HISTORICAL

SKETCHES OF IRELAND,

ANCIENT AND MODERN.

BY EDWARD R. SEAVER,

OF PORTLAND, ME.

"Then strike the harp, old Erin's harp, with fearless force and bold;
It breathes not for a timorous hand, nor for a heart that's cold;
It loves the open, generous soul—the bold, the brave, the free;
But for the craven, crouching slave, it has no melody."

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DEDICATION.

TO THE

Friends of Liberty, wherever found:

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE,

WHO HAVE, BY THEIR BRILLIANT DEEDS, IN THE CAUSE OF "INDEPENDENCE,"

AND THEIR

EXEMPLARY CONDUCT TOWARD THE OPPRESSED OF ALL NATIONS,

EARNED AN ENDURING FAME;

TO THOSE IRISHMEN,

WHO HAVE, THROUGH THE BRIGHT REFLECTION OF THE CHIVALROUS DEEDS OF

THEIR MILESIAN ANCESTRY,

WITH THEIR OWN VALOR AND INHERENT LOVE OF LIBERTY,

SIGNALIZED THEMSELVES IN THE BATTLES OF THEIR ADOPTED COUNTRY;

THIS WORK,

AS CONTAINING SOME FACTS WORTHY OF NOTICE AND BENEFIT TO THE FURTHER

CAUSE OF LIBERTY,

Is Respectfully Dedicated,

BY THE AUTHOR.

CHRONOLOGICAL INDEX.

The following Chronological Index I have thought well to prefix, as it may prove useful to the student of Irish history.

PREFACE.

The author of the present work, would respectfully solicit the indulgence of the reader, on the ground of his inability to give anything like a lengthy or elaborate historical review of Irish events. Even were my abilities adequate to such a task, I could not afford time or capital for such a work. I have been induced, through the numerous requests of friends, to publish this small work in pamphlet form. I am duly sensible, that after much time and labor bestowed upon it, it is not what it might be in more competent hands. However, I publish it with the design that it will at least prove instructive to the children of the Irish immigrant, and such as do not, either through want of opportunity or indifference to Irish history, read ponderous volumes on that much neglected study. It is to be regretted that many of Ireland's warmest friends, are either ignorant of its history, or laboring under erroneous impressions, relative to a much despised and oppressed people. The reason of this is obvious, when you reflect that the history of all other countries is to be found in their schools and other public institutions of learning, while that of Ireland is excluded. And in this general exclusion of Irish literature, the children of the Irish American citizen are permitted to grow up in perfect ignorance of their fatherland—that land which has been the nursery of saints and sages for centuries. They know nothing of the heroic deeds of their ancestors, and of the spirit, genius, and valor of that race from which they are descended. To supply this deficiency, to some small extent, the author has endeavored to collect and condense as much as possible the most striking and important events which have occurred during Ireland's long and evenful career. I claim nothing new or original. I have merely endeavored to extract from the works of such eminent writers as were within my reach, the most important facts recorded by them and arrange them in chronological order, so as to aid the mem-

ory. My object is to furnish a brief, yet concise synopsis of the history of Ireland, in the shape of historical sketches, "That he who runs may read." I have quoted from men of unquestionable veracity and profound historical lore, so that if it should fail to merit any other recommendation, it will be taken as authentic. For the youthful lover of Irish history, it may create an appetite for more extensive research and application. It will help to kindle in the youthful breasts of the Irish exile's children, a heroic admiration for the great and generous deeds of the illustrious men who have in every cycle of her eventful career, cast a bright halo around her history, and to emulate them to imitate their virtues. To the expatriated Irishman who reads it, it will help to keep alive in his mind, the fond remembrance of the past, the foul perfidious deeds which obliterated her name from among the nations of the earth, and defrauded her of a nationality which lasted over two thousand years. To the stranger and exile, it is necessary to have a constant recourse to some beacon which will clearly point out to them, through the long vista of time, Erin, her ancient glory and present degradation. Of all nations who have afforded protection to the Irish exile, none are so deserving of our gratitude as the American. They have ever received, with open arms, the distressed and oppressed of every nation, and it is they we should be ambitious to satisfy for the generous protection given to the exiled portion of that nation against which tyranny has pronounced the dread sentence of expatriation. The Irishman at home, and even the stranger within her gates, can daily see evidences of her historic renown. Every mountain, lake and rivulet, has its own legendary tale. Each monument and memorial, which still abound there, has its own historic lesson. The traditionary tales of its native peasantry, are alone sufficient to keep alive in their minds, the historic fame of their Milesian ancestry. But to the stranger and exile, who are far removed from those scenes which are calculated to awaken in the mind the fond remembrance of the past and the bitter anguish of the present, the author respectfully offers to them this small work.

CHAPTER I.

CLIMATE, SOIL AND PRODUCTIONS.

IRELAND is one of the most considerable islands of Europe, situated in the Atlantic ocean, to the west of England. It may be viewed as the pier of western Europe; it extends from the 50th to the 55th parallel of north latitude, and from the 8th to the 12th degree of west longitude. Its length is about three hundred miles, and breadth about one hundred and seventy miles. Its distance from England, varies, according to the inequality of the coasts; some parts of its northern coast being not more than fifteen miles distant from Scotland. Its distance from England, is from fifty to sixty miles, more or less, depending on the inequality or curvature of the coast. Being situated in the temperate zone, its climate is generally mild and salubrious. It is, nevertheless, subject to changes, from its being surrounded by the Atlantic ocean and subject to its exhalations. The heat of summer is not oppressive, and the rigor of winter does not necessitate a super-abundance of clothing. The soil is fertile, yielding to the hardy husbandman the rewards of his toil. It is adapted for the growth of all kinds of grain,—wheat, rye, oats, barley, etc. The pasture land is considered the best in Europe, both for quality and quantity of grass, which caused the venerable Bede to say it was an island "rich in milk and honey." "*Dives lactis et mellis insula.*" Ireland has many

fine and magnificent rivers; the principal being the Barrow, the Liffey, the Boyne, the Slaney, the Nore and the Suire, in the Province of Leinster.

The principal rivers in Ulster, are the Bann—noted for its salmon fishery,—the Morne, the Swilly and the Newry. In the Province of Connaught, we find the Shannon, which may be classed among the first rivers of Europe. It has its source in a mountain in the county of Leitrim, called Sleiv-Neirin, so called from its richness in iron ore. Its length is about one hundred and fifty miles; forming, in its course, several considerable lakes. From Banagher it flows to Limerick, whence it bears vessels of the largest tonnage, to the ocean, a distance of about fifty miles. Munster has some very fine rivers,—the Suir, the Blackwater, the Lee and the Bandon. The whole surface of the island is adorned with many beautiful and picturesque lakes or loughs, so called in the Irish. Ireland possesses much mineral wealth. Her bosom is the repository of many rich mines,—gold, silver, tin, lead, copper, iron, etc. But this great source of national wealth is hermetically sealed by the English Parliament. Gold and silver were in common use, centuries prior and subsequent to the christian era. Historians assure us, that the first gold mine discovered in the island, was during the reign of Tighernmas, who was the seventh king from Heremon,—the first Milesian king, who reigned in Ireland 1,200 B. C. A mint was founded for manufacturing gold chains, which the king and other nobles wore upon their necks as marks of distinction; also, rings, which were presented to those who distinguished themselves in the arts and sciences. A foundry was also established on the borders of the river Barrow, in which coats of mail, bucklers and other armor were made." *

* Keating's History on the Reign of Eadnaderg.

The great treasures which the Norman invaders took from the churches and monasteries, as well as the tribute exacted, which was about an ounce in gold from each person within the Tale, (this tribute was called Aerigoid-froin) furnish incontestable proofs of the great wealth of Ireland at that time. Look at Ireland as you will, you cannot fail to see that she is possessed of many great advantages, the fertility of her soil, with the salubrity of the climate, invite to agricultural pursuits; her safe and commodious harbors and fine rivers, afford facilities for commerce, not surpassed by any other country; her mineral resources present an inviting field for the development of mineral wealth and productions. Her advantages for manufacturing purposes, must present to the capitalist a remunerative field for investment. But the perversity of English legislation has rendered the great natural sources of wealth and commercial greatness, useless and unavailing to the Irish people. The trade and industry of the country are completely paralyzed by the restrictions of the British Parliament. "If it had not been too near a faithless nation, there would not be upon the globe a more happy people." * Ireland, notwithstanding all its capabilities for wealth and opulence, is miserable, degraded and discontented. Such are to-day the unmistakable marks graven on the Irish peasantry, as the legitimate result of foreign legislation. Its fertile fields go uncultivated, turned into pasture to feed the herds of English and Scotch landlords and absentees. A hardy yeomanry forced to wander to distant climes, in order to secure that sustenance, or even competence, which a liberal policy might guarantee to them in their own native land. And if the unhappy Irishman at home, cries for bread, he is

* S. John in his ancient poem on Ireland.

met with English bayonets. Let him only assert a political opinion at variance with the theory of English government in Ireland, and he is immediately branded as a rebel, and hurried off to a loathsome dungeon, as a foul malefactor. It is yet to be hoped that a country blessed with so many advantages, will yet rise to her ancient dignity of nationality, when she can then give development to her great sources of wealth, and apply her revenue to her own internal improvement, as she did during the twenty years she had a native, independent parliament in Dublin, as I will endeavor to show when I come to that bright period in Irish history.

CHAPTER II.

THE MILESIANS, THEIR ORIGIN AND CONNECTIONS WITH THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS AND PHŒNICIANS, THEIR FINAL SETTLEMENT IN IRELAND, ETC., B. C. 1260.

Some historians have given an account of the first colonies in Ireland, previous to the landing of the Milesians. It is a question so remote and uninteresting to us at the present day, that I will not endeavor to trace the various theories set forth by those writers, which at best, can only be based on the accounts given by the different colonists to their conquerors, the Milesians. From the time of the conquest of the island by the Milesians, we have an authentic source for forming the historical chain of Irish events, as the Milesians, like their ancestors, the Phœnicians, collected and recorded all matters of importance in the great Psalter of Tara, modelled after the ancient Sanconiathon, then of their progenitors. This great record of national events was submitted for inspection and correction, to the Shenachies historians, at the triennial assembly of the estates at Tara. From this, we naturally infer that any thing doubtful was expunged, and nothing retained that was not fully corroborated and authentic. Before proceeding with the settlement of the Milesians in Ireland, it may be well to know from what branch of the great eastern family they sprung. Phœneus, the inventor of letters, is claimed as the founder of the Irish race. He, it is agreed on,

by all parties, was our great ancestor. In Irish annals, he is surnamed Farsaidh, or the Sage ; and is highly celebrated for his wisdom. "So desirous was he of being informed of the different languages which then prevailed, that he appointed seventy learned men to disperse themselves through different quarters of the world, and to return at a certain day, after the expiration of seven years. He supplied them with ships and attendance, and whatever else was necessary for so great an enterprise." † . His co-operatives in this great design, were Gadel, his preceptor, and Gar, the Hebrew. On the return of the linguists, schools, were erected, but as events trusted to the memory, a medium was found out by fixing on certain signs for certain sounds, and thus, by degrees, was the first alphabet formed, which consisted of only sixteen letters. For matters of religion, a particular alphabet was invented, to be studied by none but the religious order. Annalists count twenty-three generations from Phœneus to his lineal successors, (the sons of Milesius,) landing in Ireland or about eight hundred years prior to the conquest of Ireland by the Milesians. Being the founder of the great ancient Phœnicia, so renowned in history, and according to some historians, the vehicle through which a knowledge of letters, geometry and astronomy, etc., was conveyed to Egypt. It is a question not agreed on by the most learned of modern antiquarians, whether the Phœnicians or Egyptians are entitled to the priority in the discovery of the radical arts and sciences. The result of such an inquiry cannot affect the history of Ireland in the slightest degree. The fact that the ancient Phœnicians were the first permanent settlers of the Island, is fully sustained by Irish historians, corroborated by foreign co-

† O'Halloran's History.

temporary writers of every age, and almost every nation. The identity of language, letters, customs, buildings, coins, dