.

patient several times; \* feed doctors and nurses to attend her; and, when other remedies failed, despatched to Manorhamilton in hot haste, on the swiftest horse of Markrea stables, an intelligent messenger—after first putting a couple of guineas in his pocket—to procure an alleged specific that a man named M'Govern, living in or near that town, was said to possess for the horrid disease.

Another instance—almost as striking as this—of Mr. Cooper's tenderness of heart occurred in 1854. An omnibus, conveying emigrants from Westport to Sligo, was passing through Collooney, when the vehicle, while turning a sharp angle of the road, was suddenly capsized, several of the passengers more or less injured, and the unfortunate driver thrown with such violence against the pavement that the fall caused severe concussion of the brain. That evening Mr. Cooper had company at Markrea; but the moment the intelligence of the occurrence reached the dining room the host excused himself to the guests, and hastened to the scene of the accident; and when, after having remained a good while with the patients, and having called a doctor, he was returning home—so engaged were the feelings of this benevolent man in the fate of the poor strangers, that he requested the writer of these lines to keep them *au courant* at the castle, by letter, with the progress of the case.

Acts like those gained the affections of all. It is not every one that could appreciate his culture and intellectual gifts; but no one was so rude as to be insensible to the "touch of nature, that makes the whole world kin."

There is reference to Mr. Cooper's benevolence in the

\* Es lebe, wer des Siechen Schmerz  
Des Kranken Jammer heilt;  
Nicht Kaubar durch das Gold allein,  
Noch oft bei düst'rer Sterne Schein  
Zum Armuthslager eilt!

German song—*Der Wahrheit Tafelsang.*



following "conversation" between Mr. Nassau William Senior, the late Lord Rosse, and an interlocutor that goes by the name of B——, which took place at Birr Castle, and which is recorded in Mr. Senior's *Journals, Conversations, and Essays relating to Ireland*:—"B—— talked of the cholera of 1832. The greatest mortality, he said, was in a place called, I think, Ballysadare, near Collooney, in Sligo. It contained, when the cholera approached, five hundred and eighty inhabitants, and the filthy, undrained, damp huts of which it consisted, marked it out as a fit victim. The inhabitants were urged to take precautions, but they neglected—perhaps were not able to do so. About eighty, however, left the place; the rest remained, trusting, they said, to Providence. At that time the belief in the contagiousness of cholera was firm, at least in that country. The cholera came, and became instantly very destructive. The neighbours formed a cordon round the place, and allowed no one to leave it. Mr. Cooper, the greatest proprietor in the district, sent every-day to the neighbourhood of the village a cart loaded with provisions, which was left there until the inhabitants had taken what they wanted and retired. From time to time less and less of the contents of the cart were taken. At last it remained totally untouched. The last person who had remained among the five hundred was dead." There's a pretty piece of sensationalism for you! and in the last place in the world you would expect to find it. Not in a poem or a novel; not in the lucubrations of an imaginative Irishman; but in the journal, composed at his leisure, of a great hard-headed English political economist—one commonly regarded as the very personification of facts—an authority inferior little, if at all, to the Gospel, in the eyes of Englishmen. You will search in vain Defoe's account of the Plague in London for anything so thrilling. It beats to pieces even the story of the Kilkenny cats; for in that famous narrative the tails survived; but in Bally-

sadare—at the close of the cholera visitation—according to Mr. Senior, there was neither head nor tail. “*The last person among the five hundred that had remained in the village was dead!*” Well, the state of Ballysadare in 1832 was as bad as it well could be in real life—worse, it is said, than that of any other town or village in England, Ireland, or Scotland, ravaged by the cholera—but still it did not reach the transcendental tragic imagined by Mr. Senior. What a pity to spoil the melodrama of Mr. Cooper’s cart? But the truth must be told—that the aforesaid cart is as much a myth as Aurora’s car or Phæton’s chariot. It is true that Mr. Cooper, who was ever alive to the duties of high station, did then, as always, what in him lay to lighten the evils weighing down tenants and neighbours; that he remained at Markrea the whole time the visitation lasted in order to be within reach of the sufferers; that he was unceasing in his inquiries, and in his suggestions and directions as to the care and treatment of the patients; and that he forwarded to Ballysadare an unlimited supply of wine, and brandy, and meat—of everything recommended by the doctors either as food or drink; but still, it must be recorded that this cornucopia cart formed no part of the means by which the kind-hearted gentleman conveyed his bounty to the afflicted. While the Birr “conversation,” then, damages Mr. Nassau William Senior’s authority on Irish matters, it detracts nothing from Mr. Cooper’s liberality, but rather enhances it, by showing that his reputation for this virtue was not only well known in the neighbourhood, but had reached the King’s County.

So drawn were all hearts to Mr. Cooper for this kindness of disposition, that even the office of grand master of the County Sligo Orangemen—accepted soon after a second marriage had connected him, by family ties, with the Earl of Enniskillen (the grand master of the Orange Association)—was not able to estrange the affections of Catholic

tenants and neighbours; for they forgot the office in the man. The parish priest admired him as much as the flock; and, on a suitable occasion offering at the Markrea Estate Cattle Show dinner, proposed the health of Mr. Cooper in terms so cordial and laudatory that the *Times* took note of the incident, and made use of it to prove, that an Irish landlord, if good and genial, is sure of the affections of both priests and people, whatever difference, on the score of religion and politics, might exist between him and them.

Orangeman, however, and thoroughgoing churchman as Mr. Cooper certainly was, he was no bigot for all that, as facts in abundance prove. For he continued to pay to the chapel clerk the annual stipend that Mr. Edward Synge Cooper was in the habit of paying. Similar liberality was practised on the Limerick estate; for on coming into possession of that property, as we learn from a letter\* that appeared in the newspapers some years ago, he exempted the Catholic tenants from the payment of tithes, and took on himself that charge. This generous sense of the claims and needs of those who differed from him in religion led Mr. Cooper to be very obliging to the priests of the neighbourhood, and more especially to those of Ballysadare parish, to which Markrea Castle belongs.

\* This letter, which was addressed to the *Irish Times*, contains the following statement:—“About five and thirty years since, Mr. Cooper came into possession of his Knocklong estates, of which I was then, and am at present, a tenant to a large tract, which I hold under an old lease at very fair value. A short time after, I went to pay my respects to Markrea Castle, where I remained some days at his hospitable mansion. He ascertained on Friday that I was a Catholic, and then asked me if I paid tithes on his estate. I said, “Yes, £15 per year.” Next morning he gave me a note to his agent, unasked for, saying he had no idea that I should pay tithes for the support of his church; the same rule he applied to the other tenants. . . . If we had many such in Ireland there would be very little necessity for interfering between landlord and tenant. I may add that the Misses Cooper are following in their father’s footsteps. I remain, etc.,

“MICHAEL O'BRIEN.

“*Trough House, Limerick.*”

To Very Rev. James Henry, the parish priest in possession when Mr. Cooper came to reside at Markrea, he was particularly kind. Father James having fallen into ill health about this time, never stirred out of doors, unless on some rare occasions, when he had himself helped to the chapel-yard for a breath of fresh air. All this time the greatest sympathy was felt for the invalid, not merely by the Roman Catholics of the parish, but by the Protestants as well, and by none more than by Mr. Cooper, who made frequent visits to the presbytery, and was, besides, unremitting in inquiries and other attentions. As there has of late been much talk of a "mechanical chair," presented by a cardinal to the Pope, and so constructed that the Holy Father can move himself about in it without aid from any other quarter—a contrivance which the newspapers seem to regard as quite a novel invention—it is worth remarking that, near fifty years ago, Mr. Cooper designed a similar chair for Father Henry; had it made in Dublin or London; presented it as a gift to the priest; and thus afforded that worthy man almost the only comfort he enjoyed during the remaining months of his life.

To the Right Rev. Dr. Durcan, when parish priest of Ballysadare, he gave house and land accommodation, which was all the kinder, as some little unpleasantness had occurred, once or twice, between them; and the successor of Dr. Durcan in the parish, the present writer, likewise received at Mr. Cooper's hands repeated acts of civility and kindness, one of which, as of a less private character, may perhaps, with propriety, be mentioned here. On a small holding of land in the townland of Collooney falling out of occupation, and after several applications or proposals for it had been forwarded to the rent-office, Mr. Cooper, quite unasked, sent an offer of it to the parish priest, who had no thought of land at the time, accompanying the offer with the remark, that this was the first piece of land that could be disposed of since the parish priest's

taking charge of the parish, and that if it were any accommodation, he "might have it with great pleasure"—an offer that was as gratefully accepted as it was graciously made.

Nor did this gentleman confine favours to priests living on the Markrea estates, as a striking instance will show. When the late Canon Tighe, some years ago, was questing contributions for the new church of Ballymote, meeting casually Mr. Cooper, as a fellow-passenger, in the coach then plying between Boyle and Sligo, and availing himself of the occasion, the Canon solicited a contribution for the building; but, Mr. Cooper replying only with a laugh and a joke at the idea of "expecting such a thing from a grand-master of Orangemen;" Mr. Tighe let the subject drop, and thought no more of the matter till the following morning, when, on opening the letters brought by the post, he found one from the good "grand-master," containing a £10 note, in response to the appeal of the preceding day.

When this liberal minded man was so ready to show consideration for the religion of others, it is easy to understand how desirous he must have been to serve his own church, to which he was singularly devoted and loyal; and, accordingly, we find Mr. Cooper, through life, rendering the Established church all the services in his power, promoting its interests, as a member of parliament, and as a private gentleman, and carrying zeal for it so far as to found and endow, at great expense, two chapels of ease, one at Rosses' Point, and the other at Ballysdare.\*

As might be expected from a person of such head and heart, Mr. Cooper was as quick to discern rising genius, as he was willing to aid in its development. Among the first orders received by Gibson, the late eminent sculptor, was one that Mr. Cooper gave for a monument to the memory of his first wife, and that resulted in the beautiful piece of

\* See page 136.

sculpture, which may be seen over her remains in the Protestant church of Collooney, and which bears the inscription, "Sophie Cooper—Nat. 1800—Ob. 1822." It was he, too, that discovered the great talent of Sir John Benson—sent the young Collooney man to a school of design, and thus started that gifted architect on his distinguished career. Mr. John Battle, another of Mr. Cooper's *proteges*, justified the patron's discernment by becoming as skilful and long-headed a builder as there was in the province. This talented, though somewhat hasty man, hearing that an architect, Mr. —, was erecting a salmon ladder at Ballysadare, went to have a look at the work, and, on seeing it, exclaimed that a salmon would never enter it. The architect, who was present, treated the assertion with contempt, but time verified John Battle's prediction. Mr. Cooper, judging that the man that could see defects would be the one most likely to avoid them, entrusted the design of another ladder to Mr. Battle himself, who forthwith planned a structure, over which salmon in shoals have been passing ever since its erection.

Allusion has been made (page 83) to the School of Trades established by Mr. Cooper in Collooney, in the year 1840, for the double purpose of teaching trades—those of tailor, shoemaker, carpenter, and smith—to sons of tenants, and of executing, as far as possible, for the dwellers on the Markrea estate, all the work needed by them in connection with those trades. The first intimation the body of the tenants received of their landlord's project was conveyed to them in the following letter, dated December 10th, 1840, written from Brighton, and forwarded through the Rev. Lewis Potter, who, though Vicar of Dromard at this time, acted also as chaplain and almoner to Mr. Cooper:—

"MY FRIENDS—An anxiety has long been strongly felt by me, to endeavour to open some new sources of employment for your children, the number of whom is far too numerous to admit of their earning a comfortable livelihood as farmers, from the subdivision of the land. It has,



consequently, occurred to me to establish a school of trades in Collooney, where certain of your children may learn, at my expense, to become carpenters, smiths, tailors, or shoemakers. The masters shall (if I can obtain them sufficiently qualified) be selected from among yourselves. A model farm will also be shortly laid out, near the same town, with a view of instructing others of your children in the best mode of tillage, etc., etc., to enable them to become efficient farmers, should they hereafter become tenants, or to qualify them for the situation of stewards. I estimate that about twenty pupils may be always employed, and that about three years tuition will be, in most cases, sufficient. The accounts of the expenditure and produce of the model farm will be regularly kept, and submitted to the examination of the tenantry, for their instruction and encouragement.

“The conditions required to be observed by the candidates for entrance into any of the schools will be as follows:—

“*The boys must have attended some school either wholly or partially supported by me.* They must be recommended by their clergyman for good conduct, as well as by the visitor to, and master of, the school they have attended, and they must pass a general examination as to their proficiency.

“Their parent or parents must have testimonials as to their general good moral character, industry, and punctuality in observing their engagements with their landlord.

“The boys must be bound by indenture, at the age of sixteen, for five years, but will be discharged from the agricultural and trades' school as soon as they are considered to be sufficiently instructed. The parents will be expected to provide their children, while learning their trades, in diet and lodging, and procure for them decent clothing, as no fees will be charged for their indentures.

“The boys in the agricultural school will be lodged, and under the entire control of the superintendent, with whom their parents must make an arrangement for their diet and clothing.

“No boy, in any of the schools, to be permitted to absent himself, except upon illness or special leave. A premium will be given to the best conducted and most advanced of each trade, at the end of the third year of apprenticeship.

“As it is expected that the schools will be ready for pupils about the 1st of May next, the parents of children may now make application for their admission.

“EDWARD COOPER.”

The Reverend Mr. Potter lost no time, on receiving this communication, in convening a meeting of the Markrea tenantry to consider the letter and vote an address in response. The Reverend gentleman relieved the meeting of the trouble of framing an address, and brought a cut-

and-dry document in his pocket, which was gratefully accepted by such tenants as were present, and elicited a vote of thanks to him for "his lively interest in their welfare, and the kind share he had taken in their proceedings," as also a request that he would transmit the address to Mr. Cooper. The following is the address, which was so entirely in accordance with all Mr. Cooper's views, that it seems framed on the model of certain parliamentary addresses, that are only an "echo of the speech from the throne" :—

"COLLOONEY, *January 18th, 1841.*

"HONOURED SIR—Permit us most respectfully to assure you that your kind address to the tenantry on the Markrea estates has been read by us with great pleasure and sincere gratitude to you, as our benevolent and liberal landlord. It is an addition to the many pledges we have received, from time to time, at your hands, that not only our welfare, but the best interests of the rising generation among us, is an object very near to your heart. You have been the conciliating arbiter of our differences (when such have occasionally existed)—the faithful counsellor in our difficulties—the ingenious friend in our trials—the generous benefactor of the distressed—the kind protector of the orphan and the widow—the unbounded dispenser of clothing to the naked, and of food to the hungry; this is only a just expression of what we experience and witness, and we place it before you, not in the spirit of flattery and adulation, but as a testimony which justice demands from us. In addressing you on this occasion, we most thankfully and unreservedly accept your letter as a further pledge of the interest you take in us and in our concerns, and *we consider the conditions set-forth by you as most useful in detail; BUT WE MOST SPECIALLY NOTICE WITH OUR APPROVAL, that one which makes it necessary that ALL candidates for admission into the school of trades, etc., should be educated at some school either entirely or partially supported by you; while this will secure to them advancement in all useful knowledge suited to their station, it is gratifying to us to feel that their moral and religious instruction will be advanced.* We, therefore, fully admit the value of this condition, and rejoice to acknowledge that, at your hands *the children on the Markrea estates have the privilege of attending schools established on the basis of Christian principles.* That your proposed plan (under God's providence) will prosper, we believe; and while we acknowledge his goodness in causing our lot to be cast under a landlord whom we have every reason to regard and respect, we hope we shall, by our conduct and demeanour, continue to deserve the kindness and affection

of you, our landlord and friend. Praying that God's blessing may ever be vouchsafed to you, your valuable lady, and family,

“We have the honour to remain, honoured Sir, your faithful and attached servants,

“JOHN BENSON, *Chairman.*”

The school of trades, for which success was thus predicted, unfortunately failed with a loss to Mr. Cooper of £1000. And a circumstance still more mortifying was, to use the words of Mr. Potter, that “in the month of June, 1843, the workshop of the tailor's school was set fire to, either on Sunday night or on Monday morning, and the entire of the goods contained therein was consumed or damaged; and so persuaded were the Grand Jury of the county that the act was a malicious one, that they granted a presentment, amounting to over £66 for the injury done to the property of this school; and not only this, so convinced were the same gentlemen that this act was not perpetrated by people coming from a distance, that they assessed the entire sum on the inhabitants of the town of Collooney.”

These are the facts of this case as they were laid before the Land Commissioners in Sligo\* by the Rev. Mr. Potter himself; and limiting our view even to what appears on the face of the documents, it is not hard to understand the failure of the undertaking. For, in the first place, it was a monopoly, and, as such, had against it all the free traders of the neighbourhood as well as all those carpenters, tailors, smiths, and shoemakers, whose bread and butter it threatened to take away. These tradesmen went about complaining they were going to be ruined, and thus awakened sympathy among the people, and all the more readily, as the people themselves resented the idea of being deprived of free will in their little dealings. Though not much of political economists, they did not fail to see that it was an

\* *Examination of the Rev. Lewis Potter before the Land Commissioners in Sligo.* Appendix, Part ii, page 199.

extraordinary stretch of authority in a landlord to create an establishment for making the clothes and shoes of his tenants, and doing all their carpenter and smith work, at the very time that lords of manors were obliged to relinquish the privilege, long enjoyed, of having all the corn of the estate ground at the manor mill.

But the interference of this school with freedom of conscience excited still more ill-will than its interference with freedom of trade; for, however, its patrons might have tried to keep their purpose in the background, it was clear enough that their object was to prop up Mr. Cooper's Scripture schools, and to deal a damaging blow to the National ones lately established in the neighbourhood. Of course so much is not expressly stated, but when the very first of the conditions required to be observed by candidates for admission was, "that they must have attended some school either wholly or partially supported by Mr. Cooper," it followed that parents, if they wished to share the benefits of the new establishment, should take away their children from the National school, and send them to one of those mentioned in the regulations. And this comes out still more unmistakeably in the following sentence that forms the pith and marrow of Mr. Potter's address:—"We consider the conditions set-forth by you as most useful *in detail*; but we most especially notice with our approval, that one which makes it necessary that all candidates for admission should be educated in some school either wholly or partially supported by you," as if everything else was a mere matter of *detail*, but that the essence of the thing was, the attendance of candidates "at schools established on the basis of Christian principles."

As the neighbours, too, were well acquainted with the strained relations between Dr. Durcan and Mr. Cooper, on the subject of the National schools opened in the parish, they read between the lines of the Brighton letter and the parson's address; and seeing there, that the inducements

held out were only baits to lure on to schools that their conscience condemned, they elected to forego the temporal advantages offered rather than compromise their spiritual interests. But though Dr. Durcan and his flock acted firmly, they acted respectfully towards Mr. Cooper, and avoided, as far as possible, all offence to a gentleman, that they believed to be driven on by others who kept themselves out of view, while he was free from the insidious aims entertained by them. The truth is, the Rev. Mr. Potter was generally believed to be the chief author of the school project, and as that gentleman lay under the imputation, whether deservedly or otherwise, of being no friend to Catholics, members of that body always mistrusted him, as Laocoon did the Greeks, "*etiam dona ferentes.*" Though the school of trades could hardly, under any circumstances, have turned out a success, it would have had some chance of prospering if Mr. Cooper, when organizing it, took the parish priest and the Catholics into his confidence, for they would have suggested the exclusion or modification of the first condition, as sure to lead, sooner or later, to the ruin of the measure, but it was the misfortune of Mr. Cooper at the time, as it is often the misfortune of gentlemen like him, to be surrounded exclusively by persons whose main object is to make things smooth and pleasant for themselves, and who would sooner see their patron tumble down a precipice than run the risk of incurring his passing displeasure, by pointing out the danger. As to the burning of the tailors' school, the inhabitants of Collooney, as a body, whatever Mr. Potter and the Grand Jury, that were coached by him, may have thought, had neither hand nor part in the outrage; which was regarded by those best acquainted with the circumstances of the neighbourhood at the time, as either the result of accident or, more probably, as an act of private personal revenge. At all events the Catholics of Collooney took the matter to heart even more than others, for while they shared fully the sympathy

of their fellow-townsmen with Mr. Cooper, under his loss and mortification, they felt also not a little for the master of the particular school destroyed, who was thrown on the world, and ruined by the occurrence, and who happened to be the only Catholic master in the whole concern.

The object of Mr. Potter in bringing the history of the school of trades before the Land Commissioners was to afford "those in authority, and the public generally, an opportunity to form an opinion of the discouragement that a landlord is subjected to, when induced by a high sense of duty to put into operation a plan of this kind, for the amelioration of his tenantry." But there is another lesson which "those in authority," the "public generally," and the confidential advisers of landlords particularly, could more naturally learn from the case, and it is this, that landlords should take care to eliminate the element of sectarianism from "plans for the amelioration of their tenantry," and, more especially, from plans relating to education. In inaugurating the National Board of Education, Mr. Stanley, the late Lord Derby, laid down, in his famous letter, that "even the suspicion of proselytism should be banished from the system," a principle that all Irish educationists and educators, public and private, would have done well to bear always in mind, for it was the disregard of this principle that has led to the failure of the Charter Schools, of the Kildare Street Society schools, of many other state supported schools, and of innumerable private schools, including, unfortunately, poor Mr. Cooper's school of trades in Colooney.

Though the observatory and the estate had more attractions for Mr. Cooper than the House of Commons, he, nevertheless, served in parliament—first, from 1830 to 1841; and, secondly, from 1857 to 1859—as member for the County Sligo, and, if so inclined, might have continued in the office for life. Returned unopposed in 1830, 1831, 1832, and 1835, he had to run the gauntlet of a contest in



1837 and 1857 ; but personal popularity carried him through in triumph on both occasions ; though, in 1837, the rival candidate was the late greatly lamented Rev. Daniel Jones, S.J., who had just then come of age—*chevalier sans peur et sans reproche*—the idol of the Catholics, and the rising hope of all the honest and honourable Liberals of the county ; while in 1857 the antagonist was Mr. John Ball, a man of considerable political experience and talent, and one high in the confidence of the great Whig party, and warmly backed by them.\*

In the landlord and tenant question Mr. Cooper took so warm an interest as to prepare a bill on the subject ; but retiring from Parliament in 1859, the draught of the measure was handed over to the late Chief Justice Whiteside, who was then Attorney-General for Ireland. Few private members in the house, if any, were so qualified to deal with this weighty question as Mr. Cooper. From class interest and self interest the owner of Markrea was, naturally, alive to the rights of the landlord ; while, on the other hand, a singularly equitable temperament and great experience led him to appreciate the claims of the tenant, and to do justice to those claims ; for on his first appearance in public life, at the hustings of Sligo in 1830, Mr. Cooper proclaimed that he would, in future, leave the fixing of rent on the Markrea estate to two arbitrators—one to be named by the rent-office and the other by the tenant ; a principle on which this model landlord uniformly acted through life, calling it always—the *live and let live principle*.

When the *Dublin University Commission* for inquiring

\* In the election of 1837 the numbers polled for the respective candidates were : Edward Joshua Cooper, 511 ; Colonel Alexander Perceval, 443 ; Daniel J. Jones, 368 ; and C. J. M'Dermot, 6. In 1857 the polling was : Edward Joshua Cooper, 1471 ; Sir Robert G. Booth, 1471 ; John Ball, 305 ; and Richard Swift, 5.—Thom's *Almanac*, 1853, p. 359 ; and 1858, p. 587.

into "the state, discipline, studies, and revenues" of Trinity College was issued in 1852, Mr. Cooper was named one of the commissioners, the others being His Grace the Archbishop of Dublin (Dr. Whately), the Right Hon. Maziere Brady, the Right Hon. the Earl of Rosse, the Lord Bishop of Cork, and Mountiford Longford, Esq., LL.D.\* The office was congenial to Mr. Cooper's taste as a scholar and a churchman, and was one from which he derived many pleasant associations; for he never tired quoting, in after life, the *bons mots* and drolleries with which the witty archbishop enlivened the dull proceedings of taking and recording evidence.

It is no wonder that Mr. Cooper relished the sallies of Dr. Whately, for he was himself prone to playfulness like the archbishop. Overflowing always with humour, it would be easy to mention hundreds of his whims and pleasantries in various places and companies, at home and abroad; in the drawingrooms of himself and friends; among the labourers and mechanics of Markrea; with the *creme de la creme* of foreign salons; or, if a tempting opportunity offered, before the common people met with in continental streets and squares. Here is a sample:—

Being in Naples with a friend—the Rev. Dr. Robinson, of the Armagh observatory—with whom he was making a little tour, they happened, as they were passing through one of the piazzas of that city, to fall in with a juggler, who was exhibiting feats to a large circle of spectators. It seems the exhibition was not over brilliant, at least in the eyes of Mr. Cooper, who was an adept in sleight-of-hand; for, after looking on attentively for some time, that gentleman stepped boldly into the ring and took the appliances out of the performer's hands. The crowd enjoyed the scene; and after Mr. Cooper had shown them a *tour* or two, accompanying the feats with a running com-

\* Thom's *Almanac*, 1853, p. 381.

mentary in the raciest of Italian, which he spoke like a native, they recognised a *maestro* in the new-comer, and gave cheer upon cheer as the *amateur* showman retired, after giving back the cap and balls, and passing deftly with them a piece of gold into the palm of the professional; a trick, no doubt, which that worthy regarded as the best part of the performance. Squeamish people may feel that Mr. Cooper let himself down a little on this occasion, but let your exquisites say what they will, most persons will only think the more highly of the *grand seigneur*, who could thus throw himself into the pastimes of the people; and of the philosopher, who was able, on occasion, to unbend, with conjuror's balls, a mind habitually occupied with the orbs of the planets.

Mr. Cooper, then, was a many-sided man, with moral and mental nature well developed on all sides, so that he excelled at once in intellect, in virtue, and in social and personal accomplishments.\* Unlike many men of science, who are engrossed with one idea, this *savant's* mind ranged from the highest to the homeliest subjects; and, unlike many men of the world, who care for few, or nobody, but themselves, this gentleman's affections were warm and all-embracing. And he was an excellent family man. Saint Paul says, that "he that has not care of his own, and especially those of his house, is worse than an infidel;" Dean Swift adds, that "he who has care *only* of his own is *just equal to an infidel*;" but Mr. Cooper bestowed care all round; while serving, at the same time, as a model in every domestic relation, being a dutiful son, a fond father, an affectionate and devoted husband. Indeed this strong family feeling is supposed to have hastened his death; for

\* "His personal qualities were of a high order: blameless and fascinating in private life, a sincere Christian, no mean poet, an accomplished linguist, an exquisite musician, and possessing a wide and varied range of general information."—*Obituary Notice in the Proceedings of the Royal Society*, 1864.

he visibly drooped and sank from the demise of Mrs. Cooper, and never rallied till he followed her to the grave. Mrs. Cooper departed this life about Christmas, 1862, and Mr. Cooper's death occurred on the 23rd April, 1863. They are both buried in the same grave at Ballysdare, in the cemetery attached to the chapel-of-ease founded by them, the monument erected over the remains bearing no inscription except those Scripture words: "Absent from the body, present with the Lord." \*

There are few who may not derive profit from Mr. Cooper's life. Heads of families will find plenty to imitate in the domestic virtues it exhibits; landlords may learn from it how to promote the interests of tenants and labourers, and their own interests and happiness at the same time; individuals of the humbler classes will take the more cheerfully to their lot of labour, after seeing this gentleman choose, with all his wealth and honours, to

" Shun delights,  
And live laborious days;"

while those born to place and fortune, instead of sitting down, in ignoble sloth, to the good things prepared for them—a mere *numerus fruges consumere nati*—can catch from Edward Joshua Cooper the honourable ambition of being men of culture and usefulness, and of surpassing others in mental, as much as in material possessions. †

Before concluding this notice of the Coopers an additional remark or two are to be made. First, it may be observed that the Coopers, like the O'Haras and Percivals, are a family of great antiquity and distinction. We learn from

\* The fine memorial window, erected by the Misses Cooper in the Church of Saint Paul's, Collooney, (see page 125), bears the inscription: "In memory of Edward Joshua Cooper. Obiit April 23, 1863. And Sarah Frances Cooper. Obiit Dec. 29. 1862. Erected by their devoted and sorrowing daughters, April, 1865."

† "Nam genus et proavos, et quæ non fecimus ipsi,  
Vix ea nostra voco."

Ovid's *Metamorph.*, lib. xiii, l. 140.

Sir Bernard Burke,\* and from the will of Cornet Cooper, in which the cornet commends his children to the care of his "cousin," Lord Collooney, that the Coopers are related to the Cootes, who are declared, in the preamble of the patent creating Richard Coote, Baron of Collooney, to have been "an ancient and flourishing family of Norfolk." † And they are known to be related also to Sir Richard Bingham, the celebrated governor of Connaught, a member of "an old and illustrious family of Dorsetshire," as Camden informs us. ‡ According to the memorial or genealogical window in Markrea Castle, the genealogies on which were furnished by Sir William Betham, the lineal ancestors of Cornet Cooper under King John and Henry VIII, were, respectively, Bryan Cooper, knight, and William Cooper, knight.

That Cornet Cooper was a landed proprietor in Limerick prior to Cromwell's landing in Ireland, and was not, therefore, a "Cromwellian" strictly so called, may be deduced with very high probability—to say the least—from the Exchequer decree already quoted; for, though it is not expressly stated in the decree that the Edward Cooper mentioned and Cornet Edward Cooper were one and the same, still the identity sufficiently appears: first, from there being no trace of any other Edward than the cornet in the documents of the period; secondly, from the affirmative

\* *Landed Gentry of Ireland.*

† "Quamque in eo numero conspicuum se prestitit vir nobilis nobisque in primis probatus Ricardus Dominus Coote, Baro de *Coloony* in regno nostro Hiberniæ, serenissimæ reginæ uxoris nostræ in Hollandia Seneschallus, nunc Thesaurarius, cujus familiæ sedes olim in comitatu Norfolkiençi, vetustate, rebus gestis, et opulentia inclitæ, unde proavi (nati ad majora) profecti militari laude ac de patria bene merendi studio incitati, in Hibernia, ubi tum bella exarserunt contra juratos tam Anglici nominis quam reformatæ religionis hostes, strenuam ac utilem operam navarunt, ibique inter regni proceres ascripti floruerunt, etc."—*Lodge's Peerage of Ireland*: by Mervyn Archdall, A.M., vol. iii, p. 210.

‡ *Annals of the Reign of Elizabeth*, A.D. 1598.

opinion of Mr. W. M. Hennessy, whose knowledge of the doings and documents of the time is second to that of no man living; thirdly, from the original estate of the Coopers lying certainly in Limerick; and, lastly, from the fact that the regiment of dragoons to which the cornet belonged was composed of English landholders—"poor stripped English settlers," says Borlase—dispossessed by the Irish in 1641.\*

The other remark is, that many regard those Coopers who have succeeded the cornet in Markrea, not as members of the cornet's family, but as descendants of one of the O'Briens. The story is—that Conor O'Brien, a chief of the great Thomond family, having been slain while defending Limerick against Ireton, and having left after him a wife and two or three sons; the wife, to preserve the husband's property, sought out Ireton, and besought his protection and patronage in her bereavement. This extraordinary appeal touched the heart of the general, who, in response, promised his good offices, but only on condition that she should marry an officer of the English army. The condition was accepted; Cornet Cooper was chosen for the honour of the lady's hand; and the sons of Conor O'Brien, after their mother's marriage, taking the name of the stepfather, who had no children himself, passed on the name of Cooper—but the blood of O'Brien—to their descendants, the Coopers of Markrea. This account, romantic as it sounds, is far from improbable.† There are weighty reasons

\* Borlase—*Rebellion of Ireland*, p. 44. *Cambrensis Eversus*, vol. iii, p. 92.

† Another version of the story may be seen in Mr. and Mrs. Hall's *Ireland: its Scenery and Character, etc.*, which the authors took from Crofton Croker, and which runs thus:—

“During the siege of Limerick (Cromwell's siege), Ireton, unable to gain over Connor O'Brien to his side by negotiation, employed five of his best marksmen to shoot him. These men, disguised as sporting cavaliers, succeeded in surprising Connor O'Brien, and by one of them he was mortally wounded. They were immediately seized and hung on two carts,



for and against it, with nothing, perhaps, decisive one way or the other; but in either case the Coopers can boast of high lineage; the alternative lying between the blood of Brian Boromhe and that of ancestors who were already flourishing and famous knights in the days of King John.

which were set up on end to form the gallows, The dying man was carried on horseback to Lemenagh, attended by a faithful servant, of whom Mrs. O'Brien demanded why he dared to bring a dead man home to her? and calling her two sons, Teigue and Donough, told them that with the life of their father their fortune was lost, unless both she and they immediately surrendered to the popular English party, and obtained terms from Ireton. Upon the death of her husband, who survived only a short time, she ordered her carriage, and dressing herself in superb robes of blue and silver, travelled with six horses to Limerick, then in the possession of Ireton, where she arrived on the evening when a splendid entertainment was given in celebration of the surrender of the town. Mrs. O'Brien was stopped by a sentinel, who demanded her order for admission; and while an altercation took place on the subject, Ireton came up and inquired into the cause, and the name of the lady. 'I was this morning,' replied the heroine, "the wife of Connor O'Brien, but this evening I am his widow." Ireton, who had not heard of Connor O'Brien's death, nor of the fate of the marksmen, suspected some deceit, and asked how she could prove her words? 'By bestowing my hand in marriage,' she replied, 'upon any one of your officers.' The offer was accepted, and the widow was married the same evening to Captain Henry Cooper."—Mr. and Mrs. Hall's *Ireland*, vol. ii, p. 188.

From this, then, and other traditions it is clear enough that the widow of Conor O'Brien married an English officer named Cooper; but whether he was a captain or cornet; a Henry or Edward by name, is not so clear; but as Cornet Edward Cooper was the leading Cooper of that period, there is little doubt that it is he who was the husband of Mrs. O'Brien. One argument that goes a great way to prove this is derived from the fact, that the wife of Cornet Edward Cooper, as Sir Bernard Burke and the genealogists inform us, was named Mahon or Mahony, while the maiden name of Conor O'Brien's widow was also Mahon or Mahony, as appears from the family papers of the O'Briens, now in the possession of Lord Inchiquin.

Another circumstance that tells strongly for the O'Brien origin of the Markrea Coopers is this: that the late Mr. Cooper, who was so well qualified to weigh arguments, was fully convinced of this origin after he had studied diligently all the facts of the case.

## CHAPTER IV.

## CLOONAMAHON.

## SECTION I.—OLD OWNERS.

CLOONAMAHON, the seat of Minor Meredith, is a spot of considerable interest in the parish. The tasteful mansion, which was built by the late Captain Meredith, commands a vast prospect, and is surrounded by a demesne of several hundred acres, the whole of which is land of prime quality. In old times the place was called *Kil-na-Maghin*, or *Kil-na-Mochain* from a church that stood about one hundred yards to the east of the present garden, and had annexed a graveyard. The date of this foundation is unknown; but that it is very remote appears from the old legend that Cloonamahon church moved—first, to Lough-Cronan (the little lake lying between Knocknegruath and Drumfin); and next, to Kilmorgan, where it has remained since; a story which goes to show that the building at Cloonamahon was anterior to those of Lough-Cronan and Kilmorgan, or “Killmurrough,” as the parish is called in the *Down Survey* maps.

There is no means at present of knowing for certain who the saint is in whose honour Cloonamahon church was dedicated. Very probably it is Mochain, the companion of Saint Attracta, and the erenagh of her church at Killaraght;\* or it may be Muiredach O'Manchain, suc-

\* O'Mochain or O'Moghan, is a well-known name of several ecclesiastics, particularly of some who had connexion with Killaraght. Benedict O'Moghan was erenagh of Killaraght in 1361, and the office would seem to have been hereditary in the family. Donnell O'Moghan was abbot of Boyle in 1440. In 1392 “Gregory O'Mochain, Archbishop of Tuam, a

cessor to Cronan, whose name is given in the *Annals of the Four Masters* under the year 1023. In Father O'Hanlon's *Lives of the Irish Saints*\* we read of a Saint Mainchin, "son of Colla in Corann," whose *natalis* falls on the 13th of January; and as Corann certainly included Cloonamahon in olden times, it is probable enough that this Saint Mainchin is the patron of the church in question. But the way in which Cloonamahon is pronounced by Irish speakers points rather to Mochain of Killaraght than to either of the other names mentioned.

Like the rest of Tirerrill, Cloonamahon belonged to the M'Donoghs in the Middle Ages, and up to the close of the sixteenth century. In 1587, as we have seen already, Morish M'Donogh was the owner and occupier of it, and, as such, signed the indenture of composition made that year between Sir John Perrott and the chieftains of Sligo. In 1595 Hugh O'Donnell made a very effective foray through Lower Connaught, and, in his progress appointed chiefs for Tireragh, Leyney, Corran, Tirerrill, and Coolavin, naming Morish Caech M'Donogh of Cloonamahon, son of Teigue of the Trowsers, the M'Donogh of Tirerrill.† It

pious and charitable man, died," says the *Annals of the Four Masters, sub anno*. And we learn from the same authority that "the young Bishop O'Mochain died on his way to Rome" in 1395. Very probably the last-named was Bishop of Achonry, though John O'Donovan writes in a note under the entry, "the name of his see is not given in any authority accessible to the editor."—See Colgan's *Life of St. Attracta*.

\* *Lives of the Irish Saints*: by the Rev. John O'Hanlon, M.R.I.A., vol. i, p. 194, where we read:—" 'St. Mainchin, son of Collan, in Corann.' Men of the world live a fevered life; the children of God are alone at rest. Mancin Mac Collain is mentioned in the Martyrology of Tallagh, at the 13th of January. And in addition to this entry, we read as having been venerated on this day, according to the Martyrology of Donegal, Mainchin, son of Collan, in Corann. It must probably be the present barony of Corran in the County of Sligo, that is here meant."

† *Annals of the Four Masters, A.D. 1595*:—"On this occasion, thirteen of the castles of Connaught were broken down by O'Donnell. After crossing the Moy into Tireragh, he conferred the title of O'Dowda upon Tieve, the son of Tieve Reagh, son of Owen, the O'Dowda. In Leyney

would have been well, perhaps, for Morish Caech, had he never received this dignity; for, on obtaining it, he threw himself energetically into the movement against the English, and was slain in 1598 while thus engaged, which occasioned the confiscation of his property.

O'Connor Sligo was owner of Cloonamahon in 1640; Cornet Cooper bought it, as a debenture, from Robert Brown, a dragoon, to whom it had fallen by lot; but the cornet had to relinquish it in favour of the Earl of Strafford, who claimed and obtained it from the Commissioners for executing the Act of Settlement. On the 2nd of July, 1666, Charles II made grants, under the Acts of Settlement and Explanation, of most of the County Sligo, including Cloonamahon, to William Earl of Strafford and Thomas Radcliffe, Esq.; and in the *Tripartite Deed of Partition* of the County Sligo—made on the 21st July, 1687, the third year of James II, between William Earl of Strafford, first part; Rev. John Leslie, D.D., second part; and Joshua Wilson of the City of Dublin, third part—we read, that Cloonamahon Beg and Cloonamahon More were owned, at this date, by Charles Hart, who paid ten shillings *per annum* thereout to the king.

Charles Hart was brother of Right Rev. John Hart,\* Bishop of Achonry, who lived in Cloonamahon till he and the brother were deprived of their property about the year 1735, in a way that illustrates the iniquity of the times.

he nominated . . . the O'Hara Reagh; and he appointed Maurice Caech, the son of Tieghe-an-Triubhais, the Mac Donogh of Tirerrill; Rory, the son of Hugh, the Mac Donogh of Corran; and Connor, the son of Tieghe, the Mac Dermot of Moylurg. He took away hostages from every territory into which he had come, as a security for their fealty, and returned home across the Erne, having terminated his expedition."—*Annals, &c., ut supra.*

\* In vol. ii, p. 191, of Dr. W. Maziere Brady's *Episcopal Succession in England, Scotland, and Ireland*, we read—"1735, John O'Harte, succeeded by Brief, dated September 30, 1735. He died before May, 1739."

## SECTION II.—RIGHT REV. JOHN HART.

REFUSING, as Catholics, to take the oath of supremacy, the brothers Hart had to look about for some Protestant friend to serve secretly as trustee of the estate for them—a service which kind-hearted and high-minded Protestants frequently performed at the time for Catholic owners of property, to enable them to evade the penal laws. There lived then, on the townland of Cartron, which adjoins Cloonamahon, a Protestant gentleman named Betteridge,\* with whom the Harts were on terms of constant social intercourse and the closest friendship; and this man they pitched upon to act. On being applied to, the obliging neighbour was only too happy, he said, to be able to do a good turn for friends so loved; but having received all the powers and papers from the Harts, Betteridge proceeded to Dublin, and treacherously took the property to himself in reality as well as in form. The wretch was not proof against the temptation of robbing friends by due form of law; † and when taunted

\* His name, Laurence Bettridge, is attached to the petition for changing the site of the parish church of Ballysadare.—See page 121.

† At this time, Catholic owners of landed property frequently held their estates in the names of Protestant trustees, who fulfilled honourably all the conditions of the trust. O'Connell used to tell of an humble, but high spirited tailor, that acted as trustee for half the Catholic gentlemen of Munster. Betteridge, in his robbery, probably proceeded under a law of 1709, enacting “that all leases or purchases in trust for Papists should belong to the first Protestant discoverer, and that no plea or demurrer should be allowed to any bill of discovery, relative to such trusts, but that such bills should be answered at large.” The Catholics regarded the encouragement given to discoverers and informers as an intolerable grievance, and thus refer to it in an Address and Petition (written by Edmund Burke) to George III:—“Whilst the endeavours of our industry are thus discouraged (no less, we humbly apprehend, to the detriment of the national prosperity, and the diminution of your Majesty's revenue, than to our particular ruin) there are a set of men, who, instead of exercising any honest occupation in the commonwealth, make it their

with the villany, coolly replied, that he had himself a son, for whom he felt more love and concern than for the children or the brother of Charles Hart. But neither father nor son was anything the better for the ill-gotten estate. On the contrary, the acquisition seemed only to bring them bad luck; for, in a very short time they quarrelled with one another on a subject that made both a bye-word in the neighbourhood; and old Betteridge, in order to spite the son, and get himself away from a place where he was detested and despised, resolved to dispose of the property. With this view, he offered it privately for sale to a Mr. Rutledge,\* who then kept a shop on the site of the house now occupied in Collooney by Peter Gillooley, and was known to be wealthy, for a person in the position of shop-keeper. Not having, however, money enough to make the

employment to pry into our miserable property, to drag us into the courts, and to compel us to confess on our oaths, and under the penalties of perjury, whether we have, in any instance, acquired a property in the smallest degree exceeding what the rigour of the law has admitted; and in such case the informers, without any other merit than that of their discovery, are invested (to the daily ruin of several innocent, industrious families), not only with the surplus in which the law is exceeded, but in the whole body of the estate and interest so discovered, and it is our grief that this evil is likely to continue and increase, as informers have, in this country, almost worn off the infamy which in all ages, and in all other countries, has attended their character, and have grown into some repute by the frequency and success of their practices."

In the reign of Anne, the Irish House of Commons passed a resolution "that the prosecuting and informing against Papists was an honourable service," thus endeavouring to exalt a class of men, whom common humanity instinctively recoils from with loathing, and who have found no apologist in history except the infamous and inhuman Tiberius Nero; even his vile senate, as Tacitus implies, evincing a reluctance to descend with him so low. "Ibaturque," says the historian, "in eam sententiam, ni durius contraque morem suum, *palam pro accusatoribus*, Cæsar irritas leges, rempublicam in præcipiti conquestus esset: subverterent potius jura quam custodes eorum amoverent. *Sic delatores, genus hominum publico exitio repertum et pœnis quidem nunquam satis coercitum, per premia eliciebantur.*"—Tacitus, *Annal.*, lib. iv, c. 30.

\* This Mr. Rutledge, whose Christian name was Thomas, was churchwarden in 1720.—See page 121.



purchase, Mr. Rutledge borrowed from Joshua Cooper of Markrea Castle what was wanted, giving that gentleman, in return, a lien on the property of 4s. 6d. per acre, a burden which it still bears. Mr. Rutledge at first had no reason to rejoice for having the broad acres of Charles and Doctor Hart, for the estate was not long in possession when the new owner had to lament the (page 103) death of an only son—one of the most promising young men in Ireland—who was killed by a fall from a horse on the old road through Cloonamahon, at a spot that is still called *Cloghina Phooka* (Ghost's rock), from the deceased being believed to haunt the place.

Later, however, Mr. Rutledge was somewhat consoled for this heavy affliction by marrying his three daughters to three highly respectable husbands named Meredith, Phibbs, and Ormsby, and dividing among them the Cloonamahon estate, which included Lisaneena, Ballinabull, and Knockmullen. Mr. Ormsby soon sold Knockmullen, his portion; but the descendants of Messrs. Meredith and Phibbs still hold their respective shares, and are, as well as the descendants of Mr. Ormsby, among the leading families of the county.

Poor Doctor Hart, before eviction from Cloonamahon, was famous for hospitality.

Carolán was often with the Harts, and showed his admiration of the bishop's genial nature and many virtues by composing two songs in his honour, of which one is now, most probably, lost,\* and the other is given in Hardiman's *Irish Minstrelsy*, with the following translation:—

## I.

In this hour of my joy, let me turn to the road,  
 To the pious one's home let me steer;  
 Aye! my steps shall instinctively seek that abode,  
 Where plenty and pleasure appear.

\* After making long and diligent inquiries in the parishes of Ballysadare and Kilvarnet, no trace of this song has been found.

Dear Harte, with the learned thou art gentle and kind;  
 With the bard, thou art open and free;  
 And the smiling, and sad, in each mood of the mind,  
 Find a brother's fond spirit in thee.

## II.

To the lords of the land, we can trace back thy name,\*  
 But a title all bright is thine own ;  
 No lives have been lavish'd to prop up thy fame,  
 For it rests on calm goodness alone.  
 Could they deign in old Rome my fond suffrage to hear,  
 To that spot for thy sake should I roam ;  
 And high in the conclave thy name should appear,  
 Known, honour'd, and lov'd as at home.

## III.

To thy Master in heaven a true steward art thou,  
 From thy lips His high mandates we hear ;  
 And the young and the aged submissively bow,  
 When thy voice comes in peace on the ear.  
 Oh ! good is thy fame in the land of O'Neil,  
 Kind heir of the race that is pass'd,  
 Let others, when drinking, still falter or fail,  
 I'll pledge thee, dear Harte, to the last.

\* In O'Dugan's Topographical poem, the O'Harts are set down as belonging to Tara :—

“ The chieftains of Teamhair, where are we  
 Oh-Airt the noble, and O'Riagain.”

Shortly after the Anglo-Norman invasion, this family forsook, or were banished from Tara, and settled down under the protection of the O'Connors of Sligo, in the barony of Carbury, where they had castles at Grange, Ardtarmon, and other places. They were always loyal to the O'Connors, by whom they were singularly trusted and favoured. Most probably it was while O'Connor Sligo owned Cloonamahon, that the ancestor of Bishop Hart came to live there.

The celebrated Eugene O'Hart, Bishop of Achonry, who was not only present at the Council of Trent, but took a leading part in the deliberations of that august assembly, belonged to the family. This distinguished bishop was consecrated in 1562, died in 1603, at the great age of 100, and was buried in his own cathedral at Achonry. He received special faculties from the Pope in 1575, for the whole ecclesiastical province of Tuam, signed in 1585 the indenture of composition between Sir John Perrott and the chieftains of the County Sligo, took part in the provincial synod that

No doubt, Carolan put forth all his powers while under the bishop's roof, as knowing well that in no other place could bard or musician encounter more exacting critics. The great Irish minstrel that immediately preceded Carolan—Thomas O'Connellan—was born and bred in Cloonamahon,\* and accustomed the neighbourhood to a high degree of excellence both in poetry and music. As a composer, O'Connellan is commonly preferred to Carolan, nor was he, perhaps, inferior even as a performer. This gifted man grew up in or near the hospitable house of the Harts, and acquired there the skill and taste for which he became famous. Later, the bard took to a wandering life through the country—like most of the profession—and died about

assembled in Ulster, in that year, to promulgate the decrees of the Council of Trent, and enjoyed all through life the confidence and favour of the Holy See. The consummate prudence with which this prelate steered his course through the difficult times in which he lived was on a par with his great learning.

\* See an account of O'Connellan in *Dublin Penny Journal*, vol. i, p. 112. The writer in the *Journal* observes—"Of the melodies of these musicians, those of Carolan, the last great bard of Erin, are well known, but the compositions of his immediate predecessor, Connellan, are less familiar to the public, and are far too little appreciated. Unfortunately but little is known of his history, and but few of his melodies have been preserved, but those few are in their kind of unequalled beauty, and far superior to the compositions of Carolan. From Mr. Hardiman's valuable 'Irish Minstrelsy,' we learn that Thomas O'Connellan was born at Cloony Mahon in the County of Sligo, early in the seventeenth century, and died in Lough Gur in the County of Limerick, sometime previous to the year 1700. Of the remaining airs generally attributed to him, are—"The Jointure," "If to a Foreign Clime I Go," "Love in Secret," which truly 'Dallies with the Innocence of Love like the Old Age,' "Planxty Davis," which is known to the Scotch as the 'The Battle of Killecranky,' and 'The Breach of Aughrim,' which is more popularly known under the name of the 'The Farewell to Lochaber.' These latter melodies were introduced into Scotland after his death, by a brother of the deceased bard named Laurence. According to tradition, the skill of O'Connellan as a performer was equal to his inventive powers as a composer, and Mr. Hardiman has preserved a little Irish ode addressed to him in praise of his matchless powers, in a strain of poetic beauty worthy of the occasion which gave it birth."—See page 204.

the close of the seventeenth century at Loughgur, in the County Limerick. O'Connellan was a most prolific author, having left after him, it is said, upwards of seven hundred airs. Unfortunately, most of those compositions have perished, owing to the agitation of the period in which he lived; but such as survive are unsurpassed for sentiment and melody in the estimation of competent judges.

O'Connellan is known to be the author of some of the most popular airs in Scotland; such as: *The Battle of Killecranky*, and *Farewell to Lochaber*, which the "canny" people of that country have complacently appropriated, as if of native growth, and to which, in order to conceal the Irish origin, they have given these new names; the old ones being, respectively, *Planxty Davis* and *The Breach of Aughrim*. After the bard's death, a brother named Laurence, who was also a minstrel, and had a minstrel's taste for roaming, passed over to Scotland, taking with him several of Thomas's compositions, which the brother played in his rounds through that country, and which became favourites from the moment they were heard; and in this way Cloonamahon has the honour of having laid Scotland under obligation in regard to her national music, of which that country is so proud.

The estimate formed of Thomas O'Connellan's powers may be judged from an ode, composed in his honour by the famous Cormac Common, and of which the following is a very spirited translation:—

## I.

Wherever harp-note ringeth  
 Ierne's isle around,  
 Thy hand its sweetness flingeth,  
 Surpassing mortal sound.  
 Thy spirit-music speaketh  
 Above the minstrel throng,  
 And thy rival vainly seeketh  
 The secret of thy song!

## II.

In the castle—in the shieling—  
 In foreign kingly hall,  
 Thou art master of each feeling,  
 And honoured first of all !  
 Thy wild and wizard finger  
 Sweepeth chords unknown to art,  
 And melodies that linger  
 In the memory of the heart !

## III.

By thee the thrill of anguish  
 Is softly lulled to rest ;  
 By thee the hopes that languish  
 Rekindled in the breast.  
 Thy spirit chaseth sorrow  
 Like morning mists away,  
 And gaily robes to-morrow  
 In the gladness of thy lay.\*

A writer, in the fourth volume of the same journal, page 188, supplies the following literal translation of the Irish ode:—

“ Airy spirit ! who hast obtained true admiration,  
 Through the extent of Fola, [*A bardic name of Ireland.*]  
 And hast discovered the only true way  
 Of the strains of music to the heart,  
 Vain is the harmony  
 Of Europe after thee—  
 After the delightful vibrations  
 Of thy fingers on the gentle wires.  
 There is no desire of the hearts of the kings  
 Of Europe through its extent,  
 That thou couldst not soothe  
 By the soft, swift touch of thy fingers.  
 Thou couldst change them to mirth  
 By the low murmuring sound of thy hand.  
 Spirit ! who hast stole from the fairies in their airy halls  
 Through Fola,  
 The sweet-toned plaintive strain, melting  
 Each eye to tears,  
 That wouldst heal the breast-pang,  
 And each illness of the feeble body.

\* *Dublin Penny Journal*, vol. i, p. 112.

There is no skilful minstrel that is not behind thee  
Far, in his melody.

Oh! thou whose spirit-music  
Chaseth mist from the heart.

Coming back to Doctor Hart, great commiseration was felt for him when turned out of house and home by Bette-ridge. His office; his meek and gentle nature, that "would not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax;" his family, one of the oldest and most distinguished in the county; and, above all, the vile treachery of which he was the victim, excited the warmest sympathy of both Catholics and Protestants. The Catholics, however, of that time were crushed down with fear, and voiceless; and thus an iniquity, which at present would provoke a storm of indignant remonstrance in the Catholic body, did not elicit from those of that day a single public complaint. But the Protestants were no way mealy-mouthed in expressing their feelings; and one of the chief among them, Mr. O'Hara, whose family always supplied patrons and friends to the Catholic clergy, when such were needed, invited Dr. Hart to reside near himself at Annaghbeg, and did all that courtesy and kindness could to make up for the loss of Cloonamahon.

If the bishop became thus reconciled to his lot, the old neighbours of Cloonamahon, Carrickbanaghan, Coolteem, and Lisaneena did not the less mourn his removal from among them; and never has Parisian republican loved his *arbre de liberte* with more ardour than they loved a famous ash, which was sacred in their eyes, because, according to some, the bishop planted it, or, according to others, because he said mass beneath its branches. This venerable relic still exists, sounder and statelier than ever, with a girth of about sixteen feet, and without any symptom of decay.  
*Floreat semper!*

Two traits of Dr. Hart are handed down by the traditions of the people, which serve to show the sensibility and



amiability of his nature. First, he felt strongly for birds confined in cages, and caused as many of the little prisoners as possible to be restored to liberty. And a beautiful legend informs us that all the birds of the country, to requite the kindness of their benefactor, assembled on the occasion of the bishop's death, and kept chaunting his requiem all the time the corpse was waking. Secondly, he set his face firmly against those "keeners" or professional criers, who were commonly employed at that time at wakes and funerals. Regarding, no doubt, their simulated sorrows as

"A fault to heav'n;

A fault against the dead; a fault to nature."—*Hamlet*, Act 1, Scene 2.

his honest heart recoiled from exhibitions that at once travestied the most sacred feelings of the living, and made a mockery of the dead. But that Dr. Hart had no objection to a reasonable manifestation of real grief we learn from his own case; for, on a brother or sister dying, he gave way so far to feeling as to shed abundant tears; and when some friends ventured a gentle remonstrance, and reminded the bishop of his own condemnation of the "keeners," the reply was: "When I weep it is nature forces me; but when those wretched people cry, it is they that force themselves, in spite of nature." Most probably, it is owing to the action of Dr. Hart that—though the race of "keeners" is far from extinct in other places—there is not the smallest vestige of them and their disgusting arts in the parishes of Ballysadare and Kilvarnet.

Apart from moral considerations, the *caoine* was generally a very insipid affair, whether one regarded the language or the notes to which the language was joined. The lament commonly took the form of a direct panegyric address to the deceased, in which the performers, while standing beside the corpse, clapping the hands, and swinging the body in all directions, summarized, in plaintive recitative, the life of the departed; expatiated on his chief actions; recounted his graces of mind and body; and bemoaned the

loss everybody must suffer by the removal from the world of such a paragon of perfection. All this was usually done in one stereotyped fashion, and in the same set phrases; but it happened here and there, when a man or woman of talent acted the part of keener, that the performance was not devoid of poetry and pathos. The following is a good and faithful poetic version of a *caoine* of this latter kind:—

## I.

Oh! silent and cold is my lov'd one's repose,  
 And damp fall the dews of the night,  
 Yet the sun shall return, and bring joy as he goes,  
 But thy pulse shall not vibrate—nor, fresh as the rose,  
 Shalt thou joy in the fresh coming light.  
 No more shalt thou roam thy green native hills over;  
 Where once like the morn thou arose;  
 Where often thy childhood as nature's fond lover,  
 Thy feet and thy fancy proclaimed thee a rover,  
 For silent and cold thy repose!

## II.

Thou wast dearer to me than the rays of the sun,  
 When lovely he sinks in the west;  
 For like him the years of thy life were begun,  
 Like his splendour at mid-day thy loveliness shone,  
 With the softness that mantles his vest.  
 But though like him, thy fate 'twas to sink overcast,  
 And fled thy soft blush like the rose,  
 Yet, unlike him, thy darkness for ever shall last,  
 And for ever! oh, ever! thy radiance is past,  
 For silent and cold thy repose!

## III.

Oh! thou wast to me as the friend I revere,  
 My bosom throbb'd only for thee,  
 Thou wast brave, thou wast just, thou wast sweetly sincere,  
 And thine was the love of the peasant and peer,  
 Oh! thou wast my *Cuise ma Croidh*!  
 Yet why on thy virtues look back, and review  
 Those scenes that redouble my woes?  
 He who once was their master is passed like the dew;  
 Him soft as the moonbeam, no more shall I view,  
 For silent and cold his repose!

The following is a literal translation from the original Irish:—\*

## I.

“Cold and silent is thy repose! damp falls the dew of heaven; yet the sun shall bring joy, and the mists of the night shall pass away before his beam; but thy breast shall not again vibrate with the pulse of life at the return of the morning, nor shalt thou wander more on thy native mountains, amid the scenes of thy childhood, where first were awakened thy friendships—where first thou smiled in playfulness of infancy.

Cold and silent is now thy repose!

## II.

“Thou wast dearer to me than the rays of the declining sun; and when I turn my eye on him, the thought of thee brings sorrow to my soul:—thou wast like him in thy youth, with the soft blush on thy cheek. Like him at mid-day, thou shone in the splendour of manhood: but early was thy fate clouded with misfortune, and thou hast sunk beneath it; nor shalt thou rise again like him.

Cold and silent is now thy repose!

## III.

“Thou wast to me as the nerve of the throbbing heart: for thy sake only was this world dear. Thou wast brave—thou wast generous—thou wast just—thou wast loved by all. But why look back on thy virtues? Why recall those scenes to memory, that are no more to be beheld? For he whose they were has passed away—he is gone for ever, to return no more.

“Cold and silent is now thy repose!”

The people have a notion that no family can prosper in Cloonamahon till the injustice done the bishop is repaired; but however one's sense of equity or of divine retribution

\* *The Dublin Penny Journal*, vol. iv, p. 75.

Reprehensible, however, as the *caoine* certainly was, it seems to have had, like some other abuses, a very respectable antiquity in its favour. “The custom,” observes the Rev. G. N. Wright, “of pouring forth a strain of lamentation at the funerals of their friends and relatives, though now probably peculiar to Ireland, is of very ancient date, and can be traced back to heathen origin with tolerable certainty. As far as the analogy of languages will prove, there is very singular testimony to this point; the Hebrew is *Huluul*; the Greek, *Oboluzō*; the Latin, *Utulo*; and the Irish *Hal uloo*. If it be then of heathenish origin, it may be sup-

may have started such an idea at first, when the evil doer still held the ill-gotten goods, such an idea were only a vain imagination or silly superstition at the present day, when one hundred and fifty years have elapsed since the original wrong, and when the property has long passed, by fair and lawful process, into innocent hands.

posed to arise from despair ; but, if otherwise, from hope. That it is not a fortuitous coincidence of terms, but also a similarity of customs to which these mixed modes are applicable, may easily be proved. We find in the Sacred Scriptures many passages proving the existence of this practice among those who used the Hebrew tongue—‘Call for the mourners,’ &c. ‘Man goeth to his long home, and the *mourners* go about the streets,’ &c. Its existence among persons speaking the Greek tongue is proved from the last book of Homer, where females are introduced mourning over Hector’s dead body. It is not alleged that the Greeks introduced the name or the custom, but that the Greeks were in Ireland might perhaps be proved from the Greek church at Trim, in the County of Meath, and also from the life of St. Virgilius, Bishop of Salzburg, where mention is made of Bishop Dobda, a Grecian, who followed St. Virgilius out of Ireland.” Wright might also have mentioned the Greek Bishop of Elphin. “Amongst the Romans there were women called *Præfæ*, who uttered *conclamatio* ; and Virgil, speaking of Dido’s funeral, says, ‘*Jæmineo ululatu tecta fremunt.*’ The analogy between the Roman and Irish funeral ceremony before the government of the Decemviri was amazingly striking. The Keenaghers, or Keeners (for so the *Præfæ mulieres* are called by the Irish), are in the habit of beating their breasts, tearing their hair, and wringing their hands. Now, we find the following law relative to Roman funerals among those of the twelve tables—‘*Mulier ne faciem carpito.*’ ‘*Mulieres genas ne radunto.*’ The antiquity of this custom is thus established beyond doubt, and secures for the Irish peasantry the sanction of ages for a practice which a stranger might otherwise contemplate with horror.”—Mr. and Mrs. Hall’s *Ireland*, vol. i, page 222.

That Rev. Mr. Wright is correct in his idea of what strangers would think of the exhibition under consideration, we learn from the language that Arthur Young applies to it. “Among their customs,” writes this most intelligent traveller, “it may be worth mentioning, that at the wakes or funeral entertainments, both men and women, particularly the latter, are hired to cry—that is, to howl the corpse to the grave, which they do in a most horrid manner.”—*Tour in Ireland*: by Arthur Young, vol. i, page 350.

## SECTION III.—THE MEREDITHS.

AFTER Mr. Rutledge's death Mr. Laurence O'Hara, a wealthy farmer, occupied Cloonamahon. It is said that he took forcible possession, and held on by the same tenure. But as O'Hara was related by family to the Harts, it is not unlikely that he alleged some legal claim, and continued to maintain himself in this way. However this may be, Mr. Meredith, the owner, took the law eventually into his own hands, and, accompanied by some tenants, entered forcibly into Cloonamahon House on a day that O'Hara was away at the fair of Tubberseanavan, and thus excluded the trespasser. While Laurence O'Hara lived in Cloonamahon he always, to use the words of neighbours, had "full and plenty" for himself and family, as well as for friends and the poor.

Mr. Joseph Meredith, the first of the Meredith family that resided at Cloonamahon, was an amiable and benevolent man; so very good to the poor that several stories are told about the sums of money he gave them, and the food, and sometimes even lodging afforded them at Cloonamahon House. Mrs. Meredith observed with concern her husband's extreme open-handedness, and felt it necessary to use her influence in restraining this extravagant almsgiving. She found means of limiting Mr. Meredith's money-aims to thirty shillings a week, an allowance which he had generally got through by Tuesday or Wednesday, sighing during the remaining days for the moment of again enjoying "the luxury of doing good."

This gentleman had a leaning to several practices of the Catholic religion; never, for instance, touching flesh meat on Wednesdays and Fridays; causing the Rosary to be said regularly in his kitleen every night during the Lent; and teaching the Catholic catechism to the little boys that

worked about Cloonamahon. Many say that Mr. Meredith died a Catholic, after having been received into the Catholic Church by Right Rev. Dr. Flynn, the then Bishop of Achonry, and the Very Rev. James Henry, the parish priest of Ballysadare. It is certain that these gentlemen were intimate friends, and passed much of their time under his hospitable roof. But it is not in the dwelling house the ceremony is said to have taken place, but in the garden. The story runs: that Mr. Meredith was in the garden when the bishop and priest, without calling at Cloonamahon House, came on straight to where he was, as if by appointment; and as soon as they had entered he ordered the gardener and a boy or two that served as helps, to leave; then locked carefully the gate after them, and remained alone with the visitors for a couple of hours. It was on this occasion, we are told, that the religious rite was performed. Whether the ceremony took place at all there is no means now of deciding; and, on the whole, it seems much more probable that it did not, though the contrary was the opinion of Mr. Meredith's neighbours and labourers, one of whom still survives, and retains unchanged his belief in the conversion.

Mr. Meredith died on the 22nd of January, 1811, aged 69 years and was buried in the old churchyard of Collooney. Four of this good gentleman's descendants have since succeeded to the ownership of the Cloonamahon estate: his son, Thomas; his grandson, Joseph; his great-grandson, Captain Thomas James; and the captain's son, Herbert Willoughby, the actual owner, who is a minor, and is serving at present as a naval officer on board Her Majesty's ship, the *Volage*. Thomas, the son of Joseph, resided generally at Cloonamahon, but died in Coney Island, and was interred, like his father, in the old graveyard of Collooney. Joseph, the second of the name, lived little in Cloonamahon, spent much time in travel, died in Dublin, and was buried at Collooney in the upper church-



yard. The late Captain Meredith—son of Joseph and Letitia Walker—was born in Wales in the year 1823; entered young into the army, retiring from it in 1854, on the occasion of his marriage with Miss Sydney Maria Bond, daughter of Captain Bond, Farragh, County Longford; died in London, and was buried in the same vault with his father, on which we read those inscriptions:—"Joseph Meredith of Cloonamahon, died May 5th, 1841, aged 46 years." "Thomas James Meredith, of Cloonamahon, late captain of the 90th Light Infantry, died October 29th, 1860, in his 37th year. Absent from the body present with the Lord."

Cloonamahon was greatly improved by the captain, and is indebted to him for the handsome mansion that adorns it—a picturesque structure charmingly situated; for most of the planting that covers the grounds, which are all laid out with much judgment and taste; and for extensive draining, fencing, clearing, levelling, and other improvements that have increased considerably the fertility of the soil, which, in its natural state has been always held to be of superior quality—well adapted for tillage, and singularly salubrious for pasture. Cloonamahon House is at present occupied by the captain's relict, Mrs. Kincaid; her husband, John Kincaid, Esq., J.P.—the extensive and respected land agent; and her daughter, Miss Meredith; and if old Joseph Meredith can still know what passes on earth it must be no little gratification to him to find that nowhere is his favourite virtue of charity more largely and perseveringly practised than at the head quarters of the family estate.\*

\* The estate lies in three different baronies—Tirerrill, Leyney, and Carbury; contains 2306A. OR. 25P. statute measure; and is held partly in fee, partly in fee-farm, and partly by lease for lives renewable for ever.

## CHAPTER V.

## CARRICKBANAGHAN, ETC.

THE large townland of Carrickbanaghan or Carrickbanagher, comprising 1329 English acres, has its name from a family called, in former times, O'Banaghan or O'Banagher, and, at present, Benson; a family, as history informs us, of Belgian descent, and able, therefore, to boast of a higher antiquity in Ireland than the Milesians themselves, as the latter came to the country in the year 1258 after the Deluge; while the invasion of the Belgians dates from the year 1056 after the Deluge.\* The Belgians were defeated in the battle of Moytura, at Cong, by the Tuatha de Danaans; but owing, it is said, to their helping the Milesians at a later period to conquer the Danaans, the former rewarded their allies with large tracts of territory, giving Carrickbanaghan and some of the adjacent lands to the O'Banaghans. "In the County Galway," says Roderic O'Flaherty—"O'Layn, and in the Co. Sligo, O'Banaghan, to our own times the proprietor of a very handsome estate, look on themselves as the real descendants of the Belgians." † The great cashel on the top of Carrickbanaghan—the most capacious, probably, in the county—may, perhaps, serve to give additional probability to the supposed origin of the O'Banaghans, as the Belgians are famous for the erection of such structures. Dun Eangus, in the *great* island of Arran, "which might contain," says O'Flaherty, "200 cows;" and a similar *dun* in the *middle* island, being set down by our antiquarians as works of the Belgians.

\* *Cambrensis Eversus*, Dr. Kelly's edition, vol. i, pages 415 and 421.

† O'Flaherty's *Ogygia*, vol. ii, p. 21, Hely's translation.

There is little known for certain of the O'Banaghans, save this exceptional antiquity and their location on Carrickbanaghan. There lived a Dowaltagh O'Banaghan towards the close of the sixteenth century; for, in an inquisition sped in Ballymote before Nicholas Brady, respecting the property of Melaghlin M'Donough of Collooney, who died on the 15th of August, 1597, we find Dowaltagh O'Banaghan claiming, as belonging to himself, certain townlands that had been in the possession of Melaghlin. King James I, in the fifteenth year of his reign, granted to Keadagh O'Banaghan of Carriglass, the following denominations of land:—in the Corran barony, the towns, lands, and quarters of Cair<sup>h</sup>negappul, Ochum, Knockadow, and Ardsallagh.\* On the minor hill of Carane, which is only a few hundred yards from Carrick, are to be seen the three so-called 'chairs' of Keadagh O'Banaghan—*cahir Kedagh*—which are so many chair-like cavities formed in the solid rock in such a way that Keadagh might shift the point of view according to the exigencies of sun and wind. This Keadagh is said to have lived in the seventeenth century, and to have resided to the north-west of Carane, where the ruins of his house might be seen so late as thirty years ago. It is likely that Carriglass and Carane are one and the same place, and that the Kedagh of Carane was the grantee of James I.

Though Kedagh M'Banaghan and Margaret M'Banaghan are mentioned among proprietors in the Civil Survey, their names do not occur at all in the Book of Distributions. In this book Donnell M'Cahelroy and Dominick Martin are set down as proprietors in 1641, the former of Coltimore (Coolteem) and Lishrontagh; and the latter of Carrick; these denominations, with the "red bog" attached, comprising the entire of old Carrickbanaghan. In the fifteenth year of his reign, James I granted to Melaghlin

\* Patent Roll, Jac. I, 15. To this grant is annexed the clause—  
"Saving his rights to Charles O'Connor Sligo, the King's ward."

M'Callery and Daniel M'Callery the town and lands of Coiltimore and Lishronty, saving to Sir W. Taaffe a rent of 6s. 8d. English out of each of the said quarters. In 1659 Cornet Edward Cooper possessed Coltimore; Morgan Ffarrel, gent., Carrick; and John Duke, gent., Lishrontagh. But this arrangement was upset under Charles II; and Coltimore, Carrick, and Lishrontagh were "passed" to Lord Collooney and John Boswell by the commissioners that carried out the Acts of Settlement and Explanation. Morgan Farrell, however, did not quit his hold, and his descendants owned Carrick, Coolteem, and Lishrontagh in subordination to Lord Collooney and Lord Collooney's representatives, retaining the property down to 1854, with the exception of Lishrontagh, which one of the Merediths purchased and added to Cloonamahon. In 1854 Carrickbanaghan and Coolteem were sold in the Incumbered Estates' Court, when the late lamented Alderman Farrell of Dublin, a namesake, but no relative of the former owners, became the purchaser at £12,000. There could not be better landlords than the Alderman and his son, Mr. Edward Farrell, who succeeded on the Alderman's death some years ago, have always proved themselves; and the consequence—a most noteworthy consequence too—is, that the inhabitants of Carrickbanaghan and Coolteem, who, in past times were rather under a cloud in the parish for their loose and lawless manners and morals, and for harbouring outcasts from society,\* are now models of thrift,

\* A story was current in the neighbourhood some years back, that may be mentioned in illustration of the statement in the text. It was to the effect, that when a former owner of Carrickbanaghan—Mr. Fergus Farrell, who was a sub-inspector of Constabulary, and stationed at Swineford in the County Mayo—came to visit his property, among the inhabitants that went out to welcome the landlord were two or three individuals whom Mr. Farrell, from descriptions he had been reading in the *Hue and Cry*, recognised as notorious criminals. Nor were they the only persons that, feeling other places too hot for them, found safety and shelter among the huts and turf-clamps of Carrickbanaghan.

industry, peaceableness, and general good conduct, and as conspicuous by their absence from public houses and law courts as they were formerly noted for frequenting these places.

The townlands of Lackagh, Doorla, and Knocknegruath belonged, no doubt, to the O'Banaghans in the good days of old.\* In the course of time they fell into the hands of the M'Donoghs; for we find in the *Down Survey*, Bryan M'Donogh set down as the owner of Lackagh in 1641, and Cormac M'Donogh as the owner of Doorla. These lands were forfeited in the Insurrection; and in 1659 Edward Tibb,† gent. and David Teddar, gent. possessed *Dourley*; while David Tibb and William Mortimer, gent., held Lackagh; but under the Acts of Settlement and Explanation this property was passed to John Boswell and Lord Collooney. At present Doorla is owned by Lord Norbury, into whose family it passed by marriage with Miss Brabazon, grand-daughter of the well-known Jack Phibbs; while Knocknegruath and part of Lackagh belong to Mr. B. O. Cogan, Lisconney; the remainder of Lackagh being owned by Mr. Baker, son of the late Counsellor Baker.

\* In the parish map of Killmurrrough (now Kilmorgan) in the *Down Survey*, Lackagh is set down as containing 55A. 2R. 0P., arable and pasture; one division of *Dourley*, as 97A. 0R. 0P., arable pasture and some bog; and another division of *Dourley*, as 124A. 1R. 0P., arable meadow, pasture, and some bog. Between Drumfin on one side, and Lackagh and *Dourley* on the other, are given in the map two divisions of bog, one containing 87A. 2R. 0P., the other 135A. 0R. 0P. *Dourley* was held at the time by "Bryan M'Donogh and Carbury M'Murtagh Finn, Irish Papist;" and Lackagh by "Connor M'Donogh and Tirlagh M'Murtagh, Irish Papist."

According to the Cromwellian Census of 1659, Edward Hill, gent., was Tituladoc of Durlly; and Henry Bierast, gent., Tituladoc of Lackagh, or as it is written, "Lackahaky."

† So written in the Census of 1659, but the name, most probably, should have been Hill. An Edward Hill was drowned in the Unshinagh river at Lackagh, at a spot still known as *Poll Edward Hill*.

The townlands of Lisaneena, Ballinabull, and Cloonacurra formed, very probably, a part of the territory bestowed by the Milesians on the O'Banaghan family, as they adjoin Carrickbanaghan, sloping down from the hill to the Owenmore river. In an inquisition taken at Ballymote on the 6th of June, 1610, by Nicholas Brady, these lands are enumerated among those that belonged to Melaghlin M'Donogh of Collooney at his death in 1597; in the fourteenth year of James I, "the towns, lands, and quarters of Lisenyna, Balleanloggan [Ballinabull] and Cloonecorra" were granted with various other denominations of land to Bryan M'Donogh, Collooney, son of Melaghlin; in 1638 they belonged to John Taafe, first Baron of Ballymote and Viscount of Corran; the Civil Survey and Book of Distributions make Sir George Radcliffe owner of "Knockmullen, Ballinloghan, Lishanyna, and Cloncora" in 1640; and in the Deed of Partition of Sligo, dated 21st July, 1687, the places under consideration are assigned to the Earl of Strafford as "the town and lands of Knockmullen *alias* Cloonegissan, now or late in the possession of Charles Harte, paying thereout to his Majesty ten shillings per annum; the town and lands of Lisaneena *alias* Tubberathbane; the town and lands of Ballyanloggan *alias* Ballynapoole, now or late in the possession of John Palmer, paying thereout to his Majesty ten shillings per annum; and the town and lands of Cloonecurra, now or late in the possession of Charles Harte, paying thereout to his Majesty ten shillings per annum."

Lisaneena and Ballinabull passed about the year 1740 into the possession of the Phibbs' family by the marriage of Fleming Phibbs, of Doonemurray and Chaffpool, to the daughter of Thomas Rutledge. Mr. Phibbs continued to reside after his marriage in Doonemurray, as did also his son, Tom Phibbs;\* and it was only about 1812 that Fleming

\* It is told of this Mr. Phibbs, that he rode to Dublin in one day, and after remaining a day in the city, that he rode home to Doonemurray



Phibbs' grandson, the late Mr. William Phibbs, built a residence in the townland of Ballinabull, on a part of the property which he called Heathfield, as it was then wild, heath-grown, uncultivated bog, though by reclamation and planting—effected mainly by its present owner, Thomas Phibbs, Esq., our humane and popular J.P.—it has become as fertile and picturesque a spot as one could find in the county.

The population of Lisaneena and Ballinabull has varied greatly within the last century and a-half. For several years after the estate came into the hands of the Phibbs' family, it was a mere bullock-run, without inhabitants, so that we are told there was not a single house from Ardcurley to Annaghmore except one for a herd, nor even a wall or fence of any kind. On the other hand, the inhabitants were so numerous about the close of the last century and the beginning of the present, that there were in Ballinabull alone, fifty families, the members of which formed a complete little community, with their own tradesmen—a hosier, a hatter, a tailor, a shoemaker, a carpenter, and a smith—and with a weekly market, that was held every Thursday, and was well attended by buyers and sellers, and well supplied with provisions and all other commodities needed in such a neighbourhood. But the population is again at a low ebb, having fallen to twenty-three families in 1851; to twenty in 1861; and to twenty-one in 1871; while the market has long since ceased to exist, and the tradesmen have nearly all disappeared, leaving, for the most part, in their room only herds and day labourers. Lisaneena—the fort of the fair\*—is so called because it is there was held, at first, the cattle fair, which, later was transferred to Tubberscanavan; and Ballinabull—the town

on the third day, making both journeys on the same horse. Mr. O'Hara used also to ride to the city from Annaghmore in one day, when going up to Parliament, but had a relay of horses provided on the road.

\* Joyce's *Names of Places*, First Series, p. 191.

of the hole or hollow—has its name from the village that existed formerly, and that lay for the most part at a very steep hollow in the angle formed by the Ballymote road and the new unfinished road towards Carrickbanagher.

Deferring to another occasion an account of Annaghmore, which lies alongside of Lisaneena and Ballinabull, we come to BILLA or BILE—the more correct form—a village prettily situated on the slope that lies between Annaghmore demesne and the Owen-ne-leave,\* or Coolaney river. The Irish word *Bile* signifies an old or sacred tree, so that the place, no doubt, derives its present name from containing, in ancient times, a tree of the kind.† Bile contains a fine view of the Ox Mountains, as they turn up in the direction of Kilmactigue, and disclose in the bend a greater variety of beauties than is, perhaps, to be found in any other part of the range. In and near the townland are several conical hills, each about 100 feet high, and deep green to the top, which form an interesting feature in the landscape. When broached they are found to be a congeries of sand and small round stones, such as are commonly used for paving, so that they seem to owe their formation to water, while the surrounding land looks as if it had been skimmed to form them. It is noticeable that these hills range with gaps or hollows in the Ox Mountains, one or more of them standing opposite a corresponding open; this peculiarity of situation suggesting that the rush of waters that shaped them came from the neighbouring sea through the gaps of the mountain. Very probably they date from the deluge.

\* So called in the Down Survey Map of Sligo.—See Map No. 26, by William Morgan, an. 1657.

† Dr. Reeves in treating of a church of the same name, in the diocese of Connor, writes:—"The name in Irish is *Bile*, signifying an *aged tree*, there having probably been in pagan times, near the site chosen for the church, some sacred oak, which was an object of religious veneration. Thus Merville, in the diocese of Down and Connor, is derived from Magh-bile, which is rendered *Campus arboris sacri*."—*Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Down, Connor, and Dromore*, p. 77.

What, however, gives Bile, as compared with other portions of the parish, a peculiar interest is, that it is the birthplace of Saint Fechin, and that it is full of memories and memorials of the Saint, including some remains of his church, which was a parish church in the time of Colgan, as that writer tells us in the *Acta Sanctorum*.\*

Within a few hundred yards of Bile is Killassar, a place so called from being the site of a church dedicated to Saint Lassara. There is no vestige of the building at present, but labourers still survive who tell you that they helped to root up the foundations, about fifty years ago, when the place was levelled off and planted. There were several persons of the name Lassara among the primitive Irish saints, but the one from whom Killassar has its name is certainly the Saint Lassara who is mentioned by our old writers as the mother of Saint Fechin. It is said that it was the saint himself who erected this church, and dedicated it to the memory of his mother, in the same way as Saint Ciaran of Ossory built the church or nunnery of Killyon in the King's County in honour of his mother, Saint Liadhain.† The church of Killassar was anterior to that of Bile, as appears from the local legend, that the former, after having stood for some time at Killassar, left its site and moved on to Bile, where it settled down, and has since remained. The townland of Bile belonged to the abbey of Ballysadare, as it was leased with the other lands and possessions of that establishment, on the 26th August, 1588, to Bryan Fitzwilliams; for the following clause in the lease plainly refers to it:—"One parcel of land called Trinebally in Leyney, containing thirty acres of arable land and pasture, with the tithes and appurtenances, being parcel of the temporal land to the said priory belonging." From Bryan Fitzwilliams all these monastic possessions

\* *Acta Sanctorum—Vita S. Fechini.*

† *Saint Ciaran of Ossory*: by John Hogan, page 129.—See also *Transactions of Kilkenny Archaeological Society*, vol. i, p. 215.

passed into the hands of Edward Crofton, to whom they were granted by Royal Patent, and from whose representatives Bile was purchased back by the late Major O'Hara. The thirty acres mentioned in the lease were formerly called *Parc-Ehin*—Fechin's Park—and formed only one field, but recently *Parc-Ehin* has been broken up into two holdings, which are now in the occupation of James Sprowls and Pat Banks. The whole townland of Bile, according to the Book of Distributions, comprised 170 acres, forty profitable, and 130 unprofitable, and belonged, in 1641, to "Edward Crofton, Protestant."

## CHAPTER VI.

## TULLAGHAN, ETC.

THE townland of Tullaghan has the same south-western boundary as the parish; namely, a hollow running from north to south through Doomore hill, and, in continuation of the hollow, a stream flowing from the mountain to Coolaney river. Doomore, rising above the eastern portion of the Ox range, is 903 feet high, and serves somewhat to shelter the plains of Leyney from the fierce north wind. The name shows that the place is the grave of some person or persons, the Irish word, *Dumha*, signifying a "sepulchral mound or tumulus;"\* and the tradition is, that a member of the O'Hara family, while hunting, lost his life there, and that his flesh having been mangled and eaten by the hounds, a mound or tumulus was raised on the spot over the bones. This tragedy, the story goes on to tell, led to the establishment of a branch of the O'Hara family in the North of Ireland; for a brother of the deceased took the sad event so much to heart that, unable to live near the scene of the occurrence, he removed from Connaught to the Northern coast, and became the progenitor of the O'Haras of Antrim.

Great improvements were effected by Major O'Hara on the townland of Tullaghan. As the old road that crossed the mountain was nearly impassable for its steep gradients, the major struck out another line in 1832, which is curved, and carried so skilfully over the great inequalities of the

\* *Irish Names of Places*: by Dr. Joyce, page 309. The cairn on Doomore is fifteen yards in diameter, and 12 feet high. It is called by the country people, "Cashel Dhonal na guire,"—the Cashel of Donnell of the hounds.

surface, that the slopes are practicable to horses drawing the heaviest loads. While thus promoting the useful, he was not unmindful of the beautiful, but planted largely alongside of the new road, down the deep ravines and gorges, and up the sides of the mountain, imparting a very picturesque appearance to the whole district; more especially during the summer months, when the gay and variegated foliage contrasts strikingly with the sombre masses of black rocks piled up all round.

And, what rarely happens in such improvements, they were made without any clearances of tenants, the only occupants disturbed by them being the eagles that used to frequent, up to that time, the towering crags of the place, and swoop down now and again on the new-yeaned lambs and barndoor fowls of the farmers. It is true that the lands taken up for planting had been allowed free to the tenants of the neighbourhood as a *run* for their cattle, but still the tenants gained rather than lost by the transaction; for the major, to compensate them, gave a sweep of mountain over Rahosey much larger and better than that which he had taken away.

Tullaghan Hill, so famous for its well, is a solid rock resembling a cone truncated near the vertex, and is about 200 feet high, and covered with verdure to the top. It rises at the northern end of the great plain, formerly called the Corann; a district which, in ancient times, comprised not only the present barony of Corran, but also that of Leyney, a part of Tirerrill, and large slices of Gallen and Costello in the County of Mayo.\* The view from the

\* "Corann is now represented by the bar. of Corran, Co. Sligo. But the limits of the ancient Corann would seem to have also embraced the present baronies of Gallen, Co. Mayo, and Leyney, Co. Sligo. See O'Flaherty's *Ogygia*, pars. iii, cap. lxix."—Note of W. M. Hennesy, Esq., M.R.I.A., in *Book of Fenagh*, page 97. O'Flaherty, in the chapter referred to, writes—"The country called Corann, formerly comprehended Galenga, in the County of Mayo, Lugny and Corann, in the County of Sligo. The Corco-firtrians, the posterity of Lugny, inhabited this tract.



summit is very fine, taking in not only the plain of the Corann, but Tireragh, Sligo bay, and several ranges of mountain in Sligo, Donegal, and Leitrim. There are three circumvallations or cashels on the hill, the most massive of them being the uppermost, which is built of great stones five or six feet long, runs round the hill with the exception of one point, and encloses a space of fourteen yards in diameter. On the north-west side there is a sheer precipice of fifty or sixty feet; and the point over the edge of the precipice is that on which the cashel does not run, but in the valley beneath there is a segment of a cashel, which corresponds to the break above, and serves to complete the circle.

The most remarkable thing about Tullaghan Hill is its well, which is one of the *Mirabilia Hiberniæ*, or Wonders of Ireland, and is mentioned in the accounts of these prodigies that are contained in Nennius, Giraldus Cambrensis, and O'Flaherty's *Ogygia*, as well as in an unpublished manuscript in Trinity College. Tullaghan Well is the seventh wonder in Nennius' \* list, and is thus described:—"A well of sweet water in the side of the Corann: the property of that well is, that it fills and ebbs like the sea, though it is far from the sea too." Giraldus' account is in his Topography, Dist. 2, cap. 7: "Est et in Conactia fons dulcis aquæ in vertice montis excelsi, et procul a mare, qui die naturali bis undis deficiens, et toties exuberans, marinas

Saint Senach of Tirolilla, the bishop was one of these; and Machiag the poet, who was of the family of O'Concheata, of Lignathiale in Coran; also Dobhailen, and the O'Doncaiths, who possessed Corann, till the O'Haras, and afterwards the MacDonoghs, became the proprietors of it."

\* The *Irish Version of the Historia Britonum of Nennius*: Edited by Dr. Todd, and the Hon. Algernon Herbert, p. 193. In a note, Dr. Todd observes—"The following account of the Wonders of Ireland is taken from the Book of Ballymote, folio 140, b. . . ." "The *Mirabilia Hiberniæ* [Wonders of Ireland], are described by Nennius, Giraldus Cambrensis, Ralph Higden in his Polychronicon, who relies entirely on Giraldus, O'Flaherty's *Ogygia*, part iii, c. 50, p. 289. See also Ware's *Antiquities of Ireland*, by Harris, chap. xxxiv, p. 227."

imitatur instabilitates." (There is also a spring of fresh water in Connaught, on the top of a high mountain and far from the coast, which ebbs twice a day and flows as often, like the tides of the sea). This well is the fourth wonder in O'Flaherty, and is thus given in Hely's translation of the Ogygia \* :—

“ In Sligo district, on Mount Gam's high side,  
A fountain lies, not wash'd by ocean's tide;  
Each circling day it different waters brings,  
The fresh—the salt—from it alternate springs.”

In the manuscript tract in Trinity College, Tullaghan Well is the eleventh wonder, and is thus described, “there is a well in the side of the Corann, which flows and ebbs after the similitude of the sea.”

This well still exists, but is surrounded at present with little of the sacred character which made it an object of reverence and wonder in the past. It is situated on the south-east side of Tullaghan Hill, within twenty feet of the summit, and is of circular form, two feet in diameter, and about eighteen inches in depth on an average of the twenty-four hours. The bottom is rock, and a circular wall of stones without mortar, four feet high, rises round it, sharp by the water's edge, so as to enclose the well, except on the entrance side, which faces the east. Near the well there is a heap of stones, thrown there, no doubt, by devotees, as the complement of their visit; and fourteen feet west of the well there is a large stone standing on end, which country people call the Altar.

There is a legend that this well sprang up at the prayer of Saint Patrick. The story is: that at the time the Apostle expelled the demons from Croagh Patrick, one named Caerthanach escaped the fate of the others, and moved along before the Saint, polluting all the waters in

the way. On reaching Tullaghan the Saint was tormented with thirst, and finding no water, prayed for relief, when the well burst forth, and, in consequence, became sacred to Saint Patrick, and a favourite resort of persons devoted to the Apostle. A hollow is pointed out in the north-west part of the hill, where the Saint is said to have lain in concealment on the watch for Caerthanach, till he espied her, and with a word drove her away from Ireland for ever.

But the well was famous long before Saint Patrick was born; for in the book of Dinnsenchas we read that Gam, the servant of Eremon, was slain on the mountain, thus giving it the name of Slieve-Gamh, and that his head was cast into the well, which became, in consequence, enchanted, containing salt water at one time and fresh at another, and ebbing and flowing with the tide.\* Owing to this legend the Pagan Irish betook themselves to the place in pilgrimage on one of their great festivals—that celebrated on the last day of summer; and Saint Patrick, hearing of this superstition as he was quitting Tireragh, turned up to Tullaghan and blessed the well, thus giving a new direction and object to the devotion of the pilgrims, but leaving the time for the visit to the place unchanged. And hence the patron of Tullaghan was held on the last day of summer, and continued to be so held down to the time of its removal to the Strand. The pious performed stations on the hill, and in recent times Father Dan O'Connor, parish priest of Killoran, is said to have encouraged these exercises of devotion both by example and advice. No doubt the good priest was influenced by a motive similar to that which actuated Saint Patrick; and seeing the excesses

\* This account is also given in the *Book of Extracts* of the County Sligo, which was compiled by those engaged in the Ordnance Survey, and is now in the Royal Irish Academy. Ox Mountains, the present name of the range, is a translation of *Slieve Damh*, which is a corruption of *Slieve Gamh*.

committed by those who used to frequent the patron, sought to put an end to these abuses, and at the same time to revive the religious character of a meeting that he could not abolish.\*

Pilgrimages or pious visits to the well have ceased, though traditions of the natural and supernatural prodigies that are said to have taken place in connection with it are still rife in the neighbourhood. The grown-up inhabitants of the district heard from their fathers that the well ebbs and fills with the tide, and that cures of all kinds were wrought on those who prayed around it; but, notwithstanding this, it is hard at present to meet anyone so credulous as to believe either in its tidal or healing properties.

The qualities ascribed to the well do not, however, come altogether from imagination or invention; for there is something peculiar to it which gave occasion to the idea of its following the movements of the sea. There is no doubt that the water in it sometimes rises and subsides in a very remarkable manner. The writer has visited the well different times, and on each occasion observed, all round the stone inclosure, a wet water-mark three or four inches deep, similar to what one sees on the stones of the sea-shore at the ebbing of the tide; and, doubtless, it is this circumstance, arising, no doubt, from some peculiarity in the bed of the well, or in its immediate surroundings, that has raised Tubber-Tullaghan to the honour of being one of the Wonders of Ireland.

Two trout are said to have haunted the well, and, of course, to have been enchanted like the well itself. They are no longer visible, at least to ordinary eyes, but there

\* These *patrons* were denounced by bishops even in their pastorals. In reference to one of them, Dr. Bray, of Cashel, wrote—"It is become such a scene of drunkenness and quarrelling, and of other most abominable vices, that religion herself is brought into disrepute, nay, mocked and ridiculed; intemperance and immorality are encouraged; the tranquillity of the country is disturbed, and the seeds of perpetual animosities and dissensions are sown"—*Statuta. Synodal. Cassel and Imolac*, p. 72-23°.

are trustworthy persons who assure you that they themselves saw these "odd fish" some time ago. How they came there it is not easy to say, though we are hardly bound to believe, with several simple-minded persons, that they have been in the well from the beginning of time. In proof of their enchantment a story is current to the effect, that though they were captured, killed, broiled, and eaten by some profane people of the neighbourhood, they were seen in their old *habitat* immediately after all this as lively as ever, and as "wholesome as trout" proverbially are.

Whatever may have occasioned originally the fame of Tubber-Tullaghan, it could not be its water, unless the liquid has vastly deteriorated in the course of time; for you might search all the wells of the country in vain for water so ungrateful both to the eye and the palate. It is so brackish that there is no wonder it has been supposed to come from the sea, while it is so heavy and dark that it looks as always holding a large quantity of some muddy substance in solution. And the water nurtures, besides, a soft, slimy, thread-like aquatic plant, which must always soil and pollute it.

The townlands next adjoining Tullaghan on the east are: first, KINNIGRELLY; next, Glen; and then Largan. Kinnagrelly, Kilnagrelly, Kenagrilly, Kengrillen—for we find the name written in all these forms—is so called from its lying over the marsh or swamp that runs along the side of the Coolaney river. The original form was *Kean-na-Grel-lach*, head of the swamp or miry place. As part of Leyney it belonged to the O'Haras, and was owned in 1641 by Errill O'Hara and Pat French; and when these proprietors forfeited by joining the insurgents, Kinnigrelly fell into the hands of the Earl of Strafford and Lord Collooney, each getting 137A. 3R. and 16P., or the moiety of the 275A. 2R. and 32P., which it comprises. By Charles II's grant in 1666 to the Earl of Strafford and Thomas Radcliffe, with

other lands conveyed to them was "part of the lands of Kingrillen *alias* Kinnigrilly, one cartron containing 137A. 3R. 16P. of profitable land and 32A. of unprofitable." And in the *Tripartite Deed of Partition* of Sligo between William Earl of Strafford, first part; Rev. John Leslie, second part; and Joshua Wilson, third part, we find in Joshua Wilson's portion: "the half trine of Memlagh, *alias* Moymelagh, and the cartron of Kennegrelly *alias* Kengrillen, in the possession of Oliver O'Hara, without paying any rent to his Majesty." It is a pleasure to be able to add that these lands, after having belonged so long to others, have recently come again into the hands of the O'Haras, Mr. C. W. O'Hara having purchased them, some years ago, from Joshua Wilson's heirs and assigns.

GLEN has its name from the glen or valley that runs across the Ox Mountains down by Coney. It is sometimes called Cashel in old documents, from a fort or cashel that stands four or five hundred yards to the north of the present village.

LARGAN is so called from its sloping situation, *learg*, the root of the word, signifying the side or slope of a hill. The two townlands belonged to the O'Haras of old, and have never ceased to belong to them. In Perrott's Indenture of the County Sligo they are given as the property of an O'Hara; and in the *Down Survey* they are set down as belonging to Kean O'Hara, and containing 209A. 1R. and 8P. of profitable land; and from that day to this they have remained in the possession of the family.

Between Glen and Largan on the north, and the Coolaney river on the south, lies the townland of KILNEMONOGH—church of the monks—so called from a monastery that existed there in the past, and which, according to Colgan and local tradition, was founded by Saint Fechin. This house was built about the time at which the Saint erected churches in Bile (from which Kilnemonogh is divided only by the river) and Ballysadare. There is little more known



for certain of the church of Kilnemonogh ; for, as there are several Kilnemonoghs throughout Ireland, it is hard to tell, when mention occurs in our annals of a Kilnemonogh, to which of them the reference applies. We read, for instance, in the *Annals of the Four Masters*, under the year 843, that “ Breasal—son of Caingue—Abbot of Kilnemonogh, died ;” and in the same authority, under the year 1438 : that “ the Abbot of Kilnemonogh and Vicar of Castleconnor died ;” and though it is very likely that both these entries, and more especially the latter (on account of the juxta position of Kilnemonogh with Castleconnor, which is certainly in the County Sligo) refer to the place now under consideration, still this is not quite certain.

Kilnemonogh is, or rather was, Bishop-land, and is marked as such in the *Down Survey*, where its measurement is 178A. 8R. 8P. The perpetuity of Kilnemonogh, as of many of the other church lands of the parish, was purchased under the 3rd and 4th of William IV, (the Church Temporalities Act), for, most probably, the “ spendthrift price,” of which the late Mr. Justice Shee speaks in his book on the Irish Church, by Mr. W. Phibbs,\* who now owns these lands, holding a great part of them in his own hands for grazing purposes, and letting some of them to tenants, but, probably, at no “ spendthrift ” rents. Ware, and Harris, and Archdall state that this religious house was granted to Richard Earl of Clanrickarde in the sixteenth century ; but this is an error, and comes from their confounding this Kilnemonogh with that of the County Roscommon, which was bestowed on that earl at the suppression.

ARDCOTTON and LUGNAMACKEN adjoin Kilnemonogh, and lie respectively to the east and north-east of it. Lugna-

\* Judge Shee calls this act, “ that hideous blot upon the Statute Book of the United Kingdom, that *Magna Charta* of church spoliation for the benefit of church tenants, church architects, and church builders—the 3 & 4 William IV., c. 37.”—*The Irish Church*, p. 19.

macken signifies the hollow of the parsnips, and owes the name, probably, to its being particularly suitable to the growth of that root. ARDCOTTON—in Irish, Ardcotteinte—means the “height of the common,” indicating that that district or some part of it was heretofore common property; and in effect the spot between Mr. Madden’s mills and the river goes to this day—in English—by the name of the “common.”

Previously to the sixteenth century stretches of land of greater or lesser extent, available to the general public for the purposes of grazing and recreation, were numerous in Ireland, and still more numerous in England; but in the confusion of that period, owing to the change of religion, the suppression of monasteries, and the redistribution of considerable tracts of land, these commons were encroached on, and appropriated from the poorer classes by powerful neighbours. This injustice was not consummated in England without vigorous and even insurrectionary efforts in opposition by the people, and energetic protests\* by the

\* One sample of these protests, and that from a man counted a martyr by the Church of England, will give a fair idea of all. “Fear not these giants of England,” says Latimer, “these great men and men of power. Fear them not, but strike at the root of all evil, which is covetousness . . . I fully certify you, *extortioners, violent oppressors, engrossers of tenements and lands, through whose covetousness villages decay and fall down, and the King’s liege people, for lack of sustenance, are famished and decayed; they be those which speak against the honour of the King. You landlords, you rent-raisers, I may say, you step-lords, you unnatural lords, you have for your possessions yearly, too much. Well, well, this one thing I will say unto you,—from whence it cometh I know, even from the devil. . . .* Surveyors there be that greedily gorge up their covetous goods; they make up their mouths, and the commons be utterly undone by them; whose bitter cry ascendeth up to the ears of the God of Sabaoth. The greedy pit of hell-burning fire, without great repentance, doth tarry and look for them. A redress God grant. For surely, surely, but that two things do comfort me, I should despair of redress in these matters. One is, that the King’s Majesty, when he cometh to age, will see a redress of these things so out of frame; giving example by letting down his own lands first, and then enjoin his subjects to follow him. The second hope

established clergy, the only clergy allowed to raise a voice at the time.

There is no means of knowing now who took Ardcotton from the people and clergy. Though the O'Haras were the original owners, as it is a part of Leyney, they had nothing to do in the alienation; and indeed this family were always more disposed to give than to take land where the church and the poor were concerned. But it would appear that the transgressors were the M'Donoghs of Collooney, who were so powerful in the sixteenth century as to be able to encroach both on the church and the O'Haras; for we find in an inquisition taken at Ballymote in 1610, before Nicholas Brady, that Melaghlin M'Donogh of Collooney died on the 15th of August, 1597, and that at the time of his death he was seized of Ardcottente and Loggnamacken in Leyney, with various other denominations of land in Tirerrill. The same document, however, states that the ownership of Ardcotton was contested, and that Gilleprone M'Brehon laid claim to it as being held from the king *in capite*.

In the maps of the *Down Survey* Ardcotton is given as belonging to the Bishop of Achonry, and as containing 499A. 1R. 24P. By this measurement it comprises not only what is now called Ardcotton but also Lugnamacken, Camphill, and Carricknagat.

Though King James I granted, in 1617, to Teague Buy O'Hara\* a head-rent out of the "four quarters of Ardcotton," we learn from the Patent Roll that his Majesty had granted the same four quarters of Ardcotton to Sir

I have, is, I believe that the general accounting day is at hand—the dreadful day of judgment I mean—which shall make an end of all these calamities and miseries; a dreadful, horrible day for them that decline from God, walking in their own ways, to whom, as it is written in the twenty-fifth of Matthew, is said: 'Go, ye cursed, into everlasting punishment, where there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.'—*Strype's Ecc. Memor.*, vol. ii, part 3, pp. 133-135.

\* Patent Roll, James I, 14<sup>o</sup>.

John King in the previous year.\* It would appear that Sir John received at the same time other church or termon lands in the parish, to wit: Tawniewilliam, Koney, and Kilnemonogh, as we find these lands in the possession of Lord Kingsborough, Sir John King's descendant in 1753; for on the 14th of November of that year those lands were demised by the Right Rev. Richard, Bishop of Killala and Achonry, to Robert Lord Kingsborough,† who, in all likelihood, was already in occupation of them in virtue of the royal grant to his ancestor. From Lord Kingsborough these possessions passed to the Phibbs' family by his lordship making over his interest to William Phibbs, Rockbrook, who already held part of the lands as tenant, and by the bishop renewing, on the 11th November, 1756, the lease to the said William Phibbs. From that date the property has since remained in the possession of the Phibbs, their title being, first, bishops' leases regularly renewed; and, recently, a perpetuity grant. Till about thirty years ago the estate was held in common by the two branches of the Phibbs' family, but at that date the whole was divided by private arrangement into two portions, one going to Mr. William Phibbs, Seafield, and the other falling to the late Mr. Harloe Phibbs, Sligo, who has been succeeded in possession by his brother, Mr. Peter Rutledge Phibbs of Kingstown. Unlike the other portion, the part of Mr. Peter R. Phibbs is let all to tenants; and it is but fair to add, that Mr. Phibbs, and his humane agent, Mr. Charles Phibbs, the owner's son, instead of showing any disposition to banish these tenants, are, on the contrary, taking pains to keep them in their holdings.

CARRICKNAGAT is a modern denomination, and may signify the *rock of the battle*.† This meaning is the less

\* Patent Roll, James I, 13°.

† Eric's *Ecclesiastical Registrar*, 1830, page 255.

† For an account of the battle, see page 72. The French quitted Carricknagat on the evening of the battle, and pushed on by a rapid march

unlikely, as the name dates from about the time of the affair with the French in 1798, when parts of the battlefield certainly changed their appellations: the rising ground on which Humbert marshalled his troops taking the name

to Dromahair, throwing over the bridge of Ballygrania, for the sake of expedition, the two cannon taken at Carricknagat. It seems certain that Humbert, when leaving Castlebar, intended to pass through Sligo. Some say that he altered this plan on account of Vereker's attack, but another and more probable opinion is, that the change was owing to news just received of an insurrection which had broken out at Granard, and which he desired to turn to account, by joining the insurgents as soon as possible.

Two days after the departure of Humbert, the British army under General Lake, arrived in Collooney. Instead of imitating the humanity of the French, this army committed the greatest excesses. As if to atone for cowardice in presence of the French at Castlebar, the English put to death the unarmed Irish, and the whole line of march was strewn with the unburied corpses of innocent peasants, butchered in cold blood. And it was not enough for them to deprive their victims of life, but they added sometimes savage indignities, as at Collooney, where, after shooting a man, they trampled his body to a pulp. Even the remorseless Musgrave finds it necessary to offer a word of apology for these Bashi Bazouk atrocities:—"At Collooney," says he, "a Longford deserter was recognised by some of the advanced guards, and shot; the whole army marched over his body with indifference; a strong instance of the calamities of war, and how much they obtund the feelings of humanity."

The excesses of the Hessians and other troops lasted all through the winter in this neighbourhood. The humbler classes lived in fear and trembling, as domiciliary visits were constantly making in search of persons alleged to have been "out" with the French. Cabins were sometimes burned, and their inmates obliged to take shelter in the woods and mountains. The lives of unoffending and innocent persons were taken in sheer wantonness or from private revenge. James Cusack, an inhabitant of Carrickbanaghan, was put to the sword in broad daylight at Knockbeg, merely for happening to be on the public road when a patrol was passing; but it is gratifying to add that two other parishioners, Martin Snee and Tom Snee, were saved from a similar fate by the interference of kind and influential Protestant neighbours, who were at hand when the poor men were about to be massacred. No Catholic was allowed to put the head out of doors after sunset. The late Ned Gunning of Ballinabull took a step or two one evening from his house in order to get a mouthful of fresh air; and in a moment a murderous attack was made upon him by drunken yeomen; and though the poor man escaped with life, he received a severe bayonet wound that he carried to the grave, and that

of Camphill; the slope on which Teeling shot the sturdy Whitters beginning to be called Gunner's Bray—and several knolls along the line of the French advance, where Frenchmen fell and were buried, becoming known as

was near terminating, at forty, a life enjoyed up to the patriarchal age of 112. Some inhabitants of the neighbourhood, known or suspected to have been with the French at Ballinamuck, had to lead most miserable lives, being waylaid and worried like mad dogs. Such of them as fell into the hands of the pursuers, were hanged or shot without law or ceremony; and of the remainder, several escaped to America, while a few were restored to their families by the influence with the government of certain humane and generous country gentlemen, and more particularly of three who deserve to have their names recorded, Mr. O'Hara of Annaghmore, Mr. Johnstone of Doomahair, and more than all, Mr. Jackson of Camp-hill.

As we had not seen the following interesting letter at the time of drawing up our account of the Battle of Carricknagat or Collooney (pages 72-79), we insert it here as containing a fresh and lively description of the conflict, from the pen of an eye-witness, who wrote from Sligo:—

“As I find there has not an accurate account of the action, so honourable to the Limerick City Regiment, come to your hands, I take this opportunity of describing it to you.

“On the 5th of September, Colonel Vereker, who commanded here, received information that part of the French and Rebel army had advanced to Collooney and purposed attacking this town that night in two columns. Considering it would be advisable to dispossess them immediately from that post, he ordered Captain Vincent, and 100 men as an advanced guard, to march and watch their motions, while he moved on with 20 of the 24th Dragoons, 30 Yeoman Cavalry, 250 Limerick City Militia, 20 Essex Fencibles, and 30 Yeoman Infantry. On the advanced guard coming near the enemy, they sustained a smart fire, which checked them a little, when Colonel Vereker ordered Captain Waller and the Limerick Light Company to advance and support them, whilst he formed his line and arranged his plan of attack upon the main body, which duty Captain Waller performed with great steadiness. On his line being formed, he ordered Major Ormsby and one company to take post on a hill which covered his right, and prevent the enemy from turning that flank, while the Colonel advanced on the right of the line with two curriple guns. Lieutenant-Colonel Gough was ordered to the charge of the left. In a few minutes the whole came into action, and supported on both sides an unremitting fire of musketry and grape shot for near an hour and a half—never was a more obstinate contest—at last superior numbers prevailed. Major Ormsby's detachment was obliged to retreat from the hill,



Frenchmen's Graves. But local opinion, which, it must be admitted, is not always a safe guide, takes the word to mean the *rock of the cats*, a name given to the place on account of it being the resort of wild cats. Old people tell,

and that post being given up, the enemy began to press round in numbers to the rear of the line.

"A retreat was then absolutely necessary to save those gallant fellows, who even then maintained their post, although their ammunition was nearly expended; never did any man show greater gallantry and coolness than Colonel Vereker at this trying moment; he never quitted his post while a man could stand by him, and when his artillery horses were so badly wounded that they could not bring away his guns, he attempted to have brought them off with ropes, and not until nearly surrounded on all sides did he leave them. The gallant and steady manner the officers and soldiers resisted the attack of the united French and Rebel army of above 4000 men, strongly posted, with nine field pieces, reflects the greatest honour on them, and has saved this town from ruin. The entire loss on the side of the King's troops was 6 killed and 21 wounded. The enemy had above 50 killed and wounded; many of the latter have since died in hospital here. The French fought with great bravery, and acted with humanity to the wounded officers and men who fell into their hands.

"It is singular that the three field officers of the Limerick City Regiment were slightly wounded. Even the French general allows he never met a more gallant resistance, or a better served fire than from the Limerick Regiment that day.

"It would be impossible to describe the universal dismay produced by the 'Races of Castlebar.' The loyal were paralyzed, the disloyal were filled with hope and courage, and the waverers or indifferent were inclined to side with the strong. Meanwhile the number of the French was exaggerated, and those invincible arms which had swept their enemies on the Continent before them as sheep, appeared destined speedily to expel the British from the island and to establish the Irish Republic under the protection of France. Flushed with success, Humbert determined to march to the north, to join another body of French troops, whose landing on the coast of Donegal was daily expected, and with that object in view he proceeded towards Sligo. Every hour that passed, and every mile he marched, he received new accessions of strength, whilst the Royalists were proportionally depressed and weakened. Sligo was at the time occupied by a force of about 600 men, who, under the influence of the panic that prevailed, and the fear inspired by the French name, were ordered at once to evacuate the town and retreat (*Musgrave*, page 605). But fortunately for the country and for British honour, this order was not obeyed. Colonel Vereker, then commanding in Sligo, having received intelligence of the enemy's movements, and feeling the imperative

that these animals were so numerous formerly in Carricknagat as to be a nuisance by their caterwauling, and a danger by their ferocity, to the inhabitants and to travellers on the public road.

necessity that existed, either that some decided victory should be gained, or at least that some such stand should be made as would check Humbert in his victorious career, determined to give him battle. It is thus that superior genius in the midst of national hesitation and confusion, manifests itself by seizing with promptitude on the precise moment for inflicting upon the enemy an effective and crushing blow. Collecting all the disposable troops, which comprised only a few dragoons and yeomen, and the Limerick Regiment, he marched to Collooney, a village about five miles from Sligo, to meet the French and their insurgent allies, who were at least ten times more numerous than the troops he commanded.

“The disposition of his little army was most judiciously made, and the site he selected was well calculated at once to protect and disguise the numerical inferiority of his force. The Collooney river covered the right wing, whilst the left wing occupied the side of a rugged hill” (it was *vice versa*) “thickly planted with trees, which sloped down to the high road on which his guns were placed. Such a position occupied by a body of determined men was not only difficult to take, but afforded singular facilities for a well-ordered retreat. The French had about 900 men, about 250 of the Longford and Kilkenny Militia, who had deserted after the Races of Castlebar, and a numerous body of rebels; and the total under Vereker did not exceed 300 men, with two curriple guns (Musgrave). The action began at half-past two o'clock on the 5th of September, 1798, and lasted one hour and thirty-eight minutes. Of the French, 28 were killed and a good many wounded. They left behind them at Collooney 18 of their men who were desperately wounded. Vereker returned his casualties at 9 killed and 22 wounded. He was himself severely wounded. After the action, the grenadiers represented to General Humbert, that it would be useless and cruel to compel them to endure the calamities of war any longer, but the general said, ‘he could not think of surrendering to so small a force.’ Thus it nearly fell to the lot of a few citizens of Limerick to capture the force destined by Napoleon Bonaparte for the conquest of the kingdom. . . .

“This brilliant action saved Sligo, and crushed the invasion of the French. Colonel Vereker crossed the Collooney river in good order, and the French general believing from the undaunted courage and confidence displayed by the enemy, that they formed the advanced guard of Lord Lake’s army, determined to retreat with precipitation, and shaped his course towards Manor-hamilton in the county of Leitrim, leaving on the road for the sake of expedition three six-pounders, and dismounting and throwing five pieces of artillery over the bridge of Dromahair into the

The evil was heard of, far and near, and brought to the spot a caravan of travelling tinkers—those Irish gipsies—who came to have a stand-up fight with the enemy *a la* “Brummy and the dwarf.” On reaching the rock they laid aside their budgets, formed a camp, remained for a fortnight about the place, and passed the time in a series of *battues* against the cats. The result was, that most of the cats were exterminated, and the rest so frightened that they have never since returned to the old haunt. The tinkers, to secure the fruits of their victory, and to prevent the return of the enemy, paid an annual visit to the spot for

river. These guns being abandoned, the French army lost its efficiency, and the French invasion may be said to have virtually terminated; although it was not till some days afterwards that Humbert surrendered to Lord Cornwallis.

“At this distance of time it is scarcely possible to estimate the important effect of this gallant enterprise. Lord Cornwallis with an army of 20,000 men under his orders, was cautiously wandering in a wrong direction on the banks of the Shannon; and only for the blow he received at Collooney, Humbert might, according to the supposition of Sir Jonah Barrington, have marched to Dublin, and seized the capital by a bold *coup-de-main*, joined by 40,000 rebels, who were assembling at Crooked Wood in the County of Westmeath, only 42 miles from Dublin. Such a stroke, if successfully accomplished, might have terminated for ever the English occupation in Ireland.”—*Limerick, its History and Antiquities*: by Maurice Lenihan, Esq., page 411.

The same authority gives the following returns of killed and wounded:

“Return of officers killed and wounded of the Limerick City Regiment at Collooney, on Tuesday, September 5th, 1728:—

“Ensign Rumley, shot through the body—dead. Captain Crisps (severely wounded), shot through the neck and jaws.

“*Slightly wounded*—Col. Vereker, Lieut.-Col. Gough, Major Ormsby, Captain Nash, Ensign Rindon.

“Return of privates killed, wounded, and missing:—

“*Killed*—John Wallace, Edward MacMahon.

“*Missing*—Timothy Sullivan.

“*Badly Wounded*—Corporal Kain.

“*Slightly wounded*—John Hickey, Patrick Hynes, Michael Harrison, Jeremiah Leahy, James Sullivan, Patrick Nelson, Denis Godfrey, Nicholas Purcell, Timothy Bryan, Corporal Mahony.”

some years; and as they had no fighting to do for want of an enemy, they occupied themselves in bartering their asses one against another, and buying such small things as the country people brought in. Ponies and "clibs" came by degrees to be offered for sale, and in a short time, this eccentric gathering of tinkers, asses, and *garans*, developed itself into the far-famed horse fair of Carricknagat. Like many other things of small beginnings, the fair became great, and attracted crowds from all parts of Ireland to sell and buy, to see the splendid horses exhibited, and to enjoy the jumping, which was inferior to nothing in the country for dash and daring. But those prison-like walls that secure a monopoly of the place to sheep and bullocks, and serve as a signboard to notify that there is no longer "entertainment for man and horse," have spoiled the sport and ruined the business of Carricknagat; and at the rate the fair is failing, and the neighbourhood depopulating, one need not be surprised if the place soon fall back to the state from which the tinkers freed it, and become anew the resort of wild cats.

There is, however, another account of the fair, which traces its origin to a patron that used formerly to be held on the 1st of February, in Tubberbrida, near Collooney. Many of the matrons and girls that frequented the patron, rode, it is said, to the place on pillions behind their sons or brothers; and while the females were going through the usual devotions round the well, the young men amused themselves by running and jumping the horses. On these occasions horses were sometimes bartered or sold; and after a time exchanges and sales became so numerous that Tubberbrida began to be regarded as a place of business as well as a place of devotion. When things had reached this point, and the gathering was becoming larger every year, the owner or occupiers of the land objected to the trespass, and put a stop to the jumping; and as the lands

of Carricknagat were looked on as of little value, and therefore liable to little injury by men or horses, while the place was near enough to Tubberbrida to allow horsemen to accommodate female relatives coming to the patron, the exhibition and sales of horses were transferred from Tubberbrida\* to the foot of the Ox Mountains, and continued to flourish there even after the patron was abolished. An effort was made about the year 1814, by Mr. Jackson of Camphill, who rented the lands along the river side, to confine the horses to the east side of the high road, where they are hemmed in at present, but the effort failed at that time; for when Mr. Jackson had placed in a gap his fore-

\* In an appendix to the *Trias Thaumaturga* Colgan mentions Tubberbrida, and places it near Collooney—" *prope Cuilmuniun*"—its exact situation. John O'Donovan, in a communication contained in the Ordnance Survey Letter Book of the County Sligo, states that Saint Brigit is the patron saint of the parish of Ballysadare, but he gives no authority for this statement, which can hardly be reconciled with the fact that the old parish church at Ballysadare, the old church of Billa, and several other places through the parish, are called after Saint Fechin. At present there are no remains of buildings at Tubberbrida, at least above the surface of the soil. There is, however, in the place a large rath or fort, and unlike the other raths of the neighbourhood, which are all circular, this one is oblong, being 96 yards in length and 72 in breadth. Under the fort is a cave 36 feet long, 5 feet 6 inches wide, and 6 feet high, containing, at or near the middle, a well—the one, no doubt, from which Tubberbrida has got its name. At right angles, or nearly at right angles to this cave, and joining it, is another, 51 feet long, 3 feet wide, and 3 feet six inches high. Both are roofed with large flags lying horizontally and resting on sidewalls of uncemented stones. At the mouth of the larger cave is a fine sycamore tree, the trunk being about 12 feet in girth, and dividing into seven boughs, nearly equal in size, which form when in leaf a beautiful canopy of more than sixty yards in circumference. At the spot where the boughs separate there is in the trunk a cavity that is always full of water, summer and winter; and that some, seeing it never dry, mistake for the *tubber* or well from which the townland is called. And within a few feet of the tree is a large heap of small stones, raised by the pilgrims; each man and woman that visited the well being in the habit of depositing a stone, in token of his or her having completed the exercises of the station.

man bleacher, Jemmy Drury, a big burly man of seventeen or eighteen stone weight, and several other bleachers, armed with bludgeons, to keep out trespassers, the horsemen forced a way through the bleachers, who used their weapons freely,—the first person to run the blockade being the Rev. Mr. Duke, who was soon followed by every mounted man at the fair.



## CHAPTER VII.

## CAMPHILL.

CAMPBILL has its military name from the French forming for battle in that place on the 5th of September, 1798, up to which time it went by the denomination of Ardcoffin. Camphill must be always a place of considerable importance, at least for its fine water power. A mill is shown there in the Map of the Down Survey, and from time immemorial small grain and tuck mills existed on the spot. It was in 1797 that the first large structure of the kind was erected, when Mr. F. Jackson built the bleach mill, which still stands, but which, unfortunately, is no longer at work. The undertaking cost £7000, half of which sum was spent in sinking the *race* to convey the water from the river. With the mill he built a dwelling-house, but residing only a short time in it himself, let it to Mr. John, or, as the gentleman was commonly called, "Jack" Taaffe, and after him to the Rev. Mr. Duke.

Jack Taaffe was a noted duellist, and is said to have been always on the look out for an antagonist, so far as to dock very short his horses' tails, and to cause his servant to ride on a straw saddle, in hope that some gentleman would laugh at these grotesque sights, and give occasion to demand satisfaction.

The Rev. Mr. Duke was none of your formal, straitlaced, demure religionists; but, while punctual in performing clerical duty, was genial and sociable, a capital shot, a first-rate horseman, and so free, and familiar, and obliging in regard to the humbler classes, that there was not a more popular man in the county. Mr. Duke was very hospitable for his

means, and though a magistrate, prided himself particularly on the strength, and flavour, and age of his *poteen*. After getting a supply from the maker, the parson had it always re-distilled, in order to increase the strength of the spirit, a custom which was nearly getting the reverend gentleman into hot water. For while the men were one day engaged in running the whiskey through the still, in an outhouse which stood by the road side, the place took fire, and in a twinkling, was all ablaze. Fortunately for Mr. Duke it was a holiday, and the Catholics of the parish were just returning from chapel when word of the fire was brought them; and on finding that their friend, the parson, was in a difficulty, they all hastened to the scene of the accident, and brought the flames under in a very short time. The matter rested here, for there were no police in those days, and the barony constables could not see such an infraction of the law; for, though lynx-eyed in regard to the transgressions of the peasant, they were well known to be stone-blind whenever a gentleman was concerned. Anyhow, the parson escaped all unpleasant consequences on the occasion, to the great satisfaction of the people.

Nor was it in this circumstance alone that the people stood by him: they showed their friendship in another conjuncture, which was still more critical. The parson was challenged to a duel by a notorious fire-eater, named Fenton, and had the folly to accept the challenge. The affair was to come off on a well-known trysting place near the old abbey of Ballysadare, but the people formed themselves into a "Vigilance Committee" to guard their favourite, and swore they would take Fenton's life if that bully dared to show himself; and owing to this aspect of affairs, and perhaps to the interposition of friends, the matter went no further. Previously to this the Rev. Mr. Duke had actually exchanged shots with a Mr. Holmes in a duel that came off in Lishrontagh, Cloonamahon. That

it was not so extraordinary a thing in those days as one might imagine at present, for clergymen to figure in affairs of honour, is clear not only from this instance, but from several others that might be cited, such as that of Rev. Mr. Gethin, who fought a duel about the same time with Mr. Harloe Phibbs, in Magheraboy, near Sligo. There have been some bellicose ecclesiastics in all ages and all churches.

The late Mr. Andrew Kelly was next owner of Camphill. He and a Mr. Ballantyne rented the place from Mr. Jackson for three years, beginning in 1814, at the expiration of which term Mr. Kelly bought Mr. Jackson's interest for £3000 ; \* and so profitable was the bleaching business at the time, that Mr. Kelly's profits, during the three years that he was tenant, amounted to more than the purchase-money paid for the concern. After getting the bleach mill into his own hands, Mr. Kelly worked it very energetically, turning out sometimes 8000 pieces of linen in the year, about 5000 of which were sent in, for the most part in single pieces, by country farmers, the remaining 3000 being prepared for the Dublin and English markets by himself and some large dealers, the chief of whom were Mr. Everard, Sligo ; Mr. Guilfoyle, Sligo ; Mr. M'Carrick, Coolaney ; and Mr. Middleton, near Coolaney.

The staff of bleachers was forty ; ordinary bleachers receiving 10d. per day ; grass-men, 11d. ; and engine-men, 1s. With these, Mr. Kelly employed twenty labourers on his land, so that his full staff amounted to sixty hands. The quantity of turf consumed in the mill exceeded fifty hundred annually, which came all from Carrickbanaghan, and was delivered at the mill for 4d. a barrel, hardly a third of what turf would now cost. It is in this way that Carrick-

\* Mr. Jackson was obliged to sell by pressure from Mr. Abraham Martin, Sligo, to whose sister he was married.

banaghan, which was all a soft bog sixty years ago, was rendered fit for tillage, but at the loss of its fine supply of fuel.

While Mr. Kelly owned Camphill money circulated abundantly in the neighbourhood; weavers, bleachers, labourers having it constantly in their hands. This gentleman's profits were very considerable—£2,000 a year or thereabouts, half of which came from the farmers' pieces, and the rest from his own linens and those of the dealers. But in the height of prosperity he fell suddenly into pecuniary embarrassment, brought on by having incurred liabilities for a friend. Though he had expended large sums on buildings—£3000 on the corn-mill in Camphill, and £8000 on that which Mr. Sim now occupies—Mr. Kelly had still money and credit, when the friend in question failed for a large amount, and involved in his ruin the owner of Camphill.

As a consequence of the failure Mr. Kelly's property was seized for the debt, and himself was obliged to quit Camphill, as was also his eldest son, who had given promise of becoming one of the most influential men in the county. Gifted with a high order of talent and considerable natural eloquence; full of health and energy; fertile in mental resources; a *protégè* of Lord Mulgrave, who visited Camphill in his celebrated tour when Lord Lieutenant; a favourite with O'Connell, and the idol of the humbler classes, William Kelly had a combination of circumstances in his favour which would certainly have led to place and position, were the young man's steadiness on a par with these other advantages. Unfortunately, William Kelly lacked somehow the quality that would enable one to avail oneself of those fine opportunities, and, in consequence, derived no permanent benefit from them. From the time of leaving Camphill Mr. Kelly led an erratic and adventurous life, visiting the chief regions of the earth, and showing undoubted talent in recording his experience and

observations (some would say the creations of his fancy) in several interesting and lively volumes.\*

Mr. Sim purchased Camphill in 1839, and went to reside there immediately after getting possession. From the day of the sale a large majority of the inhabitants of the neighbourhood were dissatisfied, and threatened to make Camphill too hot for the purchaser; but that gentleman cared little for their threats, and proceeded at once to make large additions to the dwelling-house. When told that the people were resolved to sell him no oats, Mr. Sim gave little heed, thinking that, with the characteristic fickleness of the Irish, they would soon give in, and determined himself to hold on, with the proverbial tenacity of the Scotchman, to the good place just secured. But when the buying season arrived, and Mr. Sim found no grain could be got, whatever price was offered, he began to grow uneasy; and the news coming in from all sides increased this anxiety; for it made it clear that a formidable conspiracy existed throughout the County Sligo, with ramifications in Leitrim, Roscommon, and Mayo, that had for its object to prevent all business transactions with him while holding Camphill from the Kellys. The leaguers managed the plot with great tact and audacity, and convinced the country, by repeated examples, that no one could oppose them or even speak in private against them with impunity. An instance or two will show how alarmingly swift the penalty used to follow the offence.

\* Mr. Kelly is buried in Boulogne, where he was married, and resided for several years. His tomb, which is a handsome one, bears the inscription:—

*A Perpetuitè*  
Of your Charity  
Pray for the Soul of  
William Kelly Esq.  
Who died at Boulogne Sur Mer  
4th March 1872  
Fortified by the Rites of  
the Holy Catholic Church.

A Boyle carman, tempted by the high price, sold Mr. Sim a cart of oats, and congratulated himself on peculiar good fortune after getting safe through Collooney on the return journey. As this man moved along a little beyond Tubbercanavin, and was passing on the road a wretched cripple, who seemed scarce able to set one foot before another, the poor *boccaigh* asked for a "lift." Being in good humour, the driver of the cart halted and helped the disabled creature to a seat, but they had not advanced far together when the pretended cripple jumped up with the agility of a lamplighter, drew forth a concealed weapon, and beat the unsuspecting carman till the wretch was left covered with wounds, and half dead.

Another instance: an inhabitant of the neighbourhood condemned, in an evening conversation at his own fireside, the opposition to Mr. Sim. Next morning a blind beggarman groped along into this man's house, and after receiving an alms, begged to be set on the road to the next village. The almsgiver proceeded to do as desired, but the sturdy beggar had scarce crossed the threshold when he turned suddenly on the guide, and reminding him of the conversation of the previous evening, belaboured him so mercilessly, that the unfortunate man had to be carried back to the house.

And a number were as liable to come to grief as an individual, if they took the unpopular side; and this, whether they were in the parish or scores of miles away from it. Mr. Sim succeeded, one way or another, in purchasing a large quantity of corn at Carrick-on-Shannon, and dispatched to take it home so many carts and carmen that there was no apprehension of an attack on so formidable a caravan; but as the carriers were returning with the grain, they had not made a mile of the journey when they were set upon, overpowered, severely beaten, their horses abused, the harness cut into pieces, the carts broken up, and the oats scattered to the fowls of the air. And the perpetrators of all these outrages could not be traced, dropping down, as it were,



from the clouds, or rising up from under the earth, and disappearing as rapidly and mysteriously as they had come upon the scene.

There was little use in contending against an enemy so ubiquitous, and withal so invisible. The police, the local gentry, and the Castle authorities left nothing untried to stop the evil; but constabulary, gentry, and government, were all foiled by the village strategists of Collooney. Mr. Sim, too, bore himself with tact and courage all through the campaign. Escorted sometimes by the police, sometimes unescorted, that gentleman moved actively about, seeking to break up the organization, and to find out its authors and abettors. His efforts, however, were as ineffectual as those of the authorities, and do what he would, the movement progressed, while the great water-wheels of the mills stood idle, and their magnificent machinery was being devoured by rust. Seeing then no chance of success in the conflict, and chafing at being debarred from business, which with a man of such sagacity and talents was sure to lead to fortune, he resolved to give up the contest and yield to the desires of the people. Negotiations were entered upon with him, through the Rev. Michael Flynn, Catholic curate of the parish, and offers were made with the result that Camphill passed by sale back again into the hands of Mr. Kelly,\* and after a few months, into those of Mr. James Madden—Mr. Kelly's brother-in-law. In a year or so Mr. Madden made over the property to his eldest son, Mr. M. J. Madden, who still owns it, though he has recently removed from Camphill House, which his taste and outlay had made one of the most commodious and best appointed residences in the county, and settled down at Bray, greatly to the regret and disappointment of old neighbours, who under all the circumstances of the case, expected to have some member of

\* Mr. Sim received the purchase-money he had himself paid, together with £1000 for improvements, both items amounting to £6000.

the family permanently among them.\* Mrs. Madden is greatly missed in the neighbourhood, where her example was a constant incentive to everything good, but her absence is more especially felt by the poor, to whom, by her advice and her alms, she was always a guide, a benefactor, and a friend.

\* Between purchase, and the erection of new buildings on it after the purchase, Camphill cost Mr. James Madden £17,000.

In a conversation with the writer, Mr. Sim has given the following version of his difference with the Messrs. Kelly:—Mr. Sim took the Collooney mills from William and Andrew Kelly, under lease for 50 years, at £500 per year, the term running from 1838. When the Agricultural Bank failed, Camphill was among its assets, the bank having advanced money on the security of that property. The place was advertised for sale, and Mr. Sim went to old Andrew Kelly, and said, “How are you now to secure me in the guarantee you gave of not allowing additional opposition?” “The only way to act,” replied Mr. Kelly, “is to buy the property yourself, which the Provincial Bank will sell for £4500, and let us now go and see Mr. Webster, the manager.” Accordingly, they went to the Provincial Bank, but the manager refused to transmit any proposal for purchase without a deposit of £1000. Mr. Sim deposited the money, was declared the purchaser, and was put in possession of Camphill. After the taking of possession, but before the deeds were completed, Mr. Kelly said to him, “Now that you have succeeded, I expect a consideration of £300 for my trouble.” “No,” rejoined the other, “nor 300 pence.” The war then arose, and lasted for seven months, after which Father Michael Flynn came to Mr. Sim, and said, “Oh, this thing has gone too far, and what do you mean to do?” In reply Mr. Sim informed the priest that if he got the purchase-money and payment for his improvements, he would give up Camphill. Father Flynn went to Sligo, had an interview with the Messrs. Madden, Mr. Kelly’s brothers-in-law, and got the money for Mr. Sim, so that the affair was completed. On leaving Mr. Sim received £6000, Sir John Benson valuing the improvements at £1000.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## BELTRA.

CROSSING now over the Ox Mountains we find in the north-west angle of the parish the Strand of Beltra, called sometimes, in Irish annals, Traigh an cairn,\* sometimes Traigh Ros Airgid; † but most commonly Traigh Eothaile or Traigh Eothaile Mae an-tsaoir, a name that signifies, according to one opinion, the Strand of Eochy; according to another, the Strand of the Yew tree wood; and according to a third, the Strand of Eothaile, a man of that name. ‡ This spot, which is full of interesting associations, comes first under the notice of the historical student in connection with the battle of Moytura of Cong, “one of the earliest battles recorded in our history, and almost the earliest event upon the record of which we may place some reliance.” § This great engagement took place in the year

\* O’Flaherty’s *Ogygia*, vol. ii, page 18 (Hely’s translation).

† O’Donovan’s *Four Masters*, anno 1249. *Ros Airgid* signifies the *silver wood*, a name given, no doubt, in reference to the silver mine that the district of the wood contains. It is so called by Duaid Mac Firbis, who lived within a few miles of it;—“The Strand of Ros Airgid, which is called Traigh Eothaile in this Tireragh in which we are.”—*Lib. Geneal.* page 8, as quoted by John O’Donovan in his *Four Masters*, sub anno 1282, note.

‡ This is the opinion of Mr. Wm. M. Hennessy. It seems also to be according to analogy, for we find the Strand at Dundalk called *Tragh Bhaile*, i. e., says John O’Donovan, “the Strand of Baile, son of Buan, one of the Tuatha de Danaan colony.”—See O’Donovan’s edition of the *Four Masters*, vol. iv, sub anno 1392, note.

§ O’Curry—*Manuscript Materials, etc.*, 243. In this place O’Curry describes in considerable detail the circumstances of the battle, but the following are the paragraphs that concern us here:—

“The battle took place on Midsummer-day. The Firbolgs were defeated with great slaughter, and their king (who left the field with a

of the world 3303, or, according to O'Flaherty, in 2737, between the Tuatha de Danaans and the Firbolgs, and in it 100,000 of the latter, who were defeated, are said to have fallen. During the contest, which lasted four days, Eochy, King of the Firbolgs, retired from the battle field with 100 brave men, and as soon as he was missed the Tuatha de Danaans sent the three sons of Nemedh—Cesarb, Luamh, and Luachra—at the head of a body of troops, after him,

body-guard of a hundred brave men, in search of water to allay his burning thirst) was followed by a party of a hundred and fifty men, led by the three sons of Nemedh, who pursued him all the way to the strand called Traigh Eothailè (near Ballysadare, in the County of Sligo). Here a fierce combat ensued between the parties, in which King Eochaidh fell,—as well as the leaders on the other side, the three sons of Nemedh.

“The sons of Nemedh were buried at the west end of the Strand, at a place called *Leca Meic Nemedh*, or the Grave Stones of the sons of Nemedh; and King Eochaidh was buried where he fell in the Strand, and the great heap of stones known to this day as the Carn of *Traigh Eothaile* (and which was formerly accounted one of the wonders of Ireland), was raised over him by the victors.”

The battle of which there is here question was that of Moytura (*Magh Tuireadh*) of Cong, and took place, according to the *Four Masters*, in 3303; but the battle of the other Moytura—the Moytura of the Fomorians—was fought in 3330, the field lying in our own county, in the barony of Tirerrill, and being surrounded, says O'Curry, “by high hills, rocks, and narrow defiles.” The latter Moytura is supposed to be identical with the *Magh Slecht* of the *Vita Tripartita*, where Saint Patrick demolished Crom-cruach and his twelve satellites.

Some of the people living near the Strand have an odd notion of the person they believe to have been buried under the famous cairn, or cairns, for there were two of them. It was, they think, a giantess of the east, who, having lost all her kindred in her own country, and having heard that a giant, named Finn-ma-Cumhal, lived in Coillte Leyney, in Ireland, made the journey from the rising to the setting sun to meet and marry Finn. In crossing Ballysadare bay, where, it is said, the water hardly reached her ankles, and seeing, as she neared *Coillte Leyney*, the so-called giant, who was little more than an average specimen of humanity, she was so disappointed, and took the disappointment so much to heart, as to fall down dead on the spot. The Irish raised two cairns in honour of the poor foreigner, one at her head—the larger one—and a smaller at her feet, the two being about two hundred yards distance asunder, from which space one gets a fair idea of this lady's stature.

but the brothers did not come up with the object of their pursuit till they reached the Strand, where the conflict was renewed and the combatants fought with such fury that the three princes were killed on one side, and King Eochy on the other. Cesarb, Luamh, and Luachra were buried near the shore where they fell, probably in the spot where the cromlec now stands, a little to the east of the avenue that leads to Mr. Verschoyle's residence; while Eochy was interred in the Strand, where a carn, that existed down to 1858, and was counted one of the "Wonders of Ireland," "*Mirabilia Hiberniæ*," was raised over the remains.

These wonders, as has been stated already (page 225), are described by Nennius, Giraldus Cambrensis, the Book of Ballymote, and O'Flaherty in his *Ogygia*; but these authorities differ as to the number and order of the *Mirabilia*; the Book of Ballymote reckoning thirty-four, while O'Flaherty reduces them to thirteen; all, however, agreeing that there were two of the "wonders" in the parish of Ballysadare; namely, the carn under consideration and Tullaghan well. In the Book of Ballymote the carn wonder is the seventh, and is thus described: "the carn of the strand of Eothail. It is not the less seen when the tide is full than when it is at a low ebb, and notwithstanding that the tide rises over the large rocks on the beach around it." \* O'Flaherty thus describes it:—

"On Eothail's shore, in Sligo's wide domain,  
I' th' centre of th' beach a ridge of rocks is seen,  
Whose top has scarce the ebbing tide over-stood,  
And yet its summit stems the reflux flood.

Hely's *Ogygia*, (Dublin, 1793,) page 176.

Taking this standing miracle for granted, the old writers proceed to account for it; and accordingly we learn from the *Libellus de Matribus Sanctorum* in the *Book of Leinster*, that the saints of the family of Dalbronach met in synod at

\* *Nennius*, p. 199, Archæological Society's edition.

this carn ; that they made there a covenant of perpetual amity, and prophesied that the carn would never be covered by the sea till the whole of Tireragh was submerged. The following is the statement of the *Libellus* :—“ And all these saints met in a synod at the carn of Traigh Eothaile, and they made a covenant of union, and they said of whosoever shall break that union on earth, that his soul shall not reach heaven, and he shall not recover his station on earth. And as for this carn at which we have met, the sea shall never cover it until it overflows the surface of Tireragh.” And Bishop Maine said :

“ Whosoever shall dissolve the union of our saints,  
Whether he be degenerate, or whether he be mad,  
Shall not inherit the firm earth,  
His soul shall not reach to heaven.” \*

Traigh Eothaile is mentioned in the *Tripartite Life of Saint Patrick*. We are there told that the saint was at a place called *Dumha-graidh*, which, though not exactly identified, seems to be somewhere in the present County of Roscommon ; and, while there in the midst of a large crowd, he cried out : “ Bronus, and Olean, and my foster son, Mac Erc, are this moment passing through *Traigh Eothaile*, on their way to me, and are quite panic-struck by the noise and rush of the breakers that the winds are lashing around them.” † Jocelin, in the 110th chapter of his

\* Irish Version of *Nennius*, edited for the Irish Archæological Society by Dr. Todd. See page 198, where the learned editor quotes the original Irish from the Book of Leinster, fol. 239, b. col. 4 ; MS. Trin. Coll., H. 2, 18.

† *Vita Tripartita*. Pars Secunda, c. xlii. Mr. W. M. Hennessy translates this passage as follows:—“ When Patrick was at Dumha-graidh ordaining the great multitude he smiled. ‘ What is that ? ’ asked Benen. ‘ Bron, and the monk Olean,’ said Patrick, ‘ who came towards me along Traig-Eothaili, and my foster son, Mac Erca, with them ; a wave of the sea made a great dash, and tried to carry off the youth.’ ”—*Tripartite Life of Saint Patrick* in the *Life of Saint Patrick* : by M. F. Cusack, p. 403.



*Life of Saint Patrick*, manifestly alludes to the same incident, though without naming the place. His words are : " On another occasion the same brethren, in order to visit Saint Patrick, undertook a long journey on foot through an immense Strand. And as they proceeded, the tide suddenly surrounded them. But Saint Patrick, informed from above of their danger, prayed for them, and commanded the sea to retire, and leave his children free to prosecute their journey. The sea forthwith obeyed the man of God, when the travellers, full of joy, and praising God, came to Patrick, and by their account of the miracle, filled the hearts of all who heard them with thanks to God who works such wonders in His saints."

Saint Columba also is associated with our recollections of the Strand. After assisting at the convention of Drumceat, and founding the church of Drumcliffe, this great saint proceeded, as we saw already (page 2), to Ballysadare, where " vast numbers of the saints of Ireland, and particularly of the family of Cumne, had come to meet him."\* Here he was received with the greatest reverence and affection, and was conducted in solemn procession across the Strand to Tireragh, the processionists chanting hymns and reciting prayers as they moved along. It must have been on this occasion that the " synod " at the carn was held, as we read of no other great assembly of saints or ecclesiastics taking place on the Strand.

But *Traigh Eothaile* has been more accustomed to the visits of fighting laymen than to those of praying ecclesiastics. In imitation of Murtough of the Leathern Cloaks, who, starting towards the middle of the preceding century (941) from the palace of Ailech, at the head of 1000 men, had made the circuit of the island, and taken hostages from all the royal houses on the march, Brian Boru intended to make a similar round and to reduce the

\* Colgan, *Acta Sanct.*, in *Vita Sancti Farannan.*

Northern Monarch to subjection. Setting out with the face to the north, and keeping the sea to the left, he met with little obstruction or opposition till he had reached the Strand. Here, however, he learned that the Northern King had come to meet him; that he commanded vastly superior forces; and that they were very advantageously posted beyond the heights of Ballysadare, and through the districts of Coolera and Carbury. As it was certain defeat to move forward, Brian resolved to defer to another occasion the designs on the North; ordered, for the first time in life, a retreat from before the enemy; and returned without the spoils and the trophies which it was his custom to carry to Kincora.

In 1012 Flaherty O'Neill, with the Cinel-Eoghain, invaded the territory of O'Donnell, and drove the Cinel-Conaill before them till they reached the Strand, where they made a stand, but were defeated, losing Mulrony O'Meldora, chief of their clan. Hostilities took place again at the foot of the famous carn in 1249, but this time between the Irish and their English invaders. We read in the *Annals of the Four Masters* that Pierce Power, David Drew, and a number of others assisted the Berminghams, who then occupied Tireragh,\* to attack the castle of Sligo. O'Connor disdained to await the attack within walls, but coming out to meet them, gave them a severe defeat, slaying Poer, Drew, and many others; and after providing Christian burial at Ballysadare for the slain, he hastened after the enemies, chased them across the Strand, ravaged their territory from Beltra to the Moy, and returned in triumph, laden with the rich booty of Tireragh. Meanwhile

\* See pages 8, 9, 10. The *Annals of the Four Masters*, sub anno 1249, say: "As to the son of Felim, he proceeded after this to Tireragh, and through Mac Feorais's country, which he entirely plundered from the Moy to Traigh Eothaile-an-tsaoir," a region that comprises all Tireragh.

In a note under the same year John O'Donovan, in speaking of the "preys" taken by MacMaurice from O'Connor, observes, that they were "driven away from Tireragh, then in the possession of the Berminghams."

Garrett Bermingham got together considerable troops, with which, in turn, he pursued O'Connor, and coming up with the rear of the enemy's forces before they got into Sligo, wounded and captured the brave Donough, the son of Manus O'Connor, and lodged him in the stronghold of Donaghintrain, in the present parish of Templeboy. O'Connor, hearing what had happened, lost not a moment in flying to the rescue, and breaking open the fortress, carried Donough back to Sligo, who, however, soon died there of his wounds, to the great grief and loss of his country. The next remarkable event on the Strand, of which we have any record, was the killing of Taichleach O'Dowda, Lord of Tireragh, by Adam Cusack.

The place on which Tahelly fell was called after him Beal-atha-Tailtigh (the mouth of Tahelly's ford), which is probably the spot where the stream that divides the parishes of Ballysadare and Dromard falls into the Strand. Adam, however, failed to root his family in Tireragh, and in 1285—three years after the death of Tahelly—was defeated at Ballysadare by Manus O'Connor; and being on this occasion followed into the field by the English of West Connaught, and all the members of his own family, the defeat was so disastrous that we hear little more after this of the Cusacks in connection with this part of Ireland.

Though the Strand does not appear to have been the scene of any considerable engagement after this date, its sands were often pressed by the feet of hostile forces preparing for, or hastening to the battle field. In 1476 MacWilliam Burke led a great army to Lower Connaught, and pitched his tents in Coillte Luighne (the woods of Leyney), on the southern border of the Strand, and O'Donnell, hastening from the North to oppose him, halted his army in Cuil-Cnamha, which, unless the respective troops of Burke and O'Donnell crossed each other, must be the place now called Streamstown, though O'Donovan, in his edition of the Annals, takes it to be part of the parish of

Dromard.\* This time, however, there was no actual conflict, and after some threatening and manœuvring, the chiefs made peace and a new division of territory, which gave the Strand, as well as a portion of Carbury, to Burke. A greater O'Donnell, the greatest, probably, of the gallant race of the Cinnel-Conaill, the "dauntless Red Hugh," visited Traigh Eothaile towards the end of 1595. It was on the occasion of a hosting to Yar-Connaught (Western Connaught), the fourth he conducted there that single year. On the three preceding expeditions he traversed the centre of the province; but as Sir Richard Bingham and the English were guarding the passes of Tirerrill and the Curlews, O'Donnell, who had skill as well as dash, turned to the north of the Ox Mountains, and marched across the

\* John O'Donovan, in his *Four Masters*, sub anno 1468, as also in his *Hy Fiachrach*, p. 265-424, does not allow Cuil Cnamha to extend eastward beyond the parish of Dromard, but it would seem to include the Strand, and other portions of Ballysadare parish. The entry of the *Four Masters* under 1476 goes to prove this; for, as Coillte Luighne, where the Burkes encamped, is in the parish of Ballysadare, Cuil Cnamha, in which O'Donnell and MacDonogh took up position, must lie to the east or north-east of Coillte Luighne, and, consequently, in Ballysadare district, unless we suppose the two armies to have crossed each other, and thus cut off retreat to their respective territories. In supporting his view Mr. O'Donovan identifies Traigh Eothaile with Fearsat Finntragh, but in this he is certainly in error, as the latter lies to the east of the Strand, and stretches from Abbeytown to Coolerra, where there is still a "flat" or "fearsat" that was much used till a man named O'Donoghue lost his life in crossing it, about fifty years ago, and where the Strand of the "flat" is sometimes called the White Strand.

The following lines, translated from the Irish in Lord Roden's copy of *Duald M'Firbis*, p. 45, seem conclusive on the subject:—

Cuil Cnamh, the land where lies  
 Eochy, the son of Erc, the son of Rionnail.  
 The name will live for ever  
 From the bones of Eochy of red arms.—

(O'Donovan's translation.)

Eochy's cairn, raised over his bones, is in the parish of Ballysadare, and consequently Cuil Cnamh (the corner of the bones), so called from containing these bones, must be in the same parish.

Strand ; and Sir Richard, though vigilant as valiant, knew nothing of the passage of the Northern troops till they had already reached their destination.

The year 1597 brought Hugh Roe a second time to the Strand. O'Connor Sligo was at the head of a considerable body of English and Irish troops, and feeling naturally anxious to recover the capital of his territory resolved to march on the town of Sligo. O'Donnell happened to be in Calry when he learned O'Connor's resolution, and, eager for the fray, hastened to meet his adversary, but the latter retreated, and got clear away from the Northern chief, excepting a few in the rear, who were overtaken at Traigh Eothaile. These were wounded or drowned ; " and the son of MacWilliam Burke, namely : the son of Richard, son of Oliver, son of John, and many others not enumerated were slain." \*

But the Strand witnessed other scenes besides war and blood. It has always been a favourite place of amusement ; and a so-called *patron* was held there during a long period on the last Sunday of summer. These patrons had usually a religious origin. They were held in general on the anniversary of saints, and were composed, at first, merely of the pious persons who had come to pass part of a stated day at a holy well, or on the site of some old church connected with a favourite saint. In the course of time the idle, the curious, and the lovers of pleasure came to the rendezvous ; and while the devout occupied themselves, as before, with religion, the new comers gave themselves up to amusement and creature comforts. As usual the supply answered the demand. Races, games, shows, dances, music, eatables, and drinkables, were soon forthcoming to meet the different tastes ; and as poteen was then in great abundance, and was commonly sold for three or four pence the pint, there were sure to be numerous cases of drunken-

\* See *Annals of the Four Masters* for this and the preceding statements.

ness during the day ; while the evening generally closed in scenes of quarrelling and other disorders. In this way these pious pilgrimages were abused and perverted by the passions of men, and what was in the beginning a blessing and help to piety, became a nuisance and a scandal.

It would seem, however, that the so-called patron of the Strand had its origin in Druidism and not in Christianity. This meeting was a continuation of that which had been held, time out of mind, on the hill of Tullaghan—on the south side of the Ox Mountains, where there is a well that was famous in the days of the Druids. There is a species of tradition in the parish that Saint Patrick produced this well, but it is an ascertained historical fact, that it existed, and was regarded as one of the “Wonders of Ireland” centuries before Saint Patrick set foot in our island. Around this well the patron was annually held until it was removed, near the close of the last century, down to the Strand. The opinion is, that it was removed on account of the displeasure and denunciations of the Catholic clergy, who were pained by the abuses and excesses of the meeting, but it is likely that those who managed the transfer were more anxious to evade the civil than the ecclesiastical authorities, who were far from formidable at that time ; and as the Act of Parliament (2 Anne, cap. 6, sect. 7) imposed a fine of 10s., or in default of payment, a whipping upon every person “who should attend or be present at any pilgrimage or meeting held at any holy well or reputed holy well,” as also “a fine of £20, and imprisonment until payment, upon every person who should build a booth or sell ale, victuals, or other commodities at such pilgrimage or meeting,” the people, like O’Connell afterwards, drove a coach and six through an Act of Parliament by substituting the famous Strand of old Eochy for the “reputed holy well of Tullaghan.” The meeting flourished the more for taking place on the beautiful Strand. Greater numbers attended,



greater attractions were provided, and, unfortunately, greater excesses were committed. The priests of the parish and of the neighbourhood left no effort untried to put an end to these excesses, and, failing in that, to abolish the meeting that produced them.

In 1826 the clergy exerted themselves more than on any former occasion, but they laboured in vain, and, in spite of all their preachings and supplications, the patron of that year was the most numerous and probably the most unruly ever held. The day, too, was fine beyond precedent, which gave occasion to some of the clever ones to say that Providence, who favoured them with such delightful weather, was not on the side of the priests. The time passed fast and pleasantly, and though it was already evening, no one thought of quitting the delightful spot. The tents were chokeful of guzzlers; itinerant dealers sold out their poteen and gingerbread as fast as they could receive the price; dancing circles whirled here and there around pipers and fiddlers; ballad singers, unused as yet to the stirring patriotic productions of the modern national muse, drawled out their doleful ditties on highway robbery and murder; mountebanks, sleight-of-hand men, and card-sharpers performed their feats and tricks so as to engross the attention of the gaping rustic, while their accomplices, the pickpockets, plied the practised finger in his pockets; drunken men staggered and shouted, and flourished their shillelaghs; excited men moved about in knots and groups preparing for the fight of the night, which to them seemed the most interesting part of the patron; and, in a word, the whole Strand was a scene of riot and revelling, and a very Babel of noises, when, on a sudden, a pitch dark cloud overspread the sky, to which all eyes were instinctively directed.

On the instant the heavens shot forth a sheet of vivid lightning, which stopped, as if by machinery, all the movements and noise of that immense gathering, and of all its

parts. There ensued a moment of doubt and anxiety as to whether the storm should continue, but when the lightning flashed forth again and again with constantly increasing force and brilliancy, and peal after peal of deepening thunder echoed and rolled between Slieve Gamh and Knocknarea, seeming to shake the very earth, and to rattle the bones of the Firbolg king and the Tuatha de Danaan princes under the superincumbent cars, a panic seized on the stoutest hearted, men and women crossed themselves, individuals dropped on their knees here and there in prayer, the sneerers felt that after all the cause of the priests looked like the cause of Providence, and all promised in their hearts, if they should be spared this time, that nothing on earth should ever induce them to attend the forbidden patron again.

The crowds dispersed as rapidly as they could, and so anxious was everyone for his personal safety, that tents, standings, and goods of all kinds were abandoned by their owners. All hurried to places of shelter, and in a few moments the houses and out-houses of the villages surrounding or near the Strand, were filled to overflowing by panting and almost frantic fugitives, so that great numbers had to pass on from sheer want of standing room under a roof of any kind. Meantime the storm raged without intermission, or rather with ever renewed fury. To the thunder and lightning were added torrents of rain, that surpassed anything the people had ever before witnessed or imagined; and there is no doubt that many, who witnessed the awful scene, were fully convinced that they had reached the end of their lives, and were on the eve of the consummation of all things.

The tornado lasted all through the night, and it was only about daybreak on the following morning that the thunder and lightning and down-pour of rain ceased, when the people ventured, still in fear and trembling, out of the lurking places in which they had passed the

most frightful night of their lives, and moved silently along to their houses in a frame of mind very different from that in which they had quitted them the preceding day. The patron was never since revived; and thus was brought to a close, by what seemed to the people a direct interposition of Providence, a celebrated festive meeting which, partly on the Strand, but principally on Tullaghan hill, had been annually held for probably more than 2000 years, which had often brought with it disorders and bloodshed, and which had survived the most strenuous efforts to suppress it both of Church and State. This night forms an epoch for the people of Tireragh, Tirerril, and Leyney; and they calculate their age and other events by reference to the "night of the big thunder," in the same way as they do by reference to the "year of the French."

The next transaction, and the last that shall be mentioned in connexion with Traigh Eothaile, is the defeat of the PENNY BOYS.

This is the name imposed, at the time, on those who took an engagement to curtail, or, in reality, to abolish the fees usually given to priests in this country on the occasion of performing certain acts of their ministry. According to the new tariff the fee of marriage should be 2s. 6d., and that for baptism 1d., from which fee of 1d. was derived the name of the new leaguers; and on the income thus realised, the priest was desired to keep body and soul together, to maintain his usual social position, and to find the alms with which he has to relieve the cases of distress that he is constantly encountering. Illegal societies show often little sympathy with the clergy, in Ireland as well as elsewhere. As the Church condemns and opposes these associations, they in turn cut off the supplies, probably with the object of starving her into compliance with their wishes.

This pressure was applied vigorously, towards the end of

the last century; and in more recent years; but passing over these instances, which were little felt in this part of Ireland, the *Thrashers* and *Penny Boys* did their best to popularise what may be called the *screw principle* in ecclesiastical finance. The *Thrashers* were guilty of such excesses that a special commission was opened at Sligo, in December, 1806, to try some of them who had been arrested; and the following extract from the Attorney-General's speech on the occasion will give an idea of their views as to the payment of the priests:—"I cannot pass by another part of these associations: I mean their attack upon the priests. I meddle not with religious rites; I mean the attack which is made upon the support derived from the voluntary bounty which the members of the Roman Catholic persuasion have been in the habit of giving to the ministers of their religion for celebrating the rites of that religion. It is not that they say that they will not pay, for there is no law to compel them to pay. But they proclaim this, that no man who chooses to do so shall dare to pay his priests their fees. For what purpose are these fees given? They are given to obtain the rites of their religion; they flow from a sense of religion; they flow from voluntary bounty; they are enforced by no compulsion, the unfortunate men who receive them are armed with no law for their support; and yet these associations are formed. To do what? To rob the priest of his benedictions and prayers. Do these men, besmeared with blood and covered with crimes, imagine that the ceremonies of religion, which are plundered from their clergy can give them a passport to a better world? I cannot help feeling and deploring that this view of the subject suggests an apprehension, that the devisors of this plan could have had nothing less in their contemplation than eradicating from the minds of those upon whom they could operate, all sense of religion."

These misguided men, after smearing the face with soot,

and putting a white shirt over their ordinary clothes, proceeded at night to the house of the person they had a design upon, and causing this person to get out of bed, mangled the poor man's naked back with a card, unless he cleared himself to their satisfaction from the alleged offence of being too liberal to the priest or parson; for the minister of one religion was as obnoxious as the minister of the other to the impartial Thrasher, as an instance or two will serve to show:—The late Tom Quigly, of Rathnarrow, who having been recently married in Ballymote, had given a guinea to the parish priest, the Rev. Mr. O'Grady, instead of the pittance prescribed in the tariff of the Thrashers, was forced from bed to be "carded," a few nights after the marriage; but, on casting all the blame of the forbidden payment on the Rev. Mr. O'Grady, who, it seems, had insisted on the regular fee, the Thrashers let Tom off that time, after, however, stipulating that he should go immediately to Ballymote, claim the balance from the priest, and threaten the reverend gentleman with the vengeance of the association unless he restored forthwith the money. Poor Tom did as directed; but Mr. O'Grady met the threat conveyed to him only by sending back an invitation to the Thrashers to come, if they had the spirit, and demand the money themselves. It is hardly necessary to add that this polite invitation was declined; for Father O'Grady was not a man to be trifled with.

About the same time members of this society met one night at Lugawarry, near the spot on which the school-house now stands, for the purpose of taking to task a man who had purchased from the parson some oats distrained for tithe; but as Colonel Irwin had been apprised by an informer of the intended meeting, and had set yeomen in ambush for the occasion, the Thrashers fell blindly into the trap that the informer and the officers of the law had laid. When the Thrashers were assembled on the crest of the hill, the colonel well muffled and disguised, rode up

and requested a free passage across the mountain, saying he was "blind Bartley from Sligo," a well-known merchant whose business used to bring him often that way. The request was granted; but Colonel Irwin pretending to be frightened by the presence of so many strangers, asked, in guarantee of safety, the hand and word of one of the party; and when a tall powerful man, named Jack Killerlean stretched forward his hand, it was grasped and held with such force that in the attempt to extricate it, he unhorsed the *soi disant* Bartley, and engaged in a struggle with the fallen man when on the ground. At this moment the yeomen (by orders, according to one account, and without orders, according to another) fired on the Thrashers, hitting at least two of them, Jack Cassidy and Tom Kilmartin, who with Killerlean, were captured, the others escaping through the ravines of the mountain. Unfortunate Cassidy soon died of his wounds, while Killerlean and Kilmartin were tried at the Special Commission in Sligo, and having been as a matter of course convicted, were sentenced to be flogged through the streets of that town—a sentence that was carried out with even more than the usual brutality of the times.

The Penny Boys were probably well acquainted with the principles of the Thrashers when they started on a new crusade in 1843. Pennyboyism took its rise in the parish of Caracastle, in the County Mayo, under circumstances which it is not necessary to enter into here. The zealous folk of that parish, like other fanatics, did not think it enough to enjoy their religious system themselves, but felt a call to communicate its benefits to others. Imitating the Mahometans, who spread abroad the doctrine of the Prophet, with the Koran in one hand and the sword in the other, the Caracastle Penny Boys, after summoning the inhabitants of the next parish to meet them on a certain day, on the mearing of the two parishes proceeded on that day to the rendezvous, with a form of



oath in the left hand, and a blackthorn stick in the right, and swore those they met to two things :—first, to observe the new tariff in all dealings with the clergy; and, secondly, to administer in due time the oath of the confederation to the inhabitants of the adjoining parish. In this way the league was extended from parish to parish, and from diocese to diocese, till it took in considerable portions of the dioceses of Achonry and Killala, and of the Counties of Sligo and Mayo. Meantime the clergy were inactive or tried their influence in vain, and the well-disposed of their flocks were first bullied into the taking of the oath, and then impelled by ignorant and superstitious scruples to carry out its engagements.

The enemies of the Church chuckled over the movement and felt the warmest wishes for its success; and it is said that several magistrates, unlike the officers of the law in the time of the Thrashers, gave it, underhand, all the help they could. Seeing its great progress, and that it only acquired fresh force and volume as it proceeded, they flattered themselves that nothing could stop it, and that it was sure to sweep irresistibly over the whole island. But they calculated without taking into account the burning zeal and strong arm of the parish of Ballysadare. The people of this parish have been always remarkable for attachment to their clergy; and from the moment they first heard of the crusade, their minds were embittered against its authors. When it was told how outrageously these misguided men acted, and how there was little or no resistance offered to them elsewhere, the young fellows of Collooney and Ballysadare were indignant at the poltroonery, and desired above all things that the innovators should try the parish of Ballysadare in their rounds. The wish was soon gratified. The Penny Boys sent a message that they would “swear in” the parish of Ballysadare on a given day, the 7th of February, 1843. They had heard of the reception they were likely to meet

with, but taking courage from the past, and relying on the connivance, at least, of the public authorities, as well as on the apathy and cowardice hitherto exhibited by the friends of the Church, they only made merry at all attempt at opposition. If no obstacle could hold the Penny Boys when they were only a handful at Caracastle, what could they now fear after traversing twenty parishes and associating a hundred thousand members to the confederation? After crossing the Ox Mountains and descending on Ardnarea, the invaders turned to the right, keeping the sea on the left, and seemingly bent, like Brian Boru, to make the circuit of the island; a resolution they might have carried into effect, had not the Strand proved as disastrous to them as to the Munster Monarch.

On they came to the trysting place at Traigh Eothaile, the mearing of the parishes of Dromard and Ballysadare, advancing in immense force by roads and lanes, as if Tireragh had sent forth all its inhabitants to cow, by mere numbers, the contumacious parishioners of Ballysadare. These brave men were not daunted but delighted at the prospect of meeting the adversaries. Eager for the fray, they reached the head of the Strand before the Penny Boys, and took position there, firmly resolved to hurl back this new invasion of ignorance and irreligion, if it were a thousand times as powerful as it boasted to be.

All classes were there—mill men from the Camphill bleach and corn mills; masons, carpenters, stonecutters, poolers from Collooney and Ballysadare, which were then flourishing little colonies of tradesmen; shopkeepers and dealers, who had shut up their concerns in order to have a share in the dangers and glories of the day; agricultural labourers from all parts of the parish, determined on doing as good a day's work with the shillelagh as they had ever put in with the loy; and farmers and sons of farmers, after suspending the pressing labours of the Spring, to show that they felt the same interest as their neighbours in the events

about to happen. Nor were all these a mere mob without leaders, for four or five young gentlemen of position placed themselves on horseback at their head, as well for the purpose of keeping an eye on certain magistrates with well-known Penny Boy proclivities, as of trying to save the people from the fury of the overwhelming forces of the other side.

Both parties were now face to face, ready for the conflict, and equally resolved—the Tireragh people to force the way into Ballysadare territory, and impose the oath, and the others to prevent the invasion, and to punish it, if attempted. At this critical moment the Rev. Peter Doudican, the parish priest of Dromard, rode in between the lines, and turning himself to the invaders, implored of them to abandon the design of going forward, and, whatever they might do in his own parish, to spare the district of Ballysadare, which belonged to a different diocese. But those he addressed were deaf as adders to the appeal, and, instead of being softened by his touching remarks, only became more excited; and one coarse, colossal fellow, who acted as leader, and stood a little in advance, unable to restrain his brutal passion, struck the pony on which the priest rode a heavy blow. This was the last drop in the cup of provocation to the other side, and in the twinkling of an eye a Ballysadare tradesman, still living, stretched this huge hulk—this Goliath of the Philistines at full length on the ground by a skilful blow, calling out, at the same moment, to his comrades—“First fall, boys! Forward and at them!”

In an instant the Penny Boys were in rapid motion all along the line, but it was *not* in the direction of the Strand. Notwithstanding all the braggadocio, they no sooner saw the leader taken off his feet than, instead of rushing to the rescue, they took ignobly to their heels to save themselves from a similar fate. The others started in pursuit, and, to the credit of Collooney and Ballysadare be it said, made no use of sticks or other arms on coming up with the

fugitives, but were satisfied with administering what the French call a *coup de pied*, which generally inflicts less injury than disgrace. The Penny Boys, however, were in no frame of mind to resent this indignity; nor did they stop to take breath until they had put miles between themselves and the pursuers. It is fortunate that the runaways showed such aversion to fight; for, had they tried to carry out their design, and penetrate into the parish of Ballysdare, the Strand would have been once more stained with blood; but their cowardice stood them in good stead; and contempt or some better feeling saved the filibusters from the sound thrashing that was in store for them. A heated partisan here and there grumbled that the poltroons were getting off so easily, but zealots were restrained by the advice and remonstrance of the mounted leaders; and Father Peter Doudican and Father Dominick O'Connor of Collooney, who had watched all the movements of the day, coming up and throwing their influence—as is usual with the clergy—on the side of peace and charity, induced the victors to desist from further pursuit, and to retire quietly across the Strand to their respective homes. Such was the “rise and fall” of the Penny Boys. In their rout some were heard to threaten that they would come back to the charge, but it is hardly necessary to observe, that the bravos never showed their faces again; and report says, they were so much ashamed and sorry for ever belonging to so disreputable an association that they proved their sincerity by doubling, from that day forward, their offerings to the clergy.

This is the last event of any public interest that occurred on the famous Strand, nor is it likely ever again to be graced or cursed with the “pomp and circumstance of glorious war.” It is but illsuited at present to military movements. The great rampart, erected in 1858 by the Messrs. Buoy, in shutting out the sea was the means of transferring a large part of Traigh Eothaile from Mars and

Neptune to the peaceful Ceres. Nearly half the Strand is confined within the mound ; and few spots in Ireland have undergone such a change within the memory of man as this tract. The island, round which vessels of considerable size used to sail, is now as much a part of the mainland as the neighbouring mountains. Sheep and cattle move about and graze on the former haunts of the salmon and the herring ; labourers dig up with the spade fine potatoes out of the sand, from which, a few years ago, fish cadgers scraped cockles and other shell fish ; and in the place of the breakers that formerly rolled on from the bar to the shore, you may now see, at the season, luxuriant corn and meadow fields rise and bend in graceful undulations under the wind. Old Eochy must miss badly the lullaby which the waves had been performing over his resting place for three thousand years. The warriors and saints of ancient days would be sadly puzzled to recognise this portion of the strand under its altered aspect. If Bronus and Olcan were now to traverse the passage which they crossed fourteen hundred years ago, the new rampart would save them from the fury of the sea as effectually as formerly the prayers of Saint Patrick. And if the Celt and Saxon, who in the past contended for the mastery, were again to come on earth and visit Traigh Eothaile with their old bellicose tastes and habits, they should choose another field of trial in their contests, if they were not softened into a more gentle mood by the genius of the place, and induced to turn their swords into ploughshares.

At the same time it may be doubted whether these alterations have been, on the whole, a public benefit or otherwise. While two or three rich men have certainly gained by the change ; and somewhat more beef and mutton is now sent into the market than formerly, several poor persons, on the other hand, have suffered, and these complain bitterly that they can no longer, to use their own expressive language, "take their living out of the sea."

One word, before closing, on the scenery of the place. Apart from its historic associations Traigh Eothaile deserves a visit for its very picturesqueness. Taken in connection with the surrounding and neighbouring objects it supplies a view which it would be difficult to surpass; but to take in all its beauties one must look at it from the highest point of the road that crosses the Ox Mountains on a tranquil summer's evening, when the tide is full in, and about the hour of sunset. The man who ascends the Ox Mountains on the Coolany side, and reaches the summit under these conditions, finds spread out before him a view, which, if he has taste, he can never forget—at his feet, Traigh Eothaile lying tranquilly, like an inland lake, within grassy slopes and banks; straight opposite on the other side of the water, the majestic hill of Knocknarea, so curiously outlined and smoothed as to suggest the idea of some mysterious machinery having been employed in fashioning it—the crescent-shaped northern shore of Sligo bay from Ballincar to Roughley—and the famous plain of Magherow (*Hibernice Magh Eabha*), (including the beautiful demense of Lisadell), filled with associations of Conal Gulban, the great ancestor of the O'Donnells; on the west, the fine barony of Tireragh, containing some of the richest and greenest land in Ireland, diversified with handsome country seats, and skirted by the sea stretching away to the distant horizon; on the east, the Ballysadare river, Union Wood, Slieve-da-en, Benbulbin, Glencar and the Leitrim mountains; and, on one side or the other, land and sea, wood and water, hill and dale and sylvan glen, majestic mountain and placid valley, stately mansion and lowly cottage,

“ Russet lawns and fallows gray,  
Where the nibbling flocks do stray,”

and such a range and variety of objects as make up the noble prospect, and render Traigh Eothaile one of the most



picturesque localities in Ireland, as it certainly is one of the most historic.\*

\* “Traigh Eothaile, which is a very famous locality in Irish history, is a large and beautiful Strand at the mouth of the Ballysadare river, in the barony of Tireragh, and County of Sligo.”—*Tribes and Customs of Hy-Fiachrach*: by John O’Donovan. Mr. O’Donovan is in error when he says that the Strand is in the barony of Tireragh, as it belongs to the barony of Leyney.

It may be mentioned here that the late Sir William Wilde calls this Strand *Tracuchullin* (Cuchullin’s Strand) in his account of Beranger’s Labours, etc., in the *Kilkenny Archæological Journal*, vol. xi, p. 142. And in the same place Beranger himself supposes the famous cairn to be the tomb of Cuchullin, for he writes, “Stopped to draw a plan and view of Cuchullin’s tomb, a circle of stones twenty-seven feet in diameter, but much covered by the sand which the waves carry on it.”

This supposition of Beranger is quite opposed not only to local tradition, but to the *Annals of the Four Masters*; but though the cairn was not Cuchullin’s, it is not the less likely that this great hero of Ossian or MacPherson performed some of his feats on the Strand, as “the tales respecting Cuchullin’s battles have placed them in this neighbourhood, and between that and the *Ford of Sods* on the Boyle water.”—Sir W. Wilde, *ubi supra*.

## CHAPTER IX.

## COILLTE LUIGHNE, ETC.

To the south of Traigh Eothaile is Coillte Luighne,\* comprising, in depth, the slope of the Ox Mountains from the summit to the Strand ; and in length, stretching, according to the common account, from the western boundary of the parish to the stream of Ballinamuc ; † but, according to others, from Cashel Tullaghan to the same stream. This district, which at present contains the quarters of Larkhill, Knockacullion, Mullinashee, and Lugnediffe, was formerly famous for its Wood, as the name shows, and is mentioned often in Irish annals, more especially in connection with battles and other occurrences on the Strand. At present the wood has disappeared, though there is brushwood here and there which would soon cover the mountain side again only that it is confined and kept under by the tenants of the place, who are constantly stubbing and clearing away the roots to fit the soil for tillage or pasture.

The mountain side from Dromard to Ballysadare is a very pretty bit of landscape : the clumps and strips of variegated brushwood alternating with stretches of clear land, kept singularly green and fresh by the exhalations of Ballysadare bay ; while three or four bowl-shaped lakes or lakelets add variety and beauty to the scene. The lakes, though of small superficies, are said to be deep. Timber must have formerly abounded on their banks, as specimens are often dug up ; and that the trees were of good size and

\* *Coillte Luighné*, i.e. The Woods of Leyney.

† This is the stream that divides the townland of Lugawarry from that of Lugnediffe.

quality we may infer from the instance of a fir, found in Coney lake about fifty years back, for which Mr. Abraham Martin of Sligo offered fourteen guineas, with the view of converting it into mill machinery; and of which Mr. M'Donnell of Ballysadare, who obtained it from the landlord, made two shafts of wheels and various other pieces of gearing for the mills of Ballysadare.

This district was very populous in past times, judging from the numerous raths and caves that one meets in it. There is hardly a holding that does not contain one or more of them; some of the structures being very curious and picturesque. In Larkhill, on the holding of Richard Diery, there is a beautiful sod fort, with three lines of circumvallation, the innermost circle being ten yards in diameter, the next thirty-two, and the outer one sixty. The summit contains a cave ten or twelve feet long, and four or five wide; roofed with flags resting on sidewalls of uncemented stones.\* To the south-east of this, and in the farm of John Gilgan, there is a fort still more remarkable, called commonly Casiol Tullaghan. *Casiol* is the name usually given to such forts as are surrounded by stones; the term, *rath*, being applied to those enclosed by sods; and as Tullaghan is encircled by two stone walls it has got the name of Casiol. The inner wall is a Cyclopean structure, twelve feet, or thereabouts, thick, and built of immense stones without mortar, but still compacted very closely and solidly. The outer wall, which is of slighter proportions and looser construction, is distant nine yards from the other. The diameter of the circle within the inner enclosure is twenty-six yards.† We have heard this fort

\* "It is now well known that the majority of our raths and cashels have within their internal areas, and beneath the surface, crypts constructed of masonry, on a variety of plans, and showing a variety of arrangements of a curious and somewhat inexplicable character."—Brash's *Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland*, page 144.

† Casiol Tullaghan, resembles Kulcashel or Culcashel, in the parish of

called on one occasion Casiol *Kiltullagh*, which would indicate that it contained a church or burying ground, but there is nothing in the place or in local tradition to confirm the indication. In this district stood, and, probably, still stands, a remarkable fort, formerly called *Lios Ladhghuill*, as we learn from the genealogical manuscript of Duaid M'Firbis, published by John O'Donovan, which says: "O'Dunchadha of the tract extending from *Coillte Luighne* to *Beal atha na muice*; *Lios Ladhghuill* is the chief seat of the district."\* And the same fort is mentioned in the celebrated poem of Giolla Iosa M'Firbis:

" Lis Ladhghaill, where the branch is purple,  
The youth O'Muirghesa obtained  
The head seat of the eastern district,  
Where the corn-fields are quick of growth.  
O'Dunchadha of the learned men obtained,  
As far as the beauteous stream of the salmons."†

O'Donovan observes, in a note on this poem: "Lis Ladhghuill, which would be anglicised Lislyle, is now forgotten, and the editor, after the most patient research and correspondence, has not been able to fix its locality, which he regrets exceedingly;" and the writer has to add that he has also failed to identify this interesting spot, even after availing himself of all the advantages of his local knowledge in numerous inquiries and searches.‡

Between Casiol-Tullaghan and the Strand there is a small hill or swell called *Cruckawn a roghaun*, that contains a

Kilmovee. The latter is 28 yards in diameter, and is better preserved than Casiol Tullaghan.

\* Tribes and customs of Hy-Fiachrach, page 173.

† Tribes and customs of Hy-Fiachrach, page 275. The "beauteous stream of the salmons" is, of course, Ballysadare river.

‡ Since this was written, the writer has made another visit to the district, on which occasion he became satisfied that the fort or rath, now called *Lis-ard*, is the one that went formerly by the name of *Lis-Ladhghuill*; but the reasons that brought him to this conclusion comprise too many details to be stated here.

large cave. Some tell you that this cave runs down to the adjoining lake—a distance of some hundred yards—but this is unlikely, though persons who have been in the passage say they followed it thirty or forty feet without seeing any sign of their being near the end. The cave was used for all the processes of distilling *poteen* before that branch of business ceased in the parish.

A little to the east of the *cruckawn* is, or rather was, a well, called Tubbermurro, where stations used to be performed by the people of the neighbourhood. The well lay in a hollow between two bushes, and the devotees made a circuit on their knees round the bushes, attaching to one or other of them, at the close of the exercise, a small strip or scrap of cloth, in token, probably, of willingness to make a more valuable offering if circumstances permitted or required. Either by accident or design the water supply was cut off and the well dried, about thirty years ago, by persons quarrying close to Tubbermurro.\*

In the townland of LUGAWARRY,† high up on the mountain side, is one of those boulders or erratic blocks, which are sometimes found in the most unlikely places; where, according to the more probable theory, they were deposited by drift ice in the glacial period. The country people give the name of *clough scaulauber* to the one under consideration, and tell, that it was cast by a giant in ante-diluvian times from Knocknarea across Ballysadare bay. This Irish Titan had “power in his elbow;” for one side of the block, which is a kind of square, is nine feet high and ten wide. The stone is manifestly of a different species from those around it, and it is clear enough that it is of marine formation, as small sea shells enter largely into its com-

\* *Tubbermurro* signifies Mary's Well.

† The *hollow of the bar*, so called from lying near the bar or shoal of sand in Ballysadare river.

position ; though it is covered with so thick a crust that it is hard to tell the exact constituents.

But the most interesting object, natural or artificial, between Ballysadare and Larkhill, is the old ruin called Kildalough, or, as those who live in the neighbourhood tautologically name it, *Tempul Kildalough*. All agree in



KILDALOUGH.

Drawn on the wood by Mr. Wakeman, from a Photograph by Mr. Edward Smith.

regarding this building as very ancient ; the neighbours saying that Tempul Kildalough and Killaspugbrone are the two churches “ first prayed for in Rome,” which seems to mean that they are the two oldest churches in the country, or at least, in this part of the country. With the exception of this impression as to its great antiquity, the people can tell next to nothing of Kildalough ; though we have met one man who said it was a *biatach*, or religious house



of entertainment; and another, who called it Bishop O'Daly's church; while Father Walsh styles it a nunnery, but on what authority we know not.\* Two bishops of the name of O'Daly sat in the see of Achonry: one, Nicholas O'Daly, appointed the 3rd of September, 1436; and the other, Dominick O'Daly, consecrated at Brussels, the 30th of November, 1725; but neither of these could have built Kildalough, as it is evidently ages older than either of them; though Nicholas may have lived near it, or repaired it, or had some other relation to it, for which it got the name of *Kil-easpug-O'Daly*, or Bishop O'Daly's church.

It occurs to us that Kildalough may be the religious house to which Colgan refers in the *Life of Saint Finian of Clonard*, and also in a note on that life. After telling in the text of the life, how the saint had performed miracles in favour of two brothers—Moyses and Ainmire—and how the brothers, in gratitude, had devoted themselves and their possessions to the service of Finian; he adds these words in a note: “In Hibernico habetur quod se et suam ecclesiam seu monasterium de *Drum-eder-da-loch*, in Ibn Olilla, hodie Tir Oillill, ei obtulerunt,” which signify—“In the Irish it is said that they offered to the saint themselves and their church or monastery of *Drum-eder-da-loch*, in Ibn Olilla, or, as it is called at present, Tir Oillill.” The only objection to this conjecture lies in the mention of Tir Oillill or Tirerrill, as Kildalough is not now in the barony of Tirerrill, but in that of Leyney; but this objec-

\* *Ecclesiastical History of Ireland*: by Rev. Thomas Walsh, page 642. Father Walsh's words are:—“Near the beach or the banks of the Strand are the ruins of an ancient monastic building, which was a nunnery of the same order, to wit, Canonesses of Saint Augustine, and named Kildaloch.”

In the Hearthmoney Returns for 1662 there is mention of a “Killinbriely,” which, as it is placed between “Carrownageeragh” and “Corhawnagh,” would seem to be what is now called Kildalough—for Kildalough occupies precisely the situation assigned in the Returns to Killinbriely.

tion is of no great weight ; for, in the first place, if Kildalough is not in Tirerrill it is on the confines, within about a mile of it—near enough to be taken as part of it ; and, in the second place, though the tract between the Strand and Ballysadare belongs at present to the barony of Leyney, old people, when they mention “Leyney” and “Coillte Leyney,” never include this spot, but mean by “Leyney” the district to the south of Slieve Gamh ; and, by “Coillte Leyney,” only so much of the mountain side as lies between Lugawarry and Dromard. Indeed this tract would seem to have been a kind of unsettled border territory, belonging, at one time, to Tireragh ; at another, to Tirerrill ; and later, to Leyney.\*

This objection removed, we may consider Kildalough and Drum-eder-da-loch as identical, the two names meaning substantially the same thing. If there be any difference, the difference makes for the present view, for *drum-eder-da-loch*—“the ridge between the two lakes”—describes with more nicety than does Kildalough, “the church between the two lakes,” the exact situation of the ruin, lying, as it does, on the ridge of land that stretches between the two Streamstown lakes. It may help to sustain this supposed identity of Kildalough and Drum-eder-da-loch, that in the very next paragraph of Colgan to that in which the proceeding of Drum-eder-da-loch is described, we find Finian establishing a church at Achonry, which is in the same diocese as Kildalough, and only eight miles distant from it ; as if the saint, after parting from Moyses and Ainmire, crossed Slieve Gamh and founded the new church. And additional confirmation may be derived from the fact, that in the Down Survey the district of Kildalough is called

\* It is some confirmation of the opinion put forward, that Beaufort, who was an extremely painstaking man, and lived so recently, places, in his map, the old church of Ballysadare in the barony of Tirerrill, though, as every one knows, it stands in Leyney.—Wm. Shaw Mason’s *Statistical Survey of Ireland*, vol. ii, page 29.

*Drum-derg*, showing that the place was then known as a *drum* or ridge, even after the rest of the denomination, *eder-da-loch*, had become obsolete from the whole being too long and cumbrous for popular use.

The western gable of the building has fallen, as well as the greater part of the northern sidewall. The exterior length of the house was forty-three feet, the exterior width twenty-three feet, and the height of sidewall nine feet six inches. The east window is three feet high, the open to the outside seeming to have been only four inches, but with a splay to the inside of five or six feet. This window is square headed, being covered with two flags, each six or seven feet long, and lying joined to each other in the thickness of the wall, the inner one projecting a foot or so beyond the inside face of wall. Four feet six inches from eastern gable, there is in the south sidewall a small square-headed window, four inches wide to outside, but splayed interiorly to three feet; the open being formed on the outside by three sand stones, two on one side and one on the other. The walls\* are four feet thick, formed of

\* Most of the *ancient wall sections* that I have examined show that the mode of construction adopted was as follows:—"The facing stones were dressed and laid, both beds and joints, in tolerably fine mortar; a grout was then prepared of hot lime, sand, and gravel, and the heart of the wall was filled with it; stones of various sizes were then packed into the grouting—a treatment exactly similar to the concrete building lately revived; in fact the walls of our ancient churches may be called compound walls of masonry and concrete. The stones are usually laid in horizontal courses, with more or less irregularity, and with their joints not always vertical except in the doorways and lower courses; the stones rarely extend as bonds through the thickness of the walls—the space between them being filled with rubble, and small stones, and thin grouting."—Brash's *Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland*, page 162.

This is a correct description of the kind of masonry found in *Kil-eder-da-loch*, and also in the old church buildings at Ballysadare. And another observation Brash makes is also exemplified in the old church of Ballysadare; it is as follows:—"One remarkable feature in our early work is the custom which prevailed of what I would call interlocking, for want of a more technical term. The old workmen, when they had a good

very large stones, and well joined by grout and mortar, so that the building has the marks of great antiquity upon it.

It is the opinion of the neighbourhood that the possession of the property on which Kildalough stands—Abbeytown and Streamstown—bodes no good to those who may hold it. This opinion too has found its way into print, for we read in Reverend T. Walsh's *Ecclesiastical History of Ireland*:—"Those possessions have frequently changed hands; they are now [1855] the property of a Catholic, who purchased them about thirteen years ago, and on whom they do not seem to confer either comfort or prosperity." At the suppression, Elizabeth leased them to Bryan Fitzwilliams; from him they passed by grant to the Croftons of Moate; from the Croftons to the Montgomerys; from the Montgomerys to the M'Manus—doctor and captain—who purchased them in 1842; and, in the year 1870, Abbeytown was purchased in the Landed Estates Court by Mr. Middleton, Ballysadare, and Streamstown by Mr. Sim, Collooney. At each successive transfer the estate was brought under the control of the law courts, and remained so for years, thus distracting the tenants' minds, and preventing farm improvement, which very rarely takes place whenever tenure is uncertain.

It were probably better for the brothers M'Manus had they never bought this property, as it certainly would have been for the tenants. The moment the doctor and captain were declared purchasers, they disquieted the tenants by giving out that the rents should be forthwith

sized block in hand, having irregular corners, instead of reducing the face to a square or rectangle, notched out the defective parts into regular angles, and fitted the next stones into them; they appear to have done this from an objection to reduce the size of the material. This description of masonry will be found generally in our primitive churches, and in the basement storeys of our round towers. The masonry of our Lady's Church at Glendalough, is of a massive character, the stones large and well jointed, and in some instances cut one into the other."—*Idem*, page 153.

raised, as the purchase-money was very high. A more preposterous reason for a rise of rent could not well be put forward; for, if ambitious nobodies (*novi homines*) think well of giving an exorbitant price for land, in order to have themselves ranked among landed proprietors, that, assuredly, is no just cause why the tenant should have to pay for the social elevation of the new landlord. By all means, let aspiring misers become landlords if they will, only let them pay, themselves, for the distinction, and not lay additional burdens, in consequence, on others who, if the truth were known, feel rather hurt than honoured by having such men over them. If public opinion once tolerated the principle advanced by the M'Manuses, we should soon have in Ireland scenes like those that most disgraced the United States before the late war; and as, in the South, inhuman slave dealers outbid all others at slave auctions, being resolved to exact from the slave an amount of work which no humane man could think of, so also unfeeling land jobbers would distance all decent competitors in the Landed Estates Court, being determined to wring purchase-money and profit out of the sweat and blood of their wretched serfs. This is strong language, but not a whit too strong for the state of things contemplated, nor, perhaps, for the actual state of facts on some properties, where the so-called tenant cannot keep a shoe to his foot, or a coat to his back, or secure always a sufficient meal, even of the coarsest food.

The Streamstown and Abbeytown tenants, seeing the kind of landlords they had now to deal with, decided to relinquish their holdings. It cost the poor men almost a death-pang to quit for ever the places where they were born, and their fathers before them; but, with a spirit that all must honour, they preferred even this sacrifice to living slaves and paupers, though nominally tenants, under taskmasters whom they both feared and despised. This, it is said, is what the M'Manuses most desired; and yet, when that "*par nobile fratrum*" got the land into their own hands,

and stocked it with cattle and sheep, they fared so ill as graziers, that they were glad after sometime, or at least the survivor of them, the captain, was glad to let the greater part of it to tenants again.

But whether with or without tenants, the M'Manuses were equally miserable. They dwelt in a long shed-like structure, which was erected originally for a cowhouse, and which was generally surrounded by a moat of sludge, that it was a very difficult and delicate matter to pass. This squalid den they shared freely with pigs and fowl, though the poor were kept at a distance by one or two horrible mastiffs, that were so trained as to be able to scent a beggar while still miles away. Their bedroom, which did duty for parlour, sitting room, and rent office as well, had an earthen floor full of holes; and, for furniture, contained two or three old chairs, a coarse deal table, and a rustic four-posted bedstead, which, in the season, was sure to be furnished, in the space between the mattress and the ground, with two or three hatching geese. It was in this wretched sty that the landlords of Streamstown and Abbeytown passed their days and nights; avoiding their fellow-men, and avoided by them; strangers to the comforts and decencies of life; living on the plainest and cheapest fare; and deeming a rasher of bacon and a tumbler of whiskey punch as the *ne plus ultra* of high living—as delicacies and luxuries to which one may not aspire except on very rare occasions. Far be it from the writer, in these remarks, to seek to cast odium or ridicule on the memory of those mistaken men, who were rather to be pitied than blamed; though they were themselves always blaming and despising the rest of mankind for not following their own example. If mention is made of their infatuation in half-starving themselves while owners of landed property worth £20,000, it is only for the purpose of calling to mind, that tenants are sometimes liable to troubles little thought on; that they need protection from eccentric



as well as from overreaching and tyrannical proprietors; and that those who turned the back on Doctor and Captain M'Manus were, if they acted justly in other respects, to be praised, rather than censured, as they sometimes have been, for putting the Atlantic between themselves and such unamiable landlords.

As the district we have been considering reaches to Ballysadare, the point from which we set out, we have now completed our itinerary of the parish, and, it is hoped, in such a way that no object or topic of interest belonging to

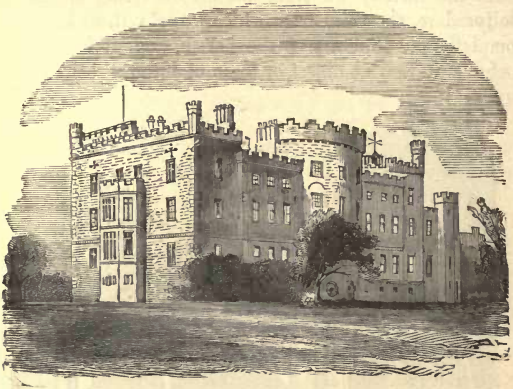


PROTESTANT CHURCH OF COLLOONEY.

Drawn by Mr. Wakeman, from a Photograph by Mr. Slater.

the place, and falling within the scope of our narrative, has been left unnoticed. And, in bidding farewell to Ballysadare, it may be observed, that since we left it we have met no spot that surpasses it in interest, though we have been visiting, meantime, some of the most remarkable places in the

county: Collooney with its picturesque scenery, its ruined Celtic castles,\* and its imposing series of churches, from that of *Shrah Phadruic* to the Church of the Assumption and the Protestant church; Markrea, with its stately modern castle, its famous observatory, its extensive demesne,



MARKREA CASTLE.

Drawn by Mr. Wakeman, from a Photograph by Mr. Slater.

and its distinguished owners; Cloonamahon reminding one respectively of the dark and the sunny side of bygone times, in the eviction of Bishop Hart and the songs of Carolan and O'Connellan; Carrickbanaghan carrying back the thoughts to days before Heber and Heremon touched the shores of

\* See page 53. "Do the inhabitants of Leyney remember that Colooney was anciently called Cul Maoile? Do they remember that one of the three first castles erected in Connaught was built at Colooney?"—Letter of John O'Donovan, dated February 14, 1836, and addressed to Thomas O'Connor—found in Ordnance Survey Letter Book of County Sligo.

Ireland; Billa sanctified by the footsteps and ennobled by the birth of Saints Nathy and Fechin; and Tullaghan, Beltra, and Coillte Leyney, with their *Mirabilia Hiberniæ*, their scenes of history and fable, and their traditions of a hundred battles, from that of Eochy and the sons of Nemedh in A.M. 2737, to that of the Penny Boys, A.D. 1843.

*Tempul Mor Fechin* on the hill\* is the oldest building in the parish, even taking into account those that have long since fallen into ruins, and in some of its parts (for its work is of different ages †) is probably the oldest *mortared* structure in the county, while the site is inferior to nothing in Ireland, whether we consider its natural beauty or its peculiar suitableness for a religious house—with the peaks of the neighbouring mountains constantly turning the thoughts of its inmates heavenward; the Owenmore, in its rapid flow, telling them of the flight of that precious time that is to be redeemed (Ephes. c. 5, v. 16; Colos. c. 4, v. 5), and the sea, as it receives and engulphs the waters at the fall, supplying a lively image and memento of that eternity in which they themselves are soon to be absorbed.

\* The oldest epitaphs in the graveyard were given in a preceding page (p. 29), and others are now added, some from the interior, and some from the outside of this old church. See for epitaphs at the end of this chapter.

† It was a common practice formerly, in building churches, to incorporate with the new building portions of older churches, when they existed on the site.—Brash's *Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland*, pages 38, 40, 67, etc.

Brash gives an instance of this in the Church of Aghadoe, of which he writes:—"There appear to be three dates of masonry in this structure. The north-west corner, partly on the west gable, and partly on the north-west wall, appears to have belonged to a primitive church, portions of the walls of which had been preserved and incorporated with a later building. The masonry of this portion was composed of large blocks of stone, of irregular forms, filled with occasional spawls. The rest of the west end, for a length of 35 feet or thereabouts, appears to have been a reconstruction of the twelfth century, being built of smaller but more regular masonry. The eastern end is thirteenth century work, the masonry rude rubble, the stones small."—Page 104.

With such surroundings even a casual visitor of the place cannot fail to be impressed, and the impression is sure to deepen into lively emotion if he lingers for a little while over the memories of the scene, and calls to mind that great saints and heroes are associated with it; that Columba and Fechin preached and ministered around it; that Brian Boru, John De Courcy, Maurice Fitzgerald, the O'Haras and Berminghams, the O'Connors and O'Donnells, contended there for the mastery; that a succession of 300 monks continued for several centuries to dispense from it "the benefits of knowledge and the blessings of religion;" and that the dust of forty generations of his fellow-men repose in the sacred spot, awaiting the trumpet of the Resurrection.

---

Here lieth the body of  
James Simpson who departed  
this life the 6 of March 1795,  
Aged 68 years erected by his  
wife Isabella Simpson.

---

Sacred to the memory of  
Mrs. Bridget Simpson alias Powell of  
Ballisodare who departed this life on  
the 28th of August, 1832 Aged 71 years  
Who lost her life of a dreadful attack  
of Epidemic Cholera and her  
Regard for an Aged and infirm Hus-  
band who now deeply laments her  
loss in common with her three sons  
This stone is erected by her son Adam  
Surgeon in his Majesty's Royal Navy as  
a testimony of his filial regard and esteem.

---

Underneath this stone  
Lyeth inter'd the body of  
John Mitchell who departed  
This life the 20th December 1771  
Aged 53 years.

Here are deposited  
 the remains of  
 John Hamilton of Knockbeg  
 who departed this life  
 26th of May 1819  
 Also his wife Eleanor Hamilton  
 alias Hudson  
 who died on the 3rd of January 1852  
 aged 65 years  
 Mary J Hamilton  
 died April 15th 1859 aged 34 years.

---

Sacred  
 to the memory of  
 Jane Young  
 Who departed this life May 10th 1859  
 aged 22 years  
 Erected by her father Wm. Young.

---

Lord have mercy on the soul of  
 John Downs who departed this  
 life the 19th of May 1832 aged 48 years  
 This stone is erected by his beloved wife  
 Mary Downs  
 Also his son Martin Downs who depd this  
 life Feby 28th 1837 aged 23 years  
 Also the soul of Eleanor Cryan who depd  
 this life December 17th 1860 aged 43 years.

---

Beneath this tomb lie immersed  
 the remains of the late  
 Mr. Michael Farrell of Tubberscanavan  
 who departed this life 24th of  
 April 1833 aged 72 years  
 In him were united the virtues which  
 constitute a good Christian a  
 Good parent and an honest man  
 May he rest in peace.

---

Here lieth the body of Thomas  
 Colomb who departed this life  
 On the 16th day of Deer in the year  
 of our Lord 1805  
 Aged 80

## PARISH OF BALLYSDARE.

Pray for the soul of  
 Anne Coleman who departed this  
 life March 1843 aged 57 years  
 Also her husband Thos who departed  
 this life April 17th 1865  
 aged 80 years  
 Erected by their affectionate  
 son John.

---

O Lord  
 Have mercy on the soul of  
 Owen Allen  
 Who departed this life August 3d 1832  
 aged 70 years  
 His wife Mary Allen alias Cunningham  
 who died February 9th 1865 aged 93 years  
 Erected by their son John Allen.

---

O Lord  
 Have mercy on the soul of  
 Mary Anne Derham alias Williams  
 who departed this life Octr 19th 1864  
 aged 30 years  
 Also her infant son Richard  
 aged 4 months.

---

O Lord have mercy on the soul of  
 Charles Kavanagh  
 who departed this life on the 24th May 1868  
 aged 39 years.  
 This tomb has been erected to his memory  
 By his bereaved sorrowing widow.

---

Sacred to the memory of  
 Jeremiah O'Hara  
 Who departed this life the 28th Decr 1859  
 Aged 35 years  
 Also his wife Mary O'Hara alias Harrison  
 who died the 8th March 1847 aged 75 years  
 May they rest in peace through Christ our Lord Amen.

---

To the memory of  
 Michl O'Connor  
 Annaghmore  
 died May 20th 1863  
 Aged 63 years.



O Lord have mercy on the soul  
of  
Hugh Clarence  
who departed this life Feby  
25th 1868 Aged 74 years  
Also his son Patrick J. Clarence  
Who died August 20th 1869  
Aged 37 years  
William Patrick son to  
Joseph Clarence  
died May 8th 1875  
Aged 2 years and 5 months  
Erected to their memory  
by  
Joseph Clarence.

---

Of your charity pray for the soul of  
Peter Purcell Esq  
of Tralee, county Kerry, whose mortal remains  
are here deposited He departed this life  
on Christmas day 1865 aged 43  
After having resided in Ballisodare the  
last 12 years of his life  
Universally beloved and respected  
May he rest in peace.

---

O Lord  
have mercy on the soul of James Horan  
who departed this life August 10th 1832  
aged 59 years  
Also his grandson Michael Horan  
who died Sept 8th 1868 aged 16 years.

---

O Lord Jesus who on a cross resigned  
Thy sacred life to redeem mankind  
Receive the souls of those for whom we pray  
Who underneath this tomb are laid in clay  
Sacred to the memory of Denis Gorevin  
who depd this life the 1st May 1824 aged 72 years  
also Catherine Gorevin alias M'Donald who  
depd this life the 21 of April 1825  
aged 71 years  
Impressed with feelings of gratitude and  
regret their son James has erected this  
tribute of respect to the memory of his  
beloved parents.

## PARISH OF BALLYSADARE.

O Lord  
 have mercy on the soul of  
 Charles Connington who depd this life  
 April 12th 1840 aged 60 years  
 Also  
 his wife Mary Connington alias Smith  
 who died Octr 9th 1845 aged 67 years  
 And  
 their Grand Son John Connington  
 who died Novr 17 1860 aged 17 years  
 Erectd to their memory by Jas Connington.

---

Pray for the soul of  
 Stephen Burns  
 died 3d Novr 1859  
 aged 60 years  
 Erected by his son  
 Stephen Burns.

---

Gloria in Excelsis Deo  
 O Lord have mercy on the soul  
 of Catherine McGragh alias Mc  
 Cormick who departed this life 13th of  
 Novr A.D. 1836 aged 56 years  
 Erected by her affectionate husband Bernard McGragh

---

Gloria in Excelsis Deo  
 O Lord have mercy on the soul of  
 Mary Haran alias Christal who departed this  
 life Novr the 10th 1840 aged 48 years  
 also her son James Haran died July the 5th  
 1830 aged 18 years  
 This tomb  
 Erected by her affectionate husband  
 John Haran of Glan.

---

Charles Gilhooly  
 died 14th February 1862  
 aged 62 years  
 May he rest in peace

O Lord

Have mercy on the soul of  
 Michael Rochford  
 who departed this life  
 Decr 13th 1871 aged 60 years  
 May he rest in peace Amen.

---

O Lord

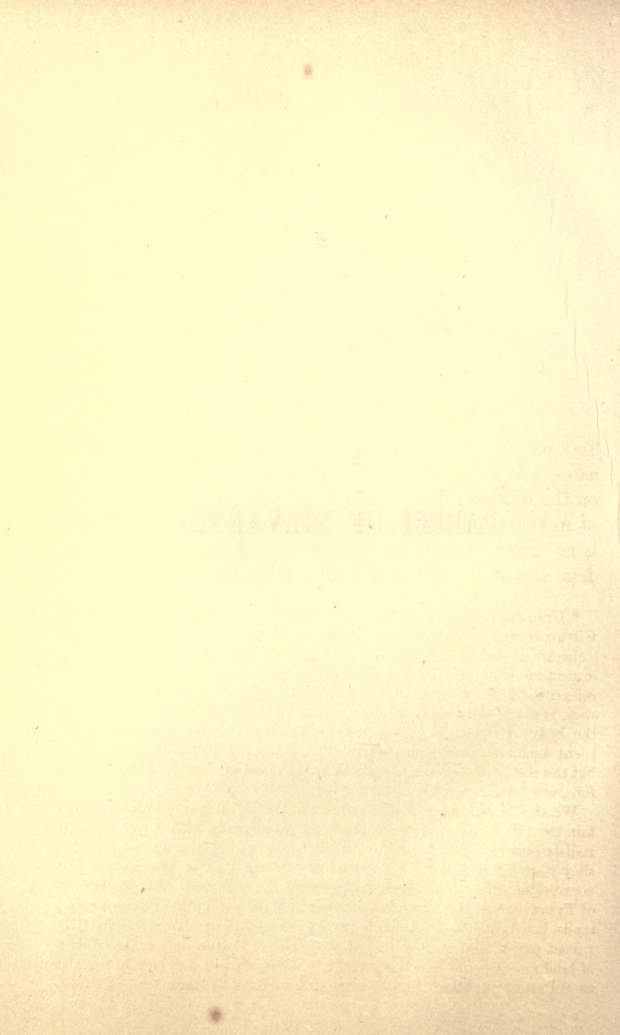
have mercy on the soul of  
 Bridget Brother alias Thompson  
 who depd this life 16th of June 1847  
 aged 50 years  
 Also her beloved husband  
 Michael Brother  
 who died 15th August 1870  
 aged 74 years  
 Also their granddaughter  
 Mary Brother  
 who died 15th August 1872 aged 19 yrs  
 may they rest in peace through  
 Christ our Lord Amen.

---

O Lord have mercy on the soul of  
 Michael Savage  
 who departed this life October 9th 1877  
 Aged 58 years  
 Erected by his son Martin Savage.



PARISH OF KILVARNET.





# PARISH OF KILVARNET.

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## CHAPTER I.

### OLD CHURCH OF KILVARNET, ETC.

THE parish of Kilvarnet\* comprises an area of 6696 statute acres, and is bounded on the east by the Owenmore river, on the north by the Owenbeg, on the south by the parish of Achonry, and on the west by that of Killoran. There is no great variety in the scenery, though the beautiful demesnes of Templehouse in the south, and of Annaghmore

\* Unfortunately there is no map, properly so called, of the parish of Kilvarnet among those of the Down Survey. In these maps there is a sheet with the title or heading "Kilmacteigue and Killoran," but on inspection one finds that this heading is a misnomer, as there is no further reference in the place to Kilmacteigue, the map of which parish, by the way, is given elsewhere; while, though there is mention of Kilvarnet in the body of the sheet, there are no details as to acreage, or the constituent denominations of the parish. Two parcels of Bishop-land are noted, but the rest of the parish is marked as "Protestant-land," which, therefore, was left unmeasured.

We should remember that the object of the Down Survey was to ascertain the extent and quality of the confiscated lands with a view to their redistribution. Wherever, then, the lands were notoriously not forfeited they were left unmeasured; and hence we find that in Connaught, the counties of Roscommon and Galway were not surveyed; that the barony of Tyrawley was the only one measured in Mayo; and that in other places, lands belonging to Protestant owners were left unnoticed, as in Kilvarnet parish, and even in *part* of the parish of Ballysadare, where a strip of land near the old burying ground is undescribed, being merely marked as "Protestant-land" and as belonging to Kean O'Hara.

the north, are very picturesque features—while the bold hills of Keash, Mucklety, and Knocknashee, in the adjoining parishes of Keash and Achonry, form a striking addition to the landscape. There is a large quantity of bog in the parish; tillage is general on Mr. Perceval's estate, and extends also over the greater part of Mr. O'Hara's property, though four or five quarters of land on his estate are let in three grazing farms. Clara, which, forty or fifty years ago, was a most populous district, is now a wild waste, inhabited only by the families of three or four herds. Mr. Charles O'Hara had no hand or part in the depopulation, and is incapable of having had; for there is no landlord in the province more desirous of seeing a numerous and happy tenantry around him than this kind-hearted gentleman. It was in the "bad times," as the years 1846, 1847, and 1848, are so graphically and touchingly called by the people, that the district was "wasted." The four or five quarters of land that comprise it were held under the O'Hara family by four middlemen, who let the lands out in detail, at rack-rents, to under tenants, and these wretched cottiers, breaking down under the pressure of the famine years, dragged with them in the fall those from whom they held. In this way about a thousand acres came into the hands of the owner in fee, Major O'Hara, and this gentleman scared, probably, by the failure so common among the small tillage farmers of the period, formed this extensive tract of country into three or four holdings, and let them for grazing purposes; an arrangement natural enough, perhaps, in the exceptional circumstances in which it took place, but little suited to a state of things like the present, when so many are anxious for land, as well as willing and able to pay a good rent for it.

The parish derives its name from the old church of Kilvarnet, the ruins of which still stand, and in fair preservation, between Clara and Finlough. The parishioners think this house got the name from its founder, who, they

say, was called "Warnet" O'Hara. That it was built by an O'Hara is pretty certain, as the O'Haras owned Leyney, and built all or nearly all the churches of the territory; but that the builder's name was Warnet is a mistake, for there was no such name in the O'Hara family, nor among the Irish at all. Kilvarnet signifies the "Church of the gap," *varnet* being one of the forms of *bearnas* (a gap)—as Ballyvarnet, the town of the gap; \* and the church under consideration has evidently got its name from the gap or valley in which the building is situated, and which stretches from Mulnabreena on between Clara and Ropefield to the parish of Killoran. There are some who say that this church was built by Bishop O'Hara, and, in proof, point to a spot in the neighbourhood called "Bishop O'Hara's lawn;" a denomination that certainly goes to show either that he built the church, or had some local connection with it. There have been at least two or three bishops of the name of O'Hara in the diocese of Achonry: Murchad, † who died in the abbey of Boyle in 1344; Brian, who departed this life in 1409; ‡ and O'Hara Roe, or the Red Bishop, who went to his reward in 1435; § but there is nothing to determine to which of these three the tradition refers.

The old church is fifty-three feet long, and twenty-six wide, the side walls being about seventeen feet high, and the northern one having two buttresses, slightly battering,

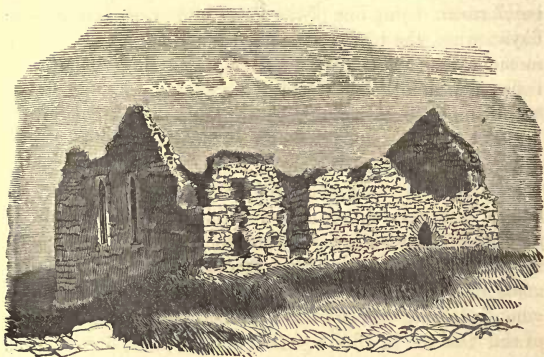
\* Joyce's *Irish Names of Places*, First Series, page 394.

† "Murrough, son of Molloy O'Hara, Abbot of Boyle, and intended Bishop of Leyney, died."—*Annals of the Four Masters*, A.D. 1344. Others regard Murrough as a bishop who had retired from his see to the abbey of Boyle; and this would seem to be the opinion of Ware, who places him among the bishops of Achonry, styling him "Murchard (Mac Mælmó) O'Hara, who for a time was Abbot of Boyle."

‡ "Brian, the son of John O'Hara, Bishop of Achonry, died after the victory of [Extreme] Unction and Penance."—*Annals of the Four Masters*, A.D. 1409.

§ "The Red Bishop, O'Hara, Bishop of Achonry, died."—*Annals of the Four Masters*, A.D. 1435.

one at each end. The masonry, though not built in courses, is solidly put together. There were two doors, one in each sidewall, and both an equal distance—nineteen feet—from western gable. The sanctuary was lighted partly by a window in each sidewall, near the eastern end, but



OLD CHURCH OF KILVARNET.

Drawn on the wood by W. F. Wakeman, Esq., F.R.H.A.A.I., from a Photograph by Mr. Edward Smith.

chiefly by two lancet windows in the gable, four feet apart, each seven feet high, and seven inches wide on the outside, but splayed on the inside to a width of five feet. No vestige of altar remains, but a piscina two feet eight inches high, and one foot seven inches wide remains quite perfect. A gallery extended throughout the church, with the exception of the sanctuary part, and was lighted by a window in the western gable, and a small open in the southern sidewall, eighteen inches high and five wide, from under which projects a gargoyle, the only one in the structure. The roof was of shingles, cut, it is said, from fine black oak trees dug out of the neighbouring bog.

A curious legend is associated with the building of this house. It is said that the builder contracted to receive for his services such cattle as should be within view at the moment of finishing the job ; and as the site of the church commands a very extensive view of pasture land, one would take the contract to have been a profitable one. But builders sometimes met more than their match even in those days ; and when the contractor looked around at the moment of giving the last touch to the work, instead of the flocks and herds he expected to see, there was nothing within view except a few beggarly goats. It is little wonder that the poor man should have lost temper, and that, like others in ill humour, he should have vented his passion on any object at hand. And accordingly he spancelled the unfortunate goats, and hurled them into a lake which was then hard by, and which got the name, from the circumstance, of *Lough-na-gower*—lake of the goats—and the site of which, now that “the waters are gone,” is still known as *Grellach-na-gower*—the miry place of the goats.

At the Reformation Kilvarnet fared like most of the other churches \* of the country, having been taken from its

\* “A Regal Visitation Book of 1615,” says Cotton, *Fasti. Ecclesiæ. Hibernicæ*, vol. iv, p. 114—“sets down the disused prebends of Achonry as follows :—

|                     |              |                                                                                                                               |
|---------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Præb. KILMOROGHE,   | (Kilmorgan). | } Hæ Præbendæ spectaverunt<br>(ut asseritur) ad Ecclesiam<br>Cathedralem Achadensem;<br>et tenentur per Edwardum<br>Croftown. |
| „ IMLAFADDA,        |              |                                                                                                                               |
| „ CLONOGHILL,       |              |                                                                                                                               |
| „ KILLOSHALWEY,     |              |                                                                                                                               |
| „ KILLOROWE,        | (Kilturrow). |                                                                                                                               |
| „ de KILWAR . . . . | (Kilvarnet). | } Tenentur per Episcopum.<br>[This was Miler Magrath].”                                                                       |
| „ et KILLOWEN,      | (Killoran).  |                                                                                                                               |
| „ KILMACTEGE,       |              |                                                                                                                               |
| „ KILNEAGH          | (Kilbeagh).  |                                                                                                                               |
| „ et KILLEDAN,      |              |                                                                                                                               |
| „ KILMAREE,         | (Kilmovee).  |                                                                                                                               |
| „ DOGHARNE,         |              |                                                                                                                               |
| „ MOYNELAGHY,       | (Meemlagh).  |                                                                                                                               |

“Another Royal Visitation Book, of 1633,” says Archdeacon Cotton,

ecclesiastical owners and given to laymen. It was granted to the Crofton family. But it would appear that the friars did not relinquish their hold without a struggle; for there is a tradition that they continued to keep possession, living on the gallery, and protected by a broad moat filled brimful with water, and running all round the church.\* But this state of things could not last long, and we learn from a Royal Visitation Book that Kilvarnet was in the hands of Protestants in 1615, Edward Crofton, a layman, being its rector, and Andreas Magrath, its vicar.† At this time the

*Ibidem*, “in the Prerogative Office, describes the prebends of Achonry, as follows:—

- Præb. DOUGHERNE, Robert White,  
 ,, KILLORAN, John Fargie (Forgie).  
 ,, KILLOSALVIE, vacant, worth 4s. per annum.  
 ,, CLOWNEOGHILL, vacant, worth 10s. per annum.  
 ,, IMLAGHFADDA, vacant, worth 10s. per annum.  
 ,, KILMURROUGH, vacant, worth 12s. per annum.  
 ,, KILLARAGHT, Patrick Campbell, worth 30s. per annum.  
 ,, KILMONIE, ditto, sequestrator, worth 8s. per annum.  
 ,, MOYNELOUGH, vacant, worth 5s. per annum.  
 ,, KINAVE, vacant, worth 30s. per annum.  
 ,, KILLIDAN, vacant, worth 30s. per annum.  
 ,, KILFRIE, vacant, worth 5s. per annum.  
 ,, KILVARNETT, vacant, worth 5s. per annum.  
 ,, KILTURROUGH, vacant, worth 10s. per annum.  
 ,, KILMACTEIGUE, vacant, worth 10s. per annum.”

\* The tradition that the church underwent a siege, derives some support from several holes, each ten or twelve inches square, which may still be seen in the western gable and in other parts of the house, and which look like port holes for the use of small arms.

† “Andrew Magrath, a son or nephew of Archbishop Miler Magrath,” says Archdeacon Cotton in his *Fasti Ecclesiæ Hibernicæ*, vol. iv. p. 106. Even Protestant writers are very hard on the memory of Miler Magrath. “It appears,” says Cotton, “that by some means or other, he had contrived to recommend himself strongly to Queen Elizabeth; but he was a most unscrupulous waster of the patrimony of the sees under his administration.” The Regal Commissioners, at their Visitation in 1615, thus name him:—“Archbishop Miler Magrath, who would give the Commissioners no satisfactory information respecting his revenues. He held four bishoprics (Achonry was one of them) and a great number of benefices in various dioceses.” Miler died in 1622, and was buried in the Cathedral

Church and State officials took to rebuilding or repairing the parochial churches, which, for the most part, they themselves had destroyed or injured in spite of the Catholics; and it gives a good idea of the iniquity of the times, that it was on the Catholics, who alone strove to prevent the

of Cashel, where his tomb bears the following puzzling epitaph composed by himself:—

Venerat in Dunum primo sanctissimus olim  
 Patricius, nostri gloria magna soli,  
 Huic ego succedens, utinam tam sanctus ut ille,  
 Sic Duni primo tempore præsul eram.  
 Anglia, lustra decem sed post tua sceptrâ colebam,  
 Principibus placui, marte tonante, tuis.  
 Hic ubi sum positus, non sum, sum ubi non sum  
 Sum nec in ambobus, sum sed utroque loco  
 Dominus est qui me judicat  
 Qui stat timeat ne cadat.

When Protestants were so severe on Miler one may guess that he fared indifferently at the hands of Catholics. In a coarse production entitled "The Apostacy of Myler Magrath, Archbishop of Cashel: A Poetical Satire, written by the Rev. Eoghan O'Duffy, a Franciscan Friar, about A.D. 1577; *Literally Translated from the original Irish*, by John O'Daly," the writer concludes a very fantastic appeal to the Blessed Virgin, with three stanzas levelled against three "conforming ecclesiastics," and running thus in Mr. O'Daly's literal translation:—

"To William O'Casey, the potent  
 By the aid of the Saxon—not by God's;  
 Give a stunning clencher on the ear,  
 In the halls of the Castle of Dublin.  
 The blessing of the hosts I will ever pray,  
 On the immaculate daughter of Anna, the spotless;  
 If she gives a box or two to Conor O'Brennan,  
 The swarthy, the black, and hidcous monster.  
 To the friar whose religion is false,  
 To Myler Magrath, the apostate;  
 Until he submits to God's Word, the boor,  
 Give him a box on each big jaw."

Miler, after he became Protestant, was Bishop of Clogher, Archbishop of Cashel, held in *commendam* the sees of Waterford and Lismore, "and," to use the words of Cotton, "laid his rapacious hands upon the two remote sees of Killala and Achonry, which he held under a grant of *commendam* from King James, until his death in 1622."—*Fæsti Ecclesiæ Hibernicæ*, vol. iv, p. 67.



injury, the whole cost of the so-called restoration was laid. The Visitation Book informs us that Kilvarnet was "repaired" \* in this way, and opened for Protestant worship; but the new service in it must have been a great rarity, if it ever took place at all, as the aforesaid Andreas Magrath had to look after half the other churches in the diocese as well as Kilvarnet. Indeed he and a Reverend Terence Connolly are set down as the only curates in the diocese, while the rectors were laymen.†

The Catholics are said to have got back to their old place of worship, and to have performed devotions privately there for some time. And the cause assigned for their quitting it is worth mentioning. There was a graveyard then, as now, around the church, and as the women, when returning from mass, could not be kept from setting up the Irish cry ‡ over the remains of relatives, § it became necessary to avoid the place altogether, lest these lamentations should attract the public authorities from the neighbouring castle of Templehouse to the spot. After Kilvarnet was aban-

\* The entry in the Royal Visitation Book of 1615, which is in the Public Record Office, Dublin, runs thus:—"Vic. de Killwarnada, Rector Crofton Edward; Val. 3s.; Andreas Magrath tenet per custodiam Archiepiscopi—ecclia. repata." (ecclesia reparata).

† We get a startling idea of the state of religion in Ireland, about this time, from a letter of Sir John Davys to Cecil, in which he says:—"The churches are ruined and fallen to the ground in all parts of the Kingdom. There is no divine service, no Christening of children, no receiving of the Sacrament, no Christian meeting or assembly—no, not once in a year; in a word, no more demonstration of religion than amongst Tartars or cannibals."—*Calendar of the State Papers relating to Ireland*: Edited by Rev. C. W. Russell, D.D., and John P. Prendergast, Esq., Barrister-at-Law.

"Andreas Magrath," according to Cotton's *Fasti*, "son or nephew of Archbishop Miler Magrath, whose long arms reached to dioceses in every part of Ireland."

According to the Regal Visitation Book of 1633, Kilvarnet was held, in that year, "by Robert Connell, cleric and preacher of the Divine Word."—"Robertus Connell, clericus, verbi Divini Prædicator."

‡ See page 207.

§ The epitaphs on the stones of this graveyard will be found at the end of the chapter.

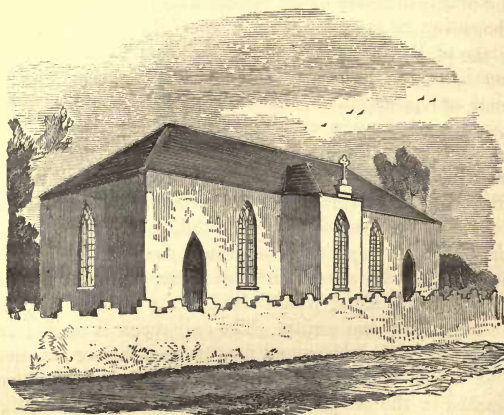
done mass was said on Sundays and holidays in the open air,\* and generally on or near the rath of *Fal-na-sugan*. A hedge-school was taught on week days in the same townland; first, in the ditch of the rath; and later, in some of the adjoining cabins. A Mr. Devine, who taught about 1780, is the last of the *Fal-na-sugan* schoolmasters. There are Catholics who feel humiliated when they call to mind such scenes as these; but, to those who know how to reason, that rude altar in the open air, and that lowly school in the ditch of *Fal-na-sugan* will afford as convincing proof of the church's fidelity to her great mission of sanctifying and educating the world as the stately cathedral and sumptuous college of her prosperous days.

Towards the close of the eighteenth century the place of celebrating mass was changed from *Fal-na-sugan* to the village of Ballinacarrow, where Mr. Tom Corkran kindly placed the principal room of his house at the service of the priest and congregation, till a chapel was provided. This time was not long in coming; for, in a few months, with the aid of the landlord, Mr. Perceval, the parishioners erected a plain oblong building—forty feet long and twenty broad—for the celebration of the divine mysteries. It was situated to the east of the high road, about twenty yards behind Mr. Corrigan's house, where its walls may still be seen. With the exception of an altar, or rather a stand for a portable altar, which stood at its eastern end, the house was bare and empty. The only repair it needed was in the way of thatching, and for this each farmer supplied, when asked, a "stook" or "bart" of oats, which was thrashed in the chapel, the straw going on the roof, and

\* In "A Tour through Ireland by two English Gentlemen" (Dublin, 1748), we read:—"The poorer sort of Irish natives are mostly Roman Catholics, who make no scruple to assemble in the open fields. As we passed yesterday in a by-road, we saw a priest under a tree, with a large assembly about him, celebrating Mass in his proper habit; and though at a great distance from us, we heard him distinctly. These sort of people seem to be very solemn and sincere in their devotion."—*Irish Names of Places*: by P. W. Joyce, A.M., M.R.I.A., page 109.

the grain going to market to pay for labour and scollops. On week days the building served for a school-house, and was the means of keeping up a fair amount of knowledge among the neighbours, though in other respects, it was a contrast to the well-furnished and well-appointed schools of the present day; the whole stock of "requisites" consisting of a few Reading-made-easys, one or two Vosters, and half a dozen, or so, slates and copy books; the knees doing duty for writing desks; and the teacher being a graduate of the hedge school of *Fal-na-sugan*. A Mr. Peer—a rather queer name for teacher or pupil—was the last person that taught in the old chapel of Ballinacarrow.\*

The present chapel was built in 1826 by Very Rev.



BALLINACARROW CHAPEL.

Drawn on the wood by W. F. Wakeman, Esq., F.R.H.A.A.I., from a Photograph by Mr. E. Smith.

\* Protestant children attended this school as well as Catholics; and, what is very strange, *all* the children learned both the Catechisms, that is, the Catholic one and the Protestant.

James Henry. The late Colonel Perceval kindly gave an acre of land as a site, and the parishioners contributed according to their means towards its erection. The chapel has of late undergone considerable alteration and repairs, and with the elegant gallery running round three of its sides; its well stuccoed walls and ceiling; its numerous benches and imposing altar, is now a very commodious and neat place of worship. It is to be regretted that Colonel Perceval's gracious wishes have been frustrated, as his grant of land has been for the most part resumed, and instead of the acre which that large-hearted gentleman generously bestowed, the chapel plot is now "cribbed, cabined, and confined" to about half a dozen perches. And to aggravate the evil, the land taken back is used as a haggard in such a way that the ricks and stacks smother up the place, intercept the view of the chapel from the road, and thus give the appearance of a farmhouse to the House of God.\*

\* If the 'poor Colonel or his excellent son, the late Mr. Alexander Perceval, lived, either would little like to see Ballinacarrow chapel so treated, for both wished it to be an ornament and not an eyesore on the Templehouse estate.

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The following are the epitaphs referred to in page 305:—

Hear lys  
Interd the Body of Barth Wallace  
who departed this life the 28th  
April 1769 Aged 76.

---

Pray for the soul  
of Oliver Wallace  
who departed this  
life March 17 1773  
aged 23 years.

---

Pray for the soul of  
Owen Donoghue who depart-  
ed this life March 16th  
1778 aged 60 years.

## PARISH OF KILVARNET.

Pray for the soul of  
 Mary Nangle alias  
 Conel who died Au  
 gust 8 1778 aged  
 48 years. Erected by  
 her son Bryan  
 Nangle.

---

Here are deposited the  
 remains of Anne Higgins  
 who departed this life Decr  
 21 1791 aged 70 years  
 Erected by her daughter  
 Mary Henry.

---

Pray for the soul of Charles  
 Quigley who departed this life  
 October 10 1802 aged 46 years  
 Erected by his relict  
 Bridget O'Connor.

---

Michael Michell lieth under this stone  
 He is to rise again but the time is not known  
 This debt must be paid without control  
 Think of this reader and pray for his soul  
 who departed this life July 28 1803  
 aged 52 years. Erected by his brother  
 Martin Michel.

---

Lord have mercy on the soul of  
 Edmond Henry who departed  
 this life February 17th 1824 aged  
 67 years also the soul of Anne Mc  
 Carrick his wife who . . .  
 This tomb erected by his son  
 Paul Henry in memory of his  
 loving father.

---

Lord have mercy on the soul of John Colleary of Ranaghan  
 who depard this life 22 dec 1841 agd 56  
 Erected by his loving wife  
 Mary McGrath  
 Requiescant in pace.

O Lord  
 have mercy on the  
 soul of thy servant John  
 Armstrong of Falnasugan  
 who departed this life  
 on the 6th of Sepr 1843  
 aged 74 years. May he rest in  
 peace. Amen.

---

Lord have mercy on the  
 soul of Maggy Tarceny alias  
 Nicholson who departed this  
 life Sep 21 1850  
 aged 60 years  
 Erected by her husband  
 Patrick Tarceny.

---

Lord have mercy on the soul of  
 William Masterson who departed  
 this life 12 June Aged  
 96 years  
 Erected by his son Thomas Masterson  
 in memory of him and posterity.

---

Have mercy O Lord on the soul of  
 thy faithful servant James Corcoran  
 of Newgrove who is herein entombed  
 He died July 25th 1853 aged 40 years  
 May he rest in peace.

---

Erected  
 By  
 James Henry  
 to the memory of his father  
 Thomas Henry who died Sept  
 21st 1855 in the 75 year of his age

---

Sarah Corcoran  
 Alias Martin  
 Died 21 November  
 1857  
 Aged 77 years.



## PARISH OF KILVARNET.

Erected

by

Michael McDonnell of Collooney  
 in memory of his beloved wife  
 Mary McDonnell alias Henery  
 died 8th June, 1858 aged 54 years  
 also of

his father Patk McDonnell  
 died 7th Sep 1832 Aged 75 years  
 also of

his mother Honor McDonnell alias Henery  
 died 14th Jany 1824 aged 60 years  
 May they rest in peace. Amen.

---

 In

memory of

William Corcoran  
 Ballinacarrow who departed  
 This life 16th March 1861  
 Aged 43 years  
 May he rest in peace.



## CHAPTER II.

## TEMPLEHOUSE.

## SECTION I.—THE KNIGHTS TEMPLARS AND THE CROFTONS.

THE most beautiful spot in the parish of Kilvarnet, as well as the most historical, is Templehouse or *Teach-tempul*, the seat of Minor Perceval. Templehouse lake—a fine sheet of water about two miles long and one wide—would, under any circumstances, be a handsome object, but its natural beauty is greatly enhanced by the planting with which it is edged, and which sets off the rich green of the sloping banks, and forms some charming glades. The fine demesne, comprising near a thousand acres, and most of it prime land, is admirably timbered, being surrounded with a deep border of trees, and interspersed judiciously with groves and clumps, that draw out well to the eye the lines of its rich undulating surface. The mansion, erected by the late deeply and deservedly lamented Mr. Perceval, is a stately and spacious structure of cut stone, with two elegant fronts—one facing the east and the other the south—and stands on a slightly rising site some hundred yards from the lake, in the midst of extensive pleasure grounds, which are diversified with sward, and coppice, and rock work, and which contain two noble terraces that would do no discredit to their surroundings if placed at Kensington or Versailles. Near the water's edge stands the venerable pile of Templehouse Castle and two immense secular ash trees; and the hoary ruin and the old trees contrast suggestively with the modern mansion and the blooming parterres, showing that Templehouse has a history, and a past, as well as an honoured present.

About half a mile outside the demesne wall is a hill or rath called Kil, which, very probably, is the site of the first place of Christian worship that was erected within the present limits of the parish. There is neither written record nor oral tradition to throw light on the spot, but the name Kil—a church—and the human bones that have been, from time to time, found in a part of the mound where the antiseptic nature of the soil has hindered their putrefaction, prove that the place once contained a church and a cemetery. And that the church was a very early one is clearly seen by a cursory glance at the spot, for it contains the remains of one of those *cashels* that always surrounded primitive religious houses; and the stones that lie in profusion about are so eaten away and honeycombed by the weather as to make it evident that they have been exposed an enormous length of time to the ravages of the atmosphere. Anyhow, there can be no doubt of this house having preceded, by centuries, the church of Kilvarnet, and even that of Templehouse.

The church of Templehouse was built by the Templars.\* This is pretty certain, as all our annalists state it; though it is not known how the place came into the possession of those knights. Indeed there is little known of the career of the Templars in Ireland. Some writers seem to think that these religious were always confined within the limits

\* Mr. Edward Fitzgerald writes in the *Kilkenny Archæological Journal*, vol. iv, p. 291, as follows:—"A list of Preceptories of the Knights of St. John, which we have seen, may be interesting, as follows:—Kilsaran, County of Louth; Kilbarry, County of Waterford; Crook, same county; Ballinamoney, County of Cork; Clonaul, Tipperary; *Teagh*, County of Sligo; Killergy, County of Carlow; Kilclogan, County of Wexford; Ballyheuke and St. Bridget, also in Wexford; Kilbeg and Kilhed, Kildare, Little Kilmainham near Nobber in the County of Meath; Kilmainham Wood, also in Meath; Ardas, in the County of Down; Any, County of Limerick; and Kilnallaken, County of Galway." Here "*Teagh*" or *Teaghtemple* is set down as a house of the Hospitallers, but this must refer to the time when the property of the place had passed to the Hospitallers at the suppression of the Templars.—See page 318.

of the Pale, but the establishment at Templehouse, as well as one in Limerick city, and another at Ardmoyle, Ballyshythar, County Tipperary, disprove that assertion. Templehouse, as well as the rest of Leyney, belonged to the O'Haras at the time of the English invasion; and it is extremely unlikely that this family, who were always stout in their opposition to the English, would have made a grant of land to a body whose members were so identified with the invaders as to fight in their ranks against the Irish. It is probable that these military religious took forcible possession, and fixed themselves at Templehouse for the purpose of keeping the passes of Lower Connaught clear for their countrymen, in the same way as the original members of the order settled in the Holy Land in order to keep the roads of Palestine open to the pilgrims of Europe. Ware, Harris,\* Archdall,† and Allemande‡ tell us that the Preceptory § of Templehouse was founded in the thirteenth century; and, according to local tradition, the

\* In Harris's *Ware*, vol. ii, p. 271, we read, "Teach-Temple, Co. Sligo, belonged first to the Templars, then to the Hospitallers, and was founded in the thirteenth century."

† Archdall—*Monastic Hibernic.*, p. 639, writes, "Temple-House, on the river Owenmore, in the barony of Leyney, and ten miles south-west of Sligo; here we find Teach-Temple, or the House of the Temple, which was founded for Knights Templars in the reign of King Henry III, but on the final overthrow of this order it was given by King Edward II to the Knights Hospitallers."

‡ And Allemande—*Histoire Monastique du Royaume d'Irlande*, p. 129, says, "A Teach-Temple (dans le comté de Slego) c'est à dire *Maison du Temple*; il y a eu une Commanderie de Templiers. Je n'en scay pas autre chose, car il est inutile de dire qu'elle fut donnée avec toutes les autres de cet ordre aux Chevaliers de Saint Jean de Jerusalem."

§ "Preceptory" and "Commandery" mean one and the same thing, though the former is the term most frequently used in the Bulls of Popes and other ecclesiastical documents. "Surquoy il faut remarquer," says Allemande—*Histoire Monastique, etc.*, p. 123, "en passant que *Preceptorie et Commanderie* c'est le mesme chose, et qu'en Cour de Rome et dans le Bulles on appelle Preceptorie, ce que nous appellons Communement Commanderie."

church belonging to it stood at the water's edge, on the site of the old stables, and was called *Tempul-na-Srah*.\*

A castle formed an important part of an establishment of Templars ; and we read in the *Annals of the Four Masters* that, in the year 1271, when the Templars are supposed to have been in possession, the castle of Templehouse, with others, was demolished by Hugh O'Conor. If the religious were in possession that year it is, to say the least, doubtful whether they ever recovered from the heavy blow thus dealt them by Hugh O'Conor ; or, at all events, whether they recovered from it so far as to be able to rebuild the castle. One does not see how they could accomplish such a work in the last quarter of the thirteenth century, which, even in those turbulent ages, was a period of exceptional commotions and disorders—a period (to use the words of the Reverend Doctor O'Conor) of “anarchy, robberies, and rapines ; of local feuds, horrid massacres and assassinations ; of famines and disease ; during which several castles were destroyed by the O'Conors, who had penetrated even into the most flourishing provinces of the English Pale.”—(*Memoirs of the late Charles O'Conor, etc.*, p. 46). It is said that Fearghal More O'Hara, the eleventh in descent from Poprigh, built a castle in Templehouse, and John O'Donovan, in his edition of the *Four Masters*, alleges in proof a manuscript then in the possession of Major O'Hara, which Mr. O'Donovan saw, and of which he has left a synopsis in English.

By the kind courtesy of Mr. C. W. O'Hara we have been able to inspect this MS., and we are of opinion, after examining it, that the castle of Templehouse is substantially, if not in all its parts, the work of the O'Haras. On the subject of the castle the old writer says : “Fergal More O'Hara made the large tower at Templehouse, and his son, Teige, made the black porch, and John Boy, son of Teige,

\* A quantity of human bones were found in this spot when Mr. Perceval's men were excavating for the foundation of the stables.

son of Fergal More, made the two small towers and the bawn. The age of the Lord at that time was 1303." It is not stated here that Fergal More, Teige, and John Boy built the entire castle, which, perhaps, would have been mentioned in terms had the case been so; though, on the other hand, it is not said that there was on the spot a



SMALL TOWER OF O'HARA'S CASTLE, TEMPLEHOUSE.

Drawn on the wood by W. F. Wakeman, F.R.H.A.A.I., from a Photograph by Mr. Edward Smith.

structure of the Templars, to which, had such existed, some reference could hardly fail to have been made; so that the silence of the manuscript goes for nothing, as it tells for one side as much as for the other. There is no proof whatever, then, that any part of a Templars' castle remained at Templehouse after 1271; and even if there did, the O'Haras so altered, and extended, and strengthened it, that the resulting structure, taken as a whole, may well

count as one of the castles of that family, of which several others existed through their principality of Leyney, in the present counties of Mayo and Sligo. The ruins that still remain at Templehouse, namely: one small tower of a castle, and a wing, confirm the statement of the MS., as they are manifestly the work of different hands; the stones, and mortar, and masonry in the tower being of a different kind from those of the wing.

It was in the year 1307 that this Order was suppressed in Ireland. Edward II, in the first year of his reign, forwarded a mandate, dated 20th December, 1307, to the Irish viceroy, Wogan, ordering the seizure of the persons, papers, and properties of the Templars to be made on the 3rd of February, 1308—the Feast of the Purification.\* The viceroy tried to execute this mandate, but notwithstanding his efforts many Templars evaded capture on the day named, and for a couple of years subsequently; and, considering the distance of Templehouse from Dublin, it is only natural to think that the inmates of that preceptory, if the Knights still occupied it, were among those who remained at large. In 1311, Clement V formally abolished the Order by a Bull, issued in the Council of Vienne, not as a sentence of guilt in respect of the atrocious and infamous charges alleged against them, but as a measure of ecclesiastical administration, something similar to that which his namesake and successor, Clement XIV, felt constrained to adopt, four centuries later, in regard to the Jesuits. The same Pope transferred the property of the Templars to the Hospitallers; though the transfer was not effected without a struggle on the part of the king to retain the possessions

\* The mandate orders Wogan “to seize all the goods, chattels, etc., as well ecclesiastical as temporal, with the charters and muniments of the brethren, cattle, etc.; that the lands be sown out of their own profits; that the knights be not imprisoned, regard being had to their station, and that an inventory be made and returned to the Exchequer.”—*Kilkenny Archæological Journal*, vol. xii, p. 328.

for himself. A case was submitted by royal order to the judges, who decided that, by the law of England, the possessions in question should revert to the original owners, the lords of the fees. But in the end the king was forced to yield to the Pope; and, making a virtue of necessity, he had an Act of Parliament passed, conferring the property, that he could no longer retain, on the Hospitallers for religious uses, but reserving, at the same time, his own and his subjects' rights.\*

The decision of the English judge, of course, became known in Ireland; and when the O'Haras found that the white-robed religious had disappeared from the banks of Loughelly, as Templehouse lake was formerly called; and that the striped banner no longer floated from the battlements of the castle, they probably regarded the place as derelict, and treated it as an escheat to themselves, the original owners. Or, if they remained quiet at that time, which is exceedingly improbable, they may have resumed possession at some later period, and built portions of the castle of which Major O'Hara's manuscript speaks. Anyhow, it is certain that the family took and kept forcible possession of at least large portions of the Templars' estate, if we are to rely on English official documents; for, in an inquisition, taken at Ballymote on the 11th January, 1593, before Richard Boyle, the jury find that "eight quarters of land, belonging to the Commandrye of *Taght-temple*, and situated in Ballyhannagh and Ballinacarra, were concealed and unjustly detained for a long time from the Queen and George Goodman, Knight, to whom she had let them, by Cormac O'Hara, otherwise O'Hara Boye, without any right or title on his part known to the jury."

But whoever may have been the *de facto* masters of

\* Under the year 1413, we read in Dowling's *Annals*, "Hospitalierii milites Sancti Johannis Jerusalem fuerunt primo instituti in terra et possessionibus Templariorum per totam Hiberniam."—*Archæological Society's Edition*, page 19.



Templehouse, it belonged, by English law, to the Hospitallers. There is no evidence that these religious ever occupied the place, but there is clear proof, supposing the official documents not to have been forged, that the property was bestowed on the Hospitallers' priory of St. John the Baptist in Lough Ree, commonly called Randon\* or Teacheon, and that it continued in their legal possession down to the suppression of monasteries, when it was resumed by the Crown, and disposed of like other religious houses. This appears from the inquisition just referred to, which, though somewhat injured and effaced by time, as it lies in the Record Office, Dublin, is clear enough on the substantial facts. After inquiry the court finds "that the prior and convent of the late monastery of St. John the Baptist, Loghrie, in the territory of Imaine, County Roscommon, at the time of its surrender, was seized in fee by right of the same priory, of a certain religious house, called the Commandrye of Taght . . . four towns or sixteen quarters of land, with their tithes and appurtenances, in the County of Sligo, the denominations of these lands being, viz. : four quarters of land with their tithes in the town and fields of . . . four quarters of land, with their tithes and appurtenances in the town and fields of Ballymorrey ; four quarters, with their tithes, in the town and fields of Ballyhannagh, and four quarters with their tithes, in the town and fields of Ballinacarra, all which possessions aforesaid belong, in virtue of different statutes to the Queen, in right of her crown." The same fact is established by the Indenture entered into in 1583 by Sir John Perrott and the chiefs of Connaught, in which document it is mentioned that

\* It appears, from the following remarks of John O'Donovan, that the Hospitallers had made Randon or Rindown a very strong military position : "Rindown contains the ruins of a castle of great size and strength, and of a military wall, with gates and towers of considerable extent and magnificence, measuring 564 yards in length, and dividing the *Rinn*, or point, from the main land by extending from water to water."—O'Donovan's *Four Masters*, A.D. 1199.

“Taghtampule in Magheralyny belongs to her Majesty as in right of the abbey of St. John’s, Maimagh.” It is right to observe that Mr. Hardiman has printed this and the other indentures of Elizabeth’s Composition with the Connaught chieftains in his edition of O’Flaherty’s *West Connaught*, but it detracts much from the value of the performance, that he has left out many denominations of land mentioned in the original, including Taghtample, and several other places in the County Sligo.\*

At the suppression of religious houses, Templehouse was leased by Elizabeth to Thomas Chester and George Goodman, for twenty-one years, the term running from the 20th April, 1578. The property was granted by King James (Patent Roll 3 James I, Part I), to Edward Crofton, son of John Crofton, Esq., of Connaught, Sligo County, as “Taghtample in O’Connor’s country, sixteen quarters; and another waste town there” (probably Annaghmore), “containing 200 acres arable, and 300 acres pasture, wood, and bog; parcel of the estate of St. John the Baptist, near Loughrie, in O’Maney . . . the rectories and tithes of Taghtample aforesaid, the tithes and alterages due to the vicars and curates of the said vicarages excepted.”

Like most other grantees of the period, the Croftons built a bawn on their new property. The residence was a plain, oblong, two-storeyd thatched house, running between the wings of the old castle, and so constructed as to enable its inmates to avail themselves of the lodging accommodation which the castle still afforded.† Portions of the

\* This important fact we ascertained by comparing the Indenture as given in the *West Connaught*, with a manuscript copy in the Record Office, Dublin. Even the able and painstaking Dr. Kelly was led into error in this matter, for he writes as follows, in *Cambrensis Eversus*, vol. i, page 206, “The documents of the Great Composition are *fully* abstracted, and for the first time printed, in Hardiman’s *Iar-Connaecht*.”

† The tower of the castle and one wing still remain, and in fair preservation. The tower is 21 feet square, with stone roof, the walls being six feet thick, battered to the outside, and well grouted. The surviving wing

building remain, including the hall-door, over which may still be seen the crest of the Croftons (seven ears of wheat on one stalk); their motto, ("Deus Incrementum") the year the edifice was erected ("1627"); the second verse of the 111th Psalm—"The generation of the righteous shall be blessed;" and three pious proverbs in Latin—"Nocumenta Documenta;" "Quos amat Omnipotens percutiendo docet;" "Ex paucis agrum nobis Deus auget aristis."

Before building, William Crofton made sure the title to the property in a way common at the time, that is, by surrendering the possessions to the Crown, and receiving them back in a re-grant from the King. In his surrender\* are mentioned "the castle, house or commandery of Teagh-temple, with three townlands, containing twelve quarters of land, . . . with the tithes great and small, and the fishing weir on the river of Owenmore . . . and the whole fishings of the said river of Owenmore, and the lake called Loghelly,†

runs from south to north, is seventy feet long by thirty-six wide, and was vaulted with stone, the floor over the vault supplying servants' apartments even after the new bawn came to be built and occupied by the Croftons and the Percevals.

There is near the castle a curious stone which the country people call the Holy Water Stone. It is two feet 6 inches long, one foot eleven inches wide, and one foot seven inches high; the inside measurements being twelve inches long, nine inches wide, and eight and a half inches deep. See *Kilkenny Archaeological Journal*, vol. ii, page 55, and vol. xi, p. 25, where objects of a similar kind are mentioned and their nature discussed, some regarding them as baptismal fonts, others as reliquaries for large relics, or as coffers for valuables, or as bases for stone crosses.

\* Dated 14th July, 1618—Patent Roll of James I.

† It is strange that this name has been completely lost in the neighbourhood. Mr. Brett's place at Templehouse is commonly called at present *Corn Abbey*, a name that has come, by a succession of changes, from *Carn Ilie* or *Carn Elly*; the carn, very probably, having been erected in memory of the person from whom the lake got its appellation. We read of a Carn-Ailche in the *Four Masters*, 743, on which John O'Donovan remarks in a note, "Carn of Ailche, a man's name. This is most probably the place now called Carnelly, near the town of Clare, in the County of Clare." Might it not be our Carnelly of Templehouse?

extending between the baronies of Leyney and Corran; the rectory or impropriate parsonage of Taghtample with the tithes and glebe lands thereunto belonging, all which were parcel of the late monastery or priory of St. John the Baptist, near Loghrie, in the County of Roscommon; . . . the site of the chapel or cell of Kilvasse, and two quarters of land adjoining the island of Inish-Killighan in Loghglil near Sligo, and certain other small islands there."

In the grant from the King to William Crofton,\* his Majesty gives in all form "the castles, lands, rectories, and other the premises above particularly described at a rent of £4 19s. 8d., to be held in free and common soccage; erects said lands and premises into the manor of Templehouse, with liberty to hold 600 acres in demesne, and to have and to hold a court leet, view of frankpledge, † and court baron, with jurisdiction to the amount of 40s. within the precincts of the said manor, and to hold a fair at the town of Templehouse, on the feast day of Saints Simon and Jude (28

\* Dated 18 July 1618 James I—Patent Roll James I.

† "View of frankpledge is an *alias* name for 'court leet,' and seems," says a writer—Mark S. O'Shaughnessy, Esq., in the *Kilkenny Archaeological Journal*, vol. ii, p. 259,—"to have sprung out of the institution of Alfred the Great, that all the freemen of the district should be mutual pledges for the good behaviour of each other." The jurisdiction of the Court Leet varied at different times, but in Blackstone's words it generally "ranged from common nuisances and other material offences against the King's peace down to eaves-dropping, waifs, and irregularities in public commons."—*Kilkenny Archaeological Journal*—*ibidem*. The writer in the *Journal* adds, "The class of offences for the punishment of which the pillory and the tumbrell, or ducking-stool, in connection with the Court Leet, were most commonly used, seem to have been the corruption of provisions and all such and other matters which could be accounted to be common nuisances."—Page 261.

Hudibras's account of the operation of the Court Leet makes it—

"Be forced t' impeach a broken hedge  
And pigs unring'd at *vis-franc* pledge.  
Discover thieves and jades, recusants,  
Priests, witches, eaves-droppers, and nuisance;  
Tell who did play at games unlawful,  
And who fill'd pots of ale not half-full."

Octr.), and the day after, with a court of pie powder, at a rent of 6s. 8d., and with liberty to have a ferry upon the lake called Loghelly, and on the river of Owenmore, between the lands lying in the barony of Leynie in the County Sligo, and the lands lying in the barony of Corran, on the other side of the shore, with power to exact the following fees, viz., for each man,  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. ; for every horse, mare, or cow, 1d. ; for every horse-load, 1d. ; for every sheep or goat,  $\frac{1}{4}$ d. ; for every heifer or pork,  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. ; and so rateably and proportionally for all things carried across, paying thereout to the King, 4s. ; to hold in free and common soccage." This ferry, which was a large, decked, flat-bottomed boat, about thirty feet long and twelve broad, and which was worked from the banks of the river by pulleys, plied down to the year 1812, when it ceased, having been rendered useless by the fine stone and mortar bridge erected in that year, over the Owenmore at Templehouse. The last ferryman was Roger M'Getrick.

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#### SECTION II.—SIEGE OF TEMPLEHOUSE CASTLE IN 1641.

NOTHING noteworthy occurred at Templehouse from 1627 till the stormy period of 1641, when William Crofton, grandson of Edward, and son of William Crofton and Mary Usher, occupied the castle, and had to defend it against the insurgents. Having heard what was passing in other places, Mr. Crofton anticipated an attack, and prepared for it by strengthening the castle and barricading its approaches; arming and disciplining his retainers; and laying in a stock of provisions and ammunition. Several fled to the castle as a place of safety, and brought their valuables to it; but there is reason to think that few strangers were admitted, except such able-bodied men as could lend a hand in the defence of the place; and that females were excluded, with the exception of a few of the

higher class ; such as the wife of the Registrar of Achonry and Killala and Miss Boswell.\* Mr. Crofton had fair time to complete his preparations, as the insurrection made slow progress in the beginning. For six weeks or more after its commencement on the 23rd of October, the movement was confined to the six confiscated counties of Ulster, and the County of Leitrim, which had been recently taken from its old lords, the O'Rorkes, and planted with English and Scotch undertakers and servitors : this march of the insurrection showing clearly that the object of those who directed it was not to gratify low bigotry or sectarianism, but to expel the new settlers, and to recover for the old Irish the lands of which they had been deprived. The Croftons were regarded by the insurgents as the chief intruders in the County Sligo at the time ; the Cootes, the Coopers, the Wynnes, the Joneses, etc., coming in later, when the sword of Cromwell had cleared the way for them.

It was towards the middle of December, and a few days after the capture of Sligo, that the attack on Templehouse began. The whole neighbourhood took interest and part in it. The men of Leyney were led to the place by captains of the O'Hara family, who regarded the castle as their own, and resolved to recover their patrimony ; the Corran contingent was commanded by the MacDonoughs of Keash, anxious to avenge their removal from Ballymote, and, if possible, to return, and by Luke Taaffe, who became, later, one of the most distinguished officers in the Confederate ranks ; † the men of Tirerrill marched under the

\* Miss Boswell lived probably about Tullyhugh, as we find in the Hearthmoney Returns the name of "Jennet Boswell, Tullyhugh," who may have been the lady in question, or at least, some member of the same family. In the Down Survey, a John Boswell is mentioned as having a mortgage on Carrickbanaghan.

† Major-General Lucas Taaffe was Governor of Ross when Cromwell and his troops appeared before the town. Some correspondence passed between the Governor and Cromwell, on which occasion the latter made his well-known declaration in respect to the Mass, and the "liberty of



M'Donoughs of Collooney, Coolea, and Cloonamahon, and Captain Patrick Plunket of Rathgran or Markrea, who took a very energetic part in the proceedings; considerable bodies were conducted from Sligo by the O'Connors and

conscience" he would allow Catholics in regard to this cardinal part of their religion. Taaffe's letter and Oliver's reply are subjoined—

*"For General Cromwell: These—*

*"Ross, 19th October, 1649.*

"SIR—There wants but little of what I would propose;—which is, that such townsmen as have a desire to depart may have liberty within a convenient time to carry away themselves and goods: and liberty of conscience to such as shall stay: and that I may carry away such artillery and ammunition as I have in my command. If you be inclined to this, I will send, upon your honour as a safe-conduct, an officer to conclude with you. To which your immediate answer is expected by, Sir, your servant,

*"LUCAS TAAFFE."*

*"REPLY.*

*"For the Governor of Ross: These—*

*"Before Ross, 19th October, 1649.*

"SIR,—To what I formerly offered, I shall make good. As for your carrying away any artillery or ammunition that you brought not with you, or hath not come to you since you had the command of that place, I must deny you that; expecting you to leave it as you found it.

"As for that which you mention concerning liberty of conscience, I meddle not with any man's conscience. But if by liberty of conscience you mean a liberty to exercise the Mass, I judge it best to use plain dealing, and to let you know where the Parliament of England have power that will not be allowed of. As for such of the townsmen who desire to depart, and carry away themselves and goods (as you express), I engage myself they shall have three months' time so to do; and in the meantime shall be protected from violence in their persons and goods, as others under the obedience of Parliament.

"If you accept of this offer, I engage my honour for a punctual performance hereof. I rest, your servant,

*"OLIVER CROMWELL."*

—*Cromwell's Letters, etc.*: By Thomas Carlyle, vol. ii, page 174. Major-General Lucas Taaffe, "post varios casus et tot discrimina rerum," died in Ireland, and is buried in Ballymote, in the tomb of his ancestors.



O'Creans; and the O'Rorkes, who were always ready to strike a blow at the foreigner, on their own territory or out of it, wherever and whenever the opportunity offered, brought numbers of the hardy kerns and gallowglasses of Breffney to the rendezvous. These forces combined numbered about 800 men.\*

If the leaders expected that they had only to exhibit these levies before the castle to obtain possession of it they were much mistaken. William Crofton knew too well the value of his possessions, and felt too keenly the duties of his position, to give in without a hard struggle; and when summoned to surrender, returned an answer of defiance, to emphasize which he sent soon after it a discharge of cannon among the enemy. The insurgents, judging it impossible to take the fortress by a *coup de main*, and seeing nothing for it but a regular siege, set themselves to the task, formed a cordon round the building, to prevent ingress or egress, and placed such cannon as they had, which must have been of a very inferior description, in proper position to batter it down. They spread themselves through Carrontavy, Rathbane, and Kill; along the Ballymote side of the lake, all the way up to Greyfort, and down on the other side to Rinbane, thus completing the circle of investment. The firing was sometimes brisk enough on both sides, but though the casualties from this cause are not recorded, there would not seem to have been much loss of life on either side. There is a tradition that a cannon, placed on the hill over the present garden, did great damage to the castle, and this may account for the disappearance of the sidewall that stood over against the hill, the work having been so injured at the time as to crumble easily away. After having held out till the beginning of February, a period of ten weeks, Mr. Crofton was obliged, from want of ammunition, to ask terms from the besiegers. The conditions

\* *Depositions* concerning the rising of 1641, in Trinity College Library.

agreed on, after considerable negotiations, were, on the one side : that the castle should be given up to the Irish ; and, on the other, that Mr. Crofton and his party should have liberty to remain where they were for nine days, should be then allowed to depart with bag and baggage, and should be provided with a safe convoy to Boyle. These stipulations were confirmed by oath ; Mr. Crofton and a Protestant minister named Oliphant swearing on the Bible ; and the Irish swearing on some other book, probably a missal,\* in presence of a priest. For some reason that is not men-

\* The Missal, or Mass-book, was often used for swearing on. "In the bag marked 'Ireland,' in the Chapter-house, Westminster Abbey, there is a paper, No. 53, containing an examination of Sir Gerald Macshayne, Knight, sworn 19th March, 1529, 'upon the holy Masebooke, and the great relike of Erlonde, called Baculum Christi, in presence of the King's deputie, Chancellour, Treasurer, and Justice.'"—*Obits and Martyrology of Christ Church*, Introduction, page 15.

"Until the arrival of the English," says Dr. Reeves, "the custom of swearing on the holy Evangelists was unknown to the Irish (who resorted, instead, to croziers, bells, and other sacred reliquaries, to give solemnity to their declarations.) Even when the Gospel was used, it was not uncommon to introduce some other object to render the oath doubly binding. Thus in a monition directed by Primate Prene, to O'Neil, he requires him to be sworn 'tactis sacrosanctis Dei evangelii ad ea, et super Baculum Jesu in ecclesia Cathedrali Sanctæ Trinitatis, Dublin.'"—Primate Colton's *Visitation*, p. 44.

It is no harm to state that, in the Depositions, there is no charge brought against a priest, or any other ecclesiastic, in connection with those transactions at Templehouse. For the services of priests in saving Protestants, see O'Flaherty's *West Connaught*, by Hardiman, pp. 406-7, where "Lieut. John Gell testifies that the O'Flahertys of Ire Connaught would have murdered all the English, had not some priests hindered them." And Mary Bowler witnesses, "that she saw the priests of the towne, and other priests, being about eight in number, going about the towne in their vestments, with tapers burning, and the Sacrament borne before them, and earnestly exhorting the people for Christ's sake, and our Lady's, and Saint Patrick's, that they would shed no more blood, and if they did they would never have mercy . . . that had it not bene for the said priests, the people would have killed all the English Protestants they had found in Galway."

Dr. Leland admits that the priests "laboured zealously to moderate the excesses of war," though these labours were difficult and dangerous,

tioned Mr. Crofton declared he would not give possession of the place to Captain Brian O'Hara or any of the chiefs present, but only to Oliver O'Hara of Tullyhugh, whom he requested to be sent for, and who was sent for accordingly.

The agreement was no sooner made than it gave occasion to a quarrel. The O'Haras and some others who had entered the castle to take the oath, refused to leave, insisting on the right to remain in possession, while Mr. Crofton contended that he should have the exclusive occupation of the place for the nine days mentioned in the compact. The castle party charged the others with a flagrant violation of the treaty; while the Irish recriminated and retaliated the charge, insisting on the right to have some of their people in the place, and citing the usual practice under similar circumstances in proof of the right. It is likely that both sides were *bona fide* in the interpretation of the agreement. A scuffle, however, was the consequence of the misunderstanding, and in it Mr. Crofton, who sought to eject by force those he considered intruders, was thrown down by the O'Haras and disabled. This happened on

considering the excited state of the people, who replied to the priests in the spirit of Mr. Duffy's stanzas—

“ Pity!—no, no, you dare not, priest—not you, our father, dare  
Preach to us now that godless creed—the murderer's blood to spare;  
To spare his blood, while tombless still our slaughtered kin implore  
' Graves and revenge ' from Gobbin cliffs and Carrick's bloody shore.

“ Pity!—could we ' forget, forgive, ' if we were clods of clay,  
Our martyred priests, our banished chiefs, our race in dark decay,  
And, worse than all, you know it, priest, the daughters of our land  
With wrongs we blushed to name until the sword was in our hand?

“ Pity!—well, if you needs must whine, let pity have its way,  
Pity for all our comrades true, far from our side to-day:  
The prison-bound who rot in chains, the faithful dead who poured  
Their blood 'neath Temple's lawless axe or Parson's bloody sword.”

*The Muster of the North.*

Friday ; next day, if we can rely on the Depositions, the insurgents divided the property found in the place ; and on Sunday they had mass celebrated in the hall, all the English and Scotch, except Crofton, Oliphant, and Miss Boswell, assisting at it, like the Catholics. After this Crofton and his people were removed to the castle of Ballymote, then in the hands of Sir George Goodman, where they remained in safety for a quarter of a year, when the agitation abated and they were able to leave.

Had the case rested here it were needless to say more on the subject ; but it would appear that crimes and outrages were committed, which it is right to mention, if it were only to condemn and deplore them. Though the writer believes that not even a tithe of what is averred in the notorious Depositions of 1641 is worthy of credence, still it is certain that some of this testimony must be true.

In regard to Templehouse, William Brown, Registrar of the dioceses of Achonry and Killala, who lived at Kilvarnet, and had six quarters of land, with a castle and mill in Leyney, testified “ that the insurgents did hang William Oliphant—a preacher of God’s word—tied him to a horse’s tail, and dragged him down the streets ; and, at the same-time, that they did hang Marriot Careless and his wife, and inhumanly stab George Wray Clarke, preacher of God’s word.” The wife of this witness, Jane Brown, who was in the castle during the whole period of the siege, testified : that “ she heard, while in the castle of Templehouse, that the rebel captains did, at Rabane, near Templehouse, wound six or seven women, British or Scotch Protestants, then throw them into a ditch or pit, and cover them with stones and earth, of which they died.”

There cannot be an atom of truth in the sensational story of Mrs. Brown. Had the horrid tragedy, which she mentions, ever taken place, her husband, who was at large during the proceedings against the castle, could not fail to know all about it, and knowing it, to relate the facts in his

evidence, whereas he is quite silent on the subject. And all the other witnesses examined are equally silent, though they would have desired above all things to confirm, if they could, allegations so damaging to the Irish, and thus promote the great object for which the Depositions were taken. Nor is there a particle of tradition to support her. There is not a man, woman, or child in the parish or in the county that ever heard a word about the occurrence. Now if such a tragedy happened about two hundred years ago, can any one imagine that the memory of it should have utterly died out by this time? Is it not, on the contrary, a matter of course, not only that the remembrance should survive, but that it should have gathered about it new circumstances of additional horror, such as always grow around an event of this kind in transmission from generation to generation. The scene too of the massacre is as great a mystery as the massacre itself. Doubtless a spot stained with such a crime would be as infamous as the valley of Topheth or the Black Hole of Calcutta; and yet, if you ask any inhabitant of Rabane for the place, he will tell you that in all his life he never heard a word about it, nor his fathers before him, though they have been living in the same track for centuries.

Jane Brown's story then seems to be a deliberate fabrication, like so many other things contained in the Depositions. And a most improbable fabrication it is. Had she charged those atrocities on some stragglers about the Irish quarters, she might have found persons to listen to her, as it is often impossible to restrain the excesses of such characters, but to impute this racking and hewing, this unmanly torturing, this burying alive of five or six old women, to the "rebel captains," some of them, at least, high spirited and cultivated gentlemen, who would risk their lives to prevent or punish such barbarity, is to overshoot the mark, and to adventure a slander which no man

of common sense or common virtue will ever believe.\* Verily, Iniquity hath lied to itself.

Some perhaps will say, that she could have heard during the attack on the castle what she testifies, silly as the rumour was. This is possible; for it is well known that in periods of great excitement, the most extravagant and absurd reports are circulated, and any one who has read the history of sieges knows that there is nothing too monstrous for credence at such a time. If the story then was gossiped about among the females in the castle, the state of the times might excuse Mrs. Brown for believing it, but that would not justify her to mention the matter two years later, when she must have known its falsehood; and the very words she employs, that "*she had heard so and so while in Templehouse,*" go to suggest that she selected the words for the purpose of guarding against contradiction, while casting all the odium she could upon the rebel captains. For, no matter how false and calumnious the imputation may have been, she could not be convicted of giving false testimony, as she might still insist that she had "heard" what she swore. Hearsay evidence is excluded from courts of justice, and yet hearsay is the beginning and end—the alpha and omega—the warp and woof of the 1641 Depositions.

The allegations respecting Mr. Oliphant and the three or four others mentioned by Mr. Brown, seem better

\* Decisive evidence should be forthcoming before one believes men of position and high courage to be guilty of cruel and unmanly conduct, to whatever side or party they may belong; and on this principle we should withhold credence from many allegations regarding brave English generals, such as that conveyed in the tradition which John O'Donovan mentions in a note to his *Annals of the Four Masters, sub anno 1592*, where he says:—"According to the tradition in the country, Sir Richard Bingham murdered sixteen women of the Burke family in this castle" (Cloonagashel, or Cloona Castle, in the parish of Ballinrobe, barony of Kilmaine, and County of Mayo.)

founded. There can be no doubt about Mr. Oliphant's having lost his life, as this is positively averred by Mr. Brown and another trustworthy witness. Nor is it unlikely that Marriot Careless and wife were put to death, and that George Wray was wounded. These are the casualties recorded; and considering that the siege lasted for ten weeks, and that men's minds were so embittered, the list is not so startling. When we recollect some scenes of the Franco-Prussian, the Anglo-Indian, the Carlist, the Turco-Servian, and the Turco-Russian wars, and the atrocities imputed to the Prussians, the English, the Turks, the Spaniards and the Russians, at a time when men boast of the humanity with which war is carried on, the excesses of 1641 will bear comparison with those of recent years.\* Assuming Mr. Oliphant and the two others to have been hanged, this severity and similar severities in other parts of Ireland, lose much of their repulsiveness when set by the side of such outrages as the blowing from the cannon's mouth, the starving, the burning, the deliberate torturing of the wounded, the cutting away of ears and noses, and the various other acts of mutilation and torture said to have been inflicted on their enemies by German, British, Carlist, Turkish, and Russian soldiers.

The dragging of Mr. Oliphant, or of his dead body, at a horse's tail seems the most revolting outrage with which the besiegers are charged; but the nature of this transaction depends a good deal on the circumstances. It is well known that at that time horses drew by the tail; and if Mr. Oliphant was merely taken in this way either to the place of execution or the place of burial, the proceeding would lose most of its repulsiveness; but if, on the other hand, he was attached to the horse's tail for the purpose of treating him with foul indignity, language is not strong enough to stigmatize the brutal and diabolical act as it

\* "Appalling savagery" is the language the *Times* employs in a leading article to describe the conduct of both Turks and Russians.



deserves. The former is the more probable supposition, though no direct testimony can be quoted in its favour.\*

For it must not be forgotten that the Depositions give only one side of the case. All the deponents, without exception, were brought forward to criminate the Irish, and particularly such of the Irish as had estates to lose. And this circumstance alone should leave the Depositions valueless as evidence. Every one acquainted with courts of justice knows how formidable trumped-up cases are made to appear, while the plaintiff and his witnesses have all the swearing to themselves, and how they collapse when the rebutting witnesses are heard. While the Claimant and Co. were swearing up his title to the Tichbourne estates, nineteen out of every twenty Englishmen believed him to be the lawful heir; but most of these dupes pronounced the man an impostor on hearing the evidence for the defence.

Something similar would happen if we could act on the *audi alteram partem* principle in the case under consideration, and hear what the Irish had to say. Many of those concerned in the Depositions, either as commissioners or witnesses, were almost as much claimants for other people's property as Arthur Orton himself: and were it possible for the incriminated to make defence; to expose the self-interest and corruption of the judges; to cross-examine the witnesses, and draw out their prevarications and perjuries; to set forth the injuries and outrages of which the Irish were victims, it could be shown that the unfortunate insurgents were more sinned against than sinning.

Without justifying the excesses on which Mr. Froude dwells in his *English in Ireland*, there can be no doubt that they were committed in self-defence or in retaliation. From the date of the Gunpowder Plot it seems to have

\* Horses harrowed by the tail in this neighbourhood so late as 1776, for in that year, Arthur Young, while staying at Markree, writes: "Horses are used for tillage only, four in a plough abreast, and some harrowing still done *by the tail*.—*Young's Tour*, vol. i, p. 332.

been the settled policy of English statesmen to root the Irish and their religion out of Ireland, and to substitute Protestantism along with English and Scotch colonists.\*

Swarms of these colonists came in rapid succession, spread themselves over the country, and took possession of such lands as pleased them, sometimes using for their purpose forms of law, and sometimes carrying everything with the high hand. "The whole kingdom," says an important contemporary *report on the state of things in Ireland in 1611*, published in the *Ecclesiastical Record* of February, 1874, "is filled and thronged with Englishmen, who daily come over like swarms of bees, so that very shortly this

\* The numbers of Scotch that passed over to Ireland, about this time, may be inferred from what Sir William Brereton wrote in 1635:—"Above 10,000 persons, says he, have within two years last past, left the country wherein they lived, which was between Aberdeen and Inverness, and are gone for Ireland."—*The Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, vol. iv, page 161.

And that a good number of Scotch settled near Templehouse, is clear from the fact that the adjoining district of Clara is divided into the townlands of *Clara Scotch* and *Clara Irish*.

A resolve to hold their own against Scotch and English, and to recover it where it had been taken away, was the cardinal motive of the Irish in the rising of 1641, a fact to which Gavan Duffy gives due prominence in his magnificent ballad:—

"Now, now we'll teach the shameless Scot to purge his thievish maw;  
Now, now the Court may fall to pray, for Justice is the Law;  
Now shall the Undertaker square, for once, his loose accounts—  
We'll strike, brave boys, a fair result, from all his false amounts.

"Come, trample down their robber rule, and smite its venal spawn,  
Their foreign laws, their foreign church, their ermine and their lawn,  
With all the spacious fry of fraud that robbed us of our own;  
And plant our ancient laws again beneath our lineal throne.

"Our standard flies o'er fifty towers, o'er twice ten thousand men;  
Down have we plucked the pirate Red, never to rise again;  
The Green alone shall stream above our native field and flood—  
The spotless Green, save where its folds are gemmed with Saxon blood."

*The Muster of the North.—Spirit of the Nation.*

island will be unable to contain, much less support, such a crowd. Wherever they appear the first thing they do is to drive the natives from the lands and possessions inherited from their grandfathers and great-grandfathers, and can be proved to have been held peacefully by them for the last 500 or 600 years; and even though possession be immemorial—nay, even though it be by new favour and confirmation of the king, made in legal form, and as the laws and statutes of these kingdoms require, notwithstanding all, if an Englishman pleases he can enter a lawsuit and take all, *per fas aut per nefas* . . . so that the natives have not a single foot of ground secure, and the English have everything at their will.” This exclusiveness was carried even into the church. “And as regards”—continues the Report—“all dignities, bishoprics, prebendaryships, and ecclesiastical benefices, they have ordained that no native can possess or enjoy them. Even one Miler, who was formerly a friar, and for the last thirty-six years has been the pseudo Archbishop of Cashel, of whom they always made much, has had to receive an Englishman as coadjutor and companion in his dignity.” And not only were the natives robbed of their houses and lands, but they were stripped of their moveables as well; “and in the scrutinies and examinations they make in Catholic houses”—says the Report—“they take away *en passant* the silver and jewellery they meet with, saying: the chains are rosaries, and that in the jewellery are inserted *Agnus Deis* and relics; and that the cups are chalices; and that the pieces of silk, cambric, and holland are altar ornaments; and, under colour of this they rob the outraged people of their property. And the shamelessness of one of these heretics has reached such a pitch that he keeps the chalices he has taken in his pantry, and uses them at table.”

All this time the practice of the Catholic religion was felony, priests were banned, and concealed themselves in woods and morasses, and the laity were fleeced by fines for

absence, on Sundays and Holidays, from places of Protestant worship. Some ecclesiastics who fell into the hands of the civil authorities were hanged. If the insurgents then hanged Mr. Oliphant, they were only following the precedent set them. Even in tying to the horse's tail they were copying the example of the English,\* and the only difference between them and the English was, that they showed themselves much less inhuman; as is clear from the following extract of another contemporary document published in the same article of the Record:—“The blessed Cornelius O'Duvena, Bishop of Down and Connor, on the 5th of February of this present year 1612, suffered glorious martyrdom in this form:—They took him from the prison at a horse's tail to the gallows, where they half hanged him, and then cut off his head, tore out and burned his bowels, and cut his body into quarters; as also Bishop O'Gallagher, who being unable to ride on account of his great age—he was over eighty—was supported on

\* It would seem that the English practised this barbarous act soon after the Invasion, for the *Book of Fenagh* tells us that they inflicted the indignity on Tiernan O'Ruairc:—

“ In Flachtga will be slain the King,  
Tighernan, tho' numerous his companions;  
A burning to my heart now is  
His slaughter by the invaders.  
Bitter to my heart, and woe, is  
That King at horse's tails.”

—*Book of Fenagh*, pp. 66-67. On this passage the learned Mr. Hennessy observes:—“This is the only account, as far as the editor is aware, in which O'Ruairc is stated to have been drawn at horse's tails after his murder.”

In the Articles of Peace, concluded between James Lord Marquess of Ormond and Lord Mountgarret and other Catholics, on the 28th March, 1646, one of the articles runs thus:—“It is further Concluded, Accorded, and Agreed, by and between the said Parties, and his Majesty is further graciously pleased, that two Acts lately passed in his Kingdom, prohibiting the *Plowing with Horses by the tail*, and the other prohibiting the burning of oats in the straw, be repealed.”

horseback with the points of their lances, so that the poor old man's body was covered with blood on the way to the scaffold, which they found he was unable to reach, and they cut off his head, and threw him into a ditch."

All this is no justification of the excesses which the Irish may have committed. If the English were tyrannical and brutal in their proceedings, that is no sufficient reason for the Irish retaliating with crimes. Such a provocation might warrant the latter in trying to strike off the odious tyranny that oppressed them; for if insurrection is ever lawful, it should be at a time when men's religion is persecuted, their liberties crushed, and their houses, lands, and lives assailed, but even when insurrection is lawful, it is necessary, in prosecuting it, to employ only lawful and honorable means. But though crime cannot, in ethics, be pleaded as a set-off against crime, it should still be mentioned in extenuation or explanation of evil doings, for we judge differently a causeless and a provoked offence. The observance of this rule, in the matter in hand, would be likely to soften or to alter men's feelings. If both English and Irish were to bear in mind the part which some, at least, of their respective countrymen had in the dark deeds in question, it might be found that shame and sorrow for the past are far more suitable feelings for both sides of the channel than the anger and antipathies that at present prevail. And it might also come to be believed, that, if either side has a right to cast the first stone, it is not the clients of Mr. Froude,\* the countrymen of Sir Frederick Hamilton, Sir Charles Coote and Oliver Cromwell.

\* "According to Mr. Froude," says the *Saturday Review*, of July 18, 1874, "The colonists were an army of occupation amidst a spoliated nation, who were sullenly brooding over their wrongs." "Granting this," continues the reviewer, "all the rest follows naturally. The spoliated nation, brooding over its wrongs, dealt with the army of occupation as spoliated nations always will do when they have the chance.

Before quitting this place, we may mention that, unlike what happened in regard to the parish of Ballysadare, where proprietors forfeited 5270A. 1R. 8P., for complicity, or alleged complicity, in the insurrection of 1641, the total of lands forfeited in the parish of Kilvarnet, for the same cause or pretext, was only 435A. 2R. 0P., the whole of which was Bishop-land, the rest of the parish being what is called, in the Down Survey maps, "Protestant Land," that is, land belonging, in 1640, to Protestant owners. Except what belonged to the bishop of Achonry, who owned two parcels, one of 143A. 0R. 0P., the other 277A. 0R. 0P., as well as a division of 15A. 2R. 0P. that had been in controversy "between the bishop and the adjacent towns," (*Book of Distributions*), the whole of the parish was the property, in 1640, of Kean O'Hara, Irish Protestant, and William Crofton, English Protestant, and thus escaped confiscation.

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### SECTION III.—TEMPLEHOUSE UNDER THE PERCEVALS.

TEMPLEHOUSE passed from the Croftons to the Percevals by the marriage of Mary Crofton, daughter and heiress of William, the defender of the castle, to George Perceval.\*

We no more justify than Mr. Froude does those acts of violence on the part of the natives, on which he is so fond of enlarging; but we hold that a crime of the same kind done by a member of a spoliated nation brooding over its wrongs, is not equal in moral guilt to the same crime when done by the army of occupation which is engaged in inflicting those wrongs."

\* Kean Oge O'Hara, it is said, had the offer of this young lady's hand and estate. The tradition is: that the heiress's mother, after the death of her first husband, married Kean O'Hara. At that time Mr. O'Hara was a widower, with a son, Kean Oge; and Mrs. Crofton, after the second marriage, wishing to marry her daughter to her husband's son, suggested the matter to the husband; but he asked time to think over the proposal, and made some slighting observations as to the perfections of the young



This gentleman was the youngest son of Sir Philip Perceval, the well-known statesman of the period of the Commonwealth, ancestor of the earls of Egmont and the Percevals of Templehouse, and belonged to one of the oldest and most illustrious families of England. Genealogists trace the origin of the Percevals to a younger branch of the sovereign dukes of Brittany in France.\* In the Patent creating John Perceval an Irish Peer, we read that a member of the family attended William of Normandy in the invasion of England; and it is certain that Richard Perceval, another member, accompanied Strongbow—of whom he was first cousin—to Ireland; and that, later, he held high command among the Crusaders, whom Richard Cœur de Lion led to Palestine.

Sir Philip, as his epitaph testifies, experienced both extremes of fortune :

“Fortunam expertus jacet Phillippus utramque;”

for, after filling some of the highest and most lucrative public offices in Ireland, and acquiring 1100 acres of land in Wexford, Tipperary, Cork, and other counties, he was so straitened by reverses, towards the close of life, as to be obliged to sell the “manor of Burton, in England; the only remains of an estate which had continued for 500 years in the family”—(*Lodge*, vol. ii, p. 240). Sir John, the eldest son of Sir Philip, took also a prominent part in state affairs, and was joined with Fleetwood in superintending the transplantation of the Irish Papists in Connaught; a measure which he strongly advocated; but which he

lady. The mother, indignant at this, proceeded with her daughter to Dublin; and when O'Hara, on thinking better of the offer, and finding it a very advantageous one, followed the wife to accept it, he arrived only in time to learn that Miss Crofton was already the wife of Mr. George Perceval.

\* Mervyn Archdall's *Peerage of Ireland*, vol. ii; Article, “Perceval Earl of Egmont.”



advocated only with the view of averting other schemes still more fatal to the Irish—(*Yvery*, ii, pp. 341, 342). Having great influence over the mind of Henry Cromwell, he employed that influence so effectually, that Henry joined the elder and less ambitious brother, Richard, in renouncing all pretensions to the Protectorate; and the government of the Restoration were so grateful to Sir John for this important service, that they called him to the Privy Council, created him a baronet, appointed him registrar of the Court of Claims and Court of Wards—"this latter an office of immense and unknown profit," (*Lodge*, ii, p. 256), and committed to him a leading part in executing the Acts of Settlement and Explanation. George Perceval, the founder of the Templehouse family, was, as well as Sir Philip and Sir John, a high public official, being registrar of the Prerogative Court; and it is supposed that this gentleman had never set foot in Templehouse when he was drowned near Holyhead, in 1675, leaving issue three sons, Philip, William, and Charles, and one daughter, Catherine. At death he left the family considerable landed property in Tipperary, Limerick, and Mayo, as well as the Templehouse estate.

George Perceval, however, was not allowed to enjoy this estate unchallenged, for the Croftons sought to get it back, alleging in favour of their claim the will of William Crofton, Senr. To repel this attack, George Perceval, and Mary, his wife, instituted on the 15th of June, 1667, as plaintiffs, a chancery suit against Henry Crofton, Esq.; Kean O'Hara, Esq.; Rose, his wife; John Williams; and John Reynolds; as defendants. The decree in the suit was issued on the 26th of November, 1670, and was against the defendant "Henry Crofton, and his heirs, and all claiming under him, or under the pretended will and settlement of William Crofton, the elder, of Templehouse aforesaid. Defendant to bring in and leave with the registrar of this court said pretended will and certain other

documents, to the end that plaintiffs may have attested copies of same. Court dont give costs; but if defendant shall hereafter sue plaintiff for the matters in his now bill set forth, Court will award costs against him.”—(Extract of Decree as found in Public Record Office, Dublin.)

Seventy or eighty years after the siege, Templehouse was the scene of very different occurrences from those of 1641. As at the theatre comedy or farce follows tragedy, so it happened in the old haunts of the Templars. The eighteenth century was a period of great relaxation and excess in Ireland—the time of bucks and bullies, duels\* and abductions,† cockfighting, carousing and gambling.

\* “The public mind was in such a state of irritation from the period of 1780 to the time of the Union, that it was supposed 300 remarkable duels were fought in Ireland during that interval. Counties or districts became distinguished for their dexterity at the weapons used: Galway for the sword; Tipperary, Roscommon, and Sligo for the pistol; Mayo for equal skill in both. So universal and irrepressible was the propensity, that *duelling clubs* were actually established, the conditions of which were: that before a man was balloted for, he must sign a solemn declaration that he had exchanged a shot or thrust with some antagonist; and a code of laws and regulations were drawn up as a standard to refer to on all points of honour. This was called, ‘The practice of duelling and points of honour, settled at Clonmel Summer Assizes, 1755, by gentlemen delegates from Tipperary, Galway, etc., and presented for general adoption throughout Ireland.’ This singular document is still extant, though, happily, now never appealed to.”

“Weapons of offence were generally kept at the inns for the accommodation of those who might come on an emergency unprovided. In such a case ‘pistols were ordered for two, and breakfast for one;’ as it might, and did often happen, that the other did not return to partake of it, being left dead on the field.”—*Ireland Sixty Years Ago*, p. 22.

† “Abduction, or forcibly carrying off heiresses was another of those crying evils which formerly afflicted Ireland; but, it was an outrage so agreeable to the spirit of the times, and so congenial to the ardent and romantic character of the natives, that it was considered an achievement creditable to the man, and a matter of boast and exultation to the woman. When once it went abroad that a woman in any station of life had money, she became the immediate object of some enterprising fellow, who readily collected about him adherents to assist in his attempt. No gentleman or farmer felt himself safe who had a daughter entitled to a fortune; she

Reading, culture, even politics were neglected, and the great principle of the day was, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." If Templehouse was not in advance, it certainly was not backward in practising the follies of the times, at least such of them as were less criminal. Outside of Dublin there was no spot more remarkable for frolic and feasting. The host was a Mr. John Harlowe, a so called gentleman grazier, one of a class that became very numerous about that time, though vigorously opposed, decried, and denounced by ministers of the Established Church, including Dean Swift and Primate Boulter "for decreasing the number of the people, without which any country however blessed by nature must continue poor,"\* and for reducing the humbler inhabitants to the condition of "wild herdsmen like Scythian savages."

Harlowe rented for grazing purposes several large districts of the country as well as Templehouse, had hundreds of herds in employment, and owned more sheep and cattle than it was easy to count. Unlike, however, most of this class, he was hospitable and generous; and the shooting lodge at Templehouse, where he resided, as much as the family residence in Rathmullen, near Keash, was an open house of entertainment for all who desired to enter, without distinction of rich or poor, gentle or simple, native or

was sure to be carried off with or without her consent, and he lived in a constant state of alarm till she was happily disposed of in marriage."—*Sketches of Ireland Sixty Years Ago*, p. 32.

\* In his *Short View of the State of Ireland*, among the true causes of any country's flourishing and growing rich, Dean Swift gives as the seventh cause, "the improvement of land; encouragement of agriculture; and thereby increasing the number of the people, without which any country, however blessed by nature, must continue poor." And thereupon he remarks: "As to the improvement of land, those few who attempt that or planting, through covetousness or want of skill, generally leave things worse than they were; and by running into the fancy of grazing, after the manner of the Scythians, are every day depopulating the country."—Swift's *Works*, vol. ii, p. 79; Bohn's Edition.

stranger.\* The great business of the place was to cater, to cook, and to consume; and the wildest stories are told of the mountains of beef and mutton, and the oceans of claret and usquebaugh provided for daily use. It was a continual feast, and the squireens of the neighbourhood, wherever they passed the day, were sure to take a seat at Harlowe's table in the evening, and have their fill of the good things going. The revel lasted all night, the guests, according to their several tastes, spending the hours in singing, drinking, gambling, or dancing to the stirring strains of the fiddle and the bagpipe,† which were in perpetual motion.

At stated times there were more formal banquets at the lodge, to which the principal gentry of the county were invited, and for which Carolan and the harp were always secured as the chief attraction. It was on one of those occasions that the bard composed the song of *Cuppaun O'Hara*. When enjoyment was at its highest, and the company were loud in praise of the host, one of the party asked Carolan to give a planxty in Harlowe's honour, something like what he was in the habit of composing for the O'Haras, telling the blind bard, to reassure him, that Kean O'Hara was not present, though that gentleman was there and co-operating in what was meant as a practical joke. Carolan was probably not in a condition, by this time, to keep out of the trap so skilfully laid and gave, on the spot, a song in honour of Harlowe, which was very

\* In those days hospitality went into extremes in other places as well as at Templehouse. "In the parish of Kilmurry, and County of Cork," writes the Reverend Doctor O'Connor, "the M'Swineys set up a stone near Clodagh, on which they inscribed in Irish an invitation to all passengers to repair for entertainment to the house of M'Swiney."—*Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the late Charles O'Connor, of Belangare, Esq., M.R.I.A.*: by the Rev. Charles O'Connor, D.D., Member of the Academy of Cortona, p. 173.

† The bagpipe has been a favourite instrument with the Irish from time immemorial, both on festive and on funeral occasions. "The Irish music," says Cox—*Hibernia Anglicana Preface*—"was either a Harp (which is the arms of the Kingdom), and makes an excellent sound if it

complimentary to that gentleman, and tended to place him on a level with the O'Haras. Kean O'Hara, carrying on the joke, now came forward, and pretending to be hurt, remonstrated with the bard for "comparing him with that bullocker Harlowe." The poor bard saw at once that he was "sold;" and inspired by devotion for the Celtic chieftain, composed and performed, on the instant, a melody in which he awarded the palm to O'Hara's full cup, not only over that of Harlowe, but over that of all the world besides. The following is a translation, by Thomas Furlong, of two stanzas of this composition, as they are given in Hardiman's *Irish Minstrelsy*:—

Oh! were I at rest  
 Amidst Arran's green isles,  
 Or in climes where the summer  
 Unchangingly smiles;  
 Tho' treasures and dainties  
 Might come at a call,  
 Still, O'Hara's full cup,  
 I would prize more than all.

But why would I say  
 That my choice it must be,  
 When the prince of our fathers  
 Hath loved it like me;  
 Then come, jolly Turlough,  
 Where friends may be found;  
 And our Kian we'll pledge  
 As that cup goes around.

be skilfully touched; or a Bagpipe which is a squealing Engine, fit only for a Bear-Garden; nevertheless they are much used at Irish Burials to encrease the Noyse, and encourage the Women to *Cry*, and follow the Corps, for there is nothing coveted more by the Friends of the deceased, than to have abundance of Company at the Burial, and a great Cry for the Defunct; which they think argues, That he was a Person of Figure and Merit, and was well beloved in his Country; therefore they bury their Dead with great Ululations or *Allelews*, after the Egyptian manner, and hire Women to encrease the Cry: And I myself have often seen strange Women come into the Crowd at a Funeral, and set up the Cry or *Allagone* for a Quarter of a Mile together, and then enquire of some of the Company, *Who is it that is dead?* And hence arose the Proverb, *To weep Irish, i.e., to cry without concern.*" (See page 207.)

Nor was Carolan the only poet whose muse drew inspiration from Templehouse. James Whyte, of Ballymote, a contemporary of Carolan's and superior to Carolan himself in comic humour, sang the extravagances of the place in a rollicking style, eminently in keeping with the subject. Of Whyte, the venerable Charles O'Connor, of Ballinagar, says:—"He had a genius for comedy: and had he been bred in the school of Moliere, would have been one of the most celebrated comic poets of the age;" and of his composition on Templehouse an able critic, quoted in *Walker's Memoirs of the Irish Bards*, (vol. i, p. 331), writes:—"Whyte's description of an entertainment and council held at Templehouse in Connaught, may be considered as the *ne plus ultra* of all the subjects that the wit of man has ever devised to excite and continue the loudest peals of laughter." It is to be feared that this production is no longer extant, but should it or any other of Whyte's pieces still linger about Corran, where formerly they were greatly prized, it is hoped that some friendly hand will gather and save them, before they are gone beyond recovery.

One of the best remembered events in the more recent history of the Templehouse Percevals, is the duel of Philip Caech Perceval and Centy O'Rorke. Hyacinth, or, as he is generally called, Centy O'Rorke, was one of the most noted duellists of his day, and had in Lower Connaught much the same reputation that Paul de Cassagnac enjoys at present in France. Inheriting overbearing pride from the O'Rorkes, "the proudest and most inflexible family of

Cox's opinion of the bagpipe agrees with that expressed by the author of *Hudibras* :—

" Then bagpipes of the loudest drones,  
With snuffling broken-winded tones,  
Whose blasts of air, in pockets shut,  
Sound filthier than from the gut,  
And make a viler noise than swine  
In windy weather, when they whine."

—Part 2, Canto ii.

all the Irish race,"\* he had, besides, an insolence, a recklessness, and a capriciousness of temper peculiar to himself. With a horsewhip in one hand and a pistol in the other, this turbulent bully was the terror of high and low through-

\* John O'Donovan has left an unpublished fragment of a dissertation on *The O'Rourke's of Ancient Times*, the first sentence of which is: "This illustrious family, the proudest and most warlike of the Irish of Connaught, is of the race of the Irish monarch, Eochy Moymedon, who possessed themselves of the provinces of Connaught, Ulster, and Meath, which they maintained till the period of the English Invasion."—MS. in the possession of Alderman O'Rorke, J.P., Dublin.

And the same writer, in the *Annals of the Four Masters*, in a note under the year 1591, observes: "The family of O'Rourke seems to have been the proudest and most inflexible of *all the Irish race*." And O'Donovan quotes Sir Henry Sydney's saying: "And first of Owrycke (O'Rorke) I found him the proudest man that ever I dealt with in Ireland."

The O'Rorkes were the most resolute and persevering adversaries that the English ever met with in Ireland. From Tiernan, in the twelfth century, to Bryan Oge, in the sixteenth, the chiefs of that family were always in active hostility against the foreigner, whatever course other Irish chiefs pursued; and even when O'Connor Sligo and Rory O'Donnell submitted at Athlone to the English deputy, O'Rorke, though strongly urged by friend and foe, refused to follow their example." "In the meantime," writes Cox, "Sir Oliver Lambert had driven the Burkes and their M'William out of the County Mayo; and on the 18th of November the Deputy began his journey to Connaught, and on the 2nd of December he came to Athlone; and on the 14th of December O'Connor Sligo and Rory O'Donnell came thither, and made their submission to him; and although O'Connor did act his part well, and alleaded many plausible excuses, yet, O'Donnell not only out-did him, but also exceeded all others that had submitted up to that day. The Deputy kept Christmas at Galway, and there received into favour the Flahertys, MacDermod's, O'Connor Roe, and others; so that only the fickle and treacherous O'Rourk (notwithstanding his letters to the Deputy that he would submit) and Tyrone's Maguire, and Tyrrell, persisted in this rebellion with the Earl of Tyrone. The Deputy ordered that the Fort of Gallaway should be finished, and appointed *three several armies to attack O'Rourk*."—*Hibernia Anglicana*: by Richard Cox, Esq., Recorder of Kinsale.

The O'Rorke of whom there is question in this extract is Bryan Oge, the son of Bryan na Murtagh; a father and son that bore as persevering hostility to the English as Hamilcar and Hannibal did to the Romans. The father, Bryan na Murtagh, having given shelter to some Spaniards who had escaped from the three ships belonging to the Armada that were



out the country. And it were well, if he was free from a different, a deeper, and a more damning blemish, than mere faults of temper; but, unfortunately, there is some reason to suppose, that he was a kind of apostate from his

wrecked near Sligo; brought on himself, for so doing, the vengeance of the English, so that Sir Richard Bingham, the Governor of Connaught, mustered two considerable armies, and made one of them invade O'Rorke's territory from the south, and the other from the north; "and these troops," says the *Annals of the Four Masters*, anno 1590, "proceeded to burn and devastate, kill and destroy all before them in the country, until both met together again."

In this extremity O'Rorke passed over to Scotland in expectation of receiving aid from James VI (First of England), thinking that the son of Mary Stuart would sympathize with an enemy of his mother's great adversary; but that monarch, instead of giving aid, ordered Brian na Murtha to be seized, had him sent to England, and delivered up to the tender mercies of Elizabeth, who had him brought to trial, and executed under circumstances so solemn and dramatic that an historic painter could not find finer subjects for his talent than the trial and execution of the Irish chief supplies. At the trial he bore himself with characteristic *hauteur*, refusing to plead before anyone except the Queen in person, and receiving with indifference the cruel sentence of hanging and disembowelling passed upon him.

At the gallows O'Rorke exhibited the same lofty courage he had shown in the court; and when the authorities, who had refused his request for a priest to minister the last rites, sent instead the apostate archbishop, Miler Magrath, O'Rorke, in place of listening to Miler's words, inverted the *roles* of both, making himself the minister and Magrath the *condamn e*, and thus rejected his profered services: "No, but do you remember the dignity from which you have fallen; return into the bosom of the ancient church, and learn from my fortitude that lesson which you ought to have been the last man on earth to disavow"—(*Memoirs of O'Connor*, page 113). The death of this gallant chieftain filled Ireland with sorrow. "The death of this Brian," says the *Annals of the Four Masters*, *sub anno* 1591, "was one of the mournful stories of the Irish; for there had not been for a long time any one who excelled him in bounty, in hospitality, in giving rewards for panegyric poems, in sumptuousness, in (numerous) troops, in comeliness, in firmness, in maintaining the field of battle to defend his patrimony against foreign adventurers [for all which he was celebrated], until his death on this occasion."

From the moment of Brian na Murtha's execution, Brian Oge, his son, nursed only one desire—that of vengeance on those who had put his father to death. While Breffny was still in possession of Sir Richard Bingham,

religion: professing himself a Catholic in public to please the people, but in private swearing himself in a Protestant, and "conforming to the Church of Ireland, as by law established." Let it be however stated at once, that there is no

O'Rorke, nothing daunted, invaded and overran it, punishing, in the midst of their armed protectors, those who sided with the English. "The whole territory," says the *Annals of the Four Masters*, A.D. 1590 "both waste and inhabited, was under the power of the Governor [Bingham] until the ensuing Michaelmas, when Tiernan Bane, the son of Brian, son of Owen O'Rourke, and Brian-na-Samhthach, i.e., Brian Oge (the son of that O'Rourke who had been expelled) came into the territory. These and the tribes of Briefny, and of Muintir-Eolais, and of the other O'Rourkes who remained in the country, opposed the Governor, and continued spoiling everything belonging to the English to which they came, until the end of the year."

Brian Oge O'Rorke's part in the Battle of the Curlews was so important that the English counted him, and not O'Donnell, to be the leader of the Irish, as appears from what Moryson and Cox write on the subject, which may be appropriately quoted here, as it regards an episode in the siege of Collooney Castle (page 60). "Sir Conyers Clifford," says Moryson, vol. i, p. 87, "marched this way with 1400 Foot by pole, and the Earl of Southampton's Troop of 100 Horse, under the leading of Captain John Jephson, with some other Irish Horse. And coming to the Curlew Mountains, he left the Munitions and Carriages under the guard of the Horse, till he passing forward with the Foot had tried the passage. He had not gone far before O'Rorke, and other Rebels with him, upon the advantage of Woods, Bogs, and a stony causey, assailed our Men, who at first valiantly repelled them, till the Rebels finding the Muniton our Men had about them beginning to fail renewed the charge with greater fury than before . . . killing some 120 in the place, among which the Governor, Sir Conyers Clifford, and a worthy Captain, Sir Alexander Radcliffe, were lost, . . . And no doubt the rest had all perished, if the horse had not valiantly succoured them." And Cox in the same way ascribes the defeat of the English to O'Rorke, without even mentioning O'Donnell's name at all: "And being now," says he, in his *Hibernia Anglicana*, p. 421, "resolved for Ulster, he ordered Clifford, governor of Connaught, to march to Belick, to distress Tyrone on that side; accordingly he marched with 100 Horse and 1400 Foot; but being encountered by O'Rourk, and 200 Rebels at a pass, our men being tired and wanting powder, were routed, 140 slain, together with Clifford and Sir Alexander Radcliffe, and as many wounded; nay they had all been lost, were it not for the valour of the Horse, who secured their Retreat; and so next day they marched back to Athlone."

clear evidence in support of this opinion, which it is right to mention, as well as the ground on which it rests, if it were only to give others an opportunity of clearing, if possible, the memory of this popular favourite. What led to the

Being on the subject of the Battle of the Curlews and the Siege of Collooney Castle, we may extract a few stanzas from a long ballad on this theme, that appeared in an American paper—*The Irish World*, of April 11th, 1874:—

“ Unmindful of the glories and the sufferings of the Gael,  
O'Connor, chief of Sligo, made alliance with the Pale,  
And held for Essex and the Queen Collooney's Castle hold.  
Beleagured by O'Donnell and his Ulster clansmen bold.

With nodding plume of emerald green before his fearless clan,  
O'Donnell stands with dauntless mien and marshals Erin's van;  
While brave O'Ruairc commands the rear—wild Breffny's warlike band,  
Bold mountaineers, with swords and spears, embattled for the land.

'Twas then O'Ruairc, with Breffny's clan, came thundering to the front,  
Unheeding blade or bullet they faced the battle's brunt;  
Against the Saxon column they rushed with might and main,  
And hurl'd them back with slaughter upon the open plain.

Collooney Castle yielded, and its chief with newborn zeal  
Made cause with Ulster's princes, O'Donnell and O'Neill,  
And soon o'er Erin's warlike ranks O'Connor's banner shone  
Beside the ancient standards of O'Donnell and Tyrone.”

Brian Oge took part in the disastrous battle of Kinsale, after which he returned home, resolved even when all was lost, to hold out to the end. But what could one Irish chief avail, when deserted by the rest, against the power of England? And the consequence was that, after making his castle of Leitrim the refuge of those who were outlawed by the English; after receiving with open arms M'Guire of Fermanagh and the brave Donnell O'Sullivan at the close of the ever-memorable retreat from Dunboy; and after contending successfully in the field with Sir Oliver Lambert, the Governor of Connaught; O'Rourke was forced by the divisions and desertion of his followers, to withdraw from Breffny, and take shelter in Ballyrourk, in the County of Mayo, where he died, it is said, of a broken heart, after directing that his remains should be interred in the abbey of Roserilly, where the bones of this great Irish patriot repose.—*Franciscan Monasteries of Ireland*, p. 77.

The O'Rourkes threw themselves energetically into the movement of 1641, and took a prominent part in the sieges of Templehouse and Sligo; and that they were true to their principles and antecedents in the contest

surmise of apostacy was the finding of the name "Hyacinth O'Rorke," on the so called convert-roll, preserved in the Public Record Office, Dublin. The exact entry is, "O'Rorke Hiacinth, Dublin, 12 Nov. 1767, enrolled 23 Nov. 1767."\*

of 1691—the last great national upheaving—appears well from the following list of British "expenses and disbursements" on the occasion of the surrender of Sligo by Sir Teigue O'Regan:—

|                                               |    |    |       |
|-----------------------------------------------|----|----|-------|
| . . . . .                                     |    |    |       |
| . . . . .                                     |    |    |       |
| . . . . .                                     |    |    |       |
|                                               |    | £  | s. d. |
| " To Colonel Scott for horses taken from him, | .. | 60 | 0 0   |
| ,, Sir Teague O'Regan                         | .. | 5  | 15 0  |
| ,, Colonel Tiernan O'Rourke                   | .. | 8  | 1 0   |
| ,, Lieutenant Colonel O'Rourke                | .. | 5  | 15 0  |
| ,, Lieutenant Colonel M'Donogh                | .. | 8  | 1 0   |
| ,, Major James Conner                         | .. | 8  | 1 0   |
| ,, Major Owen O'Rourke                        | .. | 6  | 18 0" |

—Letter, dated Sligo, Sep. 20, 1691, from Colonel Mitchelburn to the Lords Justices, in "Clarke's Correspondence," a MS. of Trinity College, Dublin.

\* The writer has also found in the Record Office, Dublin, O'Rorke's certificate of conformity, which runs as follows:—

CERTIFICATE OF CONFORMITY.

Arthur, by Divine Providence, Lord Archbishop of Dublin, Primate and Metropolitan of Ireland; To all whom these presents may concern, GREETING.

We do hereby certify, That Hyacinth O'Rorke, Now of Dublin, hath renounced the errors of the Church of Rome; and was by our order received into the Communion of the Church of Ireland, on Thursday the 12th inst. November. And that the said Hyacinth O'Rorke is a Protestant, and doth conform to the Church of Ireland, as by Law established. In witness whereof We have caused our Manual Seal to be affixed to these presents this Twelfth Day of November 1767.

Arth. Dublin.



DUBLIN; Printed by Boulter Grierson, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, MDCCLXVII.

But apart from this weighty charge, Centy was far from being as free from faults as one would wish; and among his follies, he was much fonder of going into debt than of paying the bills, a peculiarity that led to the encounter with Mr. Perceval. Having got rather deep in the books of a spinster of gentle blood, named Jane O'Neil (half sister of Roger O'Hara, then owner of Corroy, near Aclare), who kept a small shop in Ballincurry, where Centy resided, instead of discharging the account, when sent in, with a message that no more credit would be given till the bill was paid, he went straight to the shop, and laid the whip roughly on the shoulders of the proprietress, for daring to send such a communication to an O'Rorke. The good woman was not devoid of spirit, and smarting at once from the whip and the loss of her money, she resolved to bring her neighbour to book, great a bully as he was. She laid her case before the neighbouring magistrates, but so great was the dread of O'Rorke, that one and all refused to receive her information. In this extremity she carried the matter to Mr. Perceval, who heard her statement, and, with a courage becoming the descendant of a crusader, took the information she came to lodge, and issued a warrant. Centy, stung to fury on hearing this, hastened to Sligo, where the gentlemen of the county were assembled at the time for the assizes; and, finding Mr. Perceval on the steps of the Courthouse, struck him contemptuously with a whip, in presence of the assembled magnates, an outrage that resulted in a challenge for the insult, the very thing O'Rorke desired.

It appears that Achonry was first fixed on for the duel, but on the parties reaching that place, O'Rorke was followed by such a crowd of sympathizers, that Perceval exclaimed, "It seems to be murder you want and not a fair fight," on hearing which O'Rorke drew a pistol, and turning on those that were following, stormed and swore that he would blow out the brains of whoever dared to

move an inch further. These friends, among whom was his own brother, Hugh, were indignant at this treatment, and leaving the man to his fate, he and Mr. Perceval, with their respective seconds, Messrs. Nicholson and Gethin, galloped about two miles further on, to a place called Lis-cat.\* Fourteen paces having been measured, from east to west, and the choice of place belonging to O'Rorke as the challenged party, he no sooner took up position, with back to the sun, than Perceval complained of the disadvantage at which himself was, having to face, though weak sighted, the glaring morning sun. The remark was hardly made when the impetuous Centy offered to change places, an offer that Mr. Perceval without more ado accepted.†

Having been thus placed, and the "word" given, O'Rorke, with characteristic precipitancy was the first to fire, and, missing aim, stood next moment at the mercy of the antagonist. "Beg your life, Sir," said Mr. Perceval in a commanding tone. "No, never; fire away, you blind

\* Liscat is a beautiful rath, of about an acre in extent, in the parish of Achonry, quite near Commander Armstrong's residence. The position was of old a very strong one, for it is still surrounded with three lines of circumvallations, and has within the inner area buildings, or, at all events, some remains of traces of buildings. The place commands an extensive prospect, stretching to the hills of Leitrim, the territory of the O'Rorkes, so that unfortunate Centy, if he had time to open his eyes after receiving the fatal ball, could have seen the beloved Breffny of his birth and boyhood, and been inspired with the thoughts of the dying gladiator, who,

"Dulces moriens reminiscitur Argos."

† It is said that Owen Roe O'Neill owed the victory of Benburb very much to his arranging his troops so that the sun shone full in the face of the enemy.

"The battle between the Cimbri and the Roman army, under Marius, furnishes an incident exactly parallel with one which occurred in a celebrated Irish engagement. The Roman general took up his position in such a manner that the sun should shine full in the faces of his enemy; a manœuvre which contributed greatly to his victory. At the battle of Benburb, in 1646, the Irish general, Owen Roe O'Neil, adopted precisely the same tactics with the army of Munro, and with equal success."—*Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, vol. vi, p. 278.



rascal," shouted back O'Rorke in a rage; and as Perceval coolly rested the pistol on the left arm, and was taking slow, deliberate aim, O'Rorke, pointing to his heart, exclaimed, "Send it here, you coward," a defiance that was hardly uttered when the fatal ball entered the speaker's forehead, causing instantaneous death, and supplying a new illustration of the gospel saying, "All that take the sword, shall perish with the sword."\*

Hugh O'Rorke was not far from Liscat at the moment the brother fell; and having heard the two shots succeed one another, and observed the dead silence that ensued, he divined what had happened, and said to those near, "Centy is down; he fired first, as always, and the silence shows that the second shot killed him." Crowds soon reached the top of the hill, and, seeing their favourite on the ground, they filled the air, for miles round, with lamentations. At that moment Mr. Perceval's son and heir, afterwards the Rev. Mr. Perceval, having learned that his father had left home to fight, was riding through Rinbane in search of him, but the moment the young man heard the wild Irish cry, he turned back to Templehouse, knowing well that O'Rorke had fallen, and that the father was safe.

These are the circumstances of the meeting, as far as they can be ascertained after long and patient inquiry. Of course there is some variety in the popular versions of the transaction, as always happens in such cases. For instance, it is said, in one account, that O'Rorke fought without a second, his intended friend being, according to some, his own brother, who was left behind at Achonry, and, according to others, Mr. Jones, of Banada, who, on account of the change of place to Liscat, did not reach the place till some minutes after the fatal shot was fired. But it is more likely that his friend was with O'Rorke, which the blame traditionally thrown on the second for standing

\* St. Matthew, xxvi, 52.



quietly by, while the principal was deliberately shot down, goes to prove.\*

A cairn, four or five feet in diameter, and two or three high, raised by the affection of the people, stands on the exact spot where unfortunate Centy fell. The body was buried in Banada, but his Leitrim followers, with a touching devotedness, came by night, took it away, and consigned it to the *natale solum* of Breffney, in the churchyard of Kilmaetrany. Several lyrical lamentations were composed for him, the most popular being the production of a local Sappho, named Molly Kennedy, who was his next neighbour at Ballincurry. Nor did Philip Caech, on the other side lack the *sacro vate*, for until recently, an Irish song, making much of him for courage and other high qualities, was commonly sung at all the merry meetings about Templehouse and Ballinacarrow.

In or about the year 1814 a painful sensation was caused through the country by the perpetration at Templehouse of two great crimes, burglary and rape, both of which at the time were capital offences. The greatest sympathy was felt for the victim of the double outrage, a Miss Gale, who kept a shop at Somerton, in the townland of Templehouse, and the greatest indignation against the guilty parties. It came out in evidence on the trial of those charged, that eight men were implicated on the occasion; of whom three were hanged, three were transported, one escaped, and one turned King's evidence. Most of these men were labourers in the employment of Mr. Cooper, Cooper-hill, who received private information, while they were still at large, of their guilt, but as there were no constabulary in those days, it was far from an easy matter to apprehend those desperate men, resolved to use violence at any risk to themselves or others, in case arrest were attempted. Mr. Cooper's steward, however, undertook to secure them himself, and

\* Another account has it that a Mr. Robert Weir, an attorney, was Centy's second.

performed the undertaking in a very ingenious way. Riding in haste to the dwellings of the incriminated, and alleging some sudden accident at Cooper-hill, that needed the presence of the labourers, he directed the person wanted to take a seat behind him on horseback, and then returned with this companion, and lodged him in safe custody; and going successively to the houses of each of the accused, he thus captured them all.

The wretched men were easily convicted, as Miss Gale, a most respectable witness, and her servant, equally trustworthy, swore home against them. One of the convicts excited widespread commiseration by narrating, in the dying speech on the drop of the gallows, how he became involved in the crime for which he was about to suffer. This miserable man declared, and everybody believed the declaration, that he rejected with horror the project when it was first broached, that he left nothing undone to turn the others away from it, that this refusal and resistance delayed the crime for eight days, and that he yielded to the tempters at last, solely from the fear of losing life, which those wicked men were sure to take away if he withstood them to the end. Of course these fears were no justification of his participation, but they stripped it of some of its repulsiveness, by showing that it should be set down to weakness, much more than to wickedness.

Philip Caech dying in 1787, was succeeded in the possession of Templehouse by his eldest son, Guy Carleton Perceval, at whose death in 1792 the property passed to his brother, Rev. Philip Perceval, who was curate of Killooran, and who seems to have never reached any higher ecclesiastical preferment. This reverend gentleman had two sons, Philip and Alexander; but Philip dying young, Alexander, the late Colonel Perceval, became the proprietor of Templehouse. The Colonel, who was fonder of politics than other members of the family, contested unsuccessfully, in 1822, the representation of the County Sligo with the

Hon. Henry King, in an election that was unique in the country for duration and expenditure, but was returned for the county in the elections of 1831, 1832, 1835, 1837 and 1841, retiring in the last named year from Parliament, on the occasion of his appointment as Sergeant at Arms to the House of Lords, an office that he held until 1858, the year of his death. He is buried at Norwood, near London.

The latest of the Percevals was as genial a gentleman as ever came of the house of Ivery. He had no opportunity of distinguishing himself in public life; but, in recovering, by self-sacrificing energy, the patrimonial estate, that had already passed out of the hands of the family, Mr. Alexander Perceval accomplished a work as worthy of admiration as the highest feats of valour and statesmanship. Finding, when he had grown up to manhood, that the family property was so encumbered by the Colonel's election expenses as to be in danger of passing away from the Percevals, this high spirited young man resolved to make a great effort, and gain, if possible, by commerce in a foreign land, what would pay off the incumbrances and avert the threatened calamity. It is curious that an ancestor, William, the youngest son of George Perceval, took to trading in the West Indies, and there married the daughter of an eminent factor, an occurrence that may have inspired the resolution of the descendant; but however this may be, the late Mr. Perceval went to China, engaged in the tea trade, and had realized a fortune more than sufficient for the object in view, when, unfortunately, news reached there that Templehouse was already sold and in the hands of a stranger. But the proverb, "*Aide toi et Dieu t'aidera,*" was to have a new illustration in this case; for the purchaser, Mr. Hall Dare, having incurred local disgrace, and desiring to quit the neighbourhood, offered Templehouse again for sale, an offer with which the representatives of Mr. Perceval at once closed.

The new landlord's first care, on entering into possession, was to add to, or rather to build anew, the family mansion, which was done in a style worthy of his ancestors and of himself. Even while occupied in this weighty undertaking, the benevolent mind of Mr. Perceval was full of projects for benefiting all those who depended on him, either as tenants, *employees*, or neighbours, for there was room enough for all in the large heart he had inherited from both father and mother.

Colonel Perceval, though a lion in politics, was a lamb in private life; a landlord so kind, that he allowed every poor widow on the Templehouse estates a cottage and half an acre of land, free of rent; and a neighbour so charitable, that, when great distress fell on the poor in 1812, the Colonel, in company with Rev. James McHugh, then Catholic curate of the parish, made a house-to-house visitation of all the comfortable tenants on the Templehouse property, in quest of relief for the famine-stricken. Mrs. Perceval was a wife worthy of such a husband; for when she was dying in 1847, in the thick of the famine consequent on the potato blight, she had only one regret and one wish—the regret of being taken away from the poor in the time of their greatest need, and the wish—a wish again and again expressed—that the soup kitchen and ovens for the poor, which she had opened in her house, should be kept working after her death, and even in the interval between death and burial, just as they had been while she was alive; an instance of forgetfulness of self and solicitude for the poor, as touching as any you can find in Alban Butler's *Lives of the Saints*.\*

The son inherited the tender feelings of the father and

\* This lady was buried at Rathbarron, where her tomb bears this inscription:—"Jane Anne, wife of Col. Alexander Perceval, daughter of Col. Lestrangle, of Moystown, King's Co.; Died 20th January 1847—aged 57 years"

mother; and the writer of these lines can never forget the solemn earnestness with which Mr. Perceval once averred in his hearing, that one of the chief motives that brought him from China to Ireland was a desire to make the old neighbours happy;\* a desire to which the new landlord gave effect, on arrival in Ireland, by calling home from America and elsewhere those Templehouse people that Mr. Hall Dare had dispossessed, and reinstating them in their old positions. Bearing in mind the lofty nature of the man, it is unnecessary to add, that in all this he made no distinction on the score of religion, but treated all the old and faithful followers of the family alike, whether they were Roman Catholics or Protestants, proclaiming often that he would always do so, as the Perceval family had done before him; an allusion which every one acquainted with the unsectarian composition of the Templehouse tenantry could appreciate.

And though belonging to a family that, in each generation since its arrival in Ireland, had given ministers to the Established Church, and though himself an attached member of that church, as well as nearly related to its highest dignitary, Primate Beresford, still he both promoted the dignity of Roman Catholic worship, and condemned strongly the insulting talk and tactics, that proselytizing bigots love to employ. Having noticed that the roof of

\* Mr. Perceval belonged neither to the "gripping," nor to the "nothing for nothing" class of landlords, but was a fine specimen of the "live and let live" species. "All persons employed on a large estate," writes the editor of the *Standard Newspaper*, in a review of Mr. Froude's lecture on *The Uses of a Landed Gentry*, "are gainers by the semi-feudal relations which belong to it. As the owner expects to get some return from it other than a mere pecuniary one, so he is obliged to give something else himself over and above the mere material value of the land he lets. An old family, moreover, has traditions to keep up, a reputation to sustain, and hereditary connections to preserve unbroken." It would be well if owners of family estates acted always in the spirit of these remarks.

Ballinacarrow Chapel, which is on the Templehouse property, had been injured by a storm, and meeting casually the parish priest, he handed him in the kindest manner, when nothing was either asked or expected, a £5 note, requesting that it would be expended on the required repairs. And of his antipathy to proselytizing practices the writer had likewise abundant proof; for having heard that a person in high employment at Templehouse was tampering with the faith of some poor persons of the neighbourhood, and having brought the matter under the notice of Mr. Perceval, who was in the dark as to what was going on, the moment that gentleman learned the facts of the case, he condemned in strong language all such manœuvres, and not only engaged to put a stop to the proceedings complained of, but also to prevent annoyance of the kind in question from being ever again given by anyone under his influence. Such a man was a general benefactor to the neighbourhood; for his high example rebuked bigots, and taught the important lesson of regarding, in business and social matters, not a man's sect or party, but personal worth and efficiency—a lesson nowhere, perhaps, more needed than in the County Sligo. Had it pleased Providence to prolong this gentleman's years to old age, he would have effected a great amount of good which, with all the energy and activity of a most vigorous temperament, he was unable to crush into a comparatively short life; but, as it is, he lived long enough to earn the right of passing, to all time, with the Templehouse Percevals, for a second founder of their family; and with the tenants, labourers, and neighbours of the estate for as just and generous a landlord, employer, and country gentleman, as ever the County Sligo produced. Mr. Perceval died in 1866 and was buried at Rathbarron, in the family vault, which bears the inscription, "Alexander Perceval, son of Col. Alexander Perceval. Died 8th of May, 1866, aged 44 years.

Before proceeding to the history of Annaghmore, it will be convenient to say a few words of RATHMORE, most of which district lies in the parish of Killoran, but part in that of Kilvarnet; the whole being about 400 acres in extent. The rath from which the place has its name is in the former parish; but the most interesting spot in the district is in that of Kilvarnet. This is Mount-Caulfield, which was so named in honour of the Venerable Toby Caulfield, Archdeacon of Killala, who married Anne O'Hara, daughter of Adam O'Hara and Isabella Gore; this Isabella Gore being herself the daughter of Sir Francis Gore, of Ardtarmon, Sligo. The mount, which is ten or eleven feet high, of circular form, and fourteen feet in diameter, seems to be a modern structure, though resembling in shape the old raths or forts of the country, and, like many of them, containing underneath a cave or vault; the cave, in this instance, being eighteen feet long, seven feet wide, and about eight high, and being arched with brick, which affords a more solid roof than one formed by the large horizontal flags resting on rough, uncemented stones, that were used in the ancient forts. On the centre of the rath rises another structure that resembles the frustrum of a cone, and is nine feet in height, and eight in diameter, having round its base a projecting ring of masonry, fifteen inches deep, and eighteen high, which seems designed for affording sitting accommodation. A slab of chiselled limestone, five feet high, and two wide, that stands at the entrance of the vault, bears on its face a well executed escutcheon, carrying the arms of the Gore family—three crosses—cross-lets fitchèè—with the Gore motto—*In hoc signo vinces*—the words, "Mount Caulfield," and the inscription: "Erected by M. Isabella O'Hara *alias* Gore, daughter to Francis Gore, Kt. of Sligo, in May 1709."

The original destination of Mount Caulfield is a puzzle to all the wiseacres of the neighbourhood; the more com-



mon opinion being, that it was intended to afford a view of the ships that sailed into, and out of Sligo bay. The holders of this theory must not forget that, as the Ox Mountains intervene between Rathmore and the sea, it would have been necessary for Isabella O'Hara, if she had in view the object they suppose, to raise her structure almost as high

“ —as the tower which builders vain  
Presumptuous piled on Shinar's plain.”

But a lady of intelligence, like Mrs. O'Hara, could not ignore the Ox Range, so that instead of acting from the whimsical motive alleged, it is likely she only wished to form a novel and curious garden retreat, and to compliment her son-in-law by giving it his name. This theory, which, however, is only an opinion *comme une autre*, fits well with the conditions of the spot; for it is certain that Mount Caulfield was formerly surrounded by a great garden, and one has only to ascend the rath to find that it contains the finest views of all the adjacent country; while the vault or cave would serve as an arbour, to which persons might retire from the scorching sun or the passing shower. There is no trace at present of a residence, which, probably, was only of the lodge or cottage kind. But there is abundant evidence to show that great taste and large sums of money were employed in laying out and beautifying the grounds. The avenue, which was about a mile long, was 150 feet wide—with a noble carriage drive in the centre—and was shaded on both sides, along its entire length, by ashes and sycamores, many of which still survive. Over the whole hill stretched a garden, singularly well fenced, as the solid walls, ten or twelve feet high, parts of which remain here and there, still attest. The lower slopes of the hill, and part of the adjoining plain, were laid out as pleasure grounds; and the specimens of rare exotics that

one still finds, from time to time, in sheltered nooks, and the aquarium, now empty and dry, the formation of which must have entailed great expense, show that no effort was spared to give attraction and elegance to the place. Altogether it was a charming spot when in its prime; and whether one considers the immediate surroundings, or the more distant landscape, there could be few points of view so delightful to a spectator, and, more especially when the spectator was an O'Hara, whose enjoyment of the scene must have been greatly heightened by the reflection that he and his were "monarchs of all he surveyed."

Rathmore belonged to the O'Haras from the arrival of the family in Connaught, and was a part of their territory of Leyney. Whoever was in immediate occupation in 1617—the date of James the First's grant to Teigue Buy O'Hara—the O'Haras obtained from Rathmore annually a rent of 13s. 4d. in money, and 16 meders of wheat in kind.\* In the Down Survey, "the heirs of Roger Jones, Protestant," are set down as the owners of the place; and the memory of this ownership is preserved to this day in the name of a large field, that is still called "Jones's Park."† It would appear, from what has been said above of Isabella O'Hara, that Rathmore, or at least a part of it, reverted to its old owners from the heirs of Roger Jones,‡ though like so many other townlands belonging to the Annaghmore estates, this, too, may have been alienated, under the pressure of his sporting debts, by Charles O'Hara. Major O'Hara bought the place, about fifty years

\* Patent Roll, Jac. i, 14<sup>o</sup>.

† Jones's Park is in the parish of Killoran. In the list of "Popish Parish Priests," registered in Sligo, in 1704, we have Thomas Jones, Rathmore, given as one of the "sureties" for Richard Cloane, "Popish Priest" of Killoran.

‡ In the Hearth-money Returns, Teige O'Hara is given as living in Rathmore in 1662.

ago, from the representatives of those to whom his ancestor made it over; and at the time of the purchase it was in the tenancy and occupation of a family named Lilly, which the major, after some years, dispossessed, incurring no little odium for so doing; but, whether deservedly or not, the present writer is not in a position to say. At present Rathmore is in the occupation of Mr. C. W. O'Hara, and may be regarded as forming a part of his demesne. But it is time now to speak of Annaghmore.

## CHAPTER III.

## ANNAGHMORE AND THE O'HARAS.

ANNAGHMORE OWES its chief distinction to being the residence of the O'Hara family. No doubt the place possesses natural advantages and beauties of a high order. The soil is rich and fertile, and adapted alike to the purposes of the agriculturist and the grazier. The surface is well varied, and the bird's-eye view from Clane Hill, in the demesne, brings under the spectator picturesque slopes, and vales, and swells, and pretty views of the Owenmore, as the river flows along with a composure and gravity that harmonizes perfectly with the venerable associations of the place. The outlook from this eminence is striking, commanding the finest aspect of the surrounding mountains, and of hills, and raths, and various other objects, which cannot be seen to such advantage from any other point.

But it is, after all, the owners that have imparted to the place its chief charms; and this not so much by the improvements which they have effected, as by their residing there themselves. For though they have developed all its natural capabilities and beauties; have covered much of its surface with venerable forest trees as well as with saplings of younger and more vigorous growth; laid out and adorned its grounds with the choicest shrubs and flowers; and just crowned all their other improvements with a new mansion of singularly chaste and classic design; still it is not the richness of the soil, the graceful movements of the river, the stateliness of the oaks, and ashes, and beeches; the value and variety of the exotic plants and flowers; the elegance of the mansion, or all these together, that conse-

crate Annaghmore in the affections of the people, but the good old family that have made it their abode.

The O'Haras\* are no aliens, but genuine scions of the old stock of Milesius, true sons of the soil; a family that produced saints and princes ages before Strongbow or Fitzempress set foot in Ireland.

\* In a note to Connellan's *Annals of the Four Masters*, we read, "O'Hara, chief of Leyney, now the barony of Leyney in the County of Sligo; but Leyney anciently comprised part of the baronies of Costello and Gallen in the County Mayo. The O'Haras were descended from Cormac Gaileng, son of Teige, son of Cian, son of Oilioll Olum, King of Munster in the third century, of the race of Heber, and therefore of the same stock as the Dalcassians of Munster, of whom the O'Briens were kings. From this Cormac Gaileng, who lived in the fourth century, the territory of Galenga, now the barony of Gallen, in the County Mayo, took its name. The territory of Luighne or Leyney derived its name from Luighne, a brother of Cormac Gaileng. The O'Haras took their name from Eaghra, Lord of Leyney in the tenth century, whose death is mentioned in the *Annals*, at A.D. 926. Many chiefs of the O'Haras are mentioned in the *Annals* of the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries; amongst others, Donal O'Hara, Lord of Leyney, who was killed A.D. 1023; and from the twelfth to the seventeenth centuries, they held their rank as Lords of Leyney, and had large possessions to the period of the Cromwellian wars, when a great deal of their property was confiscated though they still hold considerable estates in the barony of Leyney. In the reigns of Queen Anne and George I, the O'Haras were created barons of Tyrawley and Kilmain, in Mayo, and some of them were distinguished generals in the British service."—Page 99.

Between Ballysadare and Ballydrehid, just at the mearing of the two baronies—Leyney and Tirerrill—there is a spot that the neighbours call *Clughau an Erin*, from some stone or cairn, no doubt, that formerly existed there. The legend is, that Cormac Gaileng, when coming to Connaught, had a grant from the king of all the land he should travel round in the twenty-four hours, and as he had reached in his curriple *Clughau an Erin*, quite resolved to inclose Sligo and the neighbourhood before stopping, his horse fell, hurting itself and breaking the curriple, so that further progress was impossible; upon which Cormac took an arrow from his quiver, shot the animal through the head, and had it buried where it fell, when the cairn was raised over it that got the name of *Clughau an Erin*.

Indeed the configuration of the barony of Leyney, with the small patch of Knockmuldowney to the east of the Owenmore, while all the rest of it lies to the west of the river, is so strange as to give some colour to the legend.

The royal and imperial houses of Bourbon, Hapsburg, and Este, may contend with one another for the palm of antiquity, but they must all acknowledge the priority of the O'Haras. The great Italian families of Colonna, Odescalchi, and Orsini, and the great French families of Gramonts, Polignacs, and Montmorencys, which are the oldest that figure in the *Almanach de Gotha*, were unknown when ancestors of the O'Haras occupied thrones; while the proudest noblemen in the British peerage, those even whom their countrymen look up to as almost pre-Adamite and super-Adamite in their origin, are only of yesterday in comparison of this ancient and still flourishing Irish family. Some probably will treat this as a piece of silly brag, whereas it is only sober truth. No doubt the families referred to have other claims of precedence over the one we are considering, but for early emergence into high station, and for that vigorous inherent vitality which can pass undiminished and undimmed through twenty centuries,

“ Quæ bis dena suis includit sæcula fastis,” \*

they must all yield to the O'Haras, who come straight from Olioll Olum, King of Munster in the second century, himself being the twentieth in descent from Duach, Monarch of Ireland (O'Flaherty's *Ogygia*, vol. i, p. 205, Hely's Edition).

Olioll was the first king of the line of Heber Fionn, that ruled in Munster, and was son-in-law of Con of the Hundred Battles, whose daughter Saba he married, and by whom he had nine sons. Seven of these young men fell in the great battle of Moymueroihe near Athenry, and the two that survived, were Cormac Cas, the founder of the Dalcassians of Munster, and Cian or Kean, the progenitor of the families of O'Hara, O'Gara, O'Carroll, O'Meagher, and O'Connor Ciannaхта. Thady, the illustrious son of Cian, rendered most important services to his nephew, King

\* Buchanan's *Epithalamium of Mary Queen of Scots*.

Cormac (son of Arthur the Melancholy), defeated the king's enemies, and re-established him on the throne of Ireland, from which they had removed him. Cormac, in gratitude, bestowed considerable tracts of land in Leinster and Connaught on Thady, who had four sons—Conla the Leper, Cormac Gaileng, Muredach, and Conla Frither; the second of whom, Cormac Gaileng,\* obtained the possessions in Connaught. These possessions were called, at first, indifferently, Gailenga or Lugny, from Cormac Gaileng and his son, Luigh; though, in the course of time, the southern portion of the territory took the name of Gailenga or Gallen, and the northern, that of Lugny or Leyney. After the introduction of Christianity it happened here, as through the most of Ireland, that the civil and the ecclesiastical districts were coextensive, so that the boundaries of Gailenga and Lugny coincided with those of the diocese of Achonry, which formerly was called the diocese of Lugny or Leyney, and which comprised, as it still comprises, in the County Sligo, not merely the present barony of Leyney, but the barony of Corran, the half barony of Coolavin, and the portion of the barony of Tirerrill that belongs to the parish of Ballysadare; as also, in the County Mayo, the northern half of the barony of Costello—known formerly as Slieve Lugha, and containing the parishes of Kilcoleman, Kilmovee, Kilbeagh, and Castlemore—and almost the entire barony of Gallen; namely, the parishes of Attymas, Bohola, Kilconduff, Kilgarvan, Killasser, Killedan, Mee-lick, Templemore, and Toomore. The whole of this territory was first called Corann,† and was inhabited by

\* Cormac fled from Munster after having incensed his father by killing the five sons of Conall, the son of Eochy, son of Magh Nuadhat, who were fabled to have been transformed into badgers. The legend is given at full length in a manuscript in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin, H. 3, 18, p. 42; but it is so wrapped up in fable, that it is of very little historical value.—Note to O'Donovan's *Four Masters*, sub anno 1558.

† "The country called Corann, formerly comprehended Galenga (Gallen) in the County of Mayo, Lugny (Leyney) and Corann, in the



the Damnonians and Galenians, who were Firbolgs and slaves, and were banished from their lands in punishment of the part they took in the Attacottian insurrection, thus leaving the district ready for the family of the Munster prince, on whom King Cormac conferred it.\*

In consequence, however, of the new settlers not being originally of Connaught, and their taking possession of slave land, which was always burdened with heavier charges than free land, they, belonging though they did to the royal blood of Munster, had to pay to the King of Connaught more than their rateable share of the public taxes, as we learn from the *Book of Rights*—†

County of Sligo. The Corco-Firtrians, the posterity of Lugny, so called from his surname, inhabited this tract.”—O’Flaherty’s *Ogygia*, part iii, chap. 59.

The O’Haras, though generally called in the old *Annals*, the princes of *Leyney* (Luighne), are sometimes styled princes or kings of *Corann*, as for instance, in the *Chronicum Scotorum*, under the year 1022, where we read, “Domhnall O’Hara, King of the Corann, *moritur*.” The same authority calls another O’Hara, under the year 1021, King of *Leyney*.

\* It is but fair to state that the late Rev. Dr. Kelly suspects the O’Haras and kindred families to be Firbolgs and not Milesians—though in this opinion or suspicion, he seems to be alone.—Dr. Kelly’s *Cambrensis Eversus*, vol. i, p. 471.

For the interesting legend connected with the coming to Connaught of Cormac Gaileang, the ancestor of the O’Haras, see Joyce’s *Irish Names of Places*, Second Series, p. 238.

† *Book of Rights*, pages 104-105, as edited and translated by John O’Donovan, for the Celtic Society: Dublin, 1847.

O’Donovan adds in a note, “The exact limits of their territory are preserved in those of the diocese of Achadh Chonaire (Achonry), in the Counties of Sligo and Mayo . . . The territory of Luigne or Gaileanga, anciently belonged to an enslaved tribe of the Firbolgs, who inhabited it down to the third century, when Cormac Gaileang fled thither, and obtained a grant of this territory from his kinsman, Cormac Mac Airt, Monarch of Ireland, subject, however, to the heavy tributes which had been paid by the dispossessed Attacots.”

It may be mentioned that Cormac Mac Airt, the greatest probably of the Pagan Kings of Ireland, was a native of the district comprised in the present County of Sligo, and diocese of Achonry, “having been born in Corann, in Athcormaic, near the mountain Keis (Keash) to the south, and there educated with his stepfather, Lugny.”—*Ogygia*, part iii, chap. 59.

There are due of the Luighne without fault,  
 As a supply for the residence,  
 Seven times fifty milch-cows hither  
 To be brought every May-day.

Thrice fifty bull-like hogs  
 To be brought every Samhain  
 Thrice fifty superb cloaks  
 To the King of Connaught and Cruachin.

Of the same tribute it was heard  
 Without injustice, without tyranny,  
 Thrice fifty oxen on a day hither  
 To supply the ploughing.

Although the Luighne bring hither  
 Their tribute for their territory  
*It is not the tribes here are ignoble  
 But the grass and the land (are liable).*

While the descendants of Cormac Gaileng remained united, and acknowledged one chief, their territory belonged to them in common; and even after the invention of surnames in the tenth century, and the division of the Lugnians or Gailengs into the two families of O'Hara and O'Gara, they had still for some time but one chief, who was taken now from one family, and again from another. By degrees, however, the two families separated, like those of Lot and Abraham, and the separation was complete before the English invasion; the O'Garas possessing the portions of the County Mayo that are contained in the diocese of Achonry, and the O'Haras ruling over the parts of the County Sligo, which belong to the same diocese.\*

\* In O'Dugan's topographical poem the Lords of Leyney are: "O'Headhra (O'Hara); O'Huamarain (O'Haran); O'Dobhelein (Devlin); and O'Duncathy." All these, however, sprang from the same stock.

"In Ortelius's map," says a writer in Shaw Mason's *Statistical Account of Ireland*, vol. ii, p. 29, "the O'Haras were seated in Leyney, a name which, at a more recent period, has appeared upon the pages of general British history."

In Dr. MacDermot's map, in Geraghty's edition of the *Four Masters*, "O'Hara, Lord of Leyney," is placed in the centre of the barony.

After the arrival of the English, the Jordans and Nangles, or Costellos, encroached on the O'Garas, drove them out of Gallen, and confined them to Coolavin and the districts surrounding the castle of Moygara, where they continued down to a sufficiently recent date, powerful and respected.\*

The O'Haras then share with the O'Garas the honour of the same illustrious ancestry, as also the glory reflected from the monarchs, princes, and saints of the pedigree, so that Brother Michael O'Clery, if he lived at the present day, might say to Mr. C. W. O'Hara, as he formerly said to Ferghal O'Gara, "You are of the race of Heber Mac Mileadh, from whom descended thirty of the kings of Ireland, and sixty-one saints; and to Teigue Mac Kein Mac Oilella Oluim, from whom eighteen of these saints are sprung, you can be traced generation by generation." †

The O'Haras take their surname from Eaghra, son of Poprigh, who died in 926, and from that time the annals

\* Most Rev. Brian O'Gara was Archbishop of Tuam in 1734; Most Rev. Michael O'Gara occupied the same see in 1742; and in 1656 Rev. Ferghal O'Gara was an exile in the Netherlands for his religion, where he made a very valuable collection of Irish historical poems that still exists, and is at present in the Royal Irish Academy. In 1634 Fergal O'Gara, to whom Ireland is indebted for the *Annals of the Four Masters*, represented the County Sligo in Parliament; and in 1689 Oliver O'Gara was one of the representatives of the same county in the Parliament of James II. This same Oliver distinguished himself at Aughrim and on the Continent as Colonel of the Queen's Dragoons. He left after him four sons, of whom three attained high rank in the Spanish military service; while the fourth, after a career still more distinguished, died a Count of the Holy Roman Empire; Imperial Councillor of State and Chamberlain; Grand-master of the Household to the Emperor's sister; and Knight of the Golden Fleece.—*History of the Irish Brigades*.

† Dedication of the *Annals of the Four Masters*.—O'Donovan's Edition. In reference to a remark of John O'Donovan's on the superiority of the O'Donnells over certain other Irish families, Eugene O'Curry observes: "But what is somewhat singular, in reference to Dr. O'Donovan's remark, and as shown by the statistics of the *Four Masters*, is, that the O'Gara (or O'Hara) represents Cian, another son of Oilioll Oluim, in their ancient principality of *Luigné* or *Leyney* in Sligo, from a period so far back as the year 932; that is the name of the O'Gara (or O'Hara), is

of Ireland show them to have been always active and prominent in the public affairs of the country. Though they never attained the throne of the province,\* which their Munster origin probably hindered them from reaching, they uniformly maintained a leading place among the *Tiernas* or secondary princes. Unlike the O'Gara branch of the family, the O'Haras never retreated from their original territory, though often attacked by Celt and Saxon, by the O'Connors, O'Rorkes, O'Dowdas, as well as by the Burkes, the Berminghams, and the Bingham; and, as Eaghra Mac Poprigh was the Lord of Leyney in 926, so his lineal descendant, Mr. C. W. O'Hara, of Annaghmore, is chief of the same territory in the year of grace 1878.

This is not the place for weaving a detailed pedigree of the family, but it may be mentioned, that C. W. O'Hara is the twenty-fourth in descent from Eaghra, son of Poprigh. For Duaid Mac Firis tells us that Fergal More O'Hara was eleventh in descent from the son of Poprigh, and that Kean O'Hara, who died in 1675, was eighth in descent from Fergal More;† and we know Mr. C. W. O'Hara to

older even than that of MacCarthy by more than 100 years; than that of O'Brien by about 80 years; and than that of O'Donnell by about 300 years." The O'Haras and O'Garas are all the same in this respect.—Professor O'Curry's *Lectures on the Manuscript Materials of Ancient Irish History*, p. 158.

For "the succession of the chiefs of the O'Gara family from A.D. 932 to A.D. 1537, see the same work, p. 546.

\* It is curious that this circumstance was foretold by Saint Cormac, as we learn from this passage of his life by Colgan, *Acta Sanctorum*, page 753:—"Dum hæc expostulatio supervenit Diermitius Luginæ dynasta, qui pie studuit viros sanctos ad pacem et concordiam reducere. Sanctus Cormacus piissimo viro magnas egit gratias, et in tantæ devotionis mercedem repromisit ejus posteros non inferioris ordinis quam regibus et principibus deservituros." "While this altercation proceeded Diermid the dynast of Leyney arrived, and tried to reconcile the holy men. Saint Cormac returned warm thanks to the pious dynast, and, in reward of his charity, promised that his descendants should never serve any persons inferior in rank to kings and princes."

† O'Donovan's *Annals of the Four Masters*, sub anno 926. In a note on the "son of Poprigh," O'Donovan observes:—"He is the ancestor

descend in the fifth generation from Kean, he having succeeded his uncle, Major O'Hara, who succeeded his father Charles, who succeeded his father, another Charles, who inherited from his father Kean Oge, this Kean Oge being the son of the Kean mentioned by Mac Firbis.

The leading branches of the family were the O'Haras Buidhe, who lived in Coolany and Annaghmore, and the O'Haras Reagh,\* who resided in Ballyhara, near Tubbercurry, their respective territories being sometimes called Leyney Buidhe and Leyney Reagh. Subordinate chiefs of the family were scattered throughout Leyney, as at Meemlough,† Tullyhue, Mucklety, and Coilte-Leyney.‡

The Antrim O'Haras, who are a branch of the Leyney family, separated, towards the close of the thirteenth or the beginning of the fourteenth century, from the parent stock. Hugh, brother to the hostage of King John, Conor Got O'Hara, who died in 1231, is said by John O'Donovan § to have been "the ancestor of this branch;" but whether that Hugh himself emigrated to the North, Mr. O'Donovan omits to tell us, if indeed he knew the fact. As however,

from whom the O'Haras of Leyney, in the County of Sligo, have derived their name. According to Duaid McFirbis, Fearghal Mor O'Hara, who erected Feach-Teampla, now Templehouse, was the eleventh in descent from Eaghra, son of Poprigh; and Cian or Kean O'Hara, who was living in 1666, was the eighth in descent from that Fearghal."

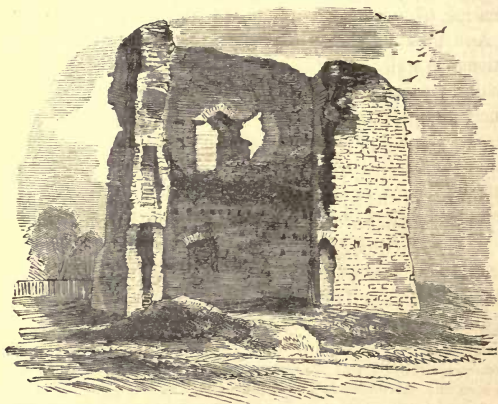
\* The combined branches were sometimes called *Muintir O'Hara*. See O'Donovan's *Four Masters*, sub anno 1392—Note.

† The portion of Meemlough Castle that still remains is 48 feet high, 51 feet long and 37 feet broad, the walls being 9 feet thick, and containing in their thickness stairs and passages. The floors of the interior were formed by stone vaults, the traces of which still remain.

‡ Four O'Haras signed Perrott's indenture with the chieftains of Sligo, namely, "Cormocke O'Harvy, of Cowlany, otherwise called O'Harey buy, chief of his name; Ferrall O'Harey of Ballinefennock, otherwise called O'Harey reogh, chief of his name; Breene O'Harey of Tulevy, gen.; Owen O'Harey, of Cowlany, gen."

§ *The Tribes of Ireland*, p. 52—note. It is pretty certain that O'Donovan got this information from Major O'Hara's manuscript, which he saw and read, and of which he has left an analysis.

the O'Hara that first settled in Antrim accompanied Richard Earl of Ulster, commonly called the Red Earl, and received lands in the northern province from that nobleman. Hugh, who if he still lived, must have been at least eighty or ninety years old at the time of the Red Earl's expedition to Ulster, could hardly be this settler.\*



#### O'HARA'S CASTLE, MEEMPLAGH.

Drawn on the wood by W. F. Wakeman, Esq., F.R.H.A.A.I., from a Photograph by Mr. Edward Smith.

Mr. C. W. O'Hara, the present head of the family, is an O'Hara Buidhe, and is the lineal descendant as well as namesake (Charles being the English for Cormac) of the "Cormac O'Hara of Coolany, chief of his name," that signed Sir John Perrott's Indenture of Composition for the County Sligo. By the way, it is very remarkable, all through the pedigree of the O'Haras that the same names

\* The Red Earl died in 1326.

constantly recur. Olioll, Kean, Teague, Cormac\* or Charles, you have here most of the nomenclature of the twenty-five generations of the O'Haras. Olioll Ollum, Cian or Kean, Teague or Thady, Cormac (Galeng) are the first links in the chain of names that connects the present Mr. O'Hara with the King of Munster; and Olioll, Teague, Cian, Cormac, Teague, Cian, Adam, Charles, Kean Oge, Charles, Charles, Charles, are the latest links.

And the family had in general similar tastes and dispositions, as well as similar names, and were noted, in particular, for devotion to religion and addiction to field sports. Their piety they manifested by bestowing lands for religious uses; † by founding several churches—Ballysadare, Billa, Killassar, Killoran, Banada, Court, Kilvarnet, etc.; by entering, as religious, into various monasteries—Clonmacnoise, Ardnaree, Boyle, Benada, Moyne, Sligo, etc.; by

\* Charles is not the English equivalent of Cormac, though passing now as such. "Cormac," says John O'Donovan in his "Origin and Meanings of Irish Family Names," *Irish Penny Journal*, p. 407, "has nothing whatever to do with Charles, for it is explained by all the glossographers as signifying 'son of the chariot,' and it is added 'that it was first given as a *sobriquet*, in the first century, to a Lagenian prince who happened to be born in a chariot while his mother was going on a journey, but that it afterwards became honourable, as the name of many great personages in Ireland. After the accession of Charles I, however, to the throne, many Irish families of distinction changed Cormac to Charles, in order to add dignity to the name by making it the same with that of the sovereign, a practice which has been generally followed ever since."

† In the Irish Charters in the Book of Kells (see *Irish Archæological Miscellany*, vol. i, p. 127), we have a charter granting certain lands for the use of pilgrims, but these lands, as part of Leyney, must have been first made over to the Monastery of Kells by the O'Haras. The following is a portion of this venerable document:—"The family of Kells have granted for the support of pilgrims Ardcamma, *i. e.* Baile Ui Midhrin, with its mill, and with all its land, and Baile Ui Chomhgain, with all its land and with its mill to God and to Columbkille. . . . In the presence of many distinguished leymen, *i. e.* in the presence of Tiernan O'Rourke, King of the men of all Briefny; Godfrey O'Reilly, King of Machaire Gaileng, and Ade O'Hara, etc., these two townlands, in Luigne of Connaught, were granted."



laying down their lives as martyrs for the faith,\* and by giving three bishops and a great number of priests and monks to the diocese of Achonry. Their love of field sports is sufficiently proved by the epithets we find attached to their names, such as *Arthur of the Horses*, *Donnell of the Hounds*; and this characteristic shows itself all along their line, up to the first of them that came to Connaught, Cormac Galeng, who was styled “a tamer of men and horses;” † while whoever, at the present time, on a hunting day sees Mr. C. W. O’Hara in the midst of his gallant company, at the “meet” of Collooney or Clara with the Annaghmore hounds and Annaghmore huntsman, starting for the field, must admit that the manly taste of the O’Haras for field sports exists still as strong as ever.

The O’Haras, though genuine Irish, and loyal to their country, could appreciate the good qualities of the English. O’Hara Boy and O’Hara Reagh were presented by Sir Donnell O’Connor, at Sligo, to Sir Henry Sydney, in 1566, during the first viceroyalty of that nobleman in Ireland. The O’Hara is said to have manifested, on the occasion, great admiration of the English, to gratify which he resolved to accompany Sir Henry, when returning to England, to the Court of the Queen. This we learn from the Viceroy himself, who writes as follows in his *Memoir of the Government of Ireland*:—“Went to Sligo, where the lord of the soyle, called O’Conor, made me and myne oste great chere

\* “After some time had elapsed, the friars returned to Moyne; and on entering the church found O’Hara dead, and bathed in his blood, on the steps of the grand altar, where he thought his presence might induce the English to respect the holy place, but where the sacrilegious miscreants had murdered him.”—*The Franciscan Monasteries, etc.*: by Rev. C. P. Meehan, M.R.I.A., page 60.

† In the *Four Masters*, under the year 1560, we read: “Teige Boy, the son of Kian, son of Ollioll O’Hara, was slain by Cathal Oge, the son of Teige, son of Cathal Oge O’Connor. For a long time before there had not appeared in Connaught, of the race of Cormac Gaileang, a man more distinguished for horsemanship and hospitality to strangers than he.”

and entertaynment, and presented his lordings to me, namely, O'Dowde, two MacDonoghs, two O'Haras (distinct additions they have, but I have forgotten them)—and O'Hara brought me to Athlone, and promised to come to me to Dublyn. He fell in such love and liking of Englishmen and English government, as he vowed to goe into England, to behold the majestie of our sovereign, which he performed."—*Ulster Journal of Archæology*, vol. iii. p. 40.

At the time of the Cormac that signed Perrott's indenture, the O'Haras had lost somewhat of their strength and splendour, as the much rarer reference to them in the annals of the sixteenth century, than in those of previous periods, amply proves. The high social position that the family held in the thirteenth century appears from the well known historical fact that Conor Got O'Hara was one of the four princes committed to King John, in 1209, as hostage for the loyalty of Cathal Crowderg O'Connor, King of Connaught. And if their dignity somewhat waned at a later period, it was very much owing to their own interne-cine quarrels; for there were few families so divided; and the following entry from the annals of Loch Ke, under the year 1234, is only one of many that might be cited to show the fatal and cruel divisions of the O'Haras:—"Aedh O'Hara, King of Leyney, was killed by Donnchadh, son of Duarcan O'Hara (a house was burned over him, and he was killed in the door of the house, after coming out of it) in revenge for his having first killed his brother, and the five sons of his father's brother, and having blinded his other brother."

In the sixteenth century many of the O'Haras were attainted, and their lands confiscated.\* In an inquisition

\* On the occasion of an entry of the *Four Masters*, under the year 1586, recording the death of the "son of O'Hara Boy, namely Brian, the son of Cian, son of Oilioll of the Gailenga of Connaught," John O'Donovan observes in a note, "The Gailenga of Connaught, who received their name from Cormac Gaileng, son of Tadgh, son of Cian, son of Olioll

taken before John Crofton—date and place illegible—we learn that “Donald O’Hary was attainted of high treason” on the 21st of September, 1585, and seven quarters of land adjudged to the crown; in another inquisition, sped before Richard Boyle, at Ballymote, on the 12th of January, 1593, we find, among the names of persons attainted in the County Sligo, those of Rory Reagh O’Hara, Tomultagh M’William O’Hara, Owen M’Edmund O’Hara, Arthur O’Hara, Donald O’Hara, and Brian O’Hara; and in an inquisition held in Sligo on the 30th June, 1617, before Thomas Brown, it was found that “William, son of Corcashel O’Hara, and Owen O’Hara of Castlecarragh, Brian O’Hara, Art O’Hara, and Donald O’Hara, were attainted of the murdering Teigue Dall O’Higgin, his wife, and child.” \*

Olum, King of Munster, originally possessed the whole of the diocese of Achonry, but at the period of which we are now treating, their territory was very narrow. O’Hara Boy possessed about the eastern half of the barony of Leyney, in the County of Sligo.”

\* O’Reilly’s *Irish Writers*, p. clxx. O’Reilly adds, “To the last of his poems is attributed the cause of his death. It is a satire on six persons of the tribe of O’Hara, who forcibly took some refreshments in his house, and so severely were the lashes of the poet felt by the delinquents, that they some time afterwards returned to his house, seized him, cut out his tongue, and otherwise abused him; of which barbarous treatment it is said he died.”

In *The Life and Letters of Florence MacCarthy Mor*, at page 369, there is mention of *The Tribes of Ireland*, a satire on Irish chiefs, written in the beginning of the seventeenth century. M’Carthy, says the author O’Daly, feared to satirize O’Donnell, “remembering Teige Dall O’Higgin, whose tongue had been cut out, and his wife murdered, for satirizing the sept of O’Hara.” O’Daly, however, was not deterred by the fate of Teige Dall from attacking the O’Haras himself, for he does not forget them in *The Tribes of Ireland*; but it is significant that he lets the *Sligo O’Haras alone*, while he vents his venom on the *Antrim branch of the family* in this fashion—

“The families of O’Haras, of small booleys,  
A tribe that never earned fame;  
Their music is the humming of the fly,  
And the grumbling of penury in each man’s mouth.

The circumstances of Teigue Dall O'Higgin's murder are so remarkable, and throw so much light on the period in which he lived, that it is well to mention them. Teigue Dall was the leading Irish poet of the day, and came of a family in which the poetic faculty seems to have been hereditary, and which gave more bards to Ireland than any other; either of ancient or modern times. Brother to Maolmuire O'Higgin, Archbishop of Tuam, who was also a poet, he was a person of recognized social status, and owned fifteen quarters of land in the County Sligo. He

A long wide house on the middle of the highway,  
And not enough for a pismire there of food;  
Heart-ache to the hungry kerne,  
That did not build a crib-house of rods on a mountain."

This is the literal translation, as we find it in John O'Donovan's edition of *The Tribes of Ireland*, p. 59. Charles Mangan renders the passage thus:—

"The tribe of O'Hara are men of some height,  
But they've never been known to stand stoutly in fight;  
They have no other music but the hum of the flies,  
And hunger stares forth from their deep-sunken eyes!

There is one waste, wide, void, bleak, black, cold, old pile  
On the highway; its length is nearly one-third of a mile;  
Whose it is I dont know, but you hear the rats gnawing  
Its timbers inside, while its owner keeps sawing."

—*Tribes of Ireland*, p. 86.

Some think that the O'Higgins were the official poets of the O'Haras, but there appears to be no authority for this opinion. In the *Annals of the Four Masters*, A.D. 1439, O'Clumain (O'Coleman) is given as chief poet to O'Hara.

So far from there being any ground for the reflection of the satirist on the courage of the O'Haras, the family was distinguished from the earliest times for its warlike spirit. O'Dugan designates them—

*Righ Luighne na m-bladhál ;*  
*Luighne ne lasch lann.*

The lords of Leyney of high fame;  
The men of Leyney of warlike swords.

composed nineteen poems, including one of a very complimentary character on the genealogy of the O'Haras, in which he traces back the pedigree of Cormac O'Hara Buidhe of Coolany to Olioll Ollum. It may have been this very poem that brought Teigue Dall the ill-will of the O'Haras Reagh, who would resent, as taken from themselves, the honour conferred on the Coolany branch of the family. However this may be, they came to the poet's house uninvited, and ate and drank against his will the best eatables and drinkables that the place afforded.

Instead of invoking the law, Teigue Dall, in an evil hour, invoked the muse, and hurled at his persecutors a cutting satire of forty-eight verses, which stung them to madness; and, while writhing under the infliction, they proceeded in a body to Teigue Dall's house, and, after throwing the satirist on the ground, and binding him, cut out his tongue, of which inhuman treatment the wretched man soon died. O'Reilly \* is unable to give the date of Teigue Dall's death, and states it is not recorded in Browne's inquisition; but he might have found the desired information in another inquisition, one taken before Nicholas Brady, at Ballymote, on the 6th of June, 1610, which informs us, "That Thadeus Cæcus O'Higgin, ut vocatur, died on the 8th June, 1595, seized of fifteen quarters of land in the County Sligo, that Teigue Oge is his son, and was twelve years old at the father's death, and that he entered into possession" of the property.

The seventeenth century, which was so fatal to the other leading families of North Connaught—the O'Connors Sligo, the O'Rorkes, the O'Dowdas, and M'Donoghs, was propitious to the O'Haras Buidhe. Teigue O'Hara Buidhe, the son of Cormac, was a man of great worldly wisdom, and played his part so skilfully in those difficult times, that he obtained from King James I, on the 28th of

\* Idem—Ibidem.

October, in the fourteenth year of that monarch's reign, an extensive grant of land and privileges, including or containing :

“The castle town and lands of Coolany, Carrowoughteragh-Coolany, Carroweightragh-Coolany, Carrow-rahoaise, Carrowhingnish, Carrowganvy, Carrowneclohie, Carrowshancohie, Carrow-kortlekirhin, Carrowmorrey, Carrowneadin, Carrowcashel, each 1 quarter; Leaghcarrowneleabragh,  $\frac{1}{2}$  quarter, Carrownecrivy, Carrowclandarrar, Carrowneboilly, Carrowneleacky, Carrownecully, Carrowcashelvrangan, Carrowlissrickeylisse, Carrowdromore, Carrowclonvickoola, Carrowvollain *alias* Carrowsessvickittricka, Carrowsessivickamany, Carrowneworan, Carrowtobbervickooover, Carrowteevin, each one quarter; the town and lands of Kungell\* with 2 quarters, viz., Carrowkungell and Carrowkungellrenagh; Carrowgortdrasse, Carrownbill, 1 quarter; Ballinkearne with 4 quarters, viz., Carrowfelduffe, Carrowkarne, Carrowknocklane, Carrownagorman; Ballielaragh,† with 4 quarters, viz., Carrowaughterclaragh, Carrowweightraghtclaragh, Carrowroaghayn, Carrowlugdagown; Carrownlaght, Carrowfinlough,‡ Carrowragran, each 1 quarter; Leaghcarrowdurush,  $\frac{1}{2}$  quarter, Carrowrabarin, Carrowcrivan, Carrowlamy, Carrowvickarrack, Carrownmullin, Carrowiranema, Carrowarderioughteragh,§ Carrow-

\* A great battle was fought in Kungell, of which the *Four Masters* thus write, under the year 1087, “A battle was fought between Rory O’Conor King of Connaught, and Hugh, son of Art O’Ruairc Lord of Conmaine and Breffney, at Conachail in Corann, where O’Ruairc was defeated and killed. Of this battle it was said—

Seven years and eighty full,  
And a thousand fair, complete,  
Since Christ was born without a stain,  
Till the battle of Conachail in Corann.”

John O’Donovan identifies Conaichail with “Cunghill, a townland in the parish of Achonry, barony of Leyney, and County of Sligo.” Note under year 1087, in O’Donovan’s *Four Masters*.

† This is the place now called Clara. Carrownlaght is part of Clara, at present commonly called *Laghta*, and was of old—probably in Pagan times—a place of burial. It commands a very extensive prospect, as Pagan burying places commonly do.

‡ Carrowfinlough, Carroragran, and Leaghcarrowdurush, have undergone little changes of name, the first being still called Finlough, the second Rathgran, and the third Durush, by Irish-speaking people, but by others Federneen.

§ Carrowarderioughteragh and Carrowarderiweightragh are now known as Ardree, and form part of the Annaghmore demesne.



ardcriweightragh, each 1 quarter; Leagharrowranaghan, Leagharrowcurra, Leagharrownerrnin, Leagharrowenlorgan, 1 quarter; Leagharrowdownecorra  $\frac{1}{2}$  quarter; Leagharrowtringlenara *alias* Triencashel, Leagharrownegirah, 1 quarter; Leagharrowknockiarra, Leagharrowlugewarry, Leagharrowcorcaerlam, Leagharrowkoltyleyney, Leagharrowcoilly, Leagharrownemoddo, Leagharrowtullegan, Leagharrownaforshogi, Carrowmore *alias* Carrownemore, 1 quarter; Eadinesheeh, Carrowkiol, 1 quarter; Carrowneleghan, Carrownecrivty, each 1 quarter; half of Knockdwo with 2 quarters, viz., Carrowknockdwo and Carrowkarnemore; the town and lands of Doghurne, the quarters of Carrownegarkfrihe *alias* Carrownebrinny, Carrowkeile, Carrowleatrum, Carrowpollroan *alias* Carrowmollogh, Carrowmoilleghan, Carrowneogh, each 1 quarter; half of Kshell, with the two quarters of Carrowdrumteample *alias* Ballynecurrie *alias* Carrowcashel, Carrowcoolecoyle, Carrowentracky, Carrowcloongownagh, Carrowkeydely, Carrowletterbroar, Carrowkinkoileclunbaragh, Carrowcloonbarne, Carrowkillmarnada, each 1 quarter; Teagharrowtrumna, 1 quarter; Carrownelorgan, Carrowweakearney, 1 quarter; Leagharrowcollman,  $\frac{1}{2}$  quarter; Leagharrowlissnefahie,  $\frac{1}{2}$  quarter; Ballyannagh\* containing 4 quarters, viz., Carrowannagoughteragh, Carrowcolglihlan, Carrowenwala, Carrowannaghightragh *alias* Carrowannaghbigge; parcels of the estate of Teaghtample, the chief rent of 2s. 8d. sterling out of each of the 5 quarters of Tawniewilliam,† Balliowilliam, Cashelvickanan, Konee, and Kilvoney, belonging to the town of Ballasadarra, called Termonland; 7s. out of each of the 4 quarters of Ard cotton, viz., Carrowcassellmore, Carrowdrumcorba, Carrowlugnemackin and Carnefinne; out of the 3 quarters of Kilnemanagh, 10s. 8d.; out of Ramore, 13s. 4d., and 16 meders of wheat; out of each of the 8 quarters of Killorne, viz., Lissilagh, Ravickernan, Racolman, Lord Dynoid, Tremkearney, Carrowneclaragh, Carrownecloonin, twelve meders of wheat; out of Coylemore, 30 wooden dishes, and six stone of iron; rent, 6s. 8d. Irish. To hold a yearly fair at Coolany on 15 August; and the day following unless the same fall on a Sunday; with a court of pie-powder and the usual tolls, rent 6s. 8d. To

\* Now Annaghmore.

† Tawniewilliam lies to the south of Ballysadare, and is now called Knox's Park; Balliowilliam lies to the south-west of Ballysadare, and goes now by the name of Curhownagh; and these places, most probably, got the names in question from their having been in the possession of Bryan Fitzwilliams, "one of her Majesty's servants."—(See page 17). The quarter land, called Cashelvickanan, lay to the west of Balliowilliam, where a small patch of land is still known as "Cashel Garden." Konee retains the old name still, but the exact situation of Kilvoney is not so clear. It may possibly be the spot on which the church of Kildalough stood, but more probably it is the district marked as *Coolmoney* in a map of the *Down Survey*, and lying between Cashelvickanan and the sea.



hold for ever the 4 quarters of Ballyannagh as of the castle of Dublin, in common soccage, and all the rest in capite by the 40th part of a Knight's fee, for a fine of 40s. Irish."

This grant gave Teague a title, according to English law, to lands, most of which had been in the possession of the family from the third century by Irish tenure. For some cause not recorded he alienated, without the leave of the king, the property thus granted; or, rather, vested it in trustees for the benefit of himself and family. If one may venture a conjecture in the matter, it is likely that Teague took this step, lest, being a Catholic, he should be deprived of the estate on account of religion. This would appear the more probable from a tradition in the neighbourhood to the effect, that the father of the first O'Hara who became Protestant,\* having been asked to join the new

\* The O'Haras figure prominently on the "Convert Roll," as the following names extracted from the Roll will show:—

| Name of "Converts." | Residence.              | Date of Certificate. | D. of Enrollment. |
|---------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| O'Hara, Henry,      | Tullyhuh,               | 1 Dec., 1738,        | 2 Dec., 1738.     |
| O'Hara, Mary,       | Dublin,                 | 1 Dec., 1738,        | 2 Dec., 1738.     |
| O'Hara, Charles,    | Longford,               | 17 May, 1740,        | 22 May, 1740.     |
| O'Hara, John,       | Dublin,                 | 16 Dec., 1757,       | 16 Dec., 1757.    |
| O'Hara, Edmond,     | Dublin,                 | 28 Sep., 1759,       | 17 Oct., 1759.    |
| O'Hara, Cormick,    | Dublin,                 | 1 April, 1761,       | 10 April, 1761.   |
| O'Hara, Charles,    | Crosboyne, Co.<br>Mayo, | 22 April, 1761,      | 23 April, 1761.   |
| O'Hara, Alicia,     | Swords,                 | 13 Aug., 1765,       | 19 Sept. 1765.    |
| O'Hara, Roger,      | P. of Achonry,          | 26 March, 1779,      | 15 June, 1779.    |

Doubtless these O'Haras were all from the country, but, to create doubts as to their identity, some of them resided a few days in Dublin, and gave that address.

In the following extract of a letter from Primate Boulter to the Bishop of London, we find mention of an O'Hara, who from the context, would seem to have been a priest:—

"The priest your Lordship mentions has been several times with me, and I do not find any of my brethren object to his sincerity; but most of the priests here are so ignorant, and there is so much hazard in trusting

religion, refused for himself, but encouraged his two, or, at least, one of the two sons to conform, in order to save the property. And, in fact, Kean, the younger son, is the first O'Hara we find set down in public documents as a Protestant, nothing being said on this head respecting Teague Oge, the elder brother, who died unmarried at the age of 22. Their mother was Sheela O'Rorke. It was the

them in our church, that it is very hard to put them in any way here of getting their bread. If O'Hara could be put into some little business in the West Indies, I believe it would be better for him; but I have not yet talked with him whether he is willing to go thither, nor shall I till I know whether your Lordship would be willing to send him."—*Letters of Lord Primate Boulter*, vol. i, p. 144.

The Primate, though always anxious to make converts, seems to have had very little faith in their sincerity. In a letter to Lord Carteret, he writes:—"As to the bill requiring some years conversion in Papists before they practise the law, your Lordship knows the bad case we are in here with new converts practising, and the dangerous consequence it may have in length of time."—*Idem*, p. 152.

And his suspicions were natural enough, if the "convert" mentioned in the following extract of a letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury was a fair specimen of the class:—"I have lately received a letter from your Grace relating to one Mr. Carol, a convert, which I had answered sooner, but that I staid till I had an opportunity of talking with my Lord Chief Baron about his case, who tells me he has an extraordinary bad character, whatever his religion may be, that he has been convicted of endeavouring to suborn witnesses, and that a prosecution has been ordered against him in the Exchequer for making a rasure in a record. I shall always be ready to support any real Protestant here; but I submit it to your grace whether there be a possibility of shewing any countenance to one who has so bad a character."—*Id. Ibidem*, p. 224.

In a letter to the Duke of Newcastle, the Primate returns to the subject, and asks the Duke's support for a bill, that had been sent to London for the approval of English ministers, and that was meant by the Primate to alter the state of things complained of. The following is an extract from the letter:—

"The practice of the law, from the top to the bottom, is at present mostly in the hands of new converts, who give no other security on this account, than producing a certificate of their having received the sacrament in the Church of *England* or *Ireland*, which several of them who were Papists at London, obtain on the road hither, and demand to be admitted barristers in virtue of it, at their arrival; and several of them have Popish wives and mass said in their houses, and breed up their

universal belief in the neighbourhood that Kean renounced the old religion for land, and not for conscience sake ; and, in confirmation of this, an exclamation of his is regularly handed down from father to son ; for it is said that as the neophyte was returning from Collooney, after recanting, he was constantly muttering, while riding along, an old Irish proverbial saying : “ *an cuirce do thabhairt air ant eorna,*” which, when translated, means, “ Ah ! me—Ah ! me, to give up the wheat for the barley ! ”

In alienating the property granted by James, without the king’s licence, Teague violated the law, and incurred the risk of losing his estate. And the consequence, no doubt, would have been serious only for Kean’s change of religion ; but no royal favour was beyond the reach of one of the old Irish gentry who had renounced the faith of his

children Papists. Things are at present so bad with us, that if about six should be removed from the bar to the bench here, there will not be a barrister of note left that is not a convert.

“ To put some stop to this evil, this bill endeavours to obtain some farther security of the sincerity of these converts : 1. By obliging all that come to the bar hereafter, or practise as attornies or solicitors, etc., or act as sub-sheriffs, sheriff’s clerks, or deputy officers in the courts, to make a declaration against Popery, and take the oath of abjuration before they are admitted to practise : 2. That every convert shall have been so five years before his admission, or so practising or acting : 3. That he breed up all his children under fourteen, as well as those born before his conversion, as those after, in the Protestant religion : and 4. That whoever fails in any of these points, shall incur the penalties and disabilities to which those relapsing from the Protestant religion to Popery are liable.

“ Everybody here is sensible of the terrible effects of this growing evil, and both Lords and Commons are most eagerly desirous of this bill. We have likewise, by this bill, inflicted the same penalties on every convert or Protestant who shall breed up any child a Papist. But if the latter part be thought too severe, or have too strong a party against it, I hope, however, that what relates to lawyers, attornies, solicitors, sub-sheriffs, etc., will be granted us, or the Protestant interest must suffer exceedingly here.”—*Letters by Lord Primate Boulter*, vol. i. p. 182.

Primate Boulter, never tired in the great work to which he devoted himself of “ converting ” everybody, but “ *Nisi Dominus ædificaverit domum in vanum laboraverunt qui ædificant eam.* ”—Psal. cxxxvi, 6.

forefathers to embrace that of the English king; and accordingly Kean\* had little difficulty in procuring a new royal grant to cure the defect of title caused by Teague's alienation. This grant is found in the Patent Roll of the 22nd of James I, Part 2, bears date the 24th March, 1625, and is in the following terms:—

“Grant of pardon of alienation for Thadeus or Teague O'Hara of Coolany, Sligo, who being seized in fee of the castle, town, and lands of Coolany, 4 quarters; Carrowcloghie, 1 quarter; Leaghcarrowdewresse,  $\frac{1}{2}$  quarter; Carrowlaght, 1 quarter; Carrowfirlough, 1 quarter; Carrowragran, 1 quarter; Carrowamilla, 1 quarter; Carrowranarrow, 1 quarter; Carrowrathbarrin, 1 quarter; Carrowknockanefossagh, 1 quarter; Annagh, als. Balleannagh, 4 quarters; and the quarter of Carrownecarrigie, by his deed of October 2, 1616, aliened the above lands to Oliver St. John, Knight, Viscount Grandison, Sir John King, Knight, William Taafe of Ballymote, Knight, Brian M'Donogh of Cowlevony, Thadeus O'Higgins of Coolecovally, and Owen M'Swine of Altenekeill, to hold for the use of the said O'Hara, his heirs and assigns for ever. Also the said Thadeus O'Hara, being seized in fee of half the town and lands of Knockdowe, 2 quarters; viz.: Knockdowe and Carugmore *alias* Carrowmore, Sligo county, by his deed dated 22nd April, 1616, aliened the premises to Manus M'Sherragh of Knockanodown to hold subject to redemption. Also the said Thadeus O'Hara, being seized in fee of the lands of Carrownegirah, 1 quarter; Ranecourlan, 1 quarter; Knockiharra, 1 quarter; Coilte-Leyney,  $\frac{1}{2}$  quarter; Tullaghan,  $\frac{1}{2}$  quarter; by his deed dated January 2, 1613, aliened the premises to Andrew Crean of Annagh, to hold subject to redemption. Also the said Thadeus O'Hara, being seized in fee of the lands of Carrowkeille, 1 quarter; Carrowmore, 1 quarter; Gortrashey, 1 quarter; Tubber M'Revelin, 1 quarter; by his deed of 25 November, 1614, aliened the premises to Patrick French Fitz-Stephen of Galway to hold subject to redemption. All which appears in a certain inquisition taken at Sligo 14 August, 1619; fine 75s. Irish.”

Teigue is said to have died in 1616,† and in that year made over to his brother Cormac of Mollane several quar-

\* Of the three persons returned in 1644, by the judges, as fit for the shrievalty of the County Sligo, namely, Thomas Crofton, Esq., William Crofton, Esq., and Keane O'Hara, Esq., the last named was selected for the office. He served also as sheriff in 1665.

† Teigue's will is in the Record Office, Dublin. It is a short document, and, is in substance, as follows:—“In Dei nomine. Amen. I Teigue O'Hara of Coolany in the County of Sligo Esquire . . . first, I will and

ters of land, and as he acted in this proceeding, too, without the king's leave, James was induced by a fine of £6 13s. 4d.—a large sum in those days—to issue a pardon of alienation to “Cormac O’Hara of Dowmore, in Sligo County, in respect of following lands:—Kearowheshwicoman, Kerrowheshwickitrig, Kerrowelumtulla, Kerrowdowmore, Kerrowlishmacellis, Kerrownequilly, Kerrowlecque, and seven other quarters in Leyney; enfeoffed to him by his brother Teigue O’Hara of Coolany, in said county, by deed dated 4th October, 1616, to hold to him and his heirs male, remainder to the right heirs of said Cormac; the licence of the king not having been previously obtained.”

Having mentioned Cormac of Mollane, it may be added, that he had three sons, namely, Oliver, who, after marrying a daughter of Roderick O’Flaherty, went into the

bequeath unto my loving wife Siby, during her life, the towns, lands, and quarters and parcels following, viz.: the Castle, Town, Lands, and Mills of Coolany, etc., etc., etc., in full recompence of all her Dowers and Thirds; I will, and my will is that my eldest son Teige Oge O’Hara, etc., etc., shall receive etc., etc., etc.; and that my second son Kayne O’Hara, etc., etc., etc. Dated the Fourth day of October, Anno Domini millesimo sexcentesimo decimo sexto. Witnesses to this will Callagh Mc. *als.* M’Jurdan, Moilmorry M’Swyney, Bernardine . . . M’Cultagh, John Waters, cleric.”

This Teague had a lawsuit with the notorious Miler M’Grath, Archbishop of Cashel; but, unfortunately, the particulars of the transaction seem to be lost; for, after a diligent search in the Record Office, all the reference to the proceedings that could be discovered is the following few words, which are found in an inquisition that is, for the most part, illegible:—“In the case of Teige O’Hara, plaintiff, and Archbishop of Cashel, defendant. At Athlone the last of August 1612 by the Vice president and Councill of Connaught. Decree.” One can also make out, in the inquisition, the words “Ballysadare” and “Lordship,” from which it would appear, that Miler M’Grath sought to possess himself of the church lands of Ballysadare, as of so many other places; and that O’Hara defeated the attempt by maintaining those lands to be part of his own lordship; a contention which he could make good; for these lands being part of Leyney, formed, therefore, a part of O’Hara’s lordship or patrimony. The same lands are marked in the parish map of the *Down Survey*, as “Protestant Land,” and as belonging to “Kean O’Hara,” an “Irish Protestant.”

insurrection of 1641, and forfeited; Brian, of whom we know nothing; and Cormac, who married another daughter of Roderick O'Flaherty, and by her had three sons—Roger, Heber, and Michael; and five daughters. Michael was a Dominican friar; and Mr. Hardiman was of opinion that the following extract from the O'Gorman MSS. in the Royal Irish Academy refers to Roger:—"Captain Patrick O'Hara, son of Roderick or Roger O'Hara (captain in the service of King Philip V, slain Anno 1702, in the battle near the river of Poe, in Italy), and of Bridget Burke, daughter of Charles Burke Fitz-Richard Fitz-Daird, of the house of Theobald Burke, created by King Philip the Third of Spain Marquis of Mayo. All his predecessors were Catholics since the conversion of Ireland to Christianity, and he descended of the best of the family of O'Hara; a family lineally descended from Olill Olum, A.D. 137, King of Munster, whose third son, Kien, was father of Thady, whose son, Cormac Galeng, was father of Lauis, of whose son, Fidcuir, O'Hara and O'Gara sprang."\*

From the official documents quoted we learn the interesting fact, that Annaghmore belonged formerly to the Templehouse estate; for it is expressly stated in James the First's grant to Teague Buidhe, that the "4 quarters of Ballyannagh are parcels of the estate of Taghtample." And we

\* The Oliver O'Hara who is buried in the Abbey of Court, may have been another son of this Roger, for we read on his tomb in the old choir of the church, the following inscription: Clare Olivere jaces hic O'Hara nate Rogeri, cum proavis, tumulo quem tua cura novat. Ætat. 78. Crux Christi Domini portus et ara seni—1725."

In his *History of Ireland and Annals of Boyle*, vol. ii, p. 239, the late Mr. D'Alton, in a note under this entry in the *Annals*, "Hugh O'Hara, King of Leyney, died," found at the year 1155, observes:—"Any illustration of this ancient family from this compiler's manuscript is here declined, as it is understood that a work, to which its illustration will more legitimately apply, is about to be published." The writer does not know to what "work" Mr. D'Alton refers, or whether it has been published. Might it be the *Annals of the Four Masters*?

find that, in consequence, the O'Haras possessed Annaghmore by a different title from that of their other lands, holding Annaghmore in soccage, but the rest *in capite*. Probably they would never have obtained Annaghmore from James if they were not in actual possession, having helped themselves to it when they got their opportunity, without warrant of English law. The time at which they appropriated it is not known, but it is certain, as has been seen, that Cormac, the father of Teague, possessed Annaghmore and Ballinacarrow. The possession of Annaghmore King James I legalized by the grant to Teague Buidhe; and as we find no mention of Ballinacarrow in that document, it is likely that O'Hara surrendered Ballinacarrow in consideration of receiving in due legal form the fertile lands of Ballyannagh.

The O'Haras seem to have been near losing their estate under Strafford. If this unscrupulous and resolute despot—the Bismarck of the seventeenth century—lived to complete the plantation of Connaught, it was like to fare ill with that family; for, in addition to the dangers that threatened the other proprietors of Connaught, a special one menaced them. From the time that Strafford set about robbing the old lords of the soil, and vesting the immediate ownership of the province in the king, applications poured in from all sides for portions of the land, of which his majesty was to have the disposal. The solicitors, in general, were satisfied with claiming an estate, without specifying this or that one, and leaving it to the king to accommodate them where he pleased, but there was one applicant, a Scotch lord named Kirkeudbright, who coveted the plains of Leyney, and shamelessly proposed for them, though in the possession of others. And the cunning Scotchman sent in his proposal or petition through Laud, the Archbishop of Canterbury; the man who, of all others, exercised most influence on the iron will of Strafford, as well as on the narrow, obstinate mind of Charles. The



Archbishop enclosed Kirkcudbright's application to Strafford in a letter dated Lambeth, July 6th, 1635, and introduced the matter in this, which is the concluding paragraph of that letter:—

“ So for this time I will cease to be further troublesome to you, but wish you all good success in the Plantation of Connaught, where, while you are, the King's express pleasure is that you take consideration of this enclosed paper; it concerns a lord of Scotland, that is a tenant to the Londoners, but to tell you the truth, his name is too hard for my memory; and when you have considered it, the King would have you return me your answer, and then he will grant or deny, as you hold the thing and conditions fit. I leave your Lordship to the grace of God, and rest

“ Your Lordship's

“ Very loving friend and servant.

“ W. CANT.”

Kirkcudbright's application was made in a letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, which runs as follows:—

“ MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE,—

“ When the Bishop of Rosse was here, I had some conference with him about a church-living I have sufficient right unto by the law of Scotland, which is worth unto me annually £150 sterling, and if it will please his Majesty to bestow upon me the land of O'Harareough and O'Haraboy lying in the county of Sligo and barony of Lynee in the Kingdom of Ireland, (which said O'Harareough and O'Haraboy and their predecessors have ever been rebels to the crown of England, as witness Kinsale and all other rebellions)\* I will be content to give my church-

\* The O'Haras were what Kirkcudbright calls them “rebels to the crown of England,” from the very beginning, for we learn from the old Norman poem, called *The Conquest of Ireland*, composed in the twelfth century, that they took part in demolishing the Castle of Hugh de Lacy at Trim, the first castle erected by the English in Ireland. The following are the words of the poem:—

“ O'Chonchor tut à estrus,  
De Connoth li reis orgullus,  
Od sei menad O'Flaverti,  
Mac Dermot e Mac Herathi  
Reis O'Kelli de O'Mani,  
O'Harthire e O'Hinnathi,  
O'Cabre e O'Flannagan,  
E pus don O'Manethan  
O'Dude e O'Manethan, etc.”

O'Harthire is O'Har. The late Dean Butler in his *Notices of the Castle*

living unto the bishop of Edinburgh, or to any other bishop the King may appoint ; and also I will be bound to build, plant the land with British, and pay such rents to the King, as my Lord Deputy shall think fitting, and take it in satisfaction of the service done unto the crown by my predecessors, and for my own service to his Majesty, whom I have served and his late father twenty two years, a gentleman of his Majesty's Privy Chamber ; And about eight or nine years since, upon his Majesty's commands I did levy, arm and furnish with horses great saddles and all other furniture, and transport into Ireland 50 horsemen and 100 foot at my own charge, which stood me in at least £2000 sterling, and at that time his Majesty promised me, if I could find out any land in Ireland, in his Majesty's gift, he would bestow it upon me. If it will please your Grace to put his Majesty in mind of this, you shall tye me ever hereafter to be

“ Your Grace's humble servant,

“ KIRKCUDBRIGHT.”

—Strafford's *Letters*, vol. i, p. 439.

Here, decidedly, in this simoniacal proposal, was a terrible danger for the O'Haras. An application, backed by the King and Laud, whose wishes were law to Strafford, could hardly fail of success. And to make sure of his prey, the Scotch lord came to Ireland, received a troop of horse from the government, attached himself to the service of Strafford, doing all the dirty work needed, and worming himself so thoroughly into that despot's confidence, that the Lord Deputy relied chiefly on the evidence of Kirkecudbright, and of that other congenial agent, Sir Frederick Hamilton, to vindicate himself from the charges made to the King against him. But the death of Kirkecudbright first, and the

*of Trim*, makes “O'Manethan,” be the name of O'Madden ; but it seems more likely to the writer that it is the old form of O'Banaghan, the O'Banaghans being neighbours of the O'Haras.

The O'Haras retained their anti-English feelings down to very recent times :—“No Puritan who had been cited before the High Commission of Laud, who had charged under Cromwell at Naseby, who had been prosecuted under the Conventicle Act, and who had been in hiding on account of the Rye House Plot, bore less affection to the House of Stuart than the O'Haras and McMahons, on whose support the fortunes of that house seemed now to depend.”—Macaulay's *History of England*.

Art. O'Hara, Prince of Leyney, was one of those who fell in the disastrous battle of Athenry in 1316.

execution of Strafford after, with the troubles that ensued, delivered the O'Haras from this great peril, and saved Leyney from the colony of "British," with which the Scotch lord promised to "plant the land." With such facts before him, an O'Hara cannot be blamed overmuch, if he should not feel as acutely as some others the tragic fate that overtook Charles, Laud, and Strafford, those three conspirators against the venerable patrimony of his family.

In the last quarter of the same century, another blow was aimed at the estate of the O'Haras, but this time, by a domestic enemy, named Rosanna O'Hara, alias Loftus, widow and relict of Kean O'Hara. This person, who was great-granddaughter of Archbishop Adam Loftus, and had been married to Richard Parsons, Esq., before her union with Mr. O'Hara, instituted a suit in which she, Henry Crofton, Esq., Senr., and Henry Crofton, Esq., were plaintiffs; and Adam O'Hara, Esq. and Sir Francis Gore, defendants; the object of the suit being to get possession of Annaghmore, Annaghbeg, Carrowenwalla, Gurtcherin, Ranarrow, Ardcrea, Carrowkeale, Carrowmore, Portdroasy, Tubbermacever and other lands, which, plaintiffs alleged, were conveyed to her by Kean O'Hara, on the 11th July, 1665, to have and to hold for sixty-one years in payment of her jointure. In their bill, plaintiffs allege, that "Kean O'Hara died on the 22nd October, 1675, and that Adam O'Hara entered into the aforesaid lands and kept the profits, and they now pray that Richard Lord Baron of Collooney, Sir Francis Gore, James Birne, Philip Ormsby, and Adam O'Hara, being the present tenants and occupiers of the lands, be compelled to attorn tenants to plaintiffs." Adam O'Hara and Sir Francis Gore plead in defence, that the conveyance depended on two conditions, first on Rosanna's cohabiting with Kean O'Hara, and, second, on Kean's life; that both conditions failed, she refusing to cohabit with him for a year before his death, and he being now dead; that Adam, as elder son and heir, entered into possession of the

lands; that "the three quarters of Annagh and the two quarters Portdraosey, and Tubbermaciver were waste and so continued till the time of plaintiff's action of recovery, so that defendant could not make one penny profit of the lands, while the other lands were in mortgage to Roger Smith;" that plaintiff "had no reason to put herself to the charge and trouble of the said recovery, had she not been minded to be more vexatious to the defendant than necessary;" and that Adam O'Hara was now ready to pay what he had received for Gurttherin, Ranarrow, Ardcrea, Carrowkeale, and Carrowmore, the reason why he did not pay before being, that plaintiff "refused to produce the deed." The upshot of these pleadings and proceedings was a decree, "given at his Majesty's court of Exchequer, 30th of November 1678," in favour of plaintiffs, for £154. 7s. 6d., a result which was a triumph for the defendants; for though £154 was a substantial sum in those days, it could not seriously affect the O'Hara estate, whereas if Rosanna Loftus had carried her point, the best part of the Annaghmore property would have been taken out of the hands of its owners, with the greatest probability of its never coming into the possession of an O'Hara again.

Though the O'Haras seem to have denied that Annaghmore had ever belonged to the Templars, still they acted as if they believed or, at least, feared this to have been the case; for, as was seen above,\* they solicited and obtained a grant of the place from the English king, who alone, according to English law, was competent to dispose of the suppressed monasteries; and, in the days of the Kilkenny Confederation, when there was a prospect of the Catholic Church acquiring commanding influence in the country, they applied to the Pope's Nuncio, Rinuccini, to cure any defect that lurked in a title derived from a royal grant; thus acting like some high families in modern France, who

\* See page 379.

bring up some of their members monarchists, and others republicans, in order to be able to weather the storm, however the wind blows. Rinuccini, who had never much misgivings about his own powers, and who was always disposed to do a good turn for the old Irish, absolved the O'Haras from any censures they might have incurred, in the past, by holding Annaghmore, and dispensed from any law that could interfere with their holding it in the future; stipulating only, that they should accord suitable support to their parish priest in case they learned, on inquiry, that he suffered from the secularization of the property. Whether it was that Errill O'Hara, who was a Catholic, and lived in Meemlagh, acted on behalf of Kean O'Hara, who was a Protestant, and resided, probably, in Coolany, or that he was moving in his own interest, and trying to secure the place for himself, it was to Errill, and not to Kean, was addressed the letter of the Nuncio, which ran as follows:—

“JOHN BAPTISTE RINUCCINI, by the grace of God, and of the Apostolic See, ARCHBISHOP AND PRINCE OF FERMO and NUNCIO APOSTOLIC IN THE KINGDOM OF IRELAND, to our beloved son in Christ, the Chieftain Errill O'Hara, of the diocese of Achonry, health.

“We have received through our beloved father, Brother Bonaventure Mihan, Minorite, your petition in which you state that your forefathers, from time immemorial, were in peaceful possession of the Castle of Templehouse with sixteen quarters of land adjoining, in the diocese of Achonry; that you, too, had peaceful possession of this property, which had descended to you by hereditary right, till you were disturbed in the possession about forty years ago by an heretical pseudo-bishop on the pretext that the said castle belonged formerly to the Templars, or Knights of Malta, which he seems to have inferred from the name of the place.\* Fearing therefore that the castle and adjoining lands should be

\* The chief reasons for holding that Templehouse belonged once to the Templars, are, first, the Inquisitions already quoted (page 320), which were taken by Government officials, and which decided, after due inquiry on the spot, that the place had been a “Commandrye” of the Templars; second, the fact that the Hospitallers were the legal owners of Templehouse at the time of the suppression; third, the name *Teagh-Templa*, house of the Temple, or house of the Templars; and, fourth,

held by future bishops to be ecclesiastical property, having been entered as such in the recent register of the heretics, and that you should, in this way, be deprived of your lawful possession, he has humbly begged of us to secure you from those ecclesiastical pretensions, and, as far as may be necessary, to dispense you in regard to the aforesaid castle and lands. Wherefore, consulting for your interests, and mindful of your merits and the many sufferings and losses you have endured for the preservation of the Catholic faith, and the exaltation of the Catholic Church, as we have learned from trustworthy witnesses, we do hereby, in virtue of our Apostolic authority, first of all, absolve you from all excommunications, interdicts, and other ecclesiastical sentences and penalties (should you in any way have incurred such), so far only as may be necessary to qualify you for receiving the present favour, and in the next place, acceding to your supplications, we, in virtue of the same Apostolic authority, absolve you from all obligation in reference to the alleged right of the Church, and also so far as may be necessary, dispense you, so that you and your descendants may, notwithstanding the aforesaid recent register of the heretics, use and enjoy, with a safe conscience, the aforesaid castle and lands, even in the *forum externum*, and that no one, no matter what may be his dignity, shall presume to disturb or molest you; on condition,

local tradition. With all this evidence there could and can be but very little room for doubt. On the other hand it is strange that, in a MS. in the British Museum that professes to give "a full account of the property of the houses of the Knights of the Temple in Ireland, at their dissolution in the first year of King Edward II (1307), there is not one word of Templehouse, though there is mention of all the other foundations of the Templars in Ireland.—See this document in the *Kilkenny Archaeological Journal*, vol. xii. p. 331.

In answer to the argument, founded on the document of the British Museum, it may be said that the Templars perhaps no longer inhabited Templehouse in 1307, the date of the paper, though living there previously. From the *Annals of the Four Masters*, and various other quarters, we learn that Hugh O'Connor, King of Connaught, demolished the Castle of Teaghtempla in 1271, an event that may have caused the knights to forsake the place, being unable to rebuild in the midst of Irish enemies.

The name *Teagh-Templa*, or Templehouse, is not conclusive as to the ownership of the Templars—as the place might receive that name from some other temple than the one of the Templars. Indeed temple, or "tempul," in Irish, was a common name for an old church. For instance, the Church of Ballysadare was often called "Tempul-Mor," the big temple. In this way Templehouse might have had its name from the old church that existed in *Kil*; and this conjecture is the less improbable, as Rathbane, on which district the Church of Kil stood, appears in some old documents under the *alias* of *Clon-Tempul*, the meadow of the temple. So it is clear the O'Haras had something to say for themselves.



however, that you and your descendants, respectively accord congruous support to the parish priest, if you learn in the course of time that the said property belonged to the church, and that the parish priest used to derive his maintenance from it, and if not, that you give such alms as your confessor shall enjoin, but not otherwise, nor at any other time, nor in any other manner. In confirmation of which we have set our hand to this letter, and had it authenticated with our seal.

“Given from our residence at Killaloe, the Sixteenth of January, 1648, old style.

“Jo. B., Archbishop of Fermo and Apostolic Nuncio.”\*

[ORIGINAL.]

“Joannes Baptista Rinucinus Dei et Apostolicæ Sedis gratia Archiepiscopus et Princeps firmanus ac in regno Hiberniæ Nuncius Apostolicus Extraordinarius.

“Dilecto nobis in Christo filio Domino Urieli O’Hara, Capitaneo Diocesis Achadensis Salutem. Accepimus per dilectum patrem fratrem Bonaventuram Mihanum Minoritam tuas supplicationes quibus exponebas quod tui proavi ab immemorabili tempore fuerint in possessione pacifica Castelli Teachteampla cum sexdecim quarteriis terræ ipsi adjacentibus in Diocesi Achadensi quæ jure hereditario in tuam possessionem translata etiam pacifice possedisti donec per quemdam pseudo-episcopum hæreticum predicta possessione pacifica ante circiter 40 annos deturbatus fueris pretextu quod dictum castellum spectaverit olim ad Templarios sive equites Melitenses prout ex sono vocis videbatur inferre; quare veritus ne per episcopos subsequentes utpote recenti hæreticorum registro in heretico Dominio Castellum cum terris adjacentibus tanquam bona ecclesiastica inseri debeant (sic) ac proinde a tua legitima possessione expelli cogaris nomine tuo humillime coram nobis supplicavit quatenus super hujusmodi pretensionibus juris ecclesiæ et liberare et absolvere ac super predictis Castello et terris adjacentibus opus fuerit dispensare dignaremur. Nos igitur consulentes tuis commoditatibus propter merita tua et propter calamitates et incommoda plurima quæ ob fidei Catholicæ incolumitatem et ejusdem ecclesiæ splendorem et nuper passus fuisti prout fide digno testimonio commendaris, &c. in primis auctoritate Apostolica a quibusvis excommunicationis et interdicti vinculis aliisque ecclesiasticis sententiis et penis si quibus quomodolibet innodatus es ad presentium duntaxat asecutionem absolventes et absolutum fore consentientes in hac parte tuis supplicationibus inclinati super predicto pretento jure eadem auctoritate liberamus et absolvimus; nec non super predicto castello et sexdecim terræ quarteriis adjacentibus quatenus opus sit dicta auctoritate Apostolica

\* This document is written on a sheet of vellum, fifteen inches wide and eleven inches deep, which, besides the heading and signature, contains eighteen lines.



dispensamus ita ut tuta consciencia uti ac frui predicto castello et bonis adjacentibus tam tu quam tui descendentes valeatis et in foro externo etiam non obstante supradicto necenti hereticorum registro nemo quacunque dignitate præfulgens turbare aut molestare audeat soluta tamen parte et descendentes tuos respective congrua sustentatione Parochi si noveris ductu temporis dicta bona spectare ad ecclesiam, et Parochum ex eorum redditibus sustentari consuevisse vel si non eleemosyna aliqua arbitrio confessarii et non aliter nec alias aut alio modo. In quorum fidem presentes manu nostra firmavimus et sigillo muniri fecimus. Daluili ex nostra residentia die xvi Januari 1648, stylo veteri.

“JO. B. ARCHIEPISCOPUS FIRMANUS NUNCIUS APOSTOLICUS.”

Errill O'Hara gained nothing by this letter, for Cromwell coming to Ireland in 1649, and overrunning the country by himself or his generals, unfortunate Errill not only forfeited all pretensions to Annaghmore, but lost, in addition, the lands of Meemlough and Kinnagrelly, which were granted, a few years later, to Richard Coote, Baron of Collooney. It is probable that Errill passed Rinuccini's letter to Kean, and that it has since continued in the possession of Kean's descendants. Anyhow, it belonged to one of them—Mr. Charles O'Hara, M.P.—towards the close of last century; for it is a well-known fact in the neighbourhood that, as this gentleman was returning from England with the letter in his possession, the vessel in which he sailed was overtaken and overhauled by the redoubtable Paul Jones, who, while searching for valuables, found the document, which, however, after examining, the famous filibusterer returned to the owner, but not without having first detached and pocketed the seal, an appendage that is now conspicuous by its absence from the empty case still attached to the parchment.\*

\* Paul, it seems, was no respecter of persons in his attentions, as we learn from Father Cogan's *Diocese of Meath, Ancient and Modern*, that he treated Bishop Plunket, of that diocese, much in the same way as he had treated Mr. O'Hara. “Dr. Plunket,” says Father Cogan, “after making all necessary preparations, left Paris for Ireland, about the end of May, 1779, and on his way home was robbed of his books and episcopal outfit by no less a personage than Paul Jones the celebrated American privateer.”

There is little more known for certain of the old history of Annaghmore, but it is probable at least, if not quite certain, that the place once contained a monastery of nuns. There is a tradition to this effect in the neighbourhood, and people say that Nymphsfield—the name by which the place was known fifty years ago, and long before—is only a corruption of Nuns-field.\* They say, besides, that the site of this building is a spot two or three hundred yards in front of Annaghmore House, where the late Major O'Hara, about forty years since, had extensive brick foundations dug up, and the ground levelled off. It is added that the nuns came from Templehouse, to which they were so attached that they had some of its earth carried down and spread under their feet in the floor of the new nunnery.†

But it is, perhaps, as likely that the brickwork mentioned belonged to a Dominican monastery of men, which, there are some grounds to believe, existed once in Annaghmore. The reason for thinking so is derived from an inquisition, sped before John Crofton towards the close of Elizabeth's reign, but the manuscript (for the inquisition was never printed) is so injured by time as to make it impossible at present to ascertain much of what it originally

\* Mr. C. W. O'Hara is of opinion that "Nymphsfield is a fancy name given by some young ladies, staying at Annaghmore in the time of Major O'Hara's grandfather."

† The tradition is so clear that there can be hardly any doubt of a nunnery having been somewhere on the lands of Annaghmore. The country people, in speaking of the nuns that came from Templehouse, call the ladies *caillechs*, which is the term employed by old Irish writers to designate female religious—*religieuses*—as we see in the *Annals of the Four Masters*, under the year 1211, where there is an entry about "Ragh-nailt and Caillech De, two daughters of Roderic O'Connor," to which passage John O'Donovan subjoins this note:—"Caillech De, i. e. the Nun of God—It would appear to be the feminine form of Cele De, which is Latinized *Deicola* by Giraldus Cambrensis, and Anglicized *Culdee*." The Cemetery of the Nuns at Clonmacnoise is called in Irish, *Relig Calliach*.—Brash's *Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland*, p. 79.

contained. The following is a translation of the document, as far as the meaning can now be made out:—"Inq. in the monastery of . . . . 28 . . . . year of the reign of the Queen . . . . before John Crofton . . . . that Donald O'Hary was attainted of high treason 21 Sep. 1655 . . . . seized in fee of qur called . . . . Carrownip . . . . in the territory of Leyne (alias O'Hares Boye's country) and of seven qur in the same country, which on account of the quarrel between himself and his brothers, were assigned to him, viz. qur of . . . . qur of Dromcon, qur of Lyseneche, qur of Clonagearra, qur of Banney, qur of Sgo, qur of Clarra. There is a certain monastery or house of the late friars of St. Dominick near the town of . . . . containing a church with a belfry, and that there is one weir, commonly called . . . . and that the aforesaid are still in the occupation of certain priests who were formerly friars of the said monastery." There is nothing decisive in this inquisition as to the locality of the Dominican monastery in question, but the *data* given would seem to point in the direction of my conjecture rather than in any other, as Annaghmore lies in O'Hara Boey's country, and contained formerly a weir that crossed the river about the spot on which the wooden bridge now stands. Unfortunately we can get no assistance in this matter from those who have written on the history and antiquities of the country; for neither De Burgo, Ware, Usher, Archdall, Lanigan, O'Connor, nor any other author, native or foreign, seems to know anything of a Dominican house having ever existed in O'Hara Boye's territory, though the inquisition quoted is quite clear upon this point.\*

It may be mentioned that a well, which is on the bank of the river, or was there lately, near the new pump, was formerly called St. Anne's well, though the late Major

\* The monastery in question may perhaps have been that of Court, which, though a house of the Franciscans, might have been mistaken by the English authorities for a Dominican one.

O'Hara used to call it Fechin's well ; a name, probably, which it generally bore before it was called—perhaps by the Dominicans—after the mother of the Blessed Virgin.

Soon after James the First's grant to Teague Buidhe, the O'Haras began to reside in Annaghmore. It would seem to be Cormac Oge, the youngest son of Cormac of Coolany, that first lived there ; but on the forfeiture of his sons by rebellion, the elder branch took up residence in the place. Kean, son of Teague, is styled 'Kean of Coolany and Annaghmore,' of course because he had residences in both places. After Kean's time the family abandoned the old castle of Coolany and confined themselves to Annaghmore, where they have since erected several successive residences : the first near Tubbermullane, the second on the site of the new stables, the third that of Major O'Hara, part of which still remains, and the last, the elegant structure that Mr. C. W. O'Hara has just raised.



MR. C. W. O'HARA'S RESIDENCE.

Drawn by Mr. Wakeman from a Photograph by Mr. Edward Smith.

The modern O'Haras have exhibited the same tastes as their predecessors, and have been quite as fond of dogs and horses. If we are to rely on the gossip of the country, Charles, the son of Kean Oge, won his wife and a fine fortune by skill and grace in horsemanship. The story runs that, being in England and after the hounds, Mr. O'Hara displayed such dash and gallantry in the presence of the Queen and the ladies of the Court, who had come to see the sport, that one of the maids of honour, a Scotch lady, lost no time in offering him her hand and fortune. This was Lady Mary, eldest daughter of the Earl of Hyndford, and sister to Dr. Carmichael, the Bishop of Killala, up to the present day spoken of by the poor about Annaghmore, as Lady Carmichael.\* Whether this story be apocryphal or not, and a hundred others like it that are told of him, and that turn, for the most part, on his wonderful horses, Arpinus and Sejanus, with their silver shoes; † his Irish servant, Johnny Cuffe, who was more than a match for all the English turfites and jockeys; his fabulous feats of horsemanship, such as the jump from the precipice of Knocknashee; and his successes, but, still more, his losses by gambling; they at all events show the manner of man this Charles was in the minds of admiring neighbours.

Charles, son and heir—a Charles too—was also a sports-

\* Lady Mary's portrait by Ramsay, is at Annaghmore, as is also that of her son, William Henry O'Hara, who was a captain in the navy, and died about his thirtieth year.

† This calls to mind the *Jeunesse Doree* of the French Republic, and still more, the *Brigata Godereccia* of Sienna, in Italy; for the members of the Brigata Godereccia "had their horses shod with silver shoes, and forbade their servants to pick up the precious shoes if they dropped off."—Cary's *Dante, L'Inferno*, canto xxix. We are not told whether Johnny Cuffe received similar orders from Mr. O'Hara. The Italian poem, *Dittamonde*, l. xi, cap. 24, mentions a Robert Guiscard that had his horses similarly shod—

“Ancora in questo tempo s'è fù visto  
 Quel Roberto Guiscardo, *che d'argento*  
*I cavalli ferò per far l'acquisto.*”

man, though engaged so actively in politics that he was less frequently in the race course and hunting field than the father. An anecdote is told of this Charles, however, which shows how devoted he was to the traditional tastes and habits of the family. In his day it was thought undignified for a gentleman of estate to mount a black horse, and Mr. O'Hara, seeing his only son, the late Major O'Hara, riding a horse of that colour, hung the head with shame, and exclaimed mournfully, "Ah! the day I die there will be no O'Hara in Annaghmore to succeed me." This gentleman\* was Member of Parliament for the County Sligo during forty years—twenty in the Irish, and twenty in the British House of Commons—always performing the duties of the office in a manner creditable to himself and the constituents. A speaker of no mean order, he took his turn in debate, and was always listened to with attention and interest. He spoke and voted against the Union, and opposed monumental honours to Lord Cornwallis. Being an advocate for the removal of Catholic disabilities, if not all of them, at least such as were most noxious, he presented to the Commons, on the 23rd of January, 1792, the famous

\* In Plowden's *History of Ireland from its Union with Great Britain*, we read in vol. ii, page 275 :—"Amongst the earliest Parliamentary proceedings on the change of the ministry [in 1766], which in any way related to Ireland, must be noticed Mr. O'Hara's spirited objection to Lord Castlereagh's vote for monumental honours to Marquis Cornwallis, who died in India. He opposed the motion because he could not, with consistency, vote funeral honours to a man who had brought about the union between Great Britain and Ireland, with regard to which he trusted, that some time or other it would come under the consideration of the House; and if it were not, as he hoped it would be, entirely rescinded; it would at all events be considerably modified, and, if possible, ameliorated." It was on the occasion of these observations of Mr. O'Hara, that Charles Fox declared that "the union was one of the most disgraceful transactions in which the government of any country had been involved."

His portrait, painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds, is at Annaghmore, where, it may be stated, are also two fine full length portraits of William III, and his queen, Mary, by Sir Godfrey Kneller.

petition of the Catholics,\* a service which the petitioners had solicited in vain from other members of the House. But politics in that day were generally an expensive pursuit, and Mr. O'Hara had to pay the penalty; for having had a contested election or two on hands, he not only spent all his income, but went into debt and incumbered the estate.

The same inordinate desire of success at elections, that

\* This was the first petition presented to Parliament by the Catholics of Ireland, who were themselves much divided in regard to the document, for a considerable number, including most of the aristocracy and gentry, considered it intemperate, or at least, quite too strong, while the majority of the body insisted on its adoption just as it stood. It was drawn up by the son of Edmund Burke, who, like his illustrious father, was a Protestant, and wrote more like the freeman that he was, than the semi-slaves and outcasts that he represented. "We are excluded from the constitution," say the petitioners; "we incur no small part of the penalties of a general outlawry, and a general excommunication. . . . For our religion we offer no apology. We have only to say that it is founded on revelation, as well as the religion established by law. Both you and we are regenerated in the same baptism, and profess our belief in the same Christ. We do not enter, we disdain to enter, into the cavils of antiquated sophistry, and to insult the understanding of Parliament by supposing it necessary to prove, that a religion is not incompatible with civil government which has subsisted for so many hundred years under every possible form of government, in some tolerated, in some established, even to this day. . . . We hunger and we thirst for the Constitution of our country. If it shall be determined that we are qualified for the base and lucrative tenures of professional occupation, but unworthy to perform the free and noble services of the Constitution, we submit, indeed, but we solemnly protest against that distinction for ourselves and our children. Whatever judgment may await our merits and our failings, we cannot recognize, for a consideration, the principle of servility and perpetual degradation." This was bold speaking, a little *trop fort* perhaps in form, at least, if not in substance, for an "humble petition," so that it is not very surprising that Mr. O'Hara was the only member of Parliament courageous enough to present it. And even he, according to Mr. Froude, in *The English in Ireland*, "handled it as if it was red hot iron," but he handled it, nevertheless, what nobody else ventured to do, and presented it in due form to as hostile an assembly as one could encounter, to men stung to madness by all the circumstances of the proceeding. It surely needed no little political and personal pluck to perform the feat that Mr. O'Hara accomplished.



tempted Mr. O'Hara to go into debt, induced him also to import Protestants from the North, and to settle them on the Annaghmore estate.\* The period between the enactment of the Octennial Bill in 1768, and the passing of the Relief Act of 1793, was amongst the most trying and perilous for the Catholic religion through which this country has passed. At that time, a mad ambition for political influence turned the heads of the Irish gentry; and as Catholics were disabled by law from voting, landlords, to acquire voting power, tried hard to make their Catholic tenants conform to the established religion, and, failing generally in that, evicted them, to clear the farms for Protestants. Even landlords who were no bigots, took part in these practices, caring little what religion the tenant cherished at heart, if he could only be got to comply outwardly with the requirements of the electoral law. And an instance will serve to show that a Catholic might be found so silly as to believe that he could, (to use the phrase of the day) "go to church," a Sunday or two, and still remain loyal enough to religion;—Tom ——, who had been to the parish church once or twice, and had thus become a Protestant in the eye of the law, having occasion to make an oath in a registration court, first of all took deliberately a beads out of his pocket to bless himself with; and when Mr. O'Hara, who was present, exclaimed, on seeing the beads, "O Tom, is that the way with you still"? "Egad, it is, your honour, I cannot do without it." "Well, then, Tom, *do with it*, and I'll never think the worse of you for it." This incident proves that Mr. O'Hara was free from

\* "The late Mr. O'Hara about twenty-five years ago built houses for about eighty weavers, got them looms from the Linen Board, and gave them very cheap bargains of land. Those people have ever since resided, and gave one of the first springs to the trade in this country. They being Protestants, Mr. O'Hara got from the Board of First Fruits every necessary assistance to purchase a glebe and build a church for their accommodation."—*Statistical Survey of the County Sligo*: by James MacParlan, page 18.

sectarian motive in creating Protestant votes; and that he had at heart the traditional feelings of the family towards Catholics was well seen in his giving poor Catholics, who were banished from the North towards the close of the last century, houses and land in Lugawarry and all along the mountain foot, where their descendants still live.\* Mr. O'Hara was buried at Rathbarron, where his tomb is thus inscribed,—“Here lie the mortal remains of Ch. O'Hara, Esq., M.P., who died 12th Sept. 1822, aged 77.”

At the time of Mr. O'Hara's death, an O'Hara of the old school would hardly have been the required successor, whereas his son, the major, was exactly the “right man in the right place.” Inexpensive in tastes, frugal, alive to the condition of the estate, with strong family feeling, and a high sense of what was due to the venerable name he bore, the major seemed as if entrusted with a mission from Providence to retrieve the errors and extravagance of father and grandfather, and from the post set himself steadily to the performance of this duty. Beginning by taking a public situation that brought a moderate income, he lived unmarried; arranged his household so as to cut off all sources of extravagance; and, on coming into the

\* In 1791 a terrible persecution was set on foot and carried on against poor Catholics in the County Armagh, and some districts of Down and Tyrone, by a confederacy that took or received the name of *Peep-o'-day-Boys*, from their pursuing their peculiar practices at the break-of-day. The object of the association was to exterminate Catholics, root and branch; and in pursuance of this end, the confederates scoured the country, robbed the Catholics of fire-arms, loaded them with curses and indignities, and bade them take themselves, without delay, out of the country, under pain of having the houses burned over their heads within a few hours. And these threats were ruthlessly executed, so that it was not uncommon of a morning to see scores of homesteads in a blaze, while the high roads were black with droves of men, women, and children flying away, they knew not whither, from these scenes of barbarism and desolation. There are hundreds of families at present in the County Sligo, and a still greater number in the County Mayo, whose ancestors were among these fugitives.

possession of the property, associated with himself in its management a gentleman of ability and zeal. Between them they ordered things so well that the major was able to hand down to his successor the fine family estate nearly unencumbered. And all this time Major O'Hara was, in many respects, a model landlord, and under him improvements of a most extensive and, generally, of a permanent character, were carried on over the property. The major's cardinal principle was, to encourage the tenants to make these improvements themselves; and this principle he carried out by paying them liberally for building, draining, planting, fencing, stubbing, or bettering the condition of the farm in any other way.\* It was a subject of boast to this gentleman towards the end of life, that there was not a single tenant on the Annaghmore estate but had a commodious cartway between his residence and the high road, and all made at the landlord's expense. Nor did this intelligent proprietor neglect the beautiful while thus promoting the useful; for, whoever, at the present day, ascends the Ox Mountains, and casts an eye on the O'Hara property, observing not only the well cultivated fields, but the symmetrical hedge rows, the shining cottages, the numerous picturesquely situated strips and clumps of planting, cannot fail to come to the conclusion that Major O'Hara was not only an improving but a most tasteful landlord as well.

And speaking of the major, it would be unfair to be silent in respect of his charities. However economical this gen-

\* "Mr. Charles King O'Hara is a resident landlord who is universally well spoken of. The system of this gentleman appears to be to let his land at its full value, and to pay his tenants for all the improvements of which he approves, whilst his personal supervision and advice encourage them in their efforts. The effect has been greatly to encourage a spirit of order, cleanliness, and industry among them."—*Letters on the Condition of the People of Ireland*: by Thomas Campbell Foster, Esq., of the Middle Temple, Barrister-at-Law (*The Times Commissioner*), page 185.

tleman may have been in other matters he was liberal in alms. All the year round, as cases of distress occurred, he gave something to relieve them, and every Christmas distributed liberally clothing and meat to the demesne labourers, their families, and the poor of the neighbourhood; getting for this purpose, from Dublin, two cartloads of calicoes, cottons, and woollens, and killing a couple of fat cows or bullocks at every return of the festive season.

While giving the major credit for the management of his estates and for his charities, duty compels us to state, that he was still, if not exclusive, at least somewhat one-sided in relations with Catholics and Protestants. Unlike the O'Haras that had gone before, who made no distinction on the score of religion in regard to those whom they employed or benefited, choosing domestics and others irrespectively of religious profession, the major gave comparatively few good things, either in the way of employment or patronage, to Catholics, so long as there were persons of his own religion to receive them. For this the major should not be blamed overmuch, as his mind, if sharp and fitted for business, was not of that lofty character that rises above the prejudices around one; and his heart, though kind, was of limited capacity, and not large enough to take in, like that of the good Samaritan, persons of all religious denominations. A good deal, too, of this unamiable partiality may fairly be set down to the character of the times, which were noted for bitter party politics and sectarian squabbles.

Major O'Hara's mortal remains are at Rathbarron, and the monument erected over them is inscribed with this double epitaph:—"In memory of Mary O'Hara, who died on the 20th of March, 1846, in the 64th year of her age."  
"Also—Of Charles King O'Hara, Esq., of Annaghmore, who died on the 26th of May, 1860, aged 74 years."

Besides the members of the O'Hara family who have been mentioned, and who resided in the parish of Kilvarnet,

there have been many others that attained to great distinction in other places and in different walks in life, as saints, patriots, church dignitaries, warriors, statesmen, and authors; such as James O'Hara, who reached the honours of the peerage as Lord Tyrawley, and was also created Baron of Kilmaine; \* General O'Hara, who, after distinguishing himself in the American war, was wounded and taken prisoner at Toulon in a *sortie* against French troops led on by Napoleon Bonaparte, this being the first occasion on which that wonderful man exhibited to the world the genius with which he so often afterwards dazzled and astonished mankind; Sir Charles O'Hara, who with others obtained a Patent Grant from King William and Queen Mary, for lighting Dublin with convex lamps; and Kean O'Hara, the dramatic author, who died in Dublin on

\* According to the Ven. Charles O'Connor in his *Dissertations on the Antient History of Ireland*, page 243, the Baron of Tyrawley belonged to the Coillte Leyney O'Haras, who were a junior branch of the Annaghmore family, for Mr. O'Connor thus writes:—"The Settlements of the Clan-Kiens fell in the country of Corran; of which the present baronies of Leyney and Gallen were a part. The late Kian O'Hara, of Nymphsfield, in the County of Sligoe, Esq., was the chief of this Name, leaving two Sons, worthy of their Ancestors—Charles, the present Head of the O'Hara Race, and Kian, his Brother. From the many Revolutions, which bore so hard on the Milesian Race, this family have still reserved to them, out of their former great Possessions, an Estate of two thousand Pounds a Year; a Remnant the more precious, as it is a Tenure of one thousand four hundred and seventy years.

"From this Family, descended the O'Haras of Kelty-Leyney in the County of Sligoe; of whom I make particular Mention, as they were the immediate Ancestors of the present Right Hon. James O'Hara, the Lord Baron of Tyrawley."

In Boswell's *Life of Johnston*, we read, "Dr. Johnson allowed the merit of good wit to Lord Chesterfield's saying of Lord Tyrawley and himself, when both very old and infirm; 'Tyrawley and I have been dead these two years; but we don't choose to have it known.' To this, Mr. Croker, in his edition of Boswell, adds this note, 'James O'Hara, Lord Tyrawley, a general officer, was born in 1690, and died July 13, 1773.'"

This *par nobile* died in the same year, 1773, but Tyrawley had the longer life, having been born in 1690, whereas Chesterfield's birth was in 1694.

the 17th June, 1782, after he had been for many years a leader and arbiter in the fashionable and literary societies of that city, and had produced a series of burlettas of such merit as to entitle him to the first place among burletta writers, "his *Midas*," says an able modern critic, "being the most perfect thing of the kind in the English language."\*

From what has been said it is clear that the blood of the O'Haras is singularly mixed. As two separate rivers, coming from widely different sources, and through very different beds, join their waters at Annaghmore, so two different streams of blood, the one Irish and Catholic, the other English and Protestant, meet and mingle in the veins of the present owners of Annaghmore; the one connecting them with whatever is most Catholic and National in Ireland—its saints, bishops, priests, and religious, as well as with the oldest Milesian families: the O'Connors, O'Rorkes, O'Briens, and O'Flahertys—and the other joining them with England and the Reformation, through the families of Archbishop Loftus, Queen Elizabeth's pet prelate; of Dr. Carmichael, the bishop of Killala; and of the Gores, the Croftons, the Matthews, and the Coopers. It is doubtless to this composite character, if one may so speak, of the family, we may trace the wide and hearty sympathies which the modern O'Haras, with very little exception, have exhibited towards their fellow-countrymen. And it is to the same cause you may ascribe the cordial respect in which the family are held by all their neighbours; by those of Saxon as well as by those of Celtic origin, the

\* The order and dates of Kean O'Hara's pieces were:—*Midas*, 1764; *The Golden Pippin*, 1773; *The Two Misers*, 1775; *April Day*, 1777; and *Tom Thnmb*, 1780.

Kean O'Hara was so tall that he was nick-named "St. Patrick's Steeple;" and an Italian glee, that was very popular in Dublin in his day, containing the line, "Che no hanno crudeltà," the words were parodied and often sung as "Kane O'Hara's cruel tall."—*History of the City of Dublin*: by J. T. Gilbert, M.R.I.A., vol. iii, p. 270.

Kean O'Hara's portrait is at Annaghmore.

former being moved chiefly by the later alliances of the family, and the latter, seeing nothing in the O'Haras but the descendants of native saints and princes, being drawn to them, in comparison of other families, much in the same way as was the "one of the ancient Irish," mentioned in the following amusing anecdote, thus told by Boswell:—  
"Dr. Johnson mentioned, that the few ancient Irish gentlemen yet remaining have the highest pride of family; that Mr. Sandford, a friend of his, whose mother was Irish, told him that O'Hara (who was true Irish both by father and mother), and he, and Mr. Ponsonby, son to the Earl of Besborough, the greatest man of the three but of an English family, went to see one of those ancient Irish,\* and that he distinguished them thus: "O'Hara, you are welcome! Mr. Sandford, your mother's son is welcome! Mr. Ponsonby, you may sit down!" The O'Haras have good reason to feel proud of this popular predilection, and should never forget, while reflecting on the high and varied honours of the family, that their greatest distinction in the eyes of the country is to be "bone of the bone and flesh of the flesh" of our old Irish princes.

With such ancestors and antecedents, it is no wonder that the O'Hara family should be popular. A family that carries back the memory, along an unbroken line of succession, to the first Christian centuries; that has always occupied a leading place among the magnates of the land; that has given champions and protectors to the weak and the persecuted around it, commends itself to the respect

\* The Irish gentleman referred to in this anecdote, was the MacDermot of Coolavin, as we learn from Arthur Young's version of the incident, which runs as follows:—"Another great family in Connaught is Macdermot. . . . Lord Kingsborough, Mr. Ponsonby, Mr. O'Hara, Mr. Sandford, etc., came to see him, and his address was curious. *O'Hara! you are welcome; Sandford, I am glad to see your mother's son* (his mother was an O'Brien); *as to the rest of ye, come in as you can.*"—*Tour in Ireland*. vol. i, page 305.



of all Irishmen, and to the veneration and gratitude of immediate neighbours. These sentiments in their regard are not confined to the members of any one creed or class, but are shared alike by all who appreciate high station and generous feeling, be they Catholics or Protestants, rich or poor.

## CHAPTER IV.

## SAINTS NATHY AND FECHIN.

BUT there is another fact that surrounds the family with a halo of veneration in the eyes of Catholics, and that is—the saints it has produced ; and in speaking of the honours of the O'Haras, it would be a grave omission to pass over in silence what forms their chief glory in the estimation of many. Brother Michael O'Clery tells us \* that eighteen saints have sprung from the great ancestor of the O'Haras, Teague or Thady, the son of Cian, the son of Oliol Ollum, King of Munster ; but as most of those saints belonged to other branches of Teague's descendants, or to other districts of Ireland, they do not come within the scope of these pages, which is to illustrate the annals of Ballysadare and Kilvarnet. But there are two of the eighteen—Saint Nathy and Saint Fechin—who belonged to the O'Hara family, and were connected with this district ; and of these we shall try to give some account, glad to have the opportunity of offering our homage to these great and holy men.

And in considering the times in which the Irish saints lived, it would be well to lay aside our nineteenth century ideas, and to avoid measuring the persons and things of that period by standards of to-day, as nothing can be more different than the character of those remote ages and of that in which we live. Instead of the highly civilized society around us, with its central and subordinate authorities, its towns and railroads, its banks and police, its conveniences, elegancies, and culture, Ireland was then little better than a continued wilderness, with hardly any of the

\* In the Dedication of the *Annals* to Ferghal O'Gara.

elements of modern civilization (if we except religion) even in separate existence—without towns or roads—the people living in tents, or caves, or huts—without current coin—the little business or commerce that was carried on consisting of cumbrous exchanges, such as that of cattle, with other objects, and with the order and peace of the little communities that existed depending on local dynasts and “saints” or eminent ecclesiastics, the former employing material, and the latter moral force, to effect their respective objects. Bearing this state of things in mind one may not feel as much surprise as one would otherwise experience at witnessing many of the rude and strange scenes to be met with in the times of our primitive saints.

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SECTION I.—SAINT NATHY.

THAT Saint Nathy\* was a member of the O’Hara family we learn from the life of Saint Cormac, as it is given by Colgan in the *Acta Sanctorum*, under the 26th of March. This Cormac lived in the early part of the sixth century, being a contemporary of Eugene Bel, King of Connaught,† who died, according to the *Annals of the Four Masters*, in the year 537. The saint was born in Munster, but he and five brothers abandoned their home, and betook themselves to different parts of Ireland, with the view of spreading

\* “*Hibernice*,” writes Colgan in a note on Saint Fechin’s Life, “nunc Nathi, nunc Dathi, *i.e.* David vocatur; Latine vero Nathyas, Dathyus, David, etc., de quo vide Aengussium, Mar. Gorm., Mart. Tamlacht., et Aengussium, auctum ad 9 Augusti, in quo die honoratur ut patronus Achadensis, sedes episcopalis Connactiæ.”

† “Eugenius was the father of six saints—St. Cormac, St. Becan of Kilbocan in Muskerry, St. Culan, St. Evin, St. Diermot of Kilmacneoguin, in Carbury, in the County of Sligo; and St. Boetan of Kilboedan, in Dalaradia.”—O’Flaherty’s *Ogygia*, part iii, c. 81.

“Venit in primis ad aulam, Eugenii Bel, filii Kellachii Connactiæ regis.

—*Acta SS. Colgani, Vita S. Corbmaci, Abbatis, 26 Martii.*

religion among their countrymen, and practising greater piety themselves. Three of the young men came to Connaught, one or two of them founding the church of Kilmacowen,\* near Sligo, and the third, Cormac, settling on the banks of the Moy, near the spot where the river empties itself into the sea. After having passed some time there, the holy man made a visit † to the neighbouring territories of Leyney, Galenga, and Corco Thid; districts which are comprised in the present diocese of Achonry, and in which the family that subsequently took the names of O'Hara and O'Gara ruled at the time.

Cormac met with a courteous and cordial reception from Diermid, the chief of the family, who, in token of devotion, bound himself and posterity to make a yearly offering of three cows to the saint, and, after the saint's

\* "Saint Diermid, the eldest brother, proceeding to the northern and maritime parts of Connaught, founded the church of *Rosnedheadh*, in the district of Carbury. This church was afterwards called *Kil-mac-neoguin*, that is, the church of the sons of Owen; and a dynast, named Flaundubh, endowed and enriched it with ample possessions, making over to it the entire district that lies between Droiched Martra (Belledrehid) and Brugh-chinnoblehe."—Colgan's *Vita S. Corbmaci*, cap. 3.

† The following is the statement of the Life:—"After this the man of God made a visit to the neighbouring territory of Leyney, in which and the adjoining districts of Galenga and Corco-thid, Diermid, the son of Finbarr, of the race of Kien, the son of Olioll Ollum, King of Munster, bore sway at the time. This chief received the man of God with the greatest kindness; and along with other benefits which he conferred on him, bound himself and his posterity to give three cows every year to the saint and the saint's successors.

"Diermid had a brother named Niel, who showed himself equally kind and devoted. Throwing himself on his knees, Diermid begged the saint's blessing for himself and his descendants. The saint gave the blessing, and then prophesied the birth, in a short time, of Priest Nathy, a man of the greatest sanctity, and the grandson of Niel, Nathy's father being Conamal, Niel's son. On the same occasion the man of God foretold many things about the other glorious saints who were to confer such honour and benefit on the district by their virtues and labours, such as Saint Luthrenna, the virgin, daughter of Falbeus; Saint Fechin, abbot; and Saint Moby, the grandson of Finbarr, being the son of his daughter, Huanfinna."—Colgan's *Vita S. Corbmaci*.

death, to his successors. The pious Niel, brother of Diermid, showed equal, if not greater reverence and affection. Falling on his knees, this fervent chief besought the saint's blessing on himself and his descendants; and Cormac not only imparted the blessing that was asked, but filled the heart of the petitioner with joy by declaring that great saints would soon issue from his family; a prediction, the author of Cormac's life remarks, verified by the birth of Saint Nathy, Saint Luathrenna\* of Killoran; Saint Mobianus or Moby, surnamed Claireneach, of Glasnevin; † and the great Saint Fechin.

Nathy then belonged to the O'Hara family, being the nephew of the dynast Diermid, ‡ and, most probably, was a native of the district comprehended now in the parish of Ballysadare, as this district, if we are to trust local tradition, has been always the head-quarters of the O'Haras from their first arrival in Connaught. And independently of the strong presumption thus established by tradition, an incident is mentioned in the life of Saint Fechin, which goes a good way to prove this connection of our saint with the locality; for we read in the aforesaid life that, on some occasion, on which Fechin's father gave a slight blow to the son, while yet a little boy, or child, under the domestic

\* St. Luathrenna, or Loran, was daughter or granddaughter of Colman, son of Falbeus, son of Fennfatha, son of Dalæus, son of Droma, son of Sualius, son of Fidhern, son of Fidecurr, son of Artchorb, son of Fidchorb, son of Niacorb, son of Lewy, son of Cormac Galeng, son of Teague, son of Kien, son of Olioll Ollum. Her festival was held on the 8th of June, at Killoran.

† Saint Mobianus or Moby, surnamed Claireneach, was the nephew of Niel, being the son of his sister, Huanfinna. His death is recorded by the *Four Masters* under the year 544.

Mageoghegan, the translator of the *Annals of Cloumaennoise*, says that Moby is supposed by some to be one and the same person with the English Merlin.

The parish of Kilmovee is so called after Saint Mobius—Kilmovee signifying *the Church of Mobius*.

‡ Colgan's *Acta Sanctorum, Vita S. Corbmaci, Abbatis*.

roof at Billa, Nathy was present at the occurrence, and, standing up, remonstrated with the father for striking a child that, he said, was destined one day to be set as patron over all Leyney. From the way in which the incident is mentioned, it would look as if Nathy lived in the house of Fechin's father as a member of the family, so that there is reason to believe that our saint was uncle or some near relation of Fechin.

Though Nathy has always enjoyed as high a reputation for sanctity as any saint of the Irish church, there is little known of his life, and hardly anything of his earlier years. Irish hagiologists, when the name occurs, speak of our saint in terms of the greatest respect, as most holy (*sanctissimus*) as of exquisite sanctity, (*sanctimonice spectatissimæ*)\* as of consummate perfection, but still none of them gives a formal account of his life, or even mentions incidentally such facts as would throw much light on his career.

It is certain, however, that Nathy lived in the sixth century, being a contemporary of Saint Finian of Clonard, who died in 552,† or thereabouts. Colgan, Harris, and Ware call him a disciple of St. Finian,‡ but, as Dr. Lanigan remarks, they bring no proof for their assertion, nor does it appear that any positive proof exists. Considering, how-

\* Colgan's *Acta Sanctorum, Vita S. Corbmaci, Abbatis*, p. 753. Modern writers mention our saint with the same respect. Ware (Harris's ed., vol. ii, p. 658), says, "Nathy was commonly called *Comrah* or *Cruimther*, and was a man of great sanctity." Lanigan, vol. ii, p. 90, observes, "Nathy's name is always mentioned with the greatest respect." Dr. Kelly, in his *Calendar of Irish Saints*, page 136, speaks of him as the "holy priest, Nathi."

† O'Clery says of Saint Finian, "He died on the 12th of December, in the year of our Lord, 552, or according to others, 563, and was buried in his own church at Clonard."

‡ "Saint Finian, having built the church of Achonry, immediately gave it to his disciple, Nathy." Ware, vol. ii, p. 658.—See Lanigan, vol. ii, p. 192—Note 38.

"His master," says Colgan, was St. Finian of Clonard."—*Vita S. Fechini*—Note.

ever, the absence of great schools in the north of Connaught in the early part of the sixth century, it is pretty certain that our saint had to leave his native district to acquire the education necessary for the priesthood; and as the reputation of Saint Finian of Clonard, "the tutor of the saints of Ireland," \* stood so high throughout the country, it is probable, though by no means proved, that Nathy, on leaving home, bent his steps to the famous school of Clonard, with its three thousand scholars.† This conjecture derives considerable support from the pains that Finian subsequently took to provide the saint with a religious establishment, as it is little likely that he would take such interest if Nathy were a complete stranger.

And this brings us to the chief event in the life of Nathy, the foundation of the church and monastery of Achonry, which was the joint work of him and Saint Finian, and which was accomplished in this wise. Finian, near the close of life, paid a visit to Connaught, for the purpose of diffusing religion among the inhabitants of that province; ‡ and when he reached Leyney, falling in with Nathy, a priest of great perfection, and admirably qualified by learning, prudence, and sanctity, to rule an ecclesiastical community, Finian resolved to utilize those talents and virtues. With this object the holy man went in search of a suitable site for a religious house, desiring above all things, in conformity with the marked taste of all the religious founders

\* *Four Masters*, A.D. 548.

† Trium virorum millium  
Sorte fit doctor humilis;  
Verbi his fudit flavium  
Ut fons immanans rivulis.

—Colgan, *Acta SS. Hib.*, p. 401.

‡ It was then the occurrences already mentioned (279) took place at *Drum-eder-da-loch*. If the conjecture put forth there (*Ibidem*) as to the identity of Kildalough and *Drum-eder-da-loch* is well founded, Saint Finian had only to pass over the Ox Mountain to find Nathy at Billa, which lies at the foot of that mountain on the south side. Indeed, the proximity of the two places much favours the conjecture.



of the period, that the place should be pleasantly and picturesquely situated. Such a spot was found in Achonry,\* a stretch of fertile land, lying tranquilly at the foot of Mucklety, not far from the beautiful lake of Templehouse, on a plain of immense extent, bounded and sheltered by the curved and stately mountains of Leitrim, The Ox range, Keash, and the Curlews.

But it was one thing to desire, and another to obtain, this charming spot, this *locus amonus*, as it is called in the life of Saint Finian. The dynast of the district, who was called Caenfahola, that is, *Caput lupi*, or Wolfhead, probably from his brutal manners and disposition, hearing that the holy men were on the land, hastened in a rage to them, loaded them with abuse, and ordered them away. Caring little about themselves, the saints bore patiently the treatment they received, but urged, all the more, the application for the site, and urged it so wonderfully and so effectually, that Wolfhead became a new man and granted what they sought. The following is the account of the transaction, which we find in the old life of Finian; and whatever some may think of the alleged miracle, the narrative proves at least, that the saints had great difficulty in succeeding in their object;—"After this Finian proceeded to a place where a holy priest named Nathy lived, and here an angel appeared to him and said: 'You shall found a church

\* Ware, vol. ii, p. 658, asserts that "Saint Finian, Bishop of Clonard, founded the church of Achad, commonly called Achonry, about the year 530. Dr. Lanigan differs from Ware as to the date of this foundation, and observes, with great show of reason, "Finnian's excursion to Connaught and his meeting with Nathy are related as having taken place after almost all his Clonard disciples had left his school, and formed establishments of their own. Ware is, therefore, wrong in assigning the foundation of the church of Achonry to about 530; for at that time Finnian had scarcely begun to teach at Clonard. I should rather assign it to about 550; and according to the series of his transactions, as given in his Acts, it appears as one of the last of his life."—*Ecclesiastical History of Ireland*, vol. ii, p. 192.

on whatever spot the man of God shall select as a convenient and pleasant site. And when they had reached the chosen spot, the prince of the territory, that is, of Leyney, whose name was Caenfahola, *Caput lupi*, approached them in a rage, for the purpose of driving them from the place; but the man of God, seeking to convert this hardened sinner to the faith by a striking miracle, made the sign of the cross on a great rock that lay hard by, and broke it into three parts. This spectacle astonished and softened the savage prince; and being now changed from a wolf into a lamb, he humbly made over to Finian the scene of the miracle, which is called in the Irish language, Achad-chonaire,\* and in which the man of God established the aforesaid priest of the name of Nathy." † The tradition of this miracle is still vivid in and around Achonry, and the part that Saint Finian had in the transaction is commemorated in the name of a well, *Tubber-Finneen*,‡ which lies within a few feet of the ruins of the old cathedral, and which has on its edge a great pile of stones, deposited one after another by the crowds of devotees that used to frequent the place to invoke the intercession of that saint.

The monastery thus established became a school of piety and learning for the surrounding neighbourhood; and, considering the passion that then existed throughout Ireland for science and sanctity, it must soon have been crowded with scholars. We are told that Nathy taught

\* It was first called *Achad-coain*. Harris's Ware, vol. ii, p. 658. Achad-coain signifies "pleasant or beautiful field." In Adamnan's Life of Columba, Ard Caoin is rendered "Altitudo amœna." Achonry or Achad-chonaire, means the field of Conaire, a man of that name.

† Colgan's *Acta Sanctorum*, p. 306.

‡ A "patron" used to be held here, but the parish priest put an end to it for the abuses it occasioned. Quarrels were usual at the patron, and it is said that lives were lost, so that the priest who removed the occasion of so much uncharitableness deserved well of Church and State.

Saturday was the day on which devotees frequented the well. There used to be as many as two or three hundred present on the Saturday that immediately preceded the 15th of August—Lady Day.

several eminent persons in this establishment.\* A Saint Kenan is said to have received his moral and literary education from the "most religious Nathan" or Nathy.†

But the disciple that conferred most honour on the school of Achonry was Saint Fechin, who followed his master and relative, Nathy, into the monastery, as soon as it was opened. The most tender friendship always existed between the two saints. Even after Fechin left Achonry, Nathy's thoughts were often occupied with his young friend; and we are informed, that on one occasion the saint suspended suddenly the business of the monastery to announce to its inmates the glad tidings, learned miraculously, that his beloved disciple was just at that moment founding the great monastery of Fore.

If we are to rely on a statement in the life of Saint Attracta, which cannot certainly be reconciled with other statements in the same life, such as that of her receiving the veil from Saint Patrick, though it is perhaps more trustworthy itself than these, Saint Nathy was a contemporary of this virgin, and aided her in some difficulties in which she was involved by the exactions of the ruling prince.

Keannfaelaid, for such was the name of this ruler, engaged in constructing a castle, and laid on his subjects the obligation of bringing contributions in kind to the work. Attracta tried hard to procure an exemption from the duty, alleging the immunity to which her establishment, as a religious house, was entitled, as also her inability to cut

\* Lanigan, vol. i, p. 345.

† "Bonis moribus literisque a religiosissimo viro Nathano eruditus."—Ussher's *Brittanicarum Ecclesiarum Antiquitates*, p. 1070.

Dr. Lanigan supposes the Saint Kenan referred to in these words of Ussher, to have been a native of Connaught, and adds, "I am confirmed in my suspicion by the circumstance that Kenan is said to have been instructed by the *most religious* Nathan. Who could this person be except the celebrated Nathy of Achonry, who lived in the sixth century, and had taught several eminent persons, among others, the great St. Fechin, who died A.D. 665?"

down and remove timber, which seems to have been the chief material employed in the new structure. But no exemption would be granted her ; and, thus, obliged to go out to the forest, it was with the assistance of Nathy, who had also to furnish a contribution for himself, that she felled and delivered the quantity of timber required from her.\*

It is not agreed who this Keannfaelaid was, Colgan supposing him to have been a local dynast, and Lanigan maintaining that he was king of Connaught ; but, as the king of Connaught of that name lived towards the end of the seventh century, he could not be a contemporary of Saint Attracta. It seems to the writer, that the person in question is the Keannfaelaid, son of Diermid, and given as Diermid's son and successor, in Brother Michael O'Clery's genealogy of Fearghal O'Gara.† This prince, as lord of Leyney, was ruler of the districts to which both Attracta and Nathy belonged, and must, in due course, have lived in or about their time, if they were contemporaries, and may have been the very person from whom Saints Finian and Nathy obtained the site for the monastery of Achonry.

Though Nathy is commonly supposed to have been bishop, it is doubtful whether the holy man ever passed the grade of priest. There is no express statement in all antiquity of his having been a bishop. Nor is the evidence of the past on the subject merely negative, for, as far as it

\* There is no evidence nor indication that our saint sought to have himself freed from this impost, though he may, perhaps have shared the views of Attracta as to the liability of religious superiors to such burdens. If he coincided with her in opinion, still in his great meekness and humility he deemed it, no doubt, better to forego a right than to run the risk of causing public inconvenience, not to say commotion.

The task was so extremely severe for Saint Attracta, that her biographers, to account for its performance, have recourse to most extraordinary legends, saying that she tied the poles with her hair, and got deer to remove them to the new palace.

† "Finnbharr, Diarmaid, Cinnfaeladh," etc.

goes, it points to his being only a priest. Crumther Nathy, or Presbyter Nathy, that is, Priest Nathy; for Crumther signifies exclusively, priest,\* is the appellation our saint invariably receives whenever the name is mentioned in the annals of the early church; and one cannot understand how such an epithet could have been applied as a kind of surname without great impropriety, had he ever been consecrated bishop. And the opinion, that Nathy never received episcopal orders, is greatly strengthened by the fact that no bishop is mentioned as his successor in the annals of the country. Melruan O'Ruadhan, who died, according to the *Four Masters*, in 1170, is the first bishop of Achonry, or Leyney-Connaught, of whom we read; and if Nathy was bishop of the diocese in the sixth century, it is incredible that we should hear of no successor of his before the twelfth.†

\* In John O'Donovan's edition of Reilly's *Irish-English Dictionary*, the only meaning of *Crumther* is "a priest." And in the *Book of Fenagh*, Mr. Hennessy says, in reference to the phrase, Crumther-Fraech, "The word *Cruimther* seems cognate with the Welsh *Premter*; and both appear to be borrowed from *Latin* "præbiter."—*Book of Fenagh*, p. 198.

And Harris, in his edition of Ware—Note, vol. ii, p. 658, observes: "It is a mistake to make *Comrah* or *Cruimther*, a name. *Cruimther* was only an addition of honour to Nathy's name, and signifieth in the old Irish, the same that "Sagart" now does, which is a priest. So that *Cruimthir Nathy* is Priest Nathy, and so Colgan explains it in many places."

† On the question, whether Nathy was a bishop or only a simple priest, Ware and Dr. Lanigan take different sides. The former declares, "I cannot but be of opinion that Nathy was made bishop of this church of Achad;" but Dr. Lanigan, on the other hand, observes, "In those times Achonry must be allowed to have been an episcopal see, if it be true that the celebrated Nathi of that place was a bishop. But it is much more probable that he was not," vol. ii, p. 190. And in a note, page 192, the doctor adds, "In Colgan's works, as far as I can discover, he is never called *bishop*. It is true that in one of the lives of St. Fechin, Nathi is styled *antistes*. Yet a few lines before, he is called *Presbyter*. Besides, the title, *antistes*, is often given to priests."

Dr. Kelly, in the *Calendar of Irish Saints*, says nothing on this moot point when speaking of the "Patron Saints of Ireland."

The Bishop of Achonry is not mentioned as such in the old annals of

On the other hand there are weighty means for thinking that the man of God did receive episcopal ordination. The *cultus* of confessor-pontiff, with which the church honours Nathy, supplies in itself a strong presumption in favour of this opinion. Whether this *cultus* was paid from time immemorial, or is of more recent origin, in either case those who originated it had better means of knowing the facts of the saint's life than we have at present, as they lived so much nearer to his time. Indeed the office of confessor-pontiff could hardly have been assigned to our saint at all if there did not exist, in the past, stronger proofs of his having been bishop than have come down to us. Furthermore, considering the great number of bishops that crowded the early Irish church, as attested by Saint Bernard,\* Keating, Ussher, Reeves,† and Todd,‡ and that the office was sometimes conferred in consideration of the great sanctity or learning of individuals, as a kind of personal distinction without any view to diocesan jurisdiction,§

the country, but as the Bishops of Leyney or Luighne—Connaught.—See *Annals of the Four Masters* under the years 1170, 1213, 1218, 1226, 1230, 1237, 1264, 1265, 1266, 1297, 1312, 1328, and 1344.

\* In the *Life of St. Malachi*, St. Bernard writes:—"Nam quod inauditum est ab ipso Christianitatis initio, sine ordine, sine ratione, mutabantur et multiplicabantur episcopi pro libitu Metropolitanis, ita ut unus episcopatu uno non esset contentus, sed singulæ pene ecclesiæ singulos haberent episcopos."

† See Reeves's *Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Down and Connor*, pages 134, 135, 137.

‡ *St. Patrick, Apostle of Ireland*: by John Henthorn Todd, p. 27. In this place, Dr. Todd tells us, "The consequence was necessarily a great multiplication of bishops. There was no restraint upon their being consecrated." Every man of eminence for piety or learning was advanced to the order of a bishop as a sort of *degree* or mark of distinction. Many of these lived as solitaries or in monasteries, many of them established schools for the practice of the religious life, and the cultivation of sacred learning, having no diocese or fixed episcopal duties; and many of them, influenced by missionary zeal, went forth to the Continent, to Great Britain, or to other then heathen lands, to preach the Gospel of Christ to the Gentiles."

§ On this point, Dr. Lanigan writes:—"It was quite usual in Ireland to raise pious monks to the episcopacy without giving them fixed sees."



leaving the new bishop to the discharge of his old duties as abbot, hermit, or head of school, it was only natural that the exalted character of Nathy, and the great school over which he presided, should bring the saint the distinction of the episcopal dignity. And the new office need have caused little alteration in his ordinary avocations. The bishop would rule the monastic establishment and lecture its pupils as before, merely conferring orders, in addition, when required, and consecrating such churches as might be erected in the territory of the clan. Nathy's jurisdiction was not diocesan, properly so called, the territory not having been ecclesiastically constituted into a diocese at the time; but as the saint resided and officiated in the district, which those, who subsequently became the territorial bishops of Achonry, governed, they took him for their patron, though they would not call themselves his successors, as he was never ordinary of their diocese. And for a similar reason they selected his monastery as the site of their cathedral.\* In some such way as this the apparently conflicting opinions regarding our saint may be reconciled.

The designation of Crumther, which is the strongest

\* A small portion of the eastern gable of the cathedral still stands, as also a little of the chancel sidewalls. The chancel was twenty-three feet in the clear. The tracery of the eastern window is said to have been very fine, and to have been filled with stained glass. The chancel was roofed with stone. The church contained a central tower; and, as in most Irish churches, the cloister adjoined the northern sidewall. Some hundreds of paces to the north-east are ruins and rubbish of a building, which the inhabitants of Achonry call *The College*. There were persons living lately who saw service in the cathedral. The stones of this edifice were made use of in building the Protestant church that stands hard by. There is a story current in Achonry of a churchwarden who was the first to tear stones out of the cathedral walls. It is said that he got paralyzed the night of the day on which he did this, and continued so afflicted to the end of his life, which lasted several years from the attack. The people regarded this misfortune as a judgment, so that whenever the poor man appeared on the public road, where he was moved along in some small wheeled vehicle, the little urchins of the neighbourhood used to taunt him with his church demolition, and the bad luck it brought him.



objection to his having been bishop, is not conclusive against the opinion; for it is easy to understand how people of the neighbourhood, who had known Nathy, and spoken of him as Crumther Nathy before he entered the monastery, while he lived among them, should continue to talk of our saint in the same style even after the holy man had received the higher order, of which perhaps they understood or heard little. Children would take up the epithet from their parents, and in this way the phrase would get stereotyped and pass on to after ages.

It is agreed that Nathy lived to a very advanced age. He must have been about thirty years old in 552, the supposed year of Saint Finian of Clonard's death, for the holy man was a priest for some time previous to that event; while, on the other hand, he was still alive when Saint Fechin founded the abbey of Fore, which could hardly be earlier than the second decade of the seventh century, seeing that that saint died only in 665, of the Yellow Plague.\* Nathy, then, was about ninety years when he passed to the reward of the just. He was buried within the precincts of the monastery†, and over his remains, after some time, was raised the cathedral of Achonry, which was dedicated to the saint, and called, after him, the Church of Crumther Nathy, contracted sometimes into Crum-Nathy.

This contracted form reminds one of a notion which some have of Saint Nathy, and which is so whimsical as hardly to deserve mention here. These persons have got it into their heads that Crum-Nathy and Crum-cruach have the same signification, and that Crum-cruach, instead of

\* On the whole it is plain that Nathy could not have lived less than about ninety years, or probably more.—Lanigan, vol. ii, p. 193.

† Remember the passion of Antonius,  
Of Firmus of brave family;  
In Achadh Cain was buried  
Nathi the devout priest.

being an idol destroyed by Saint Patrick, was a magician whom the apostle converted, and who, after conversion, became the famous Saint Nathy of Achonry. Of course there is no truth in such supposition.

The foregoing is all that has come down to us with regard to the man of God. Even this meagre account had to be gleaned from various quarters—from general Irish history, from local tradition, and from the published lives of Saint Finian, Saint Fechin, Saint Attracta, and Saint Cormac, no formal life of Saint Nathy, as has been stated already, having ever been written, or, if written, having reached our time. Almost all the particulars of his long life are lost. The countless good works that the holy man performed during his hundred years for the glory of God, for the sanctification of his own soul, and for the evangelization of Leyney-Connaught have followed him, and form now his crown, but are known only in heaven. The impression, however, which these works produced on the minds of contemporaries has been handed down from generation to generation, in the tribute which the successive writers that mention the name of Nathy never fail to pay to his extraordinary sanctity. Other Irish saints are noted for characteristic virtues: Columbkille, for love of churches; Finian of Clonard, for zeal in teaching; Brendan, for pious voyages; Columbanus and others, for missionary enterprise; but the patron of Achonry shines chiefly by pre-eminent personal sanctity. It is a great distinction; and when we call to mind that holiness is the divine attribute which forms the chief theme of praise in heaven,\* we cannot fail to feel the greatest reverence for a saint whose virtue reminds one of the most admirable and adorable of all God's perfections.

\* *Apocalypse*, chap. 4, verse 8.

## SECTION II.—SAINT FECHIN.

Saint Fechin was, probably, the most active and influential of the Irish saints of the seventh century. He is the first priest that is named in the Third Order of Irish saints, on the famous Catalogue published by Ussher in the *Britannicarum Ecclesiarum Antiquitates*.\* The order of the names is: "Fechin, presbyter; Airendan, Failan, Coman, Commian, Colman, Ernan, Cronan; and very many others, presbyters."

Unlike his master, Nathy, who has never found a biographer, Fechin has had his life written by several persons. Colgan gives three lives of the saint; one composed by Augustine Magraidin, who was a Canon Regular of the island of All Saints, in the Shannon, and died there the "Wednesday next after All Saints, in 1405;" † another in twenty-seven Latin hexameters, translated and abridged for the *Acta SS. Hib.* from seventy-four metrical Irish districts; and a third, compiled by Colgan himself, who tells us that he made the compilation from four different lives of the saint, viz.: that by Magraidan, the metrical life, and two others in Irish, one of which he supposes to be a translation of a Latin original, composed in the time of Saint Aidan, a contemporary of Fechin. This last he is inclined to ascribe to Saint Aileran, the author of a life of Saint Patrick, and a life of Saint Bridget. We are told in Magraidan's life, which is the first life given by Colgan, that Aileran the Wise recorded the miracles of Saint Fechin in the island of Imay. It does not appear from

\* Page 913. The title of this document is "Incipit Catalogus Sanctorum Hiberniæ secundum diversa tempora."—See also Todd's *St. Patrick*, pages 88-89.

Colgan says that, in an Irish life of St. Molaise, Fechin is counted among "the Twelve Apostles of Ireland."

† Ware's *De Scriptoribus Hiberniæ*, lib. i, cap. 11, p. 75.

this announcement whether Aileran composed a detailed life of our saint or not; but whichever Aileran's work was a full life or a mere report of the saint's doings in Imay we have, in either case, proof of the great respect in which Fechin was held; for the biographer of Saints Patrick and Bridget would hardly devote his pen to the proceedings of Saint Fechin, if these proceedings did not partake of the importance and dignity of those that the writer had already described.

Considering, then, the circumstances under which the Second Life\* was drawn up, it ought to be the most valuable of all the records that we have of Saint Fechin. As Colgan had materials to draw on that are no longer available, and was, from special knowledge of Irish history and hagiology, singularly qualified to make proper use of these materials, his conclusions regarding the saint should be more trustworthy than those of any other biographer. Such, however, is not the opinion of Dr. Lanigan, who manifestly regards the First Life as the superior—almost as the only authority. The learned doctor was, doubtless, led to hold this view, by the sound canon of historical criticism, that the nearer the record of an event approaches in date to the event itself, the more valuable is that record, *cæteris paribus*. But the canon just quoted does not warrant the doctor's preference; for the Second Life, though put into shape by Colgan, is not, as far as its facts and statements are concerned, *his* work, but the work of early Irish writers, one of whom, the contemporary of Saint Aidan, must have written 900 years before Colgan. "This compilation (Second Life)," says Father O'Hanlon, "proceeded from three different lives of Fechin, which were composed in Irish. One of these had been taken from a much older codex, written, it is said, in the time of Saint

\* Magraidin's composition goes commonly by the name of the First Life, or *Prima Vita*; while Colgan's composition is called the Second Life, or *Secunda Vita*.

Aidan, who was a contemporary of Saint Fechin, and over 900 years before Colgan wrote. This was a codex of Immaigh, in Connaught, where our saint lived. The second very old life wanted both the beginning and the end, although otherwise very trustworthy. The third was very old, likewise, and written in seventy-four elegant metrical distichs, recounting a great number of the saint's miracles. The three codices were found to be over prolix for separate publication, so that Colgan thought it better to collate and abridge their contents, which substantially he has published." If, then, Colgan, instead of "collating and abridging" the lives that he had before him, and giving their substance in the Second Life, had published them separately, exactly as they were written, these lives would be found to precede in date the composition of Magraidin, and to have, in a greater degree than that work, that element of authenticity which they now seem to lack. Bearing this consideration in mind, it is clear that the Second Life has the strongest claims on our deference to what it asserts respecting the career of the saint.

It is the almost unanimous opinion of those who have written on Saint Fechin, that he was born in Billa, a village in the County of Sligo, barony of Leyney, and parish of Ballysadare. The *Menelogium Genealogicum*\* seems to hold that he was a native of Meath, but it is only from gross ignorance of the facts of the case that this opinion could be advanced, as the proofs in favour of Billa are patent and irresistible. In the first place, the identical spot on which he is said to have first seen the light is, at present, and has been from time immemorial, a place of pilgrimage under the name of *Leaba-Fechin*, (Fechin's bed),† a fact of itself decisive on the subject. In this spot

\* Colgan's *Acta SS.*, etc., p. 143.

† In his *Lectures on the Manners and Customs of the Ancient Irish*, Eugene O'Curry quotes a very remarkable stanza from a poem by

there is a large stone, on which are impressions looking like indented hand marks; and the legend is: that these marks were made by his mother, Lassara,\* as she grasped the objects near her in the agonizing travail that accompanied the birth of so great a saint. Between this stone and another close by there is a hollow in which men suffering from pain in the back lie down, invoking Fechin, "who was born there," in the fond hope of being thus cured of their infirmity through his intercession. Over these stones was erected (it is said by the saint himself) a

MacCoise, poet and historian to Malachy the Second, King of Meath. O'Curry introduces the matter in those words:—"This interesting poem," on the death of Brian Boromhe, "concludes with the following curious stanza:—

" There were found at Saint Feichin's frigid bed,  
Wells of overflowing blood,  
The sign of kingly Brian's death,  
In the western border land of Erin."

"The place mentioned," proceeds the lecturer, "as Saint Fechin's Bed is the ancient abbey of Cong, in the County of Mayo, which was founded by Saint Feichin, who died in the year 664; but of the legend of the bloody wells and their connection with the death of Brian Boromha, I have never met any other account."—*Lectures, etc.*, vol. ii, p. 119.

With great deference to O'Curry, he seems to have fallen into an error in placing Fechin's Bed at Cong; for though the saint founded the celebrated monastery of that place, there is no object, in or about the building, called "Fechin's Bed." It is clear then the poet meant Billa, where "Leaba-Fechin," or, "Fechin's Bed," has existed since the time of the saint, and has always gone by that name. Billa, too, might well be referred to as "in the western border land of Erin," as it lies on the western coast, and much nearer than Cong to the sea.

\* "No less than fourteen distinct entries of holy women named Lassara occur in the Calendar of Donegal."—*Lives of the Irish Saints*: by the Rev. John O'Hanlon, M.R.I.A.

According to the Tract on the Mothers of the Irish Saints (*Book of Lecan*, fol. 89 a), the name of St. Fechin's mother was Sochla; but Colgan reconciles the apparent discrepancy by showing that Sochla and Lassair mean much the same thing. Sochla signifies *charitable*, and Lassair a *flame*, so that the mother of our saint was called by one and the other name from the *flame of charity* that constantly burned within her.

church, which was called the *Church of Saint Fechin*, the walls of which were standing about seventy years ago, the foundations being still to be seen.

In the next place, the numerous memorials of the saint that meet one at every step in the neighbourhood, prove it to have been his native place. Adjoining the ruins of the church is a piece of land called *Parc-Ehin*—Fechin's Park—where the saint is said, when a little boy, to have tended cattle for his parents, an occupation that was not counted demeaning in any one in those primitive times. In *Parc-Ehin* may still be seen the stone on which he is reported, *even in Magraidin's life*, to have performed a singular miracle. Wishing to tie up an animal—some say a cow, some a calf, and others a wolf—\* and having within reach no stake to which the tying could be attached, the saint ran the hand through a large stone, and, passing a cord through the hole he had made, thus accomplished his object. Were all other evidence wanting, that stone † alone, bearing still, after the lapse of 1000 years, the mark

\* Local tradition has it that the animal was a cow which the saint had for giving milk to the masons who built the church of Billa. *Magraidin's* statement is, that it was a wolf. His version is, that the saint having been chid, when a little boy, by his mother for having allowed wolves to destroy a calf, Fechin went away for a little, and brought back a wolf, which he tied near the cow, and which remained so quiet that the cow gave her milk.

Mr. Prendergast, in a paper published in the *Kilkenny Archaeological Journal*, vol. ii, p. 424, writes, "Moryson says that when a cow, upon her calf being taken away from her, refused to give her milk, they used to stuff the skin of the calf with hay and set it before the cow, who would smell it and lick it, and when so doing, would give down her milk." Doubtless the wolf was intended to answer the purpose of stuffed calf-skin.

† This stone is wedge-shaped and is nine feet long, five deep, and four wide at its greatest width; its width at the hole being two feet three inches. It is partly sunk in the earth, and points to the east. Though isolated till lately in the centre of a large field, it is now part of a fence and projects a couple of feet on each side of the ditch, as the people would not break anything off it, regarding it as sacred. It is the only stone in the fence, the rest of which is composed of clay.



of the supposed miracle, would suffice to connect our saint's birth and boyhood with Billa, even to the satisfaction of those who regard the *Prima Vita*—that of Magraidin—as the only sure authority on the life of Fechin. A few hundred yards to the north of *Parc-Ehin*, in the townland of Kilnemonogh, is “Fechin's Well;” half a mile or so to the south is another “Fechin's Well,” as also a “Fechin's Bridge;” \* in the demesne of Annaghmore is a well, formerly called Fechin's Well, though now known as Saint Anne's Well; the strand of Ballysadare and Streamstown was called “Fechin's Strand;” and throughout the parish are several other objects associated with the saint's name. Killassar, † near Billa, the site of an old church, said to have been erected by our saint in honour of his mother, leads to the same conclusion; while “Bile-Fechin,” the common name of Billa in former times, ‡ should remove all doubt on the subject in hand, if any such could still exist in some mind little pervious to evidence. As to the inhabitants of Billa and the neighbouring districts, their belief in the saint's being a native is so strong and universal—is, indeed, so much a matter of course with them—that they would regard it as a proof of extreme ignorance or perversity to question the fact. And excepting the writer of *Menelogium Genealogicum*, if he is an ex-

\* Old people say that in their parents' time stations in honour of our saint used to be performed at Fechin's-bridge.

† Killassar was a prebend in the diocese of Achonry. We read in Cotton's *Fasti Ecclesie Hibernie*:—“KILLASSER. 1605. This prebend, with two quarters of land, is granted, by patent from the Crown, to Edward Crofton (Erck's *Register*, p. 255).”—*Fasti, etc.*, vol. iv. p. 113.

‡ Billa or Bile must have got its name at first from some sacred tree (see page 220), under which, probably, local chiefs were inaugurated.

This manner of inaugurating kings and dynasts was not peculiar to Ireland:—“All the sovereigns,” says the *Journal des Debats* of June 16, 1877, “who succeeded one another on the throne of Castille, or of Spain, began by taking an oath to respect the *fueros* and to preserve intact the ancient customs; and the oath was taken under the oak of Guernica, the consecrated tree whose age was never known.”

ception, which we cannot decide for ourselves, not having seen the work, no one seems to have questioned it; for all the writers of authority: Colgan, Ussher, Ware, Harris, Archdall, Lanigan, Kelly, O'Hanlon, etc., are unanimous in assigning Billa as the saint's birth-place, even though these writers were not acquainted with many of the convincing particulars that local knowledge enables us to state now for the first time.

It is equally certain that Fechin belonged to the O'Hara family, or, rather, to the family whose two branches subsequently took the names, respectively, of O'Hara and O'Gara. This appears, firstly, from his being classed, in Saint Cormac's life, with the other saints of that family—Nathy, Luathrenna,\* and Moby Clairenech—and secondly, from his being traditionally called O'Hara or O'Gara. To this day the people of Leyney call him Fechin O'Hara, while we find him named O'Gara in the 121st stanza of Bishop O'Connell's *Dirge of Ireland*.—O'Brennan's translation of the stanza is:— †

“ Conmara of the bays, who surpassed in generosity;  
 Friar O'Gara that was a hermit;  
 Mochua, Molua, Lacten, Benignus,  
 Bridget of Meath and Gobenata.”

It is not clear whether it is by the father or by the mother that Saint Fechin is connected with the O'Hara family. The paternal pedigree derives him from Eochy Finn Fuothairt, and not from Oliol Olluim, the ancestor of the O'Haras and O'Garas, so that if this pedigree is accepted as that of the saint, his relationship with the families mentioned would come through the mother. And this would be well in keeping with what is said both in the

\* Killoran has its name Kil-Luathren from this saint, though in the *Book of Extracts, Ordnance Survey of the County Sligo*, and in various other places, the parish is erroneously stated to be so called from a “Saint Odhran.”

† O'Brennan's *Antiquities*, vol. i, p. 175.

*Vita Prima*, and *Vita Secunda* of Colgan, where we read that Fechin's mother "was of the royal blood of Munster," which seems to indicate that it is in this way the saint shared that blood. And the very phrase employed lends some colour to the *Finn Tuothairt* origin, for to this day when the neighbours speak of the family of the O'Haras, the phrase used is that "they are of the royal blood of Munster."

If, however, we adopt the genealogy traced in the *Leabar Breac*, our saint was descended paternally from Oliol Olluim, as that genealogy runs thus:—Fechin, Coelcharna, Cillin, Grillin, Coel, Aedh, Sain, Art Corb, Niadh Corb. And the missing links are thus supplied by Mr. W. M. Hennessy from M'Firbis's *Genealogies* (p. 739, col. 1):—Lae, Cormac Gaileng, Tadg, Oliol Olluim. The two pedigrees, then, run thus:—

| No. 1. |                    | No. 2.                       |
|--------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| 1.     | Fechin.            | 1. Fechin.                   |
| 2.     | Son of Coelcharna. | 2. Coelcharna.               |
| 3.     | " Cillin.          | 3. Killin.                   |
| 4.     | " Grillin.         | 4. Coel.                     |
| 5.     | " Coel.            | 5. Aid.                      |
| 6.     | " Aedh.            | 6. Saine.                    |
| 7.     | " Sain.            | 7. Airtcorb.                 |
| 8.     | " Art Corb.        | 8. Carbre Niadh.             |
| 9.     | " Niadh Corb.      | 9. Cormac.                   |
| 10.    | " Lae.             | 10. Aengus Menn.             |
| 11.    | " Cormac Gaileng.  | 11. Eochadh Fionn Tuothairt. |
| 12.    | " Tadg.            |                              |
| 13.    | " Cian.            |                              |
| 14.    | " Oliol Olluim.    |                              |

} *Leab. Braec*, p.  
21, col. 1.

} M'Firbis's  
*Genealogies*,  
p. 739, col. 1.

As it is reported of several other Irish saints,\* so also it is said of Fechin—that his birth and sanctity were predicted. Saint Columba, passing one time through the valley of Fore, in Westmeath, was pressed by the owner of the place to found a church there, but excused himself by saying, that that honour was reserved for a great saint named Fechin, who was soon to be born. Stellanus,

\* Adamnan's *Life of St. Columba*, p. 6—Dean Reeves's edition.

the proprietor of the valley, saw it once filled with beautiful birds, having in their midst a column of fire \* that towered up to heaven, and learned from an angel that the vision prefigured Fechin and his fervent monks. A similar vision is said to have been vouchsafed to a man named Cruemus, who is commonly supposed to be Crumther-Nathy, and who saw in spirit the valley swarming with doves, one of which was of great size and striking beauty, the large bird representing Fechin, and the others the members of his community.†

As prophecy foretold the birth, so supernatural prodigies of all kinds marked the life of the saint, if we are to receive the statements of old biographers in the literal sense. Some of these miracles are of so trivial, some of so incongruous a nature, that they would not add to our esteem for the saint, even if it were proved that they took place. But the extravagance of admirers can take nothing from the merits of the holy man. Leaving, however, this part of the subject for the present, let us now try to make out an outline of the saint's career.

We are told in Magraidin's life, that Fechin was taken away immediately after birth by a neighbouring chief, who happened to be in Billa the night the child was born. The story is, that seeing a great light over the house of Coelcharna and Lassara, the parents of the infant, and taking the phenomenon to foreshow the new-born's future sanctity, the chief asked and obtained charge of the child, which probably means that our saint was committed to a friend to be fostered, in accordance with the custom of fosterage that prevailed among our ancestors. That,

\* Prodigies associated with fire and birds are often met with in old Irish writers, as for instance, in the *Four Masters*, sub anno 1054.

† These predictions and legends are given by Magraidin.—Colgan's *Acta Prima Vita*. Some of the statements in the old lives may, no doubt, be set down to what Bishop Butler terms, "the forward and delusive faculty of imagination."

however, Fechin was soon returned to the father's house, we may infer from an account we have of the saint's receiving correction from his father, and reproof from his mother, while a child under the domestic roof.

As we have seen in Saint Nathy's life, it is likely that that holy man directed the child's education even at this time.\* It is certain that Fechin followed the saint to Achonry, as soon as that establishment was opened, and acquired there much of the learning and sanctity for which he afterwards became so famous. It is stated in Magraidin's life that Fechin passed from Achonry to another religious house, which some think was Clonenagh, under St. Fintan; others Clonmacnoise, under Saint Kieran; but it is, to say the least, very doubtful whether the saint left Achonry at all before he was a priest; and if so, it is less probable that the youth went to either Clonenagh or Clonmacnoise than to Aughris or some other part of Tireragh, as there are still vivid traditions of Fechin's intimate intercourse with saints of that district.†

\* "Emensus infantis tempus et litteris disciplinisque capessendis habilis factus S., Nathineo Antistiti Achadh-Conerensi pietati et litteris instruendus traditur." Colgan's *Acta Sanctorum*, p. 134.

† The opinion that Fechin completed his studies for the priesthood in Achonry, is much favoured by what we read in Magraidin himself, when taken in connection with facts we learn from other quarters. That writer tells us, that our saint, immediately after entering *the second monastery*, showed miraculous powers, by first putting to death horses that had been driven against his will into a meadow of which he had charge; and, secondly, by restoring them to life again, on being requested to do so. Now, the tradition at Achonry is, that these miracles took place *there*, and the inhabitants point out the very spot or scene of the alleged occurrence, which goes to show that Fechin was in Achonry when Magraidin supposes him to have passed to another religious house. The opinion about a second monastery arose most probably from the fact of the saint's receiving his education partly at Billa, and partly at Achonry—two places which some biographers erroneously supposed to be two different religious houses—whereas Billa was only the place of residence of our saint's parents, in which he received instructions from Nathy, before that saint removed to Achonry.

Fechin's first care, on becoming a priest, was to furnish the territory of Leyney with churches, which, at that time, it greatly needed. Ballysadare was our saint's first foundation, after building which, the zealous priest erected religious establishments in Billa, Kilnemonogh, Drumrath, Kilgarvan, and Ecclasroog or Edarguidhe.\* Of these structures, Ballysadare and Kilnemonogh were certainly monasteries; while the others may have been monasteries, or simple places of worship; though, considering the monastic character of early Christianity in Ireland, it is not improbable that all the houses enumerated belonged to a species of monastery.† Dr. Lanigan questions the saint's right to be called the founder of these establishments, but as the doctor assigns no reason for this opinion, except the silence of the *Vita Prima*,‡ while, in advancing it, he runs counter to local tradition, and to Colgan, who has made a special study of Fechin, there is no need of dwelling further on the subject here. And it is the less necessary, as some observations have been already made on the matter when speaking of Ballysadare. §

\* Colgan's *Acta Sanctorum Hib., Secunda Vita.*

† Dr. Todd's *St. Patrick*, page 37.

‡ It is strange that Dr. Lanigan relies on this silence, as it is well known that, except in the case of St. Patrick, the churches built by old Irish saints are hardly ever mentioned by the biographers of these saints. "Columb-Kille's countrymen," says the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, vol. vi, p. 9, "believed that he had founded three hundred religious establishments in his native land; but his professed historians have scarcely thought such enterprises worthy of even a passing notice. Adamnanus does not notice them at all: Cummineus scarcely at all. The splendid and enduring monuments by which Columba stamped the impress of his mind not merely on his contemporaries, but on his countrymen for many generations, they thought unworthy of a special record."

§ Page 4.

The Festology of Aengus, at the 20th of January, does not mention our saint under the name of Fechin, but commemorates him as Mœcca, saying, "The four I join on the same festival most holy, Molaca, Mœcca, Sapaist [Sebastian], and Oenu;" for a note informs us that "Mœcca is *Fechine Fabair*." The scholiast explains the meaning of the names Fechin and Mœcca, but in a way that seems to savour more of his



It is right to mention, as there have been doubts and differences of opinion on the subject, that Kilnemonogh is the next townland, on the north, to Billa, from which it is separated merely by the Coolany river; that Drumrat lies at the foot of Keash, towards the west; and that Kilgarvan is the parish of that name in the County of Mayo and barony of Costello. Ecclasroog or Edarguidhe has not been hitherto identified, but the writer believes that it is the spot known as "Fechin's Praying-place" or oratory, in the glebe land of Dromard, quite near the junction of Ballysadare and Dromard parishes, where there is a well called Tubber Fechin, on a flag adjoining which the country people tell you they discern the marks of the saint's knees. This conjecture as to the situation of Ecclasroog or Edarguidhe is the more likely, as the "Praying-place" is within the limits of Killala diocese, to which Colgan supposes Ecclasroog to belong. There is a local tradition that Fechin and a Tireragh saint—some say Adamnan, others Molaise—were in the habit of meeting there daily for conference and prayer, our saint leaving Ballysadare, and the other the monastery of Skreen or

own simplicity or puerility than of the virtues of so great a saint. According to him, Fechin would be the diminutive of *fiac*, a raven, and would signify little raven, and was a term of endearment, or what we should now call a pet name, in which his mother addressed the saint while a child. "*Inde*," says this writer, "*dictus est Fechin.*"

"*Mæcca autem dictus est*," adds the scholiast, from his power of vision; for it was to him this power of vision occurred; as proof, to wit, when Fechin was herding for Ciaran of Cluain; it happened that his food was left for him on the marsh. Fechin was angry, therefore, and went out afterwards, and left the cell, and went from it eastwards. This was told to Ciaran. "After him," said Ciaran, "and unless he comes willingly, let him be brought back by force." He was pursued, and Fechin said he would not come with his face before him. So that the way he was brought was with his back turned. "That man really sees [backwards]," said Ciaran; *et inde Mofecca* [mo-my, and fecca-seeing], *nomen accepit.—Festology of Aengus*—Note to 20th January.

The writer is indebted to Mr. W. M. Hennessy for the translation both of the note and text.



Aughris, every morning, for the purpose of the pious interview, and each returning home at night. And the names of Ecclasroog and Edarguidhe confirm the above conjecture. Ecclasroog signifies the "Church of the rout;" and as no district in the county has been the scene of more hostile encounters than that on which the Praying-place stands, there must have been many routs, from one of which the church, no doubt, got its name. The denomination, Edarguidhe too, meaning, as it does, "Between two sea streams,"\* is a perfect description of the place, as it lies between two sea inlets, which used to fill with the tide before the sea was shut out, in 1833, by Boey's embankment.

But the most famous of the saint's foundations, and the one in which the holy man habitually resided in later life, was that of Fore,† in Westmeath. It was posterior to those that have been mentioned. After furnishing Leyney with churches, and providing for the permanence of religion in his native district,‡ Fechin conformed to a

\* John O'Donovan tells us that, "the word *gaot* or *gact*," which enters into the composition of *Ederguidhe*, signifies a shallow stream into which the tide flows, and which is fordable at low water."—*Battle of Magh Rath*, p. 228.

† Colgan, in his appendix to the saint's life, has a separate chapter on Fore.

‡ Owing to his family connection with the rulers of Leyney, our saint was able to procure endowments for the religious establishments that he founded in that district. "Saint Fechin," says Colgan (*Act. Sanct.* p. 134), "founded the noble monastery of Eas dara, (Ballysadare) which the lord of the territory of Leyney endowed with large possessions, and he gave to it all the tract of land extending from the river washing the monastery to the sea, so that the said monastery was endowed with a noble and large estate called Termon-Fechin, Refugium vel terminus Sancti Fechini. The sanctuary or limits of St. Fechin." There are old persons still living, who, in their early days, heard the district lying between Ballysadare and Dromard called Termon-Fechin.

To damage Fechin's claim to be the founder of a monastery at Ballysadare, Dr. Lanigan observes:—"It is true that the monastery of Ballysadare possessed some land called *Tearmann Fechin*, i.e., the sacred ground of Fechin; but it does not follow that he founded the monastery, or that it was he that obtained the grants by which it was enriched. Fechin's

practice common among the saints of that period, of quitting the neighbourhood of their birth, and taking up abode in some remote place. Committing himself to the good providence of God, the saint turned the face to the south, and having reached and crossed the Shannon, gave himself up to prayer and fasting, with the object of learning the Divine will in his regard. The answer was not long in coming; and after having passed three fervent days and as many nights in these exercises, the holy man felt that it was his mission to erect a monastery in the valley of Fore, a place which there was no difficulty in obtaining from the owner, Stellanus, who recognized in the saint the person formerly shown him in vision, as destined one day to occupy the valley. Fechin hurried on the work of the monastery, assisting the workmen by his presence and advice; and a tradition still lingers in the parish of Fore, which goes to show that the saint rendered very effectual aid; for it is said that he placed miraculously in its position a huge stone lintel—six feet long, two deep, and three wide—which all the workmen had tried in vain to raise. Having laboured ineffectually all the morning at this task, they went to breakfast, leaving the saint alone on the ground; but on returning, after the meal, resolved to make another great effort to accomplish the feat, they were filled with astonishment and awe at beholding the immense block lying tranquilly in its place over the door-way, where it has since lain, and where it may still be seen. The men naturally ascribed what was done in their absence to the

system, as appears from his conduct at Fore, was one of poverty, and different from that of procuring estates for his establishments" (vol. iii, page 47). It is in this way Dr. Lanigan combats the formal assertion of Colgan, which the hagiologist would never have made thus positively had he not abundant authority for doing so. The doctor's comparison of Fore and Ballysadare is far from conclusive, for Fechin could easily secure, at Ballysadare, where his relative was dynast, a suitable endowment, which it might have failed him to acquire at Fore, where he was in the midst of strangers.

miraculous power of Fechin, an opinion which has been since shared by all the inhabitants of Fore.\* In his *Chorographical Description of Westmeath*, Sir Henry Piers thus refers to this matter:—"The wall of Saint Fechin's church is hard upon, if not altogether, three feet thick; the lintel that traverseth the head of the door is of one entire stone of the full thickness, or near it, of the wall, and, to the best of my remembrance, about six foot long, or perhaps more, and in height about two foot or more. Having taken notice of it as the largest entire stone I had at any time observed, especially so high, in any building; and discoursing of it with an ancient dweller in the town, I observed to him, that of old they wanted not their engines, even in this country, for their structures. The gentleman, smiling as at my mistake, told me that the saint himself alone, without either engine or any help, placed the stone there. He said, the workmen having hewn and fitted the stone in its dimensions, and made a shift, with much ado, to tumble it to the foot of the wall, they assayed with their joint forces to raise it, but, after much toil and loss of time, they could not get it done. At last they resolved to go and refresh themselves, and after breakfast to make another attempt at it. The saint also—for, as the story goes, he was then living and present—advised them so to do, and tells them he would tarry till their return. When they returned, behold they find the stone exactly as to this day it remains, over the door. This was done, as the tradition goes, by the saint alone; a work, for my part, I believe impossible to be done by the strength of so many hands only as can immediately apply their force to it."

\* Ussher supposes Fore, or Baille Fobhar, to be the same as Baille Leabhair, and to signify the "town of the books," but John O'Donovan proves this opinion of the learned archbishop to be an "inadvertent error," and shows that the phrase means the "town of the springs," i.e., those "remarkable springs which flow from the hill into the mill-pond at the village of Fore."—*Annals of the Four Masters* (O'Donovan's edition), A.D. 1175.

Early in the thirteenth century Walter de Lacy, in gratitude for the kindness he had received while an exile in France, at the abbey of St. Taurin, Evreaux, Normandy, had Fore constituted a cell of that abbey, under the title of the Priory of Saints Taurin and Fechin. From that date this Priory continued to be one of the most flourishing religious establishments in Ireland down to the 27th of November, 1539, when it was surrendered to the commissioners of Henry VIII. The Anglo-Normans desired to make Saint Taurin the chief patron of the house, but nothing could dislodge Saint Fechin from the first place in the affections of the people; and while Taurin is now almost forgotten, our saint is as vividly remembered at the present day in and around Fore as in his native village of Billa. Even the parish in which the ruins of Fore Abbey lie is called after him the Parish of Saint Fechin.

A mill that Fechin erected under the Benn of Fore, to grind grain for his community, was held in almost as much respect as the church. And there is little wonder in this, when we recollect the miraculous way in which the mill is alleged to have been first erected, and, next, supplied with water. As to the erection, Giraldus Cambrensis writes:—"There is a mill at Fore, which St. Fechin made most miraculously with his own hands in the side of a certain rock;" and in regard to the water supply we read in the Life of Saint Mochua, as it is given by the Bollandists under the 1st of January, that "Mochua came to Fore, a town of Meath, in which Fechin had erected a mill at the foot of a mountain, without having any water near; and as nothing was now wanting but the water, the mill being finished in other respects, the two saints set out for Lough Lene, which was two miles away. Arrived at the lake, Mochua\*

\* Mochua was a native of Leyney, the present diocese of Achonry, like St. Fechin, as we learn from an old life of the former, which begins thus: "Clarus genere vir erat nomine Mochua, filius Lonand, ex Lugne Connactiæ trahens originem."—Harris's *Ware*, vol. ii, page 305.

makes a hole with the point of a staff in the bank that lay next to the mill ; Fechin and the priests that accompanied him did the same ; and, on the moment, the water passing in a wonderful manner under ground through the mountain, dashed out not far from the mill, and, falling on the wheel with great force, set the mill a-going." The following additional remarks of the credulous Giraldus were well adapted to impress people with awe in respect to the mill and the other possessions of the monks of Fore:—"No women are allowed to enter this mill or the church of the saint ; and the mill is held in as much reverence by the natives as any of the churches dedicated to the saint. It happened that when Hugh de Lacy was leading his troops through this place, an archer committed a great crime in the mill, but sudden punishment overtook him, and, after a fearful agony, he died that night. Moreover, the army, having quartered for the night in this place, Hugh de Lacy caused all the corn which they had pillaged from the churches and the mill to be restored ; but a small quantity of oats which had been pilfered from the mill by two of the soldiers was surreptitiously placed by them before their horses. One of these men became insane, and dashed his brains out the same night in the stable. The other, after a comrade had jeered those who made restitution of the corn, fell suddenly dead the next morning by the side of Hugh de Lacy, in sight of the greatest part of the troops, who were filled with amazement." \*

Those few words regarding a place in which St. Fechin passed so much time, will not be unacceptable to the reader, though they are more or less a digression, as the object of these pages is not to give an account of the establishments founded by the saint, but of the saint himself. At Fore, Fechin combined the life of an anchoret with that of an abbot. While administering diligently the weighty affairs of the great monastery, presiding over its religious

\* The Topography of Ireland.—chapters lii, and liii.

exercises, enforcing its discipline, regulating its classes of Scripture, sacred music, and other ecclesiastical sciences, providing for its temporal needs, and satisfying the educational and various other wants of the neighbourhood, the holy man snatched, from time to time, from these occupations, a day on which he would retire to some detached hut or cell, and there in solitude, silence, and profound meditation, receive from above the fervour and strength so necessary for the due fulfilment of his great charge. Sometimes, at the call of duty, he moved further from the monastery, making journeys to different parts of Leinster, such as Termonfeekin in Louth, Tiprid, and Naas, and either founding churches in these places, or so identifying himself with the localities that churches raised in them subsequently were put under his invocation.\* In addition to the establishments in Leyney and in Leinster, of which he was either the builder or patron, he also erected churches in the island of Imay and elsewhere in West Connaught, but as these western foundations were among the latest acts of the saint's life, further reference to them will come in, more opportunely, later on.

But Fechin was no Eastern recluse, shut up in his solitary cell, careless and callous in regard to everything that happened outside, but a saint overflowing with human sympathies like the apostle of the Gentiles, and able to say with him, "Quis infirmatur et ego non infirmor"? No ecclesiastic of the time took so conspicuous a part in the public proceedings of the country, or exercised so marked an influence on the monarchs and princes of the day. Like St. Bernard, our saint was often solicited to interfere in secular affairs, and, like the same saint, sometimes complied with those solicitations, for the sake of promoting peace

\* "There was a nunnery in the county of Louth, at a place called Termon-Feekin, which possibly was built on some church ground anciently granted to St. Fechin."—Harris's *Ware*, vol. ii, page 234.

and charity. On one occasion he proceeded to the palace of the King of Leinster at Naas, where several distinguished captives, under sentence of death, were awaiting execution, and solicited their release. The King not only refused to grant the petition, but refused even the request of Fechin for an audience or interview on the subject. But the charity of the saint would not be baffled; and after failing with the king, he turned in prayer to God, and soon found, we are told, some means, which one is not bound to believe a miracle, as old writers seem to suppose, of opening the gates of the prison, and restoring its trembling inmates to liberty. The hymn read at Lauds, in the old office of the saint, thus alludes to the transaction :—

Quendam regem extra legem  
 Hic adivit et quesivit  
 Ut laxaret obsides;  
 Quo negante, Deos dante  
 Sunt soluti restituti  
 Et egressi sospites.\*

On another occasion a message of the holy man effected with ease the liberation of a state prisoner, a feat that his personal presence got it so hard to accomplish at Naas. The saint's aid having been invoked by the mother of a young man named Erlomhan, who lay in chains in the palace of Maenach, King of Munster,† Fechin directed her to go and convey his wishes for her son's release to the king, giving her at the same time, to serve as a token of his warm interest in her application, or, as a ransom for the prisoner, in case a ransom were demanded, a golden torque which he had himself received as a present from the monarch. Maenach, on receiving the message and recognizing the torque, handed back the golden ornament, and restored the

\* The stone cross, commemorating this event, was still standing in Colgan's day.—Colgan, *Acta Sanctorum*, Jan. 20, cap. 32.

† According to the Four Masters, "Maenach, son of Finghin, King of Munster, died in the year 660.



son to the longing arms of the mother. Having learned in adversity the vanity of a worldly life, Erlomhan besought Fechin to admit him among the monks of Fore—a favour, we are told, the saint accorded; not, however, before the young man had given the most convincing proofs of humility, obedience, and the other virtues required for the monastic state.

The joint monarchs of Ireland, Blaithmac and Diermid, showed a similar disposition to oblige and please the saint. They held in chains a military man named Aidan, for whose liberation various efforts were made in vain. As a last resource the powerful interference of Fechin, the great friend and liberator of captives, was solicited; and, touched with the representations made to him, the saint proceeded in person to the royal palace and preferred a petition for the release of Aidan to the two monarchs. It cost the monarchs and their council a great effort to give up a prisoner that all were most anxious to retain, but they could refuse nothing to Fechin, whom they both loved and feared, so that Aidan was soon delivered into his hands. Like Erlomhan, Aidan too, after recovering liberty, sought to serve God in religion, and was received into the monastery of Fore; and it is recorded that, though of savage manners before conversion, and of so voracious an appetite as to require as much food as seven ordinary men, he was quite satisfied, when a monk, with the meagre and stinted fare of a brother, becoming, too, so docile, gentle, and learned, that he was raised after some time to the priesthood.

If Blaithmac and Diermid obliged Fechin on this occasion, the holy man at another time repaid the favour by rendering them a service of much greater magnitude. Perhaps the most important political affair with which the saint had to do was his intervention between the Northern and the Southern HyNials, as the friend of the latter. The Northern HyNials being dissatisfied with the division of Ireland, that existed between themselves and the Southern

branch of the family, Domnald II, son of Aid, descendant of Conal Gulban,\* and representative of the former, led a great army into Meath for the purpose of effecting with the sword what the Northern princes maintained would be a more equitable partition. The sons of Aidi Slaine, Blaithmac and Diermid, collected, at a place called Druimnua, an army to resist the invaders; but as this army was in every way inferior to that of Domnald, the royal princes relied less on their arms for deliverance from the dangers that impended than on the prayers and influence of St. Fechin. Nor did the holy man disappoint their hope. After feeding for three days the whole army of Blaithmac and Diermid, which was destitute of provisions, and assisting these monarchs with his prayers and advice while they were entrenching themselves at Rath Druimnua, he repaired to Domnald and begged that king to relinquish further hostilities. Failing in this attempt the saint had recourse to more severe and solemn measures, denouncing the invaders, and threatening Domnald and the Northern army with ills of all kinds, which were not slow in coming, for, in a night or two, an immense fall of snow took place, and destroyed a vast number of men and horses in the invading army. Ascribing this and other calamities that occurred to the saint's anger, Domnald came and threw himself at the holy man's feet, imploring reconciliation and peace. Fechin, it would seem, put the monarch's sincerity and humility to a trying test, if we are to rely on the statement of old writers, which, it is to be hoped, is an invention or an exaggeration, for they tell us that the saint would not grant peace and friendship, on his own part, or the part of Blaithmac and Diermid, till he was first allowed to set the heel, in sign of victory, on the neck of the prostrate Domnald.†

\* From him the beautiful mountain of Benbulban (*recte* Ben Gulban) has its name. This transaction between the Southern and Northern monarch is related in Colgan's *Acta Sanctorum*, page 137.

† "The most signal instance of Domnald's humility," says Dr. Lynch in *Cambrensis Eversus*, cap. ix., "was when he threw himself at the feet of St. Fechin to beg pardon for his crime, and allowed the saint to place his foot on his neck."

The unfortunate king, however, was glad to purchase peace on any terms, and, having complied with all the hard and humiliating conditions imposed, and obtained the saint's pardon and blessing, led the army home, little disposed to renew ever again an enterprise that had brought such losses and disgrace on himself and his followers.

We will mention one other example of the saint's interference in the affairs of royal personages. It is the case of Ragallach, King of Connaught, who died, according to the annals of Tighernach, in the year 649. This monarch, who was a tyrannous, treacherous, and lascivious prince, having secured the throne of Connaught by the murder of a nephew, gave himself up to a life of sloth and debauchery, oppressing his subjects and insulting his queen.\* After trying in vain other means to reclaim her husband, the queen laid the case at last before Fechin, and begged the assistance of the holy man, who, moved by her statements, took with him a large retinue of clergy,† and repaired to the court of the king; but their journey was fruitless; for all the efforts of Fechin's zeal could not withdraw the monarch from scandalous courses and wicked associates. As a last resource the man of God threatened Ragallach with a speedy and ignominious death

\* Her name was *Muireenn*.—O'Curry's *Manners and Customs of Ancient Irish*, vol. ii, page 943.

† "A great number of eminent divines and religious persons of several orders," says Keating, vol. ii, page 132. "They were soon admitted," adds the historian, "into the presence of Ragallach, and used all possible arguments to prevail with him, but without success, which so enraged the clergy that they left the court, and implored the justice of heaven to overtake the king by a most signal stroke; they loaded him with the most dreadful imprecations, and prayed to God that he might not live till the May following; that he might receive his death by the most despicable weapons; that the meanest persons and the very scum of mankind might be the executioners of the divine vengeance; and that he might die in a place unbecoming the majesty of a king, and end his days in the most vile and ignominious manner." Keating goes on to give in detail the circumstances of the king's death, which are summarized in the following note.

unless he changed his life; but threats had as little effect as exhortations on that obdurate heart; and two or three months after Fechin's return to Fore, this wicked man lost his life in a low brawl, at the hands of an ignoble rabble, thus fulfilling the saint's prediction, and closing a vile and sinful life by an infamous and miserable death.\*

But if our saint, like the prophets of old, had sometimes to appear before kings and princes, he was always in a hurry back to the solitude of the cloister, and while busy about many things, never ceased to feel that the cultivation of religion in himself and in those under his care was the "one thing necessary." Hence the chief solicitude of the holy man was to sanctify the monks, for their own sake, as well as for the sake of others to whom they might become sources of spiritual life. Although engaged chiefly with the government of Fore, the home of his adoption, Fechin watched with constant care over the religious establishments of Leyney, which were always in his thoughts and prayers. Nor could his numerous and weighty occupations in Leinster, the difficulties of travel at the period, or the great intervening distance keep the man of God away from the scenes of his earlier years, and hence he visited Achonry once and Ballysadare apparently several times, as we learn from Colgan's life.

It was at the monastery of Ballysadare,† during one of

\* "The king, being out hunting, pierced a large buck with his spear, and then followed him into a bog where some men were engaged cutting turf. These men had finished the buck before the king came up; and on his demanding what he deemed to be his lawful game, they set upon himself and killed him also with their ignoble spades. King Ragallach's family poet, Fintan, wrote a poem on his royal master's ignominious death."—*Manners and Customs of Ancient Irish*. E. O'Curry, vol. ii., page 343.

† Colgan *Act. SS. Vita Secunda S. Fechini*. Colgan's words are, "Quadam nocte vir sanctus in monasterio de Eas dara existens ab angelo in somno monitus est, quod accedat ad insulam quamdam Oceani, in occidentali regione Connaciæ, quæ *Imaidh* vocatur," etc. Page 135.

these visits, that the saint conceived the design of converting the inhabitants of certain islands in the West of Ireland, as it was from the same monastery he started to engage in that great undertaking. It is not generally known that these islands remained obstinately Pagan long after the conversion of the rest of Ireland; nor is it unlikely that good numbers on the adjoining coast were in a similar state;\* and it was for St. Fechin was reserved the honour of completing the work of St. Patrick, and carrying the light of the Gospel to those islanders, as well as to such dwellers on the mainland as still “sat in darkness and the shadow of death.” The saint and the monks taken by him from Ballysadare met with extreme opposition in their labours to convert the island of Imay (now Omey), being reduced, by the want of food and the active hostility of the islanders, to the greatest distress, in which state, however, the missionaries were relieved by Guaire, surnamed the Hospitable, the well-known King of Connaught, who, on hearing what was happening, forwarded to the saint and his party an ample supply of provisions, and bestowed on them the island for religious uses.† After those sufferings and privations the indefatigable missionaries had the happiness of inducing the islanders to embrace the religion of Christ; and, having once embraced it, those

\* Marron, or Muireen, wife of Ragallach, King of Connaught, was a Pagan in the time of our saint.—See Keating’s *History of Ireland*, vol. ii, page 129. Dublin (1809).

† “The name Imaidh,” says John O’Donovan, “is Latinized Imagia by Colgan, and Anglicized Imay by Roderic O’Flaherty. The name is now usually written Omey, and is that of an island on the coast of Connemara, in the north-west of the county of Galway. Guaire, the hospitable King of Connaught, bestowed it on St. Fechin, who founded an abbey on it in the seventh century. Imagia was a parish church in the time of Colgan (1645). See his *Acta Sanctorum*, pp. 140, 141; see also O’Flaherty’s *Iar Connaught*, page 113, where he says, “St. Fechin erected an abbey therein, but now the parish church is only extant, whereof St. Fechin is patron, the 20th January worshipped.” Colgan had a manuscript Irish Life of St. Fechin, which belonged to this church.—*Annals of Four Masters*, A.D. 1362.—Note.

earnest souls became as fervent Christians as they had been obstinate Pagans, so that they made over their interest in the island to the saint, and left themselves like children in his hands. In return the saint erected a monastery to provide, in his absence, for the spiritual and temporal interests of those simple converts. After succeeding thus in Imay, the missionaries proceeded to Ardoilen, where they founded without opposition another religious house, "the ruins of which still remain with several stone crosses around them."\* It is right to remark that this island is situated to the north-west of Imay, though Colgan, Archdall, and Lanigan confound it with one of the Arran Islands, which lie a considerable distance to the south of both Imay and Ardoilen.†

It was doubtless at this time our saint laboured on the mainland, and endeared himself to the inhabitants of West Connaught, where the memory of the man of God is still greatly revered, "and many holy wells and other hallowed remains of antiquity yet bear his name."‡ But the memorial in the west that reflects most honour on the memory of Fechin is the abbey of Ccong, which was so important an establishment in its day, that "its annals, if collected, would almost form a history of Ireland."§ This

\* "Here the celebrated St. Fechin founded a monastery, formerly in great repute. A considerable portion of its ruins still remains, and several ancient stone crosses are erected around them. There are also here some of those old stone houses or cells, called Cloghans." O'Flaherty's *West Connaught*, page 114.

† O'Flaherty's *West Connaught*, p. 76.

‡ O'Flaherty's *West Connaught*, p. 106—Hardiman's Note.

There is a Tubber-Fechin in an island of Ballinahinch lake, another at Tirnakilla, in the barony of Ross, and a third in Dooghty, a townland in the parish of Cong, in which also there is a flag or stone, called Leac-Fechin, by which men are put to the ordeal.—O'Flaherty's *West Connaught*, pp. 120, 121.

For an amusing account of *Leac-Fechin*, see Rev. Cæsar Otway's *Tour in Connaught*, p. 236.

§ Wilde's *Lough Corrib*, p. 162.



renowned abbey was founded by our saint, from whom it got the name of *Conga-Fechin*, or *Cownga of Saint Fechin*.\* “Saint Fechin of Fore,” says Sir William Wilde, “struck, perhaps, with the extraordinary resemblance which the natural features of Cong, and its underground rivers, etc., bore to his ecclesiastical home in Westmeath, is said to have blessed this neck of land, from which the extensive parish of Cong still takes its name, and to have erected a church here; and the good man left his track, and gave his name to several holy wells and churches in the district westward of this village;” but if resemblances of this kind entered into the motives that induced the holy man to erect a house of God at Cong, they were certainly derived less from Fore than from Ballysadare, where, as we have seen, p. 447 the saint first formed the design of evangelizing the west, and where the rushing Owenmore, the stately Ox Mountains, the splendid limestone quarries of Abbeystown, and the stony slopes of Carricknagat, remind one forcibly of the teeming and turbulent waters, the imposing mountain ranges, the magnificent quarries, and the thick lying boulders, that form the most distinguishing objects connected with the soil and scenery of Cong.

The saint’s labours in the west of Connaught seem to have been among the latest of his life. Having brought the lawless heathens of that region under the sweet yoke of Christ, and provided for their perseverance in this happy state, Fechin returned to Fore, resolved, no doubt, to rest from missionary labours in future.

To this period may be referred an incident or two, that throw interesting light on the opinions that prevailed on some important matters among the pious people and monks of those days.

A so-called Welsh “saint,” who, however, seems to have

\* *Annals of the Four Masters*, A.D. 1204.



had much more of the serpent than of the dove about him, came to pay a visit of sympathy to Fechin in some illness that had seized him. Wishing to do a bit of business, while professing feelings of affection for the patient, the "saint" asked the sick abbot, whom he would like to have for a successor at Fore? "Of course," replied Fechin, "some monk of the monastery." "And should none of your monks be fit for the office?" rejoined the Welshman. "In so unlikely a conjuncture," observed Fechin, "I should like to have some of my masters in religion undertake the duty." But should no suitable person be found even among them?" urged the zealous man of Wales. "Oh!" said the good abbot, waxing warm, "could so impossible a case occur, I would say: Let them give my place to any Irishman they please, only let them beware, under any circumstances, of ever giving it to a Welshman." This honest sally seems to have put an end to the conversation and the interview.

But this attachment of the monks to rulers of their own choice, comes out still more strikingly, in the refusal of another monastery to accept as superior even Fechin himself, great a saint as he was. Fintan Maeldubh, the second abbot of Clonenagh monastery, was a warm friend and admirer of our saint, and desired to have him for successor at Clonenagh. It would seem that Fechin acquiesced in the desire, for we find our saint, on Fintan's death in 626, making a visit to Clonenagh, with the object, apparently, of placing himself at the service of the monks, on which occasion the religious received their visitor with courtesy and deference, delivered to him Fintan's staff, chris-m-vessel, and vestments, (bequeathed to our saint, very probably, by the deceased) but, at the same time, declined respectfully, but firmly, to take him for their abbot. Very likely it was during this visit that something happened which gave the saint great offence; for we are informed in the First Life (Magraidin's) that, having been once at the monastery of

Clonenagh, Fechin was so displeased with the treatment of the monks, as to resent it by coming away without giving them a blessing. The good man's conscience reproached him for thus giving way to anger, for the narrative adds, that, on reaching home, he was so sorry for what had happened, that he transported himself miraculously back to Clonenagh, and gave a cordial benediction to the monks and their monastery; a proceeding, we are told, that raised the holy man very high in the esteem of the public. This incident, manifestly, is greatly exaggerated, but there must be, for all that, a substratum of truth; and putting aside additions, the facts on which it rests would seem to be, first, our saint's rejection by the monks of Clonenagh, and, secondly, his generous forgiveness of their treatment, as shown by blessing them, and thus returning good for evil.

And, now that we have seen so much of the saint, this is the time to say, concerning his virtues and alleged miracles, a word or two, which there was no opportunity of saying earlier, as we were so occupied with his public acts and religious foundations. It is designedly the miracles and virtues are coupled, for they will be found to throw light on each other; the miracles indicating the virtues for which the saint was most remarkable, and the virtues corresponding with the miracles ascribed to him. And, at the mention of those ecclesiastical miracles let nobody throw up his hands in protest or defence, as if it was sought to force them upon people. As far as the Church is concerned, every man is free to receive or reject those alleged miracles, according to the dictates of his own judgment, as they rest entirely on human evidence, which we may assent to, or dissent from, as we find the proofs conclusive or otherwise. If a man believes the so-called miracle to be impossible in itself or in its circumstances, or incongruous, or unsupported by proof, he may disbelieve it, consistently with the most perfect obedience to the Church, and the profoundest respect for the saint to whom it is ascribed.

At the same time, it would be absurd to reject some miracles of the past, merely because we think they would be out of place in our society of the present day. Miracles, like tongues, are "for a sign not to believers but to unbelievers;"\* and it is easy to conceive how a priest or bishop might find it necessary to work a miracle or miracles to serve for credentials to heathens, which he would have no call to work if surrounded by believers. Signs might have been necessary for the Pagans of West Connaught in the days of our saint, though they would be superfluous among their Christian descendants of the present time.

But this principle must not be pushed so far as to favour alleged prodigies that are unsupported by evidence, or inconsistent in themselves, such as are some that are found in accounts of Saint Fechin, as of other holy men. For miracles in great numbers, and sometimes of the most extraordinary kind, have been ascribed to him. Without, however, trying here to discriminate between these wonders, and taking them as they offer themselves in old writings, it is said that, when only a few days old, he rose, of himself from a luxurious bed, in which he had been placed, and lay down on the bare floor of the apartment; that while still an infant he refused to allow flesh meat of any kind to cross the lips, in spite of the efforts of attendants to introduce it into his mouth; that when a mere youth or boy, and shortly after entering the monastery, he struck dead, by a mere act of the will, some horses that were forced in spite of him into the meadows of the monks, and on being asked, restored the animals to life again; † that, having grown up, and become a priest, he performed numerous and startling miracles by word, by touch, by blessing, or by prayer; healing, for instance, a sick man at Ballysadare of a hideous disfigurement of face; giving sight to a blind monk named Eochy, that belonged

\* 1 Cor., xiv, 22.

† A similar miracle is recorded of Saint Patrick.

to the monastery of Snamluther; \* curing a priest called Ronan of a terrible headache, that had failed all the doctors, and was naturally incurable; stopping the sun in its course, like Josue; appearing at Clonenagh in conference with the inmates of that monastery, and at Fore, in company with his own monks, at one and the same time; sailing on a flagstone over the waters of Lough Cooter, in West Connaught; removing, in an instant, from the cemetery of Hy Foelain, a great range of rock that prevented burials; raising, at Fore, a huge stone that a number of labourers could not stir; causing to fly open at his word the strong-barred gates of royal palaces in Leinster and Munster; predicting the ignominious end of Ragallach, King of Connaught; foretelling the exact date of Saint Mochua's death fourteen years before the event; bringing a young man named Tyrechan in an instant from Rome to Ireland; multiplying and transmuting a little corn, so that it served, both as meat and drink, several days, for the immense army of Blaithmac and Diermid; and raising at least three dead men to life.

Without affirming or denying the reality of these occurrences, or their miraculous character, † it is certain

\* Dr. Reeves identifies this place with Slanore, Co. Cavan.

† The following passage from the Introduction of the Comte de Montalembert's famous *History of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary*, acquaints us with the sentiments of that great man in regard to the miracles of certain Saints: "We avow, without shrinking, that we believe with the strongest good faith, the most miraculous occurrences which have been recorded of God's saints, and of St. Elizabeth in particular. It has not even cost us any sacrifice of our feeble reason to attain to this conviction; for nothing appears to us more reasonable and more natural in a Christian than that he should bow with gratitude before the mercies of his Lord, when he sees them suspend or modify those natural laws which they enacted, to secure and glorify the triumph of much higher laws in the moral and religious order. Is it not soothing and easy to conceive how souls, tempered as was Elizabeth's, and her contemporaries, elevated by faith and humility above the cold reasonings of earth, purified by every sacrifice and every virtue, living habitually, as though by anticipation, in heaven, presented a field ever ready for the operations of God's goodness; and how the faith of

that they harmonize with the well-known virtues of the saint. His lying on the naked floor in infancy, and repelling flesh meat, would foreshadow his wonderful austerities; his healing the sick, giving sight to the blind, releasing the captive, feeding the hungry, and restoring the dead to life, would agree well with his unbounded charity; and his sailing on a flagstone, raising the lintel of Fore, arresting the sun in its course, and foretelling the future, might be congruously expected from his perpetual and sublime prayer, remembering that it is written: "Amen I say to you, that whosoever shall say to this mountain, Be thou removed and be cast into the sea, and shall not stagger in his heart, but believe, that whatsoever he saith shall be done: it shall be done unto him. Therefore I say unto you, all things whatsoever you ask when ye pray, believe that you shall receive: and they shall come unto you."\* In a word, the miracles noticed would imply, in their author, virtues like those of Fechin; while, reciprocally, the distinguishing virtues of Fechin would naturally tend to acts like those supposed to have been performed by him.

But whatever may be thought of these wonders, he was not the less a saint. It is not miracle that sanctifies, but virtue. On the last day it is not those who shall say, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and cast out devils in thy name, and done many miracles in thy name" that shall enter into life, but those who shall have done the will of God, and kept His commandments. Whether, then, the alleged miracles were genuine or apocryphal, our saint was equally certain of reward at the close of his career; for, all who know anything of the holy man's life, must admit its extraordinary sanctity.

Fraternal charity, mortification, and the spirit of prayer shone out among the saint's virtues; and of these fraternal

the people, ardent and simple, claimed, and in a manner justified the frequent and familiar interposition of that Almighty power which the senseless pride of our days, by denying, repels."—Page 104.

\* St. Mark, xi, 24.

charity was, perhaps, the most conspicuous. This great virtue Fechin practised under all its forms: ministering to the sick, redeeming prisoners, and feeding the hungry. No sores or diseases were so loathsome as to repel the man of God. On a visit to Ballysadare he cured a sick person whose illness was so disgusting that the monks themselves had a horror of it, and forbade the man in consequence to come near the monastery; but this miserable person, hearing of Fechin's presence, came before the saint, who, far from repelling or treating him like the monks as an outcast, received him with open arms, consoled him, and restored him to health and happiness.

At Fore our saint was one day accosted by a loathsome leper, who begged piteously for some nurse that would look after, and cleanse his sores. Taking this child of misfortune on his back, Fechin thus carried the sufferer to the hospital of the monastery, and, leaving him there, proceeded in quest of a nurse.\* Instead of searching among the mer-

\* A similar legend is told of Fülke's *Count of Anjou*, and is versified in *Legends of the Saints*: Duffy, Dublin. The following are a stanza or two of this piece:—

. . . . .

“ Still importunate, the leper stayed his footsteps with the prayer,  
 ‘ Fain I'd rest me in Saint Martin's but have none to bear me there ;’  
 “ And the squires were wroth to hear him; but, at once, the Count  
 outspake,  
 ‘ Freely, friend, I'll bring thee thither, for the Saviour's holy sake.’  
 “ And he softly wrapped the leper in his mantle, furred and warm,  
 To his stalwart shoulders lifted up the shrinking form ;  
 “ Then, with careful step and tender, mindful of his ghastly load,  
 Up the broken dusty pathway, in the fading sunlight strode ;”

. . . . .

This story of the leper reminds one of the similar occurrence related in Montalembert's beautiful biography of the “dear Saint Elizabeth,” cap. viii.

Here again we are reminded of the *Baculus Jesu*, said to have been given by our Saviour to a hermit in an island of the Tyrrhene sea, with an injunction to deliver it to St. Patrick.

cenaries of the office—if such there were at the time—the holy man went straight to the palace of King Domnald, who lived in an island of Lough Lene, and asked Domnald's queen, by name Themaria, to take charge of the leper, promising her in return the kingdom of heaven as a recompense. Relying on our saint's promise, the queen took charge of the patient, whom she tended with the greatest devotedness, rendering all the offices needed, some of which were so nauseous that they had better be left in the obscurity of the old Latin biographer: "Inter alia dura ministeria leprosus, divinum amorem allegando, ab eâ petivit, ut purulenta phlegmata e naribus suis proprio ore exsugat." The heroic woman had her reward, for, next day, when the saint was going to the hospital, he saw a globe of fire ascend towards heaven from the roof of the building, and on entering the sick room, found that the sick man they had been nursing, and who had just departed in the form of fire, was no other than our Lord Himself in the person of the leper; the whole occurrence supplying an instance of the truth of the words: "So long as you did it to one of these, the least of my brethren, you did it unto me." In going away the leper left behind a staff, and a lump of purest gold, with directions to the queen to give them to Fechin, which she did; and the staff became the famous *Bachal Fechin*, with which the saint is supposed to have performed many miracles through life, and which was held in great reverence after his death; but the gold the saint employed in building hospitals, and in other works of charity.

Our saint's charity to prisoners appears in his interviews with the King of Leinster; with Maenach, King of Munster; and with Blaithmac and Diermid, in favour of the captives that these monarchs held in chains; while his feeding the hungry is exemplified in the support of the starving army of Blaithmac and Diermid, as well as in the daily distribution of alms at all his monasteries.



Fechin's mortifications or austerities were prodigious. The Irish saints learned to practise mortification from Saint Patrick, who fasted always on bread and water, and prayed 100 times a day, and as many times a night, in the midst of frost, and snow, and rain. It would be hard to find another saint so animated with the spirit of our national apostle as Fechin. To say nothing of the holy man's fasts and prayers, and other rigorous observances during the day, he is said to have divided the night into three parts, passing the first part in chaunting psalms and hymns; the second he spent in solitary meditation under a palm tree that grew near the monastery; and in order to keep away sleep and crucify the flesh, the fervent servant of God bound one of his feet to the tree with an iron fetter, and placed hard by a vessel of water, supporting, meantime, against the breast with his hands a large stone, which, if sleep was allowed for a moment, would fall down into the vessel and splash him with the water, thus punishing negligence or indulgence. And the third part of the night Fechin devoted to vocal prayer, standing all the time deep in cold water. Even while asleep he practised mortification; for, as an old poem on the characteristics of the Irish saints tells us:

“Fechin the generous of Fobhar loved,  
It was no hypocritical devotion,  
To place his fleshless rib  
Upon a hard bed without clothes.”

When we bear in mind these austerities, and read on the other hand, in the *Life of Saint Antony* by Rev. Alban Butler,\* that “that great saint's food was only bread, with a little salt, and he drank nothing but water; he never eat before sunset, and sometimes only once in two or four days; he lay on a rush mat, or on the bare floor,” we see how appropriately Fechin was called in the middle ages the “Antony of Ireland.”

\* Alban Butler's *Lives of the Saints*, January 17.

The holy man's constancy in the practice of those severities, or others resembling them, is well brought out in an account of a proceeding that is supposed to have happened about the close of his life. It is said that, having occasion to visit the county Wicklow, he arrived with some monks on a Sunday evening at the famous waterfall of Poulaphooka. On reaching this charming spot, the saint was so filled with religious awe by its "noise of many waters," that, instead of reposing a little after an exhausting journey, he at once engaged in some laborious exercise of devotion, which would seem to resemble that of the Stations of the Cross, and continued so engaged for a long time, utterly forgetful of everything else. The monks, interfering at last, begged their master and father to have pity on himself, and to take some respite, but Fechin only replied that, with his rational and immortal soul, he could not desist from the divine adoration, while the inanimate waters hymned on, without pause or intermission, the praises of their common Creator. At the instant the waters ceased suddenly to fall or flow, which phenomenon the saint taking as a notification of the divine will, he complied with the request of the monks, but not till it was clear that nothing short of a miracle could withdraw the fervent servant of God from his devotions.

If anything could enhance the idea we thus receive of Fechin's self-maceration, it would be those knee-prints, as they are styled, which are to be found in many places sacred to him. Near the numerous wells in Leyney, Leinster, and West Connaught, that are called after Fechin's name, you generally find flags, on which the inhabitants of the localities point out those prints, telling you that they were formed by the bare knees of the saint in his continual prayers. It is much more likely that the impressions were made by numberless pilgrims, who came to pray on spots sanctified, in their eyes, by the presence of the saint, but, in any case, the popular notions witness

the belief which the faithful always entertained respecting the surpassing austerities of the man of God, which belief, being so constant and widely diffused, could come from no other source except the austerities themselves.

With such a life Fechin had nothing to fear at its close. When that close came, A.D. 664, the saint could hardly be less than 80 years of age, having been a priest and founded churches during the lifetime of St. Nathy, who is supposed to have died about the year 615. Eighty years, so full of perfection as to cause his life to be taken for a series of miracles, filled the man of God with that hope which "confounded not." After "finishing his course," like St. Paul, as well as keeping the faith himself and spreading it abroad among those destitute of it, like the same saint, it only remained for Fechin to receive the crown due to his many merits, as anchorite, as abbot, and as apostle.

The saint came to his end by the Buidhe-Chonnail, a terrible plague that traversed Ireland, working such havoc in all classes that a third of the population did not survive. His death by this pestilence some writers regard as a divine judgment, others as a divine mercy. In support of the former opinion we are referred to a transaction that is related in Colgan's Life of St. Gerald. We are there informed that the reigning monarchs, Blathmac and Diermid, assembled their subjects by royal edict at Tara, to deliberate on the best means of averting a famine, which seemed ready to fall on the country. In fact, the evil that Malthus apprehended in the nineteenth century actually occurred in the seventh, for the population, at that time, greatly exceeded the means of subsistence. Instead, however, of the unsophisticated people of those days making use of Malthus's "preventive checks," they were of opinion that recourse should be had, in prayer and fasting, to heaven for relief. The only difference of opinion at the meeting of Tara, turned upon the species of prayer that should be put up. One side—and they formed the great

majority of those assembled—maintained that God should be asked directly and expressly to sweep the lower classes away by a pestilence in such numbers as to leave plenty of food to the surviving population; while others would not consent to pray for such wholesale extermination. In this state of things the assembled multitudes agreed to leave this weighty matter to the decision of Saint Fechin and Saint Gerald.\* Unfortunately, the saints were not at one on the subject any more than the assembly, Fechin thinking that the wishes of the majority, more especially as the majority contained the ruling classes, should be complied with, and Gerald dissenting from this opinion and contending that, no matter what numbers and rulers thought they ought rather to beg God to save the people, and to multiply their food, one thing being as easy to Omnipotence as the other. God, it is said, was displeased with the majority, and, in His indignation, sent the pestilence they desired, thus granting their prayer, and, at the same time, punishing them for it, so that the reigning monarchs, several subordinate princes, and other persons of station and influence, including our saint, were amongst its first and most conspicuous victims. It were well that the higher classes would learn from this notable example that their ill-treatment of the lowly is sure to recoil one day upon themselves.

Those who regard Fechin's death by the plague as a mercy, cite an incident in his life as a proof of their view. This incident happened at a meeting which took place at Fore between our saint, Saint Ultan of Ardraccan, and Saint Ronan, son of Berach, on which occasion each of these holy men and venerable abbots, who were all three patriots as well as saints, prayed for their beloved country immunity, during his days, from the evil which each

\* According to the accurate *Annals of Tighernach*, St. Gerald died in the year 732; and, surviving Fechin 68 years, it is not likely that he was engaged with our saint in the transaction under consideration.

regarded as the greatest that could befall her:—Saint Ultan praying that she might be free from pestilence, Saint Fechin that she might not suffer from famine, and Saint Ronan that she might not be profaned by foreign invasions. Each got his prayer, for Saint Ultan died on the 4th of September, A.D. 657,\* seven years before the appearance of the Buidhe Chonnail; Saint Fechin went to his reward on the 20th of January, 664, and therefore before the famine had time to succeed to the plague; while Ronan passed to the crown on the 18th of November, 664, the same year as Fechin, and, of course, ages before Dane or Anglo-Norman invader set foot in Ireland. From this, then, it would appear that God was only granting the prayer of Fechin in taking him to Himself at the earlier stages of the pestilence, and before the famine, of which the saint had such dread, wrought its worst horrors through the land.

Whatever may be said of these opinions, the saint's end showed the same exalted virtue that his career did. Though falling by the plague, Fechin's last moments were as serene as if death came on in the ordinary course of nature. Foreseeing, from the beginning, the issue of the attack, the saint called the monks around him, and received, in their presence, the last rites of the Church, showing, while partaking of the holy viaticum, a fervour both of faith and love, which his biographers specially notice. While life and strength lasted, the good father employed his failing voice in conveying blessings and exhortations to his afflicted children. We are told that the dying superior pressed on them particularly the paramount importance of persevering in the observance of their holy rule, reminding them of all God had done for the community, and assuring those present that His hand would be with them in the future as it had been in the past, if they were themselves faithful to duty.

\* *Obits &c. Christ Church, lxxiv.*

It was in this way, first fortifying himself with all the aids of religion, and then, like Saint Peter, confirming his brethren, that the man of God yielded his great soul to its Maker. No doubt in the last moments the holy abbot had in his thoughts and prayers the beloved inmates of his distant monasteries as well as those of Fore, so that the precious blessing the dying saint exhaled with his parting breath was meant as much for the monks of Ballysadare, Kilnemonogh, Omey, Cong, and other places, as for those brethren who knelt, at the moment, by the deathbed.

As might be expected, a life that was so full of miracles, during its progress, was not devoid of them at the close; and as a bright flame over his father's house is said to have announced his birth, so also a pillar of light,\* rising from the monastery of Fore and reaching to the sky, is alleged to have shone out at his decease. When this phenomenon was mentioned to St. Mochua of Ardslaine, who was already ill, the holy man knew that St. Fechin was dying; and remembering the prediction made fourteen years previously by Fechin, to the effect that himself and Mochua would depart this life together, the abbot of Ardslaine made at once his final dispositions, received the last sacraments, imparted to his monks a parting benediction, and gave up the ghost so soon that the saint's soul accompanied that of Fechin to the presence of the Great Judge.

St. Fechin's death caused a deep sensation throughout Ireland. The many important transactions with kings and

\* Extraordinary light is often said, in Irish history and biography, to have accompanied the births or deaths of holy persons. After mentioning, under the year 1173, the death of Murray O' Coffey, Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, the Four Masters add:—"A great miracle was performed on the night of his death—namely, the dark night was illumined from midnight to daybreak; and the people thought that the neighbouring parts of the world, which were visible, were in one blaze of light; and the likeness of a large globe of fire arose over the town, and moved in a south-easterly direction; and all persons arose from their beds, imagining that it was daylight; and it was also thus on the east side of the sea."



princes in which the saint had been engaged, the numerous monasteries and churches he had established in different parts of the country, and the friendly relations he had maintained with several holy abbots and their communities, made Fechin generally known and as generally respected. The ideas that people entertained of his extraordinary sanctity are well preserved in a legend that arose on the occasion of his death. Soon after that event the devil is said to have appeared to a St. Molingus (apparently the bishop of Ferns of that name, who died on the 7th of June, A.D. 697) with the object of distracting him at his devotions, when that saint, making use of the occasion to force the wicked one to reveal some of his practices, commanded him, saying, "Wretch, declare to me whether you and your imps are in the habit of tempting the saints at the hour of death?" Satan replied, that they were accustomed to do so. "Tell me, then," proceeded Molingus, "did you venture to tempt St. Fechin in his last moments?" "Oh! far from doing so," rejoined the evil spirit, "myself and the other demons were so terrified by the wonderful light which shone over Fore on that occasion, that we fled panic-stricken from Ireland, and kept clear of the country for full eight days." This anecdote\* may raise a smile on the countenances of the unreflecting, but it is, nevertheless, full of historical value, for it shows, much better than any formal narrative, the profound veneration in which the saint was held by those who lived at or about his time, that is to say, by those most competent to form a correct

\* The late Dean Butler, of Trim, says of Irish legends: "These legends are worthy of record. . . . It is reasonable to conjecture that they were the forms of historical narrative used by one people, which, falling into the hands of another people of different language and of other habits of thought and turns of expression, were understood by them in a sense which they were not intended to bear, and in which they were not used by their authors. We would look upon these strange and portentous narratives as the hieroglyphic records of forgotten but substantial history." —Preface to Clynn and Dowling's *Annals*, pp. vii, viii.



judgment upon the miraculous life and holy death of this great man of God.

After Fechin's death his memory came to be as venerated as his person had been during life; and that this veneration began to be felt, immediately on the saint's decease, appears from the anecdote just mentioned about Saint Molingus. Devotion to our saint was general through the country, but Ballysadare, Billa, and Kilnemonogh, in the diocese of Achonry; Cong, and the islands off the coast of Galway, in the diocese of Tuam; Fore, in the diocese of Meath; and Termonfeekin, in the ecclesiastical province of Armagh; were its chief centres, where churches were dedicated in his name, where his festival was celebrated with extraordinary honour, and where his praises were proclaimed with more than usual warmth and frequency, as our saint was the special patron of those places.\* A good idea of the popular belief in his power may be had from statements like the following, which is found in the *Annals of the Four Masters*, under the year 1061, and which is only one of many that might be cited:—"An army was led by Murchadh, son of Diermaid, into Meath, when he burned territories and churches, namely, Granard, Tobhar-Feichin, and

\* "Every principal family of the nobility and gentry throughout the kingdom of Ireland expressed a singular veneration and reverence for some particular saint, whose name they invoked, and whose protection they implored upon all occasions. . . . There was not a county or territory in all the kingdom but what had a particular saint, whose name they invoked in all emergencies, and who was made choice of as the guardian of themselves, their families, and their fortunes."—Keating's *History of Ireland*, Dublin, 1809, vol. ii, page 114.

It was in consideration of this state of things that St. Nathy remonstrated with Fechin's father for striking the child (see page 413). "Why strike that royal head?" asked the saint. And when the father inquired the meaning of the strange question, Nathy replied, "I see a multitude of angels hovering round the child, and I foresee that one day he will be set over all Leyney," a prediction, adds the old author, that was fulfilled when the inhabitants of Leyney became his clients, and acknowledged him as their patron and tutelary saint.

Ardbraccan; but Feichin slew him, face to face, and a great destruction was made among the foreigners and Leinstermen by various distempers."

Another thing that shows the faith of the people in our saint, is the esteem and reverence in which his relics were held, these being counted as part of the "chief relics and guarantees of Ireland," which are thus enumerated in the *Annals of the Four Masters* under the year 1143:—"The altar of Kieran (Clonmacnoise) with its relics; the shrine of Kiaran, called the Oirenach; the Matha-mor, the abbot and the prior, and two out of every order in the church; Muiredach O'Duffy, the archbishop, the Lord of Connaught, the successor of Patrick, and the staff of Jesus; *the successor of Fechin and the bell of Fechin*, and the Bohan of Caeimghin." And under the year 1157, in the same *Annals*, we read that the "sureties" of the lord of Leaghaire, who had been slain by the king of Meath, were:—"The successor of Patrick, and the staff of Jesus, together with the legate, *i.e.*, Ma Condoirche; the successor of Colum-Cille, with his relics; Greene, bishop of Atheliath (Dublin); the abbot of Mellifont; the successor of Kiaran, with his relics; *the successor of Fechin, with his relics*; O'Loughlen, king of Ireland: Donagh Ma Cearbhail, lord of Oirghialla; Tiernan O'Ruaire, lord of Breifne; Diarmaid M'Murghada, king of Leinster; and the chiefs of the men of Meath, and of the men of Teathba in general."\* Here we see, though there is considerable difference in the guarantees in this and the preceding case, that the "relics of Fechin" have a place in both instances. Those relics were the *Cuach-Fechin*, *i.e.*, Fechin's cup, the *bachal-Fechin*,

\* The chief guarantees in Pagan times were the sun, the wind, and the elements. Laoghaire, the last Pagan king of Ireland, on being taken prisoner at Ath-dara, "gave the guarantees of the sun, and of the wind, and of the element, to the men of Leinster, that he would never again come against them."—*St. Patrick, Apostle of Ireland*: by James Henthorn Todd, D.D., etc.

or Fechin's staff, and *Clocc-Fechin*, or Fechin's bell. Of the "cuach" or cup, nothing is known except that it was given by King Guiare to the saint (*Prima Vita*, cap. 12), and that it was in existence long after the saint's death (*Secunda Vita*, page 135); with the staff he is said to have performed many of his miracles, and it is probable that this object was preserved in the monastery of Fore, where Fechin is stated to have received it from our Lord; while it is likely that the bell in question belonged to Ballysadare, as we see in the *Annals of the Four Masters*, under the year 1261, that the Berminghams carried away a sacred bell or bell-cover from that monastery; unless we suppose—and the supposition is not improbable—that there was a *Second Clocc-Fechin*, and that it, like the *bachal*, was kept in the abbey of Fore, the most famous of the saint's foundations.

The fame of Fechin was well diffused at the time of the English Invasion, for Giraldus Cambrensis, the chief historian of that event, dwells at considerable length on topics connected with the saint. And from the frequent mention of the holy man, and of his comorbans, in the annals of the country, and the number of his biographies that were spread about,\* it is clear that this fame continued unimpaired down to the period of the Reformation, when we find Dr. Hanmer, in the *Chronicle of Ireland*,† observe: "Ireland remembreth the feast of St. Fekin, that he was of the King's blood, and an Abbot, cured many of the flixe or fluxe, and dyed thereof himselfe."

From this statement of Hanmer we might conclude, that a feast was instituted and celebrated in the saint's honour, for, to say, "Ireland remembreth the feast of St. Fekin," seems the same as to say, "Ireland commemorateth the feast

\* In the catalogue of the Earl of Kildare's library we find "Saint Feghin is lif." Preface to Dowling's *Annals*, p. vii, where the *Retrospective Review*, and *Historical and Antiquarian Magazine*, 2nd series, part i, p. 138, are quoted for the contents of the catalogue.

† *Irish Histories*, vol. ii, p. 96.

of St. Fekin." And we might draw the same conclusion from two hymns for his office, that are still extant, one for lauds, and the other, apparently, for vespers; as also from the various martyrologies and calendars that fix his feast on the 20th of January. But we are not left to inferences in this matter, as we have positive proof, not only that his feast was celebrated, but that it was celebrated with special honour, by a proper office of nine lessons; for, in the Constitutions of Primate Colton, we find the Primate in council, the highest ecclesiastical authority in Ireland, providing for the due celebration of our saint's festival in the following ordinance, in which he makes provision also for the feasts of Saint Patrick, Saint Columba, and Saint Brigid, where the very juxta-position of Fechin's name with those of the three patrons of Ireland, cannot fail to exalt our idea of the saint:—"Item auctoritate presentis concilii statuimus et ordinamus . . . . quod festum almifici Confessoris nostri et totius Hiberniæ Patroni a cunctis Christi fidelibus nostræ provinciæ ut festum festivum perpetuis temporibus observetur, ab omni servili opere in eo abstinenceatur, et quod more duplicis festi majoris in ecclesiis celebretur, etc.

"Item quod festum Sanctæ Brigidæ virginis sub more duplicis festi annuatim per totam provinciam celebretur, etc.

"Item quod festum Sancti Columbæ confessoris et abbatis sub festi more novem lectionibus singulis annis in ecclesiis provinciæ nostræ celebretur.

"Item eodem modo statuimus de festis Sanctorum Feghini et Ronani quoad nostram diocesam Ardmachanam."\*

As this *cultus* of Saint Fechin was interrupted by the Reformation and has not been since resumed, it is a pity that the case was not considered a few years ago, when the

\* *Acts of Archbishop Colton, etc.*: by Rev. William Reeves, D.D., M.R.I.A., Introduction, p. xix.

Holy See restored public worship to several Irish saints ; but it is to be hoped that the matter was not abandoned, but only deferred to a more convenient time ; and whenever that time arrives, judging from the holy man's well established sanctity, from the ecclesiastical honours already paid him, and from the private devotions of which he is still the object in various places, there can be little danger, considering the principles that govern such examinations, of his claims being disallowed.

## CHAPTER V.

## PARISH PRIESTS OF BALLYSDARE AND KILVARNET.

IN drawing up an account of the Parish Priests of an Irish parish, one is made to feel the want of local records in this country. If you had occasion to make out the succession of *Cures* in a parish of the continent, you would, notwithstanding the ravages of the French Revolution, and of other insurrectionary movements, often find great help in the documents of the presbytery, or, at any rate, in those of the cathedral; but you will generally search in vain in Ireland for any such assistance. This of course, is owing mainly to wars, invasions, and the religious persecution that the country suffered, and that destroyed the books and papers of churches and monasteries, though the evil may perhaps be somewhat referred to the comparative distaste for writing, which the Irish are said to have sometimes exhibited.\* Whatever may be the cause, there is not perhaps a single line of writing in this diocese, for instance, on the succession of the Parish Priests in the different parishes, or

\* *Adarnan's Life of St. Columba*; edited by William Reeves, D.D., M.R.I.A., p. 337. Scotland too has fared ill in respect of her old records, and would have fared still worse only for Irish monks. "Scotland" writes the author of *A Philosophical Survey of the South of Ireland*, p. 240, "would at this day be without a written monument of antiquity antecedent to the ravages of Edward I, if some remnant had not been saved in the Abbey of Hy Columb-cill."

"From about the year 1530," says Eugene O'Curry in *Lectures on Ancient Irish History, etc.*, p. 355, "in the reign of the English king, Henry VIII, to the year 1793, the priests of Ireland were ever subject to persecution, suppression, dispersion, and expatriation, according to the English law; their churches, monasteries, convents, and private habitations, were pillaged and wrested from them; and a Vandal warfare was kept up against all that was venerable and sacred of the remains of ancient literature and art which they possessed."



even on the succession of the Bishops in the See, though this latter defect can be supplied from other quarters, and, particularly, from original acts and documents at Rome.

There is nothing even to tell us when the parishes of Ballysadare and Kilvarnet, that are now united, were thus joined, though it is likely they have been connected in some way, from about the period of the Reformation, when that event disturbed much of what it did not destroy in the old discipline of the Church. It is true, a proper Parish Priest is assigned to Kilvarnet, under the Registration Act of 1704, in the person of Rev. William M'Donogh, who is stated to have been ordained at Clonfert, in 1670, by Bishop Donnellan, to have resided at Fialoohar, (probably Falougher) and to have had for sureties, Morgan M'Donogh, Roscrib, and Charles Phillips, Oghane; but the double Parish Priest may have been allowed by the government, as the parishes of Ballysadare and Kilvarnet were still separate in the eye of the law;\* and the allowance, as giving an additional clergyman to minister to the people, would have been gladly availed of by the Catholic ecclesiastical authorities, who would appoint some simple priest to serve as the "Popish Parish Priest of Kilvarnet," no curate being tolerated by the law. If, however, William M'Donogh was the canonical as well as the legal Parish Priest of Kilvarnet, as a separate parish, it is very likely that he had no successor, and that the two parishes have been ever since committed to the same incumbent.

It would appear that both these parishes were administered by religious before the troubles of the sixteenth

\* It was only in 1819 these parishes were united, by act of council, into the union of Killoran.—Erck's *Ecclesiastical Register*, 1830, p. 255.

The church of Rathbarron was built in 1766, and cost £921, of which £500 came from gifts. The glebe of Killoran contains 75 acres, and the glebe-house was built in 1811, at a cost of £575, of which sum £200 came from gifts, and £375 from loans.



century. For Ballysadare, this seems certain, as the abbey enjoyed the rectory of the parish, and served the vicarages by the *religieux*; and as to Kilvarnet, the tradition is, that the state of things there was similar. This system existed largely in Ireland, and therefore the suppression of the religious houses threw much of the ecclesiastical machinery of the country out of gear for a long time; for in any case, it would not have been easy to make new provisions for public worship; and, besides, the authorities of the Church were in no hurry to interfere, hoping that the troubles would pass away, and that the old order of things would be re-established. "The system of vicars," says Mr. Green, in his much admired "*Short History of the English People*," p. 439, "so general in England, was rare in Ireland; churches in the patronage of the abbeyes, were for the most part served by the religious themselves, and the dissolution of their houses suspended public worship over large districts of the country." After their expulsion from the abbeyes, the monks continued to remain in their neighbourhoods, and to discharge their old duties as far as the change of circumstances allowed, which accounts for the late appearance of secular parish priests in many places.\*

Whether it be owing to the cause here assigned, or to this, that though there were earlier secular pastors, their names and incumbencies are forgotten, the first Parish Priest of Ballysadare whose name we meet with is REV. JAMES O'CONNELL, who is said to have been a native of Tubber-scavin, where his family resided till towards the close of the last century, when they removed, some members to Glen, and others to Collooney. Father O'Connell must

\* "As for the Franciscans, they continued, after their expulsion from the monastery, to live in thatched cabins in the neighbourhood."—*The Franciscan Monasteries and the Irish Hierarchy in the 17th Century*: by Rev. C. P. Meehan, M.R.I.A., p. 81.—Fifth edition. Duffy, Dublin.

have been born in 1648, having been fifty-six years of age in 1704, when the register of the Parish Priests, then living in Ireland, was made out. An act of Parliament for "registering the Popish clergy," was passed in 1703, which enacted that "all and every Popish priest or priests, who are now in the Kingdom. . . shall return his or their names and places of abode, to the respective clerks of the peace, in the several counties where the said Popish priests shall dwell or reside, together with his or their age, the parish of which they pretend to be Popish priests, the time and place of his or their receiving Popish orders, and from whom he or they first received the same; and shall then and there enter into sufficient sureties, and in the Penal sum of £50 sterling, that every such Popish priest shall be of peaceable behaviour, and not remove out of such county, where his or their place of abode lies, into any other part of the Kingdom;" and we learn from the list of the Popish Parish Priests, registered, in compliance with this act, at the general quarter sessions of the Peace, held at Sligo, the 11th day of July, 1704, that "James Connell resided at Annaghbegg," that he was 56 years in 1704, that he "pretended to be Popish priest" of Ballysadare, that he received orders at Cong, County Mayo, from "James Lynch, archbishop of Tuam," and that the sureties, that entered into recognizances for him, were "John Crean, Sligo;" and "John Dolan, Collooney."

Father O'Connell's name occurs in an inventory of the "goods and effects" of Holy Cross Abbey, Sligo, drawn up at Bilboa, in Spain, in 1703, by Father Patrick M'Donogh, the expatriated Prior of Holy Cross Convent. In 1698 the friars had to fly to the continent from Sligo. As they had no other means in the world to meet the expenses of removal, they sold or pledged their chalices, with the consent of their superiors; and "Father James O'Connell, Parish Priest of Ballisadair," is stated in the inventory to hold one of the Holy Cross chalices, "with an

obligation and condition" that the convent of Sligo could redeem it.\*

Nothing further is known of this good priest; and he would seem to have passed through life unmolested by the persecutors, though living in an eventful period, and in a dangerous neighbourhood, when Shaftesbury's horrid plot had sent several priests to "rot in Sligo gaol." † Our Parish Priest may have owed his safety to the protection of the O'Haras, on whose property he resided at Annaghbeg. He died in 1710, and was buried outside the eastern gable of Ballysadare old church, as near the site of the altar as was possible, considering that the Protestants had appropriated all the inner area of the church, leaving the poor Catholics "out in the cold." Over Father O'Connell's remains lies a tombstone, bearing, first, a cross, having four hearts in the angles formed by its arms; next, an open book with a hand, as if of a preacher, pointing to it; and, lastly, the following inscription in raised letters: "*Hic jacet Jacobus O'Connell, sacerdos hujus*

\* "There was a generall licence," says Father M'Donogh in his most interesting *Inventory, etc.*, "given to every Prior to dispose of all the goods and chalices of every convent with the mutuall consent of his conventualls, as he thought more expedient and convenient for the present necessity and for the future. The fathers of the Convent of Sligoe having no other effects nor worldly meanes butt their chalices they agreed unanimously to dispose of some of their chalices to redeeme the present necessity, and found it more proper and lawfull before God and the world to make use of them than to perish in foraigne countreys, not knowing to what part of the universe would they be driven nor what reception they would gett amongst strangers. It is most sure when the V. R. fa: M. fr. Felix O'Conor was Prior of Sligoe the convent had fiftheene silver chalices and their pixes. The said fa: died a prisoner in Sligoe in the heate of Shaftesbury's Plott the year 1679. There was such a cruel and rigorous persecution in those days that none of the fathers of our convent cud assist him nor come neere him . . . . . I made a narrow search and straight inquiry after these chalices . . . . . John Bane Breanagh sould the chalice to Fa: James O'Conell Parish Priest of Balisadair with an obligation and condition that the convent of Sligoe cud redeeme it."

† Father M'Donogh's *Inventory, etc.*

*parochiæ qui . . . die Aprilis, 1710.*” “Here lies James O’Connell, priest of this parish who . . . day of April 1710.” It is to be regretted that the stone was injured by the apex of the gable falling on it and breaking the flag. In this way the missing portion of the inscription—consisting, apparently, of the word *obiit* and the day of the month—was destroyed.

The next Parish Priest of Ballysdare that anything is known of was REV. PATRICK HINNEGAN, who died in or about 1750. It is likely that one or more Parish Priests, whose names are now lost, intervened between him and Father O’Connell, as there were forty years in the interval. A Rev. Stephen Brett is said to have been some time incumbent of Ballysdare, and may have lived in this period. Very probably the Rev. Mr. Hinnegan’s name would be now forgotten, were it not that he was once hunted by priest-catchers; an occurrence that created a great sensation at the time, and that has left very vivid reminiscences in the parish. There was a rude chapel at that time in a hollow on the hill of Largan, near which sharp eyes kept watch and ward while the priest offered the holy sacrifice; and on one occasion Father Hinnegan had just finished the service when word was suddenly passed that the priest-catchers, Harrison and Co., were hard by. In an instant the priest started towards the friendly shelter of Annaghmore, the residence of the O’Haras, with the human bloodhounds at his heels. There was a desperate struggle between the pursuers and the pursued, and until they neared the Annaghbeg river, no one could tell the result; but on reaching the bank of the river, the priest-catchers stopped suddenly short, while the priest plunged into the water, ascended the opposite bank, and saved himself in Annaghmore amid the enthusiastic cheers and thanksgivings of the people that lined the mountain side.

It was a sad hunt for one of the priest-catchers; for it befel him, as it had befallen William Fitz Adelm Burke,

of whom the Annals of Clonmacnoise tell us, under the year 1204, that in punishment of the "spoyles of all the churches of Connaught, his entrails fell and trailed after him even to the very earth." The similar misfortune of Father Hinnegan's pursuer may have been a divine judgment or only an accident, but in either case, it contributed not a little to the aversion which the neighbours, Protestant quite as much as Catholic, felt for the wretched man as long as he lived.\* Harrison, it is said, had also reason to rue the day that the priest was hunted, for, on his returning home, he found a young daughter dead, who had been accidentally drowned during her father's absence in Collooney river, a little above the spot where the bridge now stands. Father Hinnegan is supposed to be buried in the same grave with Father O'Connell.

Nor was this the only hunt in which Harrison and Co. were engaged, if we are to believe local tradition; for they are said to have given chase to a Friar Cunnan, who was a native of Ballymote, but who was officiating somewhere in the neighbourhood of Dooastle when set upon. Finding the priest-catchers had come unnoticed so close that there was not time to put off all the sacred vestments, the poor man struck off, habited as he was, to Cloonmore, the residence of Mr. Charles Phillips, a friend of the friar, and a gentleman of considerable social influence, though a

\* "Towards the close of the reign of Anne," says Dr. De Burgo, *Hibernia Dominicana*, p. 160, "and the beginning of that of George the First, there were several persecutions, and they would have been more numerous and violent only that, by the dispensation of Providence, nobody, not even the common hangman, was so infamous, even in the eyes of the Protestants, as the wretch that was contemptuously called *Priest-catcher*. Hence, once a man had turned informer against priests, he could no longer appear in public except at the imminent risk of his life; a fact that I witnessed more than once myself when a little boy, for the informer no sooner showed himself than he was hustled and pelted with missiles by both Protestants and Catholics." The Collooney priest-catchers were treated in the way described by De Burgo, as the writer heard from very old men who, when little boys, witnessed this treatment.

Catholic. As soon as the fugitive entered Cloonmore House, and Mr. Phillips saw how things stood, he directed the friar to take off the vestments and conceal himself. This done, Phillips put part of the vestments on himself, and running away from the house, attracted the attention and pursuit of the priest-catchers, who soon came up with and captured the runaway. They were sure they had the friar, and proceeded at once with the captive to Collooney, which, however, they did not reach till it was too late to bring the prisoner that day before the magistrate. Pleased with their day's work, they not only passed the night carousing themselves, but, sure of the large reward awaiting them, kept open house, as at election time, and gave drink and refreshments to all comers. But they had to "pay for their whistle;" for, next day, when they brought the supposed friar before the magistrate, the Rev. Adam Caulfield, the then vicar of the parish, his worship at once recognised an old friend—Charley Phillips, and, delighted with the discomfiture of the priest-catchers, sent them ignominiously away. It was hard enough on these disappointed men to have to endure the contempt of the magistrate and the derision of the people, but it was a still more serious evil to meet the liabilities incurred by the lavish expenditure of the preceding night. It is said that their efforts to pay the debt kept them in poverty all their lives; but there was no pity for them, and it was rare sport to Protestants as well as Catholics to see these "engineers hoist with their own petard." As to Mr. Phillips, the incident made him the most popular man in the county; unlike, in this respect, to Saint Alban, the protomartyr of England, who was brought to the block by exchanging garments, in very similar circumstances, with Amphibalus, in order to help that priest to escape the fury of persecutors.—(See *Alban Butler*.)

Father Hinnegan's successor was REV. CHARLES BRETT, who lived as Parish Priest for eighteen years in the parish.



Father Brett was born at Derroon, near Ballymote, and came of a highly respectable Anglo-Irish family, who were connected by marriage with the Taaffes of Carlingford and Ballymote. While Parish Priest of Ballysadare, Mr. Brett resided at Ardcotton; and though occupying the whole townland of that name, as well as the districts of Lugnamacken, Camphill, and Carricknagat, he devoted himself exclusively to clerical duties, leaving farms and stock to be managed by others. The chapel was still in Largan, but in that day there was no let or hindrance to the parishioners frequenting it for public worship when they pleased. It was an oblong thatched building, without a particle of furniture except, at one end, a rustic timber stand, that served to support the altar stone.

In this house happened an incident which deserves to be recorded, as it throws light on the manners of the times, and affords, besides, insight into the character of Father Charles. As it was then the custom in the parish to celebrate Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve, an immense fire used to be lighted in the centre of the chapel to warm the place and enable the priest and congregation to bear the cold of a mid-winter night during the service; but, on one occasion, some giddy-headed members of the congregation, forgetting what was due to the place and the circumstances, snatched up the half-burned turves from the fire, and flung them in frolic at each other and through the house, regarding the proceeding as a harmless joke. "My father told me," said the old man from whom the writer had the account of this incident, "that the chapel, that night, was like a corpse house;" words, by the way, which convey a striking picture to the mind of the kind of place a wake-house was, when this unnatural horse-play, in presence of the dead, was a common and characteristic practice.

Father Brett, arriving in the midst of the confusion, showed himself equal to the occasion. After denouncing, in the strongest language, the disgraceful and sacrilegious



scene, he dismissed all present, informing them that there would be no Mass in the chapel on that night, or on any other night, so long as he continued Parish Priest. And the zealous pastor not only kept this engagement, but his successors followed the example thus set them, so that there has never since been a Midnight Mass in the parish of Ballysdare.

And this extraordinary occurrence reminds one of another strange event that took place in the parish during Father Charles's incumbency, though the writer has not been able to get at its exact nature. In the absence of particulars we can only "tell the tale as 'twas told to us," and report the matter in the words of the late Martin Ferguson, of Lugnamacken, the great local *shanachie*. "In Father Charles's time," said Martin, "there was a great trial at Annaghmore. His curate, Father Nelson, was charged with saying to Mrs. M'Cormack, the wife of Mr. O'Hara's steward, that no Protestant could enter the kingdom of heaven, for which the priest stood a trial. It was a trial by fire. Mr. O'Hara was present and twelve Protestant ministers; and Father Charles, who was very great with the O'Haras, went, like a man, with his curate. There was a big fire lighted in the lawn, and when everything was ready Mr. Nelson took off his coat and thrust his arm up to the shoulder into the fire, taking it slowly out, after some minutes, without burn or blister. Mr. O'Hara asked the ministers to do the same: and when they refused, he kicked them all out of sight, leaving the honours of the day to Father Nelson." Knowing that there must be some grains of truth in this extravagant fable, inquiry was made of other old men about the matter, but they merely repeated Martin Ferguson's story, and almost in the same words. It is now impossible to find out the facts of the case, but what seems likely is, that the priest was calumniously charged with saying something obnoxious of Protestants, and that he cleared himself to the satisfaction of Mr. O'Hara, all the

other circumstances—the fire, the ministers and the rest—being legendary, and supplying an instructive example of the way in which legends may arise.

Father Brett died in Derroon, where he was born. Finding death imminent, he removed to the family residence, died there in March, 1768, and was buried in the sanctuary of the old Franciscan abbey, on the epistle side, exactly in the angle formed by the eastern gable and northern sidewall, where there is neither monument nor inscription to preserve this good priest's memory. It may be added that our Parish Priest rests in the same grave with his brother or cousin, the Right Rev. John Brett, bishop, first of Killala, and next of Elphin, who, like Father Charles, elected to die at Derroon, and to be buried with his ancestors in the venerable abbey. The bishop died on the 22nd of June, 1775, in the 58th year of his age.

The REV. JOHN FITZMAURICE, the next Parish Priest of Ballysadare and Kilvarnet, was translated to the parish from Killasser on the death of Father Brett. The writer cannot tell for certain in what place or places Father Fitzmaurice and the other priests that have been mentioned received their theological education, but there can be little doubt that it was on the continent, where almost all the Irish priests of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries made their ecclesiastical studies; and if some uncertainty may exist as to this particular in regard to Father Fitzmaurice's predecessors, there can hardly be any in his own case, as there is a tradition in the neighbourhood that he passed several years in Rome, and brought from the Eternal City some document conferring on him the succession of Ballysadare and Kilvarnet parishes. This popular impression goes at least to prove that Father Fitzmaurice made his studies in Rome, and carried home some influential testimonials and recommendations.

Father Fitzmaurice was the first Parish Priest of Ballysdare that resided in Collooney, the others having lived in Ballysdare, Annaghbeg, or Ardotton. To induce the priest to take up abode in Collooney, the Right Hon. Joshua Cooper placed at his service some land and the best house then in the village, the one now occupied by John Coleman, but which in the last century was three storeys high, so that it afforded ample accommodation. A handsome railing painted green stood in front of the house, which gave those nuisances of the period—the Bucks \*—such offence, that they came one night and demolished it.

Father Fitzmaurice's incumbency lasted till about 1794, when he died, and was buried in Father O'Connell's grave. The circumstances of his death deserve perhaps to be recorded. Father John was so fond of dogs that old men who remembered him never failed in their conversations to connect the priest and his dogs. Two of these animals constantly accompanied their master, and whenever Mr. Fitzmaurice dined or breakfasted out, he gave more thought to the fare and care of the "twa dogs" than to his own. It were well that the simple man had thought less of these pets, for he died by the bite of one of them. Though there was no hydrophobia, the bite brought on a complication of ailments, under which the priest suffered a long and painful illness, and eventually sank.

The REV. WALTER HENRY, spoken of familiarly and affectionately to this day in the parish, as "Father Wat," succeeded Father Fitzmaurice. The new Parish Priest was born in or about the year 1744, in the parish of Achonry, at the foot of Knocknashee, in a village called Cloondriara, lying close to the source of the river Moy. Desiring to serve God in the priesthood, and finding no classical school in the neighbourhood, he went to Munster to learn the Greek and Latin necessary for the clerical

\* See page 163.

state. Having acquired this knowledge, the young levite returned home, got ordained priest, and was sent to the continent, we believe to Salamanca, to complete his studies. Father Wat's first mission was Killasser, of which parish, after some time, he became Parish Priest, and from which he was transferred, in 1794, to take the place vacated in Ballysadare and Kilvarnet.

All through life this excellent priest was noted for his pastoral zeal, feeling so sensibly the responsibility lying on him, if any one should die without the last rites of the church, that on receiving some urgent sick-calls, he is known to have galloped as fast as the horse could move from his residence to that of the patient. Till a year or two ago there lived an old man in Coillte Leyney, who loved to relate, how he saw Father Wat one day galloping across the strand from Streamstown to Beltra, to attend a person that had taken suddenly and dangerously ill, and how, when the sick man died just after having received the sacraments, the good priest knelt down in the middle of the village, and called on the bystanders to kneel with him and return thanks to God for the singular grace He had vouchsafed to the deceased.

Remembering the inconveniences he had suffered in youth for the want of a classical school in the neighbourhood, Father Wat taught classics himself, both in Killassar and Collooney, to promising students, having generally about a dozen pupils at a time receiving lessons. The late Archdeacon Coleman, of Swinford, was one of those who thus became indebted to Father Wat, and the late Mr. Edward Howley, Belleek, was another.

The places of Catholic worship in the parish, when Father Wat took charge, were two ruinous thatched houses, one in Tubberscanavin and the other in Curhownagh, but he substituted for them two substantial slated chapels, one in Collooney, and the other in Curhownagh. Those who live at the present time, when collections for church funds

are so available and effective, and when tradesmen of the different building trades are so numerous, can have no idea of the difficulties that surrounded Father Wat, who lived in a day when collections were unheard of, and when you might search a parish in vain for a single mason. A church builder of the last century, and a church builder of 1878, stand to each other in the relation of the pioneer who first visits a new country, when it is covered with primeval forest and jungle, and the traveller who, later, when the same country is cultivated, and the conveniences of civilization introduced, lounges through it, at his ease, in a first-class railway carriage. When Father Wat began to build Curhownagh chapel in 1797, he could find only two masons fit for the work, and even these needed constant instruction and supervision.

Every hour that could be spared from ordinary duties the priest passed at the building, directing those engaged; and so intent was the good man in this occupation, that, instead of coming home to dine, he used to turn into some of the neighbouring houses, and make a meal with the villagers on a morsel of oaten bread and a cup of milk. This supervision was necessary, as he could find no competent substitute, though the ecclesiastic that should imitate Father Wat in these matters at present, however he might appear to the vulgar and the ignorant, would, perhaps, be only misspending the time due to study and other essential duties.

Father Wat lived in Collooney, in the house now occupied by John Whitesides, which was then a commodious and respectable residence; and which, with land, was given to him by Colonel Joshua Cooper, though this gentleman was far from being the best disposed of the Coopers towards Catholics and their clergy.

As to personal appearance, Father Wat was under the middle height, compact but not corpulent, and energetic in his movements. He usually wore over a brown wig, a low

hat with broad upturned leaf, like those carried by priests on the continent ; and as he never appeared out of doors without a short cape coming down to the small of the back, the " wig," the " three-cocked hat"—as it was called—and " cape," have become as associated with Father Wat in the minds of the parishioners of Ballysadare and Kilvarnet as the *petit chapeau* and *redingcote grise* are with Napoleon the Great in the traditions of Frenchmen.

This good priest died of paralysis, with which he was struck, while riding home from a sick-call. The deceased was so beloved at once by the parishioners of Ballysadare and the inhabitants of his native place, that there was near being a battle between these parties for the remains on the day of the funeral. On that day crowds streamed over from Cloondriara and all the villages round Knocknashee, resolved to take the corpse with them by force to Court-abbey, but the parishioners hearing of the intended rescue, armed themselves with sticks, and attended in such numbers that the Knocknashee people, deeming discretion the better part of valour, withdrew from the procession, after begging in vain for the corpse, which was then quietly conveyed to the parish cemetery at Ballysadare. From the circumstances mentioned, Father Wat's funeral is always spoken of as the " funeral of the sticks."\* His remains were buried at first in the south-west angle of the graveyard, but later they were exhumed, placed in a chest, and deposited in the vault erected for them by his grateful and attached parishioners.

FATHER JAMES HENRY, the next Parish Priest, was born, like his uncle, Father Wat, at the base of Knocknashee ; but, unlike him, was able to obtain a classical

\* There was a similar dispute about the remains of Saint Patrick:—" There was a rising of battle, and a cause of dissension in the province contending for the body of Patrick after his death. The Ui-Neill and the Airghialla attempting to bring it to Armagh ; the Ulta to keep it with themselves."—*Annals of the Four Masters*, A. D. 493.

education in the county. Low as Tubberscanavin has fallen of late, it contained, towards the close of the last century, an excellent classical school. The boys, though not so strong in Greek, acquired a superior knowledge of Latin for the time. They used to get by heart large portions of Virgil and Horace, and to have a contest once a month for the kingship of the school, the distinction being awarded to the boy that showed the readiest and most retentive memory. The conditions of the competition were: that when one boy gave out a line of Virgil or Horace, his opponent should cite, from the same author, a second line, beginning with the letter with which the line already quoted ended. Thus, if the line quoted was, for instance,

“ Quæ regio in terris nostri non plena laboris ? ”

the next line should begin with an s, the last letter of *laboris*, as thus :

“ Sunt lacrimæ rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt.”

The respondent needed to be on the alert ; for if, on a line being cited, he delayed so long in finding another as to leave the opponent time enough to repeat thrice the formula, “ Victus es, captus es, nihil dicere potes,” he was cast in the contest. It was in this school Father James learned classics ; and under its training he committed to memory whole books of Virgil and Horace, and became able, in after life, to illustrate any matter in hand with apposite quotations from these authors.

After finishing this classical course the young man was ordained priest, and sent, for philosophical and theological studies, to Salamanca, where he had for class-fellow Dr. Kelly, the late Archbishop of Tuam, with whom our Parish Priest kept up very friendly relations through life. At the close of their career in Salamanca both took missions in London, from which city, after some time, Father Henry was called home to serve as administrator to the Rev. Mr.



Brown, Parish Priest of Swinford, who, by the way, was uncle to the late-lamented Rev. John Brown of Buninadden. On Father Brown's death Father Henry became Parish Priest of Swinford, continuing in that position till 1805, when, on the decease of Father Wat, he was appointed to the parish of Ballysadare, and made vicar-general of the diocese.

Like his immediate predecessors, Father Wat and Father Fitzmaurice, the new pastor resided in Collooney, where Colonel Joshua Cooper first, and Mr. Edward Cooper next, left nothing undone to make him comfortable. Desiring to live beside the new chapel, he applied for a building lease, and the landlord not only granted the lease on very liberal terms, but gave the priest, at moderate rents, several stretches of land, including the paddock opposite the Church of the Assumption; a small farm at Rathrip-pon; another at Loughheed's sandpit, in the townland of Collooney; and a third in Knockbeg, which are mentioned thus in detail in order to show the gratifying relations that existed between the Cooper family and the parish priests of Ballysadare.

Father James was hardly installed in the parish when he gave mortal offence to the Thrashers, who were then numerous and formidable in the neighbourhood. So bitterly did they resent the priest's conduct, and so openly and resolutely did they vow vengeance, that the good man was obliged to fly for safety to the County Mayo, and to remain there *incog.* for several weeks, rarely sleeping two successive nights in the same house, the better to defeat the machinations of the enemy. In spite, however, of all precautions Father James was once on the point of falling into the lion's mouth, when native tact and knowledge of the Irish character stood him in good stead. Learning from scouts that the object of their search was to pass one night on a certain road, a large party of Thrashers, under the command of Murty, lay in ambush, with their inhuman

cards ready for use, and acted their part so well that the poor priest suspected no danger till he found himself in the midst of those misguided men. Counting on their generosity, Father Henry said to the leader, who was an old acquaintance: "Yes, Murty, here I am—one against a hundred. Come, Murty, fair play! I will go into the next field, and do you send the whole hundred of your fellows, one by one, after me, and if any of them all capture or disable me, you may card or kill me as ye please." These stirring words, spoken with emphasis, and addressed to Irish hearts, which, no matter how perverted, have always at bottom a chord that responds to the touch of the *Soggarth aroon*, produced their intended effect, and, next moment the priest was not only passed on, with all the honours of war, through the crowd, but was hailed, while riding away, with a ringing cheer.

Returning to Collooney, Father James abated nothing of his opposition to the Thrashers, and caring more for the interests of the people than for popularity, he gave no quarter to an association that was exposing them to the vengeance of the law. The audacity, on the other hand, of the confederates may be judged by the following incident:—One of them, by name Billy Barden, a clerk of Mr. Jackson, composed a long vindication of the principles and proceedings, and one Sunday, when Father James had finished Mass, and was putting off the vestments at the altar, Barden drew forth this paper, and, without notice or communication of any kind to the priest, began to read it aloud in the chapel for the congregation. As Father James was not the man to submit tamely to such a desecration of the house of God, or such an insult to himself, taking up the *asperge* and saying to the people that nothing was so efficacious as holy water against the devil, he descended from the altar and proceeded to sprinkle the unfortunate reader, who retired backward, step by step, and continued to receive the contents of the asperge at each

successive move till he was clean out of the chapel. After this extraordinary scene the priest received little further annoyance from the Thrashers. It may be observed, *en passant*, that this was not the only time Father James had recourse to the *asperge* as an instrument of discipline, though, *pace tanti viri*, the one or two other occasions that he used it may not have called so strongly for its application as the flagrant case of Billy Barden.

The late Right Rev. Dr. M'Nicholas having been appointed, about the year 1812, president of the Lay College that then existed at Maynooth, Father James joined that establishment to assist the president in conducting it, and taught for three years a class of Greek and Latin, Father John M'Nulty and Father John Doddy serving the parish as curates during the parish priest's absence. Delicacy of health hindered Father Henry from making as long a stay in the college as was intended and desired, as it also interfered with his discharge of mission duty towards the close of life. He died in 1832, and was buried in Ballysadare. The funeral was probably the largest that had ever entered that graveyard, being attended by nearly the entire adult population of the parish, which was then five times as populous as at present, by crowds from the neighbouring parishes, and by all the priests of the diocese, as well as by great numbers from Killala and Elphin, the clergymen walking two abreast, in solemn procession, the whole way from Collooney to the burying-place.\*

Father James had a graceful presence, being over the average height, well-proportioned, and with features expressive at once of kindness and dignity. Social in tastes, this kind-hearted man loved to join the people in their

\* A "conference" of Elphin priests was announced for that day in Sligo, but on the priests assembling, the noble-hearted Bishop Burke adjourned the ecclesiastical meeting, and, with characteristic charity, led his clergy to the obsequies of their deceased brother.

wedding and christening feasts, where the presence and example of the good pastor restrained excess, while his easy, genial manners and numerous anecdotes made every one happy. In youth Father Henry was singularly active and athletic. When a boy he leaped over the Moy, a little below its source, a feat, it is said, which no one has ever performed since; and soon after ordination the young priest cast a heavy stone over the steeple of Court-abbey, a performance also in which, if we believe local report, Father Henry has never had a successful imitator. The vault in which this priest's remains and those of his uncle repose bears the following inscription or inscriptions:—

*“ Vir Fidelis multum laudabitur.*

If generous merit, without pride or state,  
Or Heaven-born virtue could avert men's fate,  
If a God-like mind inclined to aid and give,  
Could furnish means to conquer death and live,  
The worthy pastor that entombed lies here,  
Would always live to give, instruct, and cheer  
The helpless poor, illumine the church, and be  
God's faithful servant, Walter Henry.

This monument was erected by the voluntary contributions of the Inhabitants of this Parish as a melancholy token of their esteem for their much-beloved Pastor, the Rev. Walter Henry, who departed this life on the 3rd day of July, 1805, in the 61st year of his age.—*Requiescat in Pace.*

Also the Very Rev. James Henry, V.G., who departed July, 1833.”

#### RIGHT REV. DOCTOR DURCAN.

Father James Henry's immediate successor in the parish was the late Right Rev. Dr. Durcan, who was appointed to the cure a few days after it fell vacant. This venerated ecclesiastic was born on the 6th of February, 1790, in the Parish of Cloonacool; and as the mention of Cloonacool will come by surprise on even the relatives of the deceased, who take it for certain that Dr. Durcan was a native of Kilmacteige, where his parents lived before and after the child's birth, and where they died, it is well to be sure that the fact is, nevertheless, as here stated, the writer's

informant being the bishop himself, who had the information from his father and mother. Dr. Durcan was the first-born of his parents, and it being usual at the time for mothers to betake themselves to their parents' residence on the occasion of a first birth, Mrs. Durcan conformed to the custom, and thus conferred on Cloonacool the honour of being the birth-place of the good bishop. The infant was only a few days' old, however, when brought home to the father's house in Kilmacteige, where he grew up and was rooted and grounded in virtue. Both the bishop's parents—John Durcan and Mary Ruane—belonged to families that had given many distinguished dignitaries to Achonry. Among his mother's ancestors there were three bishops of Leyney or Achonry, while his paternal, as well as maternal, grandmother was an O'Hara, and in this way, he received the "double spirit" of that great ecclesiastical family, that has given the diocese its great saints, its chief bishops,\* its leading dignitaries,† its best priests, and nearly all its church builders.

Desiring to devote himself to the ecclesiastical state, to which he felt a divine call, the boy acquired, partly at home from a maternal uncle, partly in Swinford, and chiefly in Ballaghaderreen, the knowledge of Greek and Latin necessary for entrance to college; but owing to the

\* See page 299.

† In the Provincial Synod held at Tuam in January, 1660, *in quodam refugii loco*, Very Rev. Phelim O'Hara was one of the representatives of the diocese of Achonry, as we read in the account of those present:—"Dominus Phelimus O'Hara, et Dominus Thadæus O'Donocher, et Dominus Hilarius Convey, Vicemgerentes Reverendi admodum Domini Jacobi Fallon, Vicarii Generalis Apostolici Accadensis jam incarcerati."—Dr. Ranehan's *Collections on Irish Church History*, p. 504.

And in Dr. W. Maziere Brady's *Episcopal Succession in England, Scotland, and Ireland*, vol. ii, page 191, we find this record:—"1707, April 30, Hugh MacDermott. His brief was dated April 30, 1707. He continued in this see, until his death, which probably occurred in 1725, as on the 10th of September in that year, faculties were granted to Charles O'Hara, *Vicar Capitular of Achonry*."

operation of the Penal Laws, the schools of these places were of a somewhat inferior class, so that the deceased prelate never ceased to lament the defective early education he had to put up with in consequence. The bishop belonged to the first generation of students that entered Maynooth College, and was distinguished throughout the course in that great institution for piety, talent, diligence, and devotedness to duty. His literary honours at college were:—In the class of Humanity, the distinction so well known to Maynooth men as the “Atque”; in Logic, the second distinction; in First Year’s Divinity, the eighth distinction in Dogmatic Theology, none in Moral; in Second Year’s Divinity, the second distinction in Dogmatic, and the third in Moral Theology; and in Third Year’s Divinity, the first premium in Dogmatic Theology, and the first also in Moral. This record proves two things: first, the student’s imperfect education at entrance, and second, the great talents and industry that raised him from the “Atque” to a double first premium.

At the end of the ordinary College course, Dr. Durcan was elected to a place on the Dunboyne establishment, but was hardly in his new position when the bishop of the diocese, the Right Rev. Dr. M’Nicholas, who entertained a very high opinion of the young Dunboyne-man’s prudence and learning, called him home to take charge, for a year or so, of a small seminary opened at Cloonmore in the County Mayo, for the purpose of completing the theological education of five or six priests who had been ordained for the mission without possessing as thorough an acquaintance with ecclesiastical science as his lordship deemed desirable. Having acquitted himself of this responsible commission to the satisfaction of all concerned, Dr. Durcan returned to Maynooth and completed the Dunboyne curriculum.

Being now a priest and ready to undertake missionary



work, Dr. M'Nicholas appointed him to the important post of administrator in the mensal parish of Ballaghaderreen. This appointment took place in 1820, and a fearful famine ravaging the country in 1821, the young clergyman went constantly about among the people, like our Divine Lord while on earth, "doing good," and sustained the strength and courage of the famine-stricken by the corporeal and spiritual succours that he administered.

In 1823 the bishop conferred on this zealous priest the parish of Ballymote, which at that time was in a very distracted state, owing to circumstances that it is unnecessary to particularise in this place. At first certain parishioners refused to receive the new pastor, and even threatened his life; but the good priest felt no fear; pursued unmoved the even tenor of his way; returned good for evil; and in a short time not only overcame the prejudices of the ill-disposed, but conquered their affections, which went on increasing up to 1832, when he was transferred from Ballymote to the parish of Ballysdare.

It is said that while Dr. Durcan was in Ballymote as Parish Priest two men were told off to take his life, and that they undertook the sacrilegious commission. They provided themselves with a pistol; and as Dr. Durcan was to dine on a given day with Father Rickard Fitzmaurice, Parish Priest of Keash, they chose the time at which he would be returning from Father Rickard's for the execution of their design. To learn, if possible, the hour at which the party would break up, these men, having been on the watch, approached stealthily the room in which Mr. Fitzmaurice and guests were assembled. It so happened at the moment that Dr. Durcan was singing; and they were so fascinated by the noble voice, and the ardour with which the singer threw himself into some sacred and patriotic theme, that they became shocked at the crime they meditated, and shrank away in horror from its execu-



tion. Their intended victim knew nothing of all this at the time, and continued ignorant on the subject till one of the accomplices came to him, several years later, to beg forgiveness, and to deliver up the pistol that was procured to do the murder.

About the same time Dr. Durcan manifested courage in a very conspicuous manner, on a remarkable occasion, at Buninadden. Bad as the ecclesiastical state of Ballymote was then, that of Buninadden was still worse. In both instances the evil arose from the adhesion of the people to a suspended priest; but in Buninadden the adherents were more numerous and violent, and the priest abler and bolder. So formidable was the excitement of the people that in a visit which Dr. M'Nicholas made to the place, the bishop not only failed to secure the reconciliation he came to effect, but it needed the protection of two or three magistrates to save his lordship from the violence of the mob. Though the insurgent priest was duly suspended, that wily man persuaded the people that the instrument of suspension had never been served, and that, therefore, he was free as ever from censure or disability of any kind. It was all important to disabuse the people of their error; but where find a man to undertake this duty—one hardly less perilous than that which the prophet Samuel performed when, with the Lord's word in his mouth, the man of God sought out the prevaricating Saul in the midst of armed soldiers, and proclaimed that his kingdom would not continue, and that the Lord had already commanded a man according to His own heart, to be prince over the people.\*

But Dr. Durcan's spirit was exactly the spirit of the Prophets, and, seeing the bishop in a strait, the fervent priest offered himself in the words of Isaias, "*Ecce ego, mitte me* : Lo, here am I, send me !" and taking with him a second suspension, the man of God proceeded, on a

\* I Kings, xiii, 14.

Sunday, to Buninadden chapel and entered it unobserved, while the parishioners were assisting at a Mass, which was being said by Rev. Bernard O'Kane. Mass being over, Dr. Durcan expressed a desire to say a few words to the flock, and began to speak with the consent of the ex-parish priest who was present, and who, doubtless, expected to hear some conciliatory proposal or message on the part of the bishop. But the speaker had not proceeded far till he blamed those who followed a "suspended priest," and when the person, referred to, rose in a rage and denied that he was suspended, Dr. Durcan took the document quietly out of the pocket, and serving it said, "Well, if not, here now is a suspension in due form, and there are witnesses enough around to prove the service of it." In a twinkling, the whole house was in an uproar, and, during the commotion, the intrepid priest descended leisurely the steps of the altar, and retired unmolested through the infuriated crowd, the Divine protection bringing him safe from the midst of his enemies.

On coming to the parish of Ballysadare Dr. Durcan met with opposition there, as at Ballymote, but of a much milder kind. Indeed the resistance encountered hardly proceeded further than to prevent him from saying Mass in Collooney and Curhownagh the first Sunday he presented himself for that purpose in those places. The good priest felt so little what had happened on this occasion as to say to the crowds that stood around, as he was riding away from Curhownagh, after hearing Mass, "Well, I like you all the better for your attachment to the priests you have known; but I must tell you, all the same, that I am your Parish Priest, and shall continue so as sure as that sun shines." The people had never any objection to Dr. Durcan personally, but they had set their hearts on having, as pastor, the late Rev. Canon Henry, who was dear to them for his own sake, as also for the sake of an uncle and grand uncle—their last two Parish Priests, but in

a few days the proverbial sense and piety of the inhabitants of Collooney parish, the meek and gentle bearing of Dr. Durcan, and, still more, the calming advice and influence of Canon Henry reconciled and even attached the parishioners to the superior to whom they had been canonically committed, so that, for the twenty years he lived and laboured in the parish of Ballysadare, there was not a more popular, beloved, and respected Parish Priest in Ireland, or in the universal Church.

And this popularity was acquired by no unworthy means, but by strict and uniform attention to duty and to the interests of the people. Indeed this high-minded man cared so little for popularity, and was, besides, of such inflexible integrity that he not only disdained those sensational proceedings by which in the world cunning public men \* sometimes gain for themselves the admiration of the ignorant and the simple, but seemed by nature incapable, under any circumstances—*Phalaris licet imperet* † —of being

\* There was nothing in common between Dr. Durcan and the “cunning man of the world,” whose dark traits are thus painted by Churchill:—

“ With that low cunning which in fools supplies  
And amply too, the place of being wise,  
Which nature, kind, indulgent parent, gave  
To qualify the blockade for a knave ;  
With that smooth falsehood whose appearance charms,  
And reason of its wholesome doubt disarms,  
Which to the lowest depths of guile descends,  
By vilest means pursues the vilest ends ;  
Wears friendship’s mask for purposes of spite,  
Fawns in the day, and butchers in the night.”

† *Esto bonus miles, tutor bonus, arbiter idem  
Integer ; ambiguae si quando citabere testis  
Incertaeque rei, Phalaris licet imperet, ut sis  
Falsus, et admoto dictet perjuriam tauro,  
Summum crede nefas animam preferre pudori,  
Et propter vitam vivendi perdere causas.*

actuated by anything but a pure sense of duty. His time was divided between missionary work and study. Though not a methodical student, Dr. Durcan was an inveterate reader, but read always with a view to immediate practice. Indeed his mind was of so practical a turn and so religious withal, that he never cultivated science for the sake of science, but rather condemned those who did without having some higher motive to dignify and sanctify their labour. In preaching, the zealous pastor was indefatigable and singularly successful,\* and the sermons, as might be expected, were simple, straightforward, earnest, homely addresses, appealing little to the fancy but much to the reason, interspersed and seasoned with anecdote and apologue, and filled with arguments and illustrations from Scripture, from history, from the lives of the saints, and, not unfrequently, from the occurrences of the day.

The Parish Priest of Ballysadare and Kilvarnet was one of the first parish priests in the county to avail himself of the educational appliances placed within reach by the Board of National Education. As the conditions were not then annexed to the Board's grants by which they have been since marred, the zealous priest had no scruple in applying for and accepting those grants; and building, with their aid, in 1835, a double school-house in Camphill, and a second of the same kind at Lisaneena in 1837. And he would have erected other schools, in the same way, only for failing to obtain sites from local landlords. The mere project of a National school at Camphill gave such offence in influential quarters, that the late Mr. Cooper threatened

\* We read in Boswell's *Life of Johnson*—"I talked of preaching, and of the great success which those called methodists have.—JOHNSON. 'Sir, it is owing to their expressing themselves in a plain and familiar manner, which is the only way to do good to the common people, and which clergymen of genius and learning ought to do from a principle of duty, when it is suited to their congregations; a practice for which they will be praised by men of sense.'"—Croker's *Boswell*, p. 156.

to withdraw the £4 a year he was in the habit of allowing to the clerk of the chapel, in case the work was proceeded with, a threat which that gentleman actually carried into effect, on the erection of the school. But let it be recorded to the credit of this high-souled, though somewhat hasty man, that the incident did not hinder him from following the traditions of the Markrea family, and giving to the priest such land and building accommodation as were required. As soon as Dr. Durcan had completed the school-houses, he began to build the Church of the Assumption on the site of Father Wat's chapel,\* and continued the work, in the face of great difficulties, till the walls were raised up and roofed; and, though the distress of the famine years prevented him from carrying the undertaking further, still it was left in so advanced a state, that this beautiful church must be always regarded as a monument of the bishop's zeal and labours. It would be unjust to the memory of the Rev. Dominick O'Connor, one of the

\* Only that Dr. Durcan was so conscious of his own purity of motive it would have cost him a sharp pang to take down the chapel, though, probably, he felt this only all the more; for being the man of God he was, like St. Wulstan, of whom we read: "St. Wulstan, who was a Saxon, though he found himself obliged to follow the general example in rebuilding his cathedral of Worcester in the new style of magnificence, yet appears to have done this unwillingly. When the former structure, raised by St. Oswald, was taken down, the historian tells us:—'Lachrymas tenere nequivit et dixit: Nos miseri sanctorum opera destruimus ut nobis laudem comparemus. Non noverat illa fœlicium vivorum ætas pompaticas ædes construere, sed sub qualicumque tecto seipsos Deo immolarunt. Nos, e contra nitimur, ut animarum negligentes curam, accumulamus lapides.' (Unable to restrain his tears, he cried out: "Wretches that we are, we destroy the works of the saints in order to get ourselves praised. The holy men of former days had not, to be sure, the art of erecting pompous edifices, but they knew well how to sacrifice themselves to God in all sorts of houses; while we, on the contrary, disregard souls, but pile up stones)."—De Pont. 1. 4.—Quoted in *A Treatise on the Ecclesiastical Architecture of England, during the Middle Ages*: by the Rev. John Milner, D.D., F.S.A., etc., page 42.—Note.

curates of the parish, to omit to mention that Dr. Durcan received a good part of the money with which the building was carried on from this zealous priest, who spent several months in England collecting it. Father O'Connor died in Collooney in 1846, of the fever that then raged in the parish, and his remains were interred in the south transept of the church that he had so effectually helped to raise.

The Right Rev. Dr. M'Nicholas, dying in 1852, Dr. Durcan, or Dean Durcan as he was then, was chosen for his successor, and was consecrated on Tuesday, the 30th of November, the same year, in the Church of the Assumption, Collooney, the consecrating prelate being his Grace of Tuam the Most Rev. Dr. MacHale, and the assistant bishops the Right Rev. Dr. Brown and the Right Rev. Dr. Derry. At his demise, in 1875, then Dr. Durcan was nearly twenty two years in the episcopate, and during those years of benediction for Achonry, the man of God impressed his mark deeply on the diocese. His administration was fruitful in every kind of blessing and benefit, of which what was done in regard to churches may serve as a sample. About the time of the bishop's consecration there were very few slated chapels in the diocese, whereas, on the day of his death there was not a single thatched house of worship within the length and breadth of Achonry, with the exception of that of *Doo*, which seemed left, by a special disposition of Providence, to remind priests and people of all they owe to the prelate who went so lately to his reward.

The following table, containing, in the first column, the names of all the parishes in the diocese, in the second the names of those parishes in which places of worship, entirely or substantially new, were built during Dr. Durcan's episcopate, and in the third the probable cost, shows at a glance the extent of his services as a church builder :—

| Names of Parishes.                        | New Churches.             | Cost of<br>Erection. |
|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Castlemore and Kilcolman                  | one cathedral, one chapel | £12,000              |
| Achonry                                   | ..                        | ..                   |
| Attymass                                  | ..                        | ..                   |
| Ballysadare and Kilvarnet                 | one church                | 7,000                |
| Ballymote                                 | one church                | 6,000                |
| Bohola                                    | one church                | 5,000                |
| Carracastle                               | one church                | 2,200                |
| Cloonacool                                | one church                | 2,000                |
| Curry                                     | one church                | 3,000                |
| Drumrat                                   | one church                | 800                  |
| Kilconduff                                | one convent, one church   | 6,000                |
| Kilfree and Killaraght                    | one church, two chapels   | 3,800                |
| Kilgarvan                                 | one church                | 500                  |
| Killasser                                 | one church                | 2,500                |
| Kilbeghagh                                | one church                | 3,000                |
| Killedan                                  | ..                        | ..                   |
| Kilmovee                                  | one church, one chapel    | 3,500                |
| Killoran                                  | ..                        | ..                   |
| Kilmacteigue                              | one convent               | 2,700                |
| Kilshalvy, Kilturra, and Cloon-<br>oghill | ..                        | ..                   |
| Templemore                                | ..                        | ..                   |
| Toomore                                   | ..                        | ..                   |

With these statistics under the eye, one can understand why the Right Rev. Patrick Durcan was sometimes familiarly spoken of by his priests as Patrick of the Churches, after the example of Columbkille or Columba of the Churches. It is surprising how the bishop was able to raise £48,000, or, in round numbers, £50,000, the aggregate cost of these churches and chapels; and our surprise, of course, increases when we add to this sum the £14,000 or so that must have been spent in the alterations and repairs of other churches and chapels of the diocese, and, more especially in the erection of school-houses. Sixty-four thousand pounds is a large sum to find in any Irish diocese—even in one of those that are twenty times as rich as Dr. Durcan's was—but it needed little less than a miracle to get it together in Achonry, a poor rural district, without towns, without commerce, and with hardly a Catholic landlord or magistrate or merchant within its limits. All this,



too, was done without occasioning any of those complaints about exactions or undue pressure, which one sometimes hears of in other places where so-called charitable contributions are said to resemble forced military requisitions rather than free-will offerings. Leaving the people to themselves they gave spontaneously as well as largely, as they had the fullest faith in the good bishop's disinterestedness and purity of motive, and knew well he was building not for self-glorification but for their benefit and the greater glory of God.

And Dr. Durcan did as much for the functions as for the fabrics of the churches. Before his time there was little done in the places of worship through the diocese, from one end of the year to the other, except to celebrate a single Mass on Sundays and holidays, and that often in threadbare vestments, and with other shabby surroundings, but towards the close of Dr. Durcan's episcopate, the rule in the parochial churches was, daily Mass on week days, and two Masses on each Sunday and holiday, with a sermon after one of them, and, occasionally, Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament; while there was hardly a parish but had several sets of superior vestments, with altar plate and altar linen to match, as well as a well-trained choir, sometimes, too, with an organ or harmonium to add to the dignity of religious functions.

And, if possible, the bishop's zeal was still more occupied with the ministers than with either the fabrics or the functions of religion. He evinced the most anxious solicitude in preparing students for entrance to Maynooth; and, as the *res angusta domi* prevented him from organising one of those well-appointed seminaries which the rich and ample dioceses of other bishops enable them to have, Dr. Durcan left nothing undone to turn to account such diocesan school as existed. It was a single apartment, hardly as imposing as an ordinary National school-house, with only one teacher—a layman, but a sharp

scholar; and yet so judicious was his lordship's plan of studies, and so effective the system of direction and management, that that bare room, and that solitary school-master, sent up, year after year, to Maynooth, pupils that were able not only to hold their own in that great national institution, but to carry away regularly the chief academical prizes from students who had been taught and trained in so called diocesan colleges, with their spacious study and class halls, their well-stocked libraries, their choice scientific apparatus, and their numerous staffs of clerical and lay professors.

The learning the priests acquired in college, the zealous bishop took care that they preserved and increased in diocesan conferences. To these meetings he imparted an elevated and business-like character, taking care, on the one side, that they should not degenerate into a mere child's catechism of question and answer, and, on the other hand, that they should not deviate into frivolous conversations on things in general; thus maintaining them, in conformity with the designs of the Church, as serious classes of Scripture, Theology, and Canon Law, which needed long and laborious preparation, and in which the knowledge of all present was tested and improved by discussion.

Knowing that the possession of knowledge helps largely to secure for clergymen that social consideration on which the success of their ministry not a little depends, and that this knowledge was never so necessary as at the present time, the wise prelate desired to see his priests not only virtuous, but learned and accomplished. Indeed, whatever raised the clerical character in the esteem of the people was dear to him, while everything that tended to lower the same gave him pain, whether it was the fault or only the misfortune of clergymen themselves. You could never forget the distress of mind he once showed on hearing casually in conversation that a priest, whose mind had become deranged, and who had been taken into a public

asylum, was so neglected by those who should look to the matter, that the wretched man had to wear the pauper uniform while in the institution. The good bishop felt keenly for the poor priest, but felt still more for the Church, which was thus degraded, before the eyes of friends and enemies, in the person of one of her ordained ministers.

And still, it was not zeal in building that constituted his merit in the eyes of priests or people, or, perhaps, of heaven, so much as those other less conspicuous virtues and qualities for which the modest prelate was distinguished.

Dr. Durcan had the greatest respect for authority, and the deepest sense of responsibility in exercising it. While a simple priest he was remarkable for obedience, taking the bishop's order, or even the bishop's desire as decisive of what ought to be done. It is true the bishop in question was Dr. M'Nicholas, who was noted for moderation, and whose name was a synonym for common sense, a quality perhaps the most important of all in those who rule; but from Dr. Durcan's humility and patience it is certain, though there were a different class of man to deal with, that he would do all that could in reason be done to please even such a one, mindful of Saint Peter's advice to those who serve: "Be subject with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thank-worthy, if for conscience towards God, a man endure sorrows, suffering wrongfully."

But it was by the way in which he commanded, even more than by the way in which he obeyed, that this model superior showed correct appreciation of authority. There was nothing in common between Dr. Durcan and the *Sic volo, sic jubeo*, class of rulers. He learned from civil history that authority may suffer more from those who use, or rather abuse it, than from the resistance which it sometimes meets with; and that the age of your *Louis the Fourteenth*, with their *L'Etat, c'est moi*, usually precedes the age of anarchists and revolutionists. Apprehensive,

then, lest this sacred principle should suffer anything in his keeping, the prudent prelate never performed an act of authority of any moment without clear warrant in Scripture, in Canon Law, or in the examples of the saints.

After the Sacred Scriptures, there was no book so often in Dr. Durcan's hands as the Lives of the Saints, in reading which he used to note carefully such passages as might serve for guidance in the future. This practice stood our bishop in good stead; for, on having a call to deal with some delicate or difficult matter lying outside of routine duties, he would bring to mind what Saint Augustine, Chrysostom, or Athanasius, for instance, among the ancients; or Saint Charles Borromeo, Thomas of Villanuova, Francis of Sales, Alphonsus, or some other holy and learned bishop among the moderns, had done in the like case, and would copy the saint's proceedings as far as circumstances permitted.\* Decisions come to in this way commended themselves to the acceptance of all; and if they bore hard on a priest, that priest himself was always the first to admit the spirit of justice from which they proceeded; whereas, if there was reason or even room for him to think that they were the result of wilfulness, he might, if over sensitive, have fallen into despair; or, if proud and perverse, as such persons sometimes are, might have been goaded by his pride and resentment into some egregious folly or fault.

Another property that struck at once every one that met Dr. Durcan was the open, artless, natural carriage of the man. If there are disingenuous and double-faced people in the world, Dr. Durcan was their direct opposite; as opposed as Mr. Carlyle himself could desire to "unveracities, astucities, semblances, and shams."

His scorn of duplicity, though restrained by the charity

\* In this practice he resembled Dr. Milner, who, we are told, generally studied theology in the Lives of the Saints.—*Husembeth*, p. 537.

of the Gospel, seemed by nature animated with the energy of that of Achilles, as described by Homer :

Ἐχθρὸς γάρ μοι κείνος ὁμῶς Ἀϊδαο πύλῃσιν,  
 Ὅς χ' ἕτερον μὲν κεύθῃ ἐνὶ φρεσίν, ἄλλο δὲ εἰπη.

—Book ix, lines 312-313.

while the words of Wisdom in the Book of Proverbs—  
 “*Os bilingue detestor*”—might have served as the most appropriate motto for his crest and seal. Dark and crooked ways he detested, as well from instinct as a man as from sense of duty as a bishop ; and those who followed such ways he shunned himself, and cautioned his friends against. In this, too, as in other matters, this prelate took the ideas of right and wrong from the Scriptures, where, it is said that “the path of the just is a shining light,” and the way of the wicked is darksome ;” so that he always regarded those that gave themselves to underhand practices as “children of the world,” and not as “children of light.” And in tracing out for his priests the line of conduct they should pursue, he insisted on the duty of being always simple and undesigning, quoting for them the text : “Whilst you have the light believe in the light, that you may be the children of the light.”—St. John, xii, 36.

Indeed Dr. Durcan reminded you of those clocks one sometimes meets at Exhibitions, without case or cover of any kind ; so that one has under the eye the whole machinery at actual work, and sees distinctly the play and bearing of the parts on each other. It was manifest that the simple man had nothing to conceal, and cared little if every thought, word, and act of his were proclaimed on the housetops. His speech was the straightforward *yea* and *nay* of the Gospel, without equivocation or mental reservation ; without a particle of either the *suppressio veri* or the *suggestio falsi*. And he spoke sometimes when a man of the world would be silent ; but whether Dr. Durcan spoke or was silent it was alike for the glory of God, and with

a singular forgetfulness of self. An incident or two in illustration will not be out of place.

Once he was making a little tour with a party of friends—clerical, it is said, and lay—some of whom, perhaps, were not quite so indifferent with regard to the figure they made in the eyes of others as our holy bishop. As the tourists were somewhere entering a steamboat or railway carriage one of those canting hypocrites, or, perhaps, blind zealots, that turn up in the most unexpected places, seeing ecclesiastics, and desiring to insult, or, mayhap, to convert them, cried out: “Who can forgive sins except God alone?” On meeting this interruption, Dr. Durcan’s companions stood on their dignity, and treated the questioner with silent contempt; but the good bishop’s bowels of compassion were moved, and, turning to the author of the interruption, he asked, more in sorrow than in anger: “Foolish man, why do you act the part of the unfortunate Jews, and fling in our face the words with which they insulted our common Redeemer?” The appeal had the best effect; the person addressed shrank back silent—perhaps repentant; and the spectators of the scene, feeling the full force of the comparison, called down a blessing on the man of God.

A similar incident happened at Kingstown. It was shortly after the definition of the Immaculate Conception; and as his lordship was walking along, some silly swaddler asked sneeringly: “Well, sir, where was the Immaculate Conception a thousand years ago?” The bishop showed no sense of annoyance, but turning quietly round answered gently, “My good friend, just where it is at present, in the revealed word of God,” thus conveying an important lesson in Theology, which, it is to be hoped, was taken to heart by the poor fanatic.

The bishop had a great love of music, and especially of ecclesiastical music. There were two things, either of which even the most accomplished should have hesitated



to do in presence of Dr. Durcan, namely, to quote a passage of Scripture, or to perform a piece of music. The slightest verbal inaccuracy in the quotation could not escape observation, and, impassive though he sought to appear, a false note not only grated on the ear, but told unmistakably on the countenance. He never looked so happy as while singing in church the praises of God. Far from troubling himself about what others thought, the holy man seemed to forget every person and object present except God; and in the hearty way in which he threw himself into the hymn or piece, reminded you of David dancing with all his might before the ark of the Lord, and "being little in his own eyes, to become more glorious in the eyes of God." And the bishop had the secret of inspiring others with the same taste for sacred music that he felt himself. Set Dr. Durcan down in a drawingroom with what company you pleased, and you were sure, after a little, to find it filled with the sweet and thrilling sounds of the Church's music. Not that the modest prelate ever obtruded his own preferences on others—on the contrary, let him be asked to sing, and you heard at once a melody of Moore's, or a planxty of Carolan's in the original Irish, or anything else which those present preferred.\* But with all that the time of the hymn was sure to come. A friend once left him in a drawingroom with as unpromising materials for a sacred music choir as could well be imagined—some ladies who had a portfolio of novelties from Paris and London, which they were eager to air, a couple of Protestant clergymen who, though men of cultivation, had naturally little leaning to Catholic practices of any kind, and a few lively young gentlemen, who had less *gout* than either the ladies or parsons for religious hymns; yet on this friend's return after half an hour's absence to the

\* His piety was of the cheerful character inculcated by Saint Paul (Philip., iv, 4), and spoken of in Ovid's line, "Di quoque ut cunctis hilari pietate colantur."



drawingroom, there was the whole company, ladies, bishops, Protestant clergymen, and fast young gentlemen, singing enthusiastically the *Adeste Fideles*, while a young lady accompanied them on the piano with the devotional feelings as well as the taste of a Saint Cecilia. It is thus that this good man was the means everywhere of turning people's thoughts heavenward, and could find occasion of doing good at an evening party, as our Lord did at a marriage feast.

But the most characteristic of the bishop's virtues was charity, a virtue to which he was singularly attached from the tenderest years, as a striking incident shows. Brought once, when only six years old, by somebody, to the fair of Banada, and receiving there sundry pence for the purchase of "fairings," from friends, instead of treating himself to gingerbread and sweets, as was expected, the child sought out some beggars and handed them over the whole store of coppers. As the little boy began, the man continued through life; not that Dr. Durcan came much before the public as an almsgiver, or that the name figured often in the charity subscriptions of the newspapers, for the humble man seemed to be always afraid that the left hand should know what the right hand was doing. The favourite recipients of the bishop's alms were not those who paraded, but those who concealed their needs; and according as such persons appeared, he would make any sacrifice to aid and comfort them. It was more especially to this class that he gave all through life, as priest, in Ballaghaderreen, Ballymote, and Collooney; and as bishop in Ballaghaderreen. But if this class had the preference, others were hardly ever sent away empty. The common beggars had such experience of Dr. Durcan's habits of giving, that his house was constantly beset by them, and particularly after he had become bishop. The writer shall not easily forget the spectacle witnessed on the occasion of a visit to the bishop some eight or nine months before his death. It was one

of the two days in the week on which his lordship used to make a general distribution of alms; and on approaching the house one saw forty or fifty beggars—lame, blind, old, infirm, stranger, and inhabitant—sitting in a semicircle round the hall-door, while the bishop handed them, one by one, their accustomed doles, adding always a blessing—an addition that increased the alms a hundred-fold in the estimation of the receivers. Later in the day as the charitable prelate walked to the cathedral, he was surrounded, and accompanied much of the way, by scores of poor who were unable to attend the morning distribution, and who came now for their pittance. They certainly formed an unsightly *cortege*, with their rags, and dirt, and ailments; and, kindly as the good bishop took to them, would have fared ill had they come between the wind and the nobility of certain other people, who seem to have taken for their motto, in relation to beggars, that maxim of Horace in regard to the mob, “*Odi profanum vulgus et arceo.*”

But after all it would be hard to find a scene more worthy of a Christian bishop; and if we, Catholics, think with pleasure and pride on the eminent gifts and powers of so many prelates of the Church; on Richelieu and Ximenes governing great kingdoms as no other men could govern them; or Bossuet holding learned conference on the Sacred Scriptures with “the elite of the clergy of France,” in promenades through the abbeys of Versailles, reminding one of Plato and his disciples in the groves of Academus\*; on Pecci and Wiseman devoting the “spoils of the Egyptians”—the humanities of Greece and Rome, and the languages and learning of the East—to the service of religion; and on Dupanloup championing the great cause of Christian faith and morals in the tribune of the House of Deputies or of the Senate, and confounding the infidel and the scoffer; so

\* *Histoire de Bossuet par le Cardinal de Bausset*, livre v, c. 2.

also we must contemplate with gratification this saintly Irish bishop reproducing, in the streets of Ballaghaderreen, the scenes of the Gospel, and by his example bringing vividly before the mind our Divine Lord, as He moved about amid the poor, the sick, and the miserable, through the villages and towns of Judea and Galilee.

And the superiority of his virtues shone out as much by contrast and resemblance as by direct inspection. If few men approached nearer to the meekness and humility of heart \* of the Great Model, no one was further removed from the ostentatiousness of those that “love the first chairs in the synagogues,” and “salutations in the market-place, and to be called Rabbi,” and that “do all their works to be seen by men.” † While we sometimes find men in authority who are for ever posing like subjects in a photographic gallery, who efface all subordinates in order to be the only persons themselves “seen by men,” and who seem to imagine that they are the centre of the universe, and that others are made to merely revolve, and at a very remote distance around them; Dr. Durcan knew not jealousy or vanity, the faults of little minds—counted it, like Saint Paul, “a very small thing to be judged by man or man’s day,” ‡—effaced nobody but himself,—exhorted the modest and timid to come forward and take their candle from “under a bushel,” § and if the good was done, little cared whether it was by himself or others, as this anecdote will help to show:—

“A public movement was in progress, in which the whole diocese—bishops, priests, and laymen, had and felt an equal interest. In connection with this movement, one of the clergy singled himself out, and took a conspicuous and very popular part, a part that should—in all propriety—

\* St. Matt., xi, 29.

† St. Matt., xxiii.

‡ I Cor., iv, 3.

§ St. Matt., v, 15.

be left to the bishop; and when another priest, indignant at the proceeding, begged the bishop to reprove the trespasser, and to hinder his moving further in the same direction, Dr. Durcan, with his unequalled facility and felicity of Scripture quotation, answered: "Why hast thou emulation for me? O that all the people might prophesy, and that the Lord would give them his spirit,"\* words that Moses made use of when asked by somebody to stop Eldad and Medad, who were prophesying without leave in the camp. That was the answer of our holy bishop; and if all other evidence were wanting, that answer alone, with the forgetfulness of personal considerations, the spirit of self-sacrifice, and the exclusive concern for the glory of God, which it breathes, would prove Dr. Durcan to be a saint, and a saint like Moses, of the highest type.

At home, Dr. Durcan was as simple and unpretending as out of doors. The furniture and appointments of the episcopal residence were solid and plain—as far removed, on the one side, from everything finical, as on the other from what would be mean or unworthy the dignity of a bishop. His library, if not large, contained a choice collection of books, for though free from every taint of bibliomania, no money could hinder the purchase of any really valuable and appropriate volume that issued from the press. Rising at six o'clock, the holy man continued in prayer and pious meditation up to eight, when he said Mass; and the rest of the day, with the exception of the time given to dinner and breakfast—the only meals he ever touched—and to a short walk or drive, was devoted to study, the Divine Office, the reception of priests and others on business, the writing of letters and sermons, and some other duties incidental to his office. Being as hospitable a man as ever lived, he loved to have priests and lay friends as often as possible at his table, which was always spread with

\* Numb., xi, 29.

abundant and generous fare, though unaccompanied by such rarities and delicacies as are fit only for those epicures who "live to eat."\* Ten o'clock was the usual hour for retiring to his bedroom, where he was supposed to pass long hours *in oratione Dei*, like the Divine Master while on earth.† Few men fulfilled so literally the injunction of "praying always." Even in bed, when beset by wakefulness, it was his custom to take the beads that were always under the pillow, and tell them over, after which, sleep was sure to come on, so that he often said playfully, that the best soporific in the world is the beads.‡

In 1870 it was made known to Dr. Durcan that a second bishop was to be sent to the diocese, and though the announcement came on him by surprise, he took no thought of throwing obstacles in the way of the measure. As if our prelate had no will of his own to gratify, he left the matter entirely to the disposal of others; and after the coadjutor

\* "Possidius tells us," says Alban Butler, in his *Life of St Augustine*, "that the saint's clothes and furniture were modest, but decent—not slovenly. No silver was used in his house except spoons. His dishes were of earth, wood, or marble. He exercised hospitality, but his table was frugal; nor was wine wanted; but a quantity was regulated, which no guest was ever allowed to exceed."

† St. Luke, vi, 12.

‡ This cure for restlessness was not, it appears, peculiar to Dr. Durcan, at least if we go back to the middle ages. For Sir Walter Scott, who is such a master in the folk-lore of those times, represents Fitz-James practising it:—

"I'll dream no more—by manly mind  
Not even in sleep is will resigned.  
My midnight orisons said o'er,  
I'll turn to rest and dream no more.  
His midnight orison he told,  
A prayer with every bead of gold;  
Consigned to heaven his cares and woes,  
And sunk in undisturbed repose,  
Until the heath-cock shrilly crew,  
And morning dawned on Belvenue."

—*The Lady of the Lake*, Canto 1.

was appointed and consecrated, and Dr. Durcan found in him a considerate, sympathetic, and cordial private friend, as well as a gentle, skilful, and prudent ecclesiastical administrator—a man, indeed, after his own heart, and every way worthy of his confidence and esteem—he gradually committed all the concerns of the diocese to those able hands, and devoted himself thenceforth more exclusively every day, to preparing for death.

This holy man died on Saturday, the 1st of May, 1875, in the full possession of his senses, and after receiving not only all the ordinary aids and rites of religion, but also the exceptional and extraordinary grace of the general jubilee of that year. His last illness, which continued several months, and which at times was very painful, was borne with a cheerfulness that could have come only from a perfect conformity of the sufferer's will to the will of God. Death, indeed, Dr. Durcan never feared. Once or twice towards the close of life, when he had to bear excruciating surgical operations, the operator, a surgeon of the greatest practice, and a Protestant, was so struck with the bishop's firmness as to remark often since, "This old gentleman of seventy was the most imperturbable patient that has ever fallen into my hands." The man of God exhibited the same calm courage at the moment of death, his features wearing an expression of pleasure rather than of pain, and his last words being those of the apostle, "I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ."

The remains of the bishop were laid out in the room in which he died, and were there visited by clergy and laity. On kneeling, the visitors were as inclined to invoke the intercession of the deceased as to put up a prayer for his eternal repose, feeling sure that the good and faithful servant had already entered into the joy of the Lord. Many even took with them beads, crosses, or medals, to apply them to his person, convinced that these objects, like the handkerchiefs and aprons brought from St. Paul to the

sick would derive virtue from contact with such a saint. The coffin, containing all that was mortal of the lamented prelate, was removed to the cathedral on the evening of Monday, accompanied by an imposing procession of clergy and laity, headed by the bishop of the diocese and the bishop of Galway, the bishops and priests chaunting hymns, and continuing the solemn dirge till the coffin was deposited on a *catafalque* raised in the choir of the church to receive it, where it was surrounded, all night, by pious and devoted watchers.

The following day, Tuesday the 4th, the obsequies were solemnized in the cathedral in the midst of an immense congregation. The Most Rev. Dr. M'Cormack, who showed affectionate solicitude in honouring the memory of deceased, presided at the Office of the Dead, was celebrant in the Solemn Mass, and performed the absolution, as well as the ceremony at the grave. In the choir sat His Grace the Most Rev. Dr. MacHale, their Lordships the Bishops of Galway and Ardagh, nearly all the priests of Achonry, and a large number from the dioceses of Tuam, Killala, and Elphin. At the close of the solemn functions, the coffin was lowered into the grave, formed in a spot chosen by the bishop himself for his last resting place, in the noble cathedral which he had erected, and in which the tomb might well bear the inscription placed over that of Sir Christopher Wren in St. Paul's, London, "Si monumentum quæras, circumspice."

The Month's Mind took place on the 2nd of June, when the cathedral contained a congregation as large and sympathetic as that which had assembled within its walls on the day of the burial. There were present three bishops, several others being unavoidably absent; nearly a hundred priests, including a large proportion of the clergy of Elphin, who knew well how to appreciate the frankness, the straightforwardness, and the candour of Dr. Durcan; and a vast concourse of the laity of the diocese, as well as numbers of



the good bishop's admirers from other places. As on the day of the obsequies, Most Rev. Dr. M'Cormack presided at the Office, sang the Mass, and spared no trouble or effort to add solemnity to the celebration. The funeral sermon was preached by the writer of these lines, who was selected for the duty as possessing special knowledge of the deceased, Dr. Durcan having been not merely his bishop, but his lifelong and intimate friend.

To crown the honours paid to the memory of Dr. Durcan, the anniversary of his death was celebrated at Ballaghadereen, on the 2nd of May, 1876, under circumstances highly gratifying to his admirers. With an abiding affection, not often felt even by bishops for their predecessors, Most Rev. Dr. MacCormack, who seemed to think that nothing was done for the deceased so long as anything remained that could be added, invited all the priests of the diocese to an Anniversary Office and Mass, and by his exertions and arrangements, first in the cathedral, and next in the episcopal residence, made the occasion one that must be long remembered in Achonry. The priests on their side, with hardly an exception, betook themselves with alacrity, in some cases at great personal inconvenience, from the different parishes to Ballaghadereen, to bear a part in the tribute of devotion and respect to their venerated father and friend. And the laity of Ballaghadereen and the neighbourhood, as impressed as either bishop or priests with what was due to the day, suspended all business, closed shops and offices, and assisted *en masse* in the cathedral at the commemorative service of their beloved bishop and benefactor.

This universal eagerness to respect Dr. Durcan after death was in perfect keeping with his lot through life. Though there was no bishop in Ireland that cared less, no one perhaps that cared so little, for human respect, there was none, notwithstanding, that elicited, wherever he was known, truer esteem, profounder respect, or warmer attach-

ment. Others may have received more lip-service, but for that spontaneous homage of the heart, that is given only to genuine merit, no bishop of the time received so much, as everyone knows that mixed freely with the priests and people of the County Sligo and the adjoining counties. This popular predilection for one who loved to live unknown, for one whose voice was not "heard abroad," and who would "not break the bruised reed," nor "quench the smoking flax," may be understood somewhat from what has been said of his characteristic virtues, but will be fully comprehended only by reference to the words of Isaias, "Behold my servant, I will uphold him,"\* or to the well-known saying of our Lord, "Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled, and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted." †

\* Isaias, xlii, 2.

† St. Matthew, xxiii, 2.

## CHAPTER VI.

## CONCLUSION.

IN concluding this narrative it remains now to say a few words upon some miscellaneous matters that could not so conveniently be noticed before. And, first, a fact that meets one at every turn is the shyness—"not to put too fine a point upon it"—felt by leading landed proprietors to go outside the circle of their own co-religionists in giving office or other employment. On this head there may be a shade of difference between this proprietor and that, but all, it is to be feared, are a good way off from a state of optimism as yet. Go into their rent offices, and you find agents, under-agents, clerks, bailiffs, and rent-warners—all without exception of one religious profession; examine the list of their domestics, reaching probably to twenty or thirty souls, and you search in vain for a Roman Catholic, unless, perhaps, you find one in the dairy where a Papist that takes *firsts* in the butter market may be preferred, in spite of her religion, to a more orthodox dairy-help that could not reach beyond *seconds* or *thirds*; look among those employed in their demesnes as stewards, wood-rangers, gamekeepers, gatekeepers, and you come everywhere across the same onesidedness. It is not bigotry but hatred of bigotry that occasions these remarks, for the writer, whose motto is, *No social distinction on the score of religious denomination*, would condemn the ostracism in question all the same if practised by Roman Catholics, as he condemns it now that it is practised against them, his firmest conviction being that the social condition of Ireland will always be unhealthy until employers, to whatever creed or party they belong, and whether they be corporations or individuals, come to regard personal fitness as the

essential qualification for office, and not nationality or religious profession. But so far is this from being the case in many quarters, that the wit was not so much astray who remarked some time ago, that though St. Peter had received the keys of the kingdom of heaven, he would still find it hard, with his Popery, to obtain the key of a gate-lodge in parts of the county Sligo.

No reasonable Irish Catholic could object to Englishmen and Scotchmen or Protestants receiving their *fair and full share* of the offices or other employment at the disposal of our gentry. And least of all would he who offers these remarks make any such objection, not only on personal grounds, having many friends and neighbours in these classes,\* but also on public grounds; for he knows that the characteristic virtues of the English and Scotch—their pluck, perseverance, business habits, and respect for the law—must prove highly beneficial to the country; and that the regularity, the gravity, the decorum, with which most Protestants perform their religious duties, more especially on Sundays, cannot fail of influencing advantageously some Roman Catholics who often need the stimulus of such an example.† But, on the other hand, every fair man will condemn the systematic exclusion of Irish Catholics from employment in Ireland, solely because they are Catholics; “though,” to use the words of Edmund Burke, “they are of the old, long-established religion of the country, and are the far greater majority of the inhabitants.”‡

\* . . . Vicinitas

Quod ego in propinquâ parte amicitiae puto.

Terence—*Heautontimorumenos*.—Act 1, sc. 1, line 5.

† “The very presence of a rival religion is a perpetual incentive to faith and devotion in men who, from the circumstances of the case, would be in danger of becoming worse than lax Catholics, unless they resolved on being zealous ones.—*The Idea of a University, etc.*: by John Henry Newman, D.D., page 484. Third edition.

‡ Burke's Works.—Letter to Dr. Laurence, vol. viii, page 499. Bohn's edition.

The writer would much rather not touch this invidious subject at all ; but without some reference to it, a volume that professes to give the history and present state of the locality would be incomplete ; and if any apology were necessary for introducing such a topic, ample justification would be found in the examples of Arthur Young and Edmund Burke, both warm lovers of Ireland, and sterling Protestants. The former, in his *Tour in Ireland*,\* observes, " A few considerable landlords, many years ago, made the experiment of fixing, at great expense, colonies of palatines on their estates. The scheme did not appear to me to answer. They had houses built for them ; plots of land assigned to each at a rent of favour, assisted in stock, and all of them with leases of lives from the head landlord. The poor Irish are very rarely treated in this way ; and when they are, they work much greater improvements than these Germans. . . . I am convinced no country, whatever state it may be in, can be improved by colonies of foreigners, and whatever foreigner, as a superintendant of any great improvement, asks for colonies of his own countrymen to execute his ideas, manifests a mean genius and but little knowledge of the human heart ; if he has talents he will find tools wherever he finds men, and make the natives of the country the means of increasing their own happiness. Whatever he does then will live and take root ; but if effected by foreign hands, it will prove a sickly and short lived exotic ; brilliant, perhaps, for a time in the eyes of the ignorant, but of no solid advantage to the country that employs him." And Edmund Burke writes :—" Sure I am that there have been thousands in Ireland who have never conversed with a Roman Catholic in their whole lives, unless they happened to talk with their gardener's workman ; and so averse were they some time ago to have them near their persons, that they would not employ

\* Appendix, page 24.

even those who would never find their way beyond the stable. I well remember a great, and in many respects a good man, who advertised for a blacksmith, but at the same time added, "he must be a Protestant." It is impossible that such a state of things must not produce alienation on the one side, and pride and insolence on the other." And Lady Morgan, who cites these words in *Patriotic Sketches*, (vol. 1, page 61), adds for herself:—"It is to be hoped, and indeed to be believed, that the fatal spirit of prejudice thus strongly adverted to by Burke, is daily losing its influence; for myself, though one among the many in my own country who have been educated in the most rigid adherence to the tenets of the Church of England, I should, like the poor Maritornes of Cervantes, think myself endowed with very few 'sketches and shadows of Christianity,' were I to confine virtue to sect, or make the speculative theory of opinion the test of moral excellence, or proof of human perfection."

These words, so wise and charitable, and the sentiments they express, are no longer confined to lofty master spirits like Arthur Young, Edmund Burke, and Sydney Morgan, but are now fairly diffused through the whole community, with some exceptions here and there, where, owing to local circumstances, old-world ideas and antipathies still prevail. Where such a state of things exists Catholics must submit to conditions of life they cannot alter; but submission is one thing and acquiescence another; and if any Catholic should be so base as to feel at ease in such an environment, and to kiss the rod that strikes him, all that can be said of such a one is, that he richly deserves to live and die under the ban.

Another fact calling for notice is the DEPOPULATION that has been going on for a good many years, and that is even still in progress. At the time Dr. Durcan became Parish Priest of Ballysadare and Kilvarnet, in 1832, the Roman Catholic population of the parishes comprised near eighteen



hundred families, while at present it reaches little beyond six hundred. Marriages, during the earlier years of his incumbency are said to have averaged 65 in the year, and baptisms 350, while the marriages last year, for instance, were only 9, and the baptisms 121. The process of thinning took place, more or less over the whole area of the district, but in some places it has been much more effectual than in others. Entering the parish of Ballysadare from the south you find only two tenants on the lands between Lackagh and Tubberscanavin, though they contained not many years ago some of the most comfortable farmers in the parish. Passing beyond Collooney you meet the residences only of a herd and two cottiers, on the fine alluvial plain that stretches from Collooney to Ballysadare, where people remember to have seen twenty-six well-to-do families. And to the north of Ballysadare you have large tracts in the occupation of their owners.

Wastes or untenanted lands may be a greater deordination in one district than in another. In outlying parts of the country that are remote from markets and from centres of population, it is not so remarkable to see lands without occupying tenants, as people often do not care to live in such places, but the case is different in regard to the spots that have been taken up by landlords in these parishes. Take, for example, that lying between Collooney and Ballysadare. When you see at each end of this stretch a little town full of inhabitants, many of whom are desirous to have a bit of land, as well as able and willing to pay a good rent for it, and find the whole given up to flocks and herds, it is strange if such an arrangement does not strike you as a blot in our social system. While admitting the perfect legality of all this, as the law stands now, and without presuming to cast blame on any person or persons, one still feels forced to regard as unsound a state of things in which the advantage of the community seems in an inverse ratio with that of the individual, in which the *10 πολλοί* are



nothing, and one man everything; in which poorer people are disinherited from their share of the earth "and the fulness thereof," and a monopoly secured to some rich man, who, as landlord grazier, may take thought for nobody but himself, may give little or no employment, may act as his own agent, his own steward, his own seller and buyer, almost as his own herd. *Latifundia perdidere Italiam*,\* says the Latin proverb, that is: "large estates were the undoing of Italy;" and if some legal check is not given to the multiplication of wastes like that under consideration, the future historian may describe the fate of Ireland in the words of the Romans—*Latifundia perdidere Italiam*, that is: translating freely: "Stock farms and stock jobbers have ruined Ireland."

Allusion has been made already to the crying need there is in the district for more and better dwelling houses, but as the subject is of great importance some additional reference to it here will do no harm. At a time when the necessity of bettering the condition of the poorer classes is more felt than at any former period, when prime ministers, lord lieutenants of Ireland, economic writers, sanitarians, and the periodical press never tire of enlarging on the obligations landlords and employers of labour are under to supply labourers and workmen with sufficient and decent lodging accommodation, it is humiliating to think that in parts of this district we are daily becoming worse and worse off in respect of such accommodation. The exalted station and public duties of the Prince of Wales do not hinder him from superintending the erection of cottages for his labourers and others at Sandringham; charitable men, like Lord Shaftesbury, and charitable women, like the Baroness Coutts, spare neither time nor money in promoting the good work; the State, to second the benevolent tendencies of the time, lends money to landlords on advantageous terms, so as to leave

\* C. Plin. Secundi, *Nat. Hist.* lib. xviii, 7.

owners of property without excuse for neglect of duty in this respect ; and it is to be hoped that all these examples and facilities, and inducements, and stimulants, will not be lost for ever on those who have the power of moving in this neighbourhood, whoever they are—a problem that the writer is unable to solve. In other parts of Ireland, and still more in England and Scotland, wherever you meet factories, mills, or other centres of employment, you are sure to see, hard-by, rows of commodious residences for the employed ; but in Collooney and Ballysdare, while the mills are second to none in size and machinery, the lodging



COLLOONEY WATERFALL.

Drawn on the wood by W. F. Wakeman, F.R.H.A.A.I., from a Photograph by Mr. Slater.

of the mill men is miserably deficient in extent, and some of what exists is unfit for human use. It is no wonder that the poor (to say nothing of others, who have griefs of

their own) should feel hurt by this indifference to their interests and comforts.

As to education it is, at the least, as extended and efficient in the parishes of Ballysadare and Kilvarnet as in the neighbouring parishes ; but, unfortunately, the only education imparted is of the primary kind. It was not so always in the district ; for to say nothing of the higher education formerly given in the monastery of Ballysadare, where there were 300 monks (page 23), and to come to more modern times, Father Wat Henry in his day taught classics to a good number of students (p. 482) ; while towards the close of the last century there was an excellent classical school in Tubbercanavin (p. 485), and another about the year 1834, in the old chapel of Collooney.

At no time was the work of the schoolmaster neglected in the district ; for even when the priest said mass on the Ox Mountains, or in a lowland ditch, some reading, writing, and cyphering, as well as the catechism, used to be taught in the place of worship ; and as the priest, according to the gradual relaxation of the Penal Code, descended from the mountain to the plain, and passed from the ditch to the hut, the cabin, and the barn, and from these to the slated chapel, the schoolmaster followed in his footsteps till the establishment of the National Board enabled them, or obliged them, to pursue their respective avocations apart. Nor was it Catholics alone that these schools accommodated, but Protestants as well ; and, doubtless, there are still living in the parishes Protestant farmers and tradesmen, who acquired in the old chapels of Collooney, Curhownagh, and Ballinacarrow, such learning as they possess—as there existed, in their young days, no other schools in the neighbourhood.

There are at present in the parishes of Ballysadare and Kilvarnet, under the management of the Parish Priest, seven National Schools, that were opened in the order that follows :—Camphill Male school, 1835 ; Camphill Female,

1835; Lisaneena Male, 1836; Lisaneena Female, 1836; Ballinacarrow Mixed school, 1851; Ballysadare Male school, 1867; Ballysadare Female, 1867. The average attendance of pupils at these schools in 1877 was: Camphill Male, 72; Camphill Female, 46; Lisaneena Male, 48; Lisaneena Female, 46; Ballysadare Male, 62; Ballysadare Female, 44; and Ballinacarrow Mixed, 50.

Of these schools, those of Camphill (Male and Female), and of Ballysadare (Male and Female) are particularly efficient, being held in fine houses, conducted by singularly able and zealous teachers, and attended as largely as can be reasonably expected; and that the "Education Office" shares this opinion appears from the fact, that while it has never addressed a word of reprimand or remonstrance to any teacher of these schools, its officers are very liberal to them of the rewards and prizes at the disposal of the Board, award them the highest "results fees" obtained in the District, and have recently recommended two of them for the Blake and Carlisle premium. Another fact that reflects great honour on the Camphill Male school is this: that three of its pupils, who have lately presented themselves as candidates at competitive examinations for the Civil Service, have all three succeeded and come off with great credit, taking higher places than were gained by competitors who had been educated in the so-called "grinding" establishments of Dublin, Cork, and Belfast. And speaking of competitive examinations, it is but fair to mention that the only candidate sent up from Ballinacarrow school passed too with success through the ordeal, which is the more creditable to teacher and pupil, as the bad house in which that school is held must operate as a great drawback on its efficiency.

Alongside of these schools there are in the district seven others, under Protestant teachers and Protestant management, namely: four of Colonel Cooper's—two at Ballysadare and two at Collooney; two of Mr. O'Hara's—one at his gate-

lodge and one at Luggediffe ; and one of Mrs. Perceval's, at Templehouse.

The leading industry of the parish is milling, or the grinding of wheat, oats, maize, and sometimes barley, into flour, meal, and other articles of food for man and beast. Forty years since, and previously from time immemorial, there were many tuck mills in the district for dressing frieze and flannel, whereof there survives only one, that of Richard Broder, Ballysadare ; three bleach mills—the largest and best appointed one standing in Collooney or Camphill ; another at Ballysadare ; and the third, the only one that still exists, in Thornhill ; and several small corn mills, all of which, without exception, have disappeared. These mills were mere trifles in comparison of the immense and stately structures that are now to be seen in Collooney, Camphill, and Ballysadare. The Collooney milling concerns are the finest in the world, at least for the area they cover, comprising :

1. A mill 100 feet long and 36 feet wide, 6 storeys high, worked by an overshot wheel [made by Graham of Glasgow] 36 feet 8 inches in diameter, of 80 horse power, and capable of grinding 600 tons weekly.
2. A mill 80 feet long, 42 wide, and 4 storeys high, driven by a turbine wheel [by Randolph, Elder, and Co.] of 300 horse power, and capable of turning out 1000 tons per week, not including 100 tons of pot barley, made also weekly.
3. A mill 125 feet long, 42 wide, and 4 storeys high, driven by another turbine [made also by Randolph, Elder, and Co.] of 150 horse power, and able to grind 100 tons of fine flour weekly.
4. Fire-proof stores of 107 feet long, 42 wide, and 4 storeys high, the lofts being all arched with brick and asphalted.

The three mills contain thirty pairs of stones, and are driven exclusively by water power ; the water at the wheels having a fall of thirty feet. This noble block of buildings, which includes also kilns and offices, as well as Mr. Sim's fine residence, was, with the exception of mill No. 1, built by that gentleman at a cost of £50,000. And having

mentioned Mr. Sim's name, it is a pleasure to be able to add, that though forty years ago he incurred the ill-will of some by purchasing Camphill, he is at present so popular, that his recent appointment to the commission of the peace was celebrated in Collooney by the burning of tar barrels, and other manifestations of the people's delight.

Leaving behind us this noble concern, with the interesting church ruin that adjoins, and passing to the other side of



OLD CHURCH OF COLLOONEY.

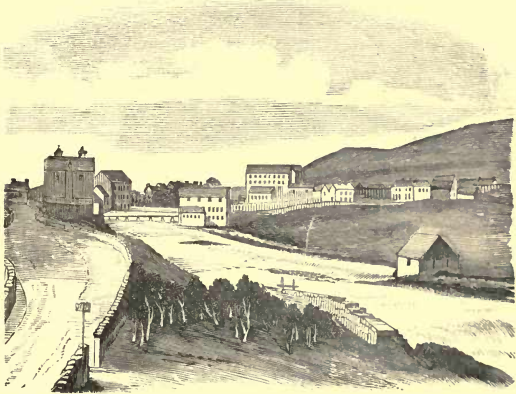
Drawn by Mr. Wakeman from a Sketch by Mrs. Moore.

the river, we find the Camphill mills, one a flour, the other a meal mill, both driven by overshot wheels, (each twenty-five feet wide) and a small turbine of fourteen horse power. The flour mill can turn out about 300 tons of flour per week, and the other, 240 tons of meal in the same time. Both the mills are the property of Mr. Madden, Bray; but are leased for a long term to Messrs. Middleton and



Pollexfen. The building in Camphill called the bleach mill, is also leased by the same gentleman to this firm, and serves them for a store and saw mill. It was a bad time for many when the old work of the bleach mill was given up, and the rhythm of its beetles ceased, for in its palmy days, forty or fifty years ago, it earned more money, gave more employment, and diffused more comforts through the neighbourhood, than is done at present by half the monster mills of the parish.

If the Collooney mills are somewhat "cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd" in area, though this facilitates supervision, and



BALLYSDARE RIVER AND MILLS.

Drawn on the wood by W. F. Wakeman, Esq., F.R.H.A.A.L., from a Photograph by Mr. Slater.

brings with it other advantages as well, those of Avena, Ballysadare, have "ample room and verge enough," being built some on one side of the river, some on the other, and all the buildings well apart. The bird's-eye view from the



top of Knockmildowney gives a good idea of the largeness and completeness of the concern, bringing all the parts at once under the spectator—the long, and lofty, and spacious mills, three for dressing flour, one for grinding oats and maize, and one for crushing maize, or, as it is more commonly called, Indian corn; the kilns, and stores, and offices that serve for the working of these mills; the gas works, that supply the gas with which all the buildings are lighted; the cottages of the millers and millwrights; the house of the superintendent; and, commanding and overlooking all, Avena House, the residence of Mr. Middleton. If the place contained, in addition, a row of workmen's dwellings—which might be built cheaper in Ballysadare than in any other part of the county—nothing would be wanting to the completeness of the establishment; but the absence of this accommodation at present must be regarded as a blot.

The three flour mills, which are all on the left bank of the river, are driven by two three-quarter breast wheels, and one undershot wheel, each eighteen feet in diameter, and ten feet wide, the combined horse power of the three being 195. These concerns contain twenty-eight pairs of stones, and are capable of turning out 1,500 sacks of flour per week.

The maize mill, which sometimes grinds oats, and sometimes maize or Indian corn, stands on the right bank of the stream, contains nine pairs of stones, is worked by two three-quarter breast wheels, eighteen feet in diameter and six wide, and turns out 360 tons of ground bread-stuffs per week. The mill for crushing Indian corn, for horse and cattle feeding, is also on the same bank.

The working of these extensive concerns should, one would think, tax to the utmost the abilities and energies of their owners; but when we recollect that the same firm work, besides flour and corn mills in Camphill; flour and corn mills in Sligo; flour and corn mills near Dublin; that they

have agencies and stores in Wexport, Ballina, Castlerea, Boyle, Donegal, Ballinasloe, and Galway; and that Mr. Middleton, the senior partner, is also a landlord, a ship-owner, a magistrate, and a Sligo harbour commissioner, and that he sees personally to the details of this multifarious business, we shall be disposed to think that he needs the hundred hands of Briareus, and the hundred eyes of Argus; and shall at all events be forced to admit, if he has only the usual supply of hands and eyes, that he must be furnished with a head to organize and to administer, such as is rarely vouchsafed to mortals.

Touching the physical geography and natural history of the district, the most conspicuous object is Slieve Gamh, or, as the Irish has been corruptly translated, the Ox Mountains—a volcanic range stretching from Ballysadare to Foxford, and composed of primitive rocks, containing a large admixture of gneiss, mica, and quartz. Excepting the area occupied by the mountains, limestone runs through the whole district, and is particularly valuable in the neighbourhood of Ballysadare, where the stone is of the finest quality, and the strata of such variety as to supply scantlings at once for the lightest and for the weightiest works; and as a matter of fact, while the quarry has afforded the material of some finely cut mantel-pieces that are in Sir Henry Gore Booth's mansion at Lissadell, and of delicately sculptured monuments in the new cemetery of Sligo and the old graveyard of Ballysadare, it has also supplied the large stones of which the quay of Sligo is built, as well as some of the huge blocks that have been used in the Spencer Dock, Dublin.\*

\* Stonecutting has been carried on at Ballysadare for about a century, but the quarries were never so extensively and vigorously worked as they are at present by Mr. Joseph Clarence and Mr. Thomas MacDonough. Mr. Clarence, the distinguished builder, is probably the largest employer of labour in the parish, his ordinary staff comprising seventy tradesmen (stonecutters, masons, carpenters, plasterers, smiths, plumbers, painters,

The parish of Ballysadare contains two silver-lead-and-zinc mines—one in Lugawarry, the other in Abbeytown, both of which were undiscovered when Boate wrote in 1652, or, at least, unknown to that writer, as he tells us that the only silver and lead mines “found out up to his day were one in Ulster in the County Antrim, one in Munster in the County Tipperary, and another in Connaught upon the very harbour mouth of Sligo, in a little demy island, commonly called Coney Island.”\* It is likely that the mine of Coney Island is a continuation of that of Lugawarry and Abbeytown, which would thus run across under the sea from the Ox Mountains to the north side of Sligo harbour. Of the two mines in the parish, or, of the two parts of the same mine, as the case may be, that of Lugawarry was the first taken in hand, and, judging from the quantity of *debris* on the ground, the works must have been carried on for a considerable time. The working of the Abbeytown mine was in progress when Arthur

and slaters,) and 69 labourers, including quarry men and carters; and to say nothing of his great outlay on materials, he pays in wages alone £160 a week. Along with being the largest, Mr. Clarence is also the most liberal employer of the district—more liberal than our country gentlemen, who give their demesne labourers only fourteen pence a day—more liberal than our merchants, for though the wages paid is the same, two shillings per day, the merchants’ labourers work much longer time in winter than his. Mr. Clarence’s building operations extend to several counties, but he is one of those cool, clear-headed, able men, that no amount or pressure of business can overpower or disconcert. If his engagements multiply, his mental resources multiply still more, so that had he been at the building of Babel, he would have maintained his self-possession amid the general confusion. As it is, he not only continues perfect master always of his numerous and weighty undertakings, but is also able to communicate to those under him a steadiness, punctuality, and method, that contribute not a little to the satisfaction he never fails to give to those who employ him.

Mr. MacDonough, too, sends out of his quarry a considerable quantity of highly finished work; employs ten stonecutters, at 28s. per week; and pays his labourers from 2s. to 2s. 6d. a day.

\* Boate’s *Natural History* in Thom’s *Tracts and Treatises*, vol. i. p. 115.

Young visited Ballysadare in 1776, as he says, "near Ballysadare is a lead mine, but not worked with success though very rich."\*

Recently Mr. Middleton has had portions of this one analysed in England without, it seems, a definite result as to ascertaining its value, though if Arthur Young's judgment on the "richness" of the mine be correct, the proper working of the concern should be highly remunerative.

From the appearance presented by the rocks that lie alongside of the railway cutting at Ballysadare, a gentleman of some experience in mining concluded that they contained iron in large quantity, but a sample having been tested, some months since, in an English foundry, it was found to contain only about one per cent. of the metal—a percentage that put an end to the idea of taking further trouble in the matter.

*Coillte Leyney* (the woods of Leyney), as the name signifies, contained formerly abundance of timber, but it has all disappeared; much of it, no doubt, having gone to smelt the ore of Lugawarry. Union-Wood, too, seems to be of natural and immemorial growth, and may have been the spot to which Arthur Young alludes when he says that Mr. Cooper had 300 acres of wood.†

With these exceptions the district would seem to have been void of timber less than a century ago. Towards the close of the last century a tourist who had passed through the parishes of Ballysadare and Kilvarnet, on the way to Tubbercurry, noted the absence of trees and the naked surface of the land as a striking feature of the country, though it would be hard to meet now, in any two parishes of Ireland, more extensive plantations and a greater number of trees, in all stages of growth, than we find on the estates of Markrea, Annaghmore, and

\* Young's *Tour in Ireland*, vol. 2, p. 334.

† Young's *Tour in Ireland*, vol. 2, appendix 109.

Templehouse, and this, notwithstanding all the timber that has been cut down within the last few years in these places, and sold in the saw mills of Sligo and Camphill, or at the Chemical Works of Collooney, this last concern alone, which could not have used more than a third or a fourth of the whole, having purchased more than 21,000 tons\* since its opening.

\* The items, as supplied by the obliging and intelligent manager, Mr. George Glen, are :—Markrea, 9,000 tons; Annaghmore, 6,000; Templehouse, 4,000; Hazlewood, 700; Hollybrook, 300.

Owing to the depression of trade caused by the Turco-Russian war, the *Collooney Chemical Works* are now idle, or comparatively so, which is a pity, as the employment they used to afford was considerable, and though believed to be somewhat unhealthy, much desired by the more steady-going labourers of the neighbourhood. From a rare combination of firmness and kindness Mr. Glen is able to get a greater quantity of work from an Irish labourer, and to get it more freely, than any other manager, steward, or ganger in the county; and the moment labourers get into his employment at the *Chemical Works* they seem to lay aside all idle and flighty habits, and to take to their work as to a labour of love, moving to and from it, for years together, with all the regularity and steadiness of a chronometer.

The concern when at full work employed fifteen labourers at 15s. a week each; but we shall see that the wages of these men represents only a small part of the money circulated by the Collooney Chemical Works, when we call to mind the sums paid to owners for timber, to hatchetmen and carters for felling and bringing it in, and to a regular staff of draymen for carrying home the coal, lime, and other things needed, and conveying to Sligo, for shipment, the products of the works.

These products are charcoal and pyrolignous acid, the acid being resolved in the concern into acid of lime, naphtha, and tar.

1. The charcoal serves mainly as an ingredient for gunpowder, but good quantities of it are used by moulders or casters in foundries, for the finer kind of castings, as also by manufacturers of the best steel, who prefer charcoal to coal as being free from particles of sand.

2. The acid of lime is used in print-field and dye works, in preparing colours for cloth and yarn, as it is also for the manufacture of verdigris and sugar-of-lead. And from it is obtained acetic acid, which is preferred by many for table use to all other kinds of vinegar.

3. Naphtha is mixed with spirits of wine, and thus serves as an ingredient in varnishes.

4. Tar is used for making asphalt, which serves largely for covering roofs, floors, footpaths, etc., as also for laying down under foundations of

Though about four miles of Ballysadare parish are bordered by the sea, there is little fish taken at present in the district except at Colonel Cooper's salmon fishery, which is a work—one might say a creation—of the late Mr. E. J. Cooper. The Act of Parliament empowering that gentleman to establish it, passed in 1841, and from that date to 1855, Mr. Cooper was engaged in constructing the necessary works, which, with the Act of Parliament, cost about £7,000. The "ladders" of Ballysadare and Collooney are said to be the finest things of the kind in Europe, except one structure in Norway. In 1855, the first year the fishermen went to work, 150 fish were taken; in 1856 about the same number; in 1857 only 18; but things soon began to improve; and, in 1859, 2,000 salmon were netted; in 1861, 3,000; in 1862 near 4,000; in 1863, 6000; the number rising one year to 11,000; but averaging one year with the other between eight and nine thousand, a point at which things are likely to remain. From the opening in 1855 to the present the greatest number of salmon taken, in one day, was 1,400; the greatest number in one draught, 600; and the weightiest fish captured 33lbs. In the season three boats are employed, and nine men, exclusive of the manager, Mr. Hepburn, to whose intelligence and skill the success of the concern is said to be very much due. The leading principles of his management

residences and other buildings to prevent damp. From tar, too, is obtained, by a tedious process, the substance known as creasote, which is much employed for curing toothache, for smoking flesh and fish, for preserving anatomical preparations, and for various other antiseptic purposes.

In *Statistical Survey of the County Sligo*, by Dr. M'Parlan, p. 83, under the head of *Plantations and Planting*, the author observes:—"Those are extensively done and doing at Mercury, Nymphsfield, and Hazlewood, the seats of Mr. Cooper, Mr. O'Hara, and Mr. Wynno. At Templehouse a good deal has been done and is doing for Minor Percival. Mr. Holmes, Mr. Meredith, Mr. Duke, and some others are contributing much to ornament the country by planting."



are—first, to send the salmon early up the river, when the water is deep; secondly, to take care that there shall be always an abundant supply of spawning fish, securing this object sometimes by taking off the fishermen before the legal close of the season; and, thirdly, to exercise the strictest watch on the fish and their ova in the upper waters.

As has been said, there is no fish worth speaking of caught at present in the parish except at the salmon fishery. Formerly great quantities of herring used to be taken. About eighteen years ago the number was so large that each of the men engaged in the work saved £21 in about one month, but there are no herrings now in Ballysadare bay. Flounders, too, abounded in the bay, and abound there still, but it seems Mr. Cooper's Act of Parliament has made it illegal for the people to fish for them. Even mussels, which the poor, living near the sea, used to gather for their own food, as also for sale, are now reserved to the rich men who own oyster beds, and who export the mussels to England and Scotland, as many as four or five hundred sacks of them going at a time in the steamers that sail from Sligo quay. There is no oyster bed in the parish, as it is at present bounded, but in Derenge, Island, which was included in the parish of Ballysadare when the Down Survey maps were drawn, there is a fine bed belonging to Mr. Verschoyle; and it would be hard to find so genial a habitat for oysters, for the place always teemed with this fish, so that the foundation of the island is said to be composed of oyster shells.\* The only thing now left the poor in the bay is cockles, and, through them, several cadgers continue still to draw a fair livelihood out of the sea. There are four or five small lakes in the district—one in Larkhill, one in Coney, another in Glanagulough, a fourth in Culnabraher, and a fifth lying between Union and Ballygawley—each differing from the

\* *Kilkenny Archaeological Journal*, vol. xi, page 143.

other in the kind of fish contained. The Larkhill lakelet has nothing but trout, and an abundant supply of them, though otters are very numerous on its banks; Coney lake yields nothing but pike and eel; Glanagulough, pike, roach, perch, eel, and, formerly, trout in great abundance, but the trout were destroyed by the steeping of flax and have not since reappeared, though the late Mr. Culbertson had a quantity of young trout taken in Ballysdare river and put into the lake; Culnabraher gives pike, perch, and eel; and Ballygawley lake affords bream, pike, perch, and eel. In Culnabraher and Ballygawley there is found, besides, a bivalve shell-fish, from two to four inches long, called by the people "clam," which is said to contain, not unfrequently, pearl.

The longevity often reached on the mountain side that stretches between Collooney and Coolany is worth remarking. Whatever may be the cause the fact is certain, that the average age there at death is considerably above what it is in the other parts of the parish. Though an individual or two may, in the other parts, attain a highly advanced age—like the late Ned Gunning of Ballinabull, who is said to have been 114 at his decease—still this is a marked exception, and people in general very rarely reach eighty in these places, though that age is frequent on the slopes of the mountain. There died recently in this district, within a few years, nineteen heads of families whose average age was eighty-six; and when it is stated that the full number of householders there is only about seventy, the exceptional character of the place will be understood. It is certain that an equal number of octogenarians did not die within the same time throughout the rest of the two parishes, though comprising, if we include Catholics and Protestants, about 800 families.

The change that has taken place among the humbler classes since the beginning of the century, in regard to dress, food, and social habits, should not be passed over in

silence. Seventy years ago these classes were clothed, speaking generally, with material of domestic manufacture; the females wearing drugget and flannel, and the men linen and frieze. "Tell me, Tom," said the writer, a little while since, to an intelligent octogenarian of the parish, "what do you think to be the chief difference between the people of the present time and those of seventy years since?" "Oh, sir," was the reply, "the pride of dress in those around us. When I was a little boy the women made every stitch that was worn—drugget and flannel for themselves and their daughters, and good strong linen and warm frieze for their husbands and sons. The money did not then go, as it all goes now, into the big shops, to buy dandy coats, and carolines, and ties for the boys, and men's hats, and doll's bonnets, and parasols, and all sorts of high-flying things for the girls." No doubt, there is a good deal that must pass unchallenged in the preference that this "*laudator temporis acti*" gives to past generations, at least as far as the greater industry of females is concerned; but, on the other hand, Tom forgets that women can now purchase in the shops articles of clothing much cheaper and better than they could make them; while they are, at the same time, left free to look closer than formerly after children, and to attend to other important household duties.

Nor is it clear that the change in food that has occurred is so beneficial as it is commonly supposed. If a meal of potatoes-and-salt is a greater rarity than it used to be, and the alteration is, so far, for the better, the common use of tea, on the other hand, is certainly not an improvement. Whoever knows anything of the food of the people is aware that they have a decoction (not an infusion) of tea, with little or no cream, and "soda bread," for a meal, as often as they can; a repast which many will not consider as wholesome and nutritious as either "stirabout-and-milk," or potatoes—the fine flowery potatoes of the past—with butter, milk, eggs, and often oaten cake, which very fre-

quently formed the food of the labouring classes fifty or sixty years back. The people hardly eat one egg now for the hundred they used to eat then, when it was held disgraceful in a housekeeper to sell them, nor do they drink a glass of milk for the gallon they then made use of. Tea is the weak point in the popular diet of the locality; and if it be washy and innutritious for adults, it is little less than poison for the children that are filled with it, and that are sure to grow up, in consequence, a degenerate race.

And if we allow what men eat and drink to have the influence on their dispositions and habits that physiologists maintain, we must give the praise of superiority, in many points, to the food of those that have gone before us, for the light-hearted, joyous, amusement-loving generation of the early years of the century were quite a contrast to the staid, prosaic, plodding, demure people one now meets with. It is surprising how fast fondness for amusement is dying out in the country. In the past much of the holiday time of Easter, Christmas, Whitsuntide, and other seasons, was given to recreation and athletic sports; hurling, football, and handball were, all the year round, standing games in which the man of forty took as warm a part as the stripling; and dancing was so popular that there are townlands in the district where the villagers, young and old, after the day's work in the fields, retired to the top of some fort and danced away in the open air till bed-time. Even after meals, and before resuming work, labourers passed, in jumping, wrestling, pushing the stone, or other trials of skill and strength, the time that they now spend, squatted like Mussulmans, or American Indians, smoking the pipe. And in the exuberance of their animal spirits, labourers and cottiers, after clamping turf, often took to leaping over the clamps; an exercise in which the father not unfrequently contended, and contended successfully, with full-grown sons. Add to this the regularly recurring fair days and patron days,

which were generally more given to pleasure than to business or devotion, and it cannot be denied that our ancestors, whatever else they did, or did not do, took, at any rate, good care to amuse themselves. And in winter, when the short days and wet weather often prevented outdoor pastimes, the men, instead of sitting solitary and moody over their own hearths, as so many do at present, assembled round the fireside of some neighbour, and spent hours in discussing local legends and traditions, rehearsing the old Fenian tales, and fitting the so-called prophecies of Columbkille to current or coming events. Looking critically at both periods, one may see in each good points and defects. While one must admire the love of the men of other days for open-air exercises, which have been always held to be\* the best discipline for health and manliness, it may be granted at the same time that their ideas of the aims and business of life lacked somewhat in earnestness and solemnity. And, on the other hand, if the men and boys of the present day admittedly excel in gravity and worldly wisdom, it may, perhaps, be contended that they want the freshness and simplicity of their predecessors, and that they would help both mind and body, by turning to more account the teaching of Solomon, that "there is no better thing than to rejoice"—an aphorism which, in taking our leave now of the reader, we would respectfully commend to his consideration.†

\* *Cyropædia of Xenophon*, lib. 1, c. ii.

† The writer regrets that, owing to the great length this volume has already reached, he is obliged to omit an Appendix he had prepared, containing (1) a List of the Churchwardens of Ballysadare, (2) Hearth Money Returns for Ballysadare and Kilvarnet, (3) Census of Ballysadare and Kilvarnet in 1659, and, (4) the Census of 1871, as far as it regards the same parishes.

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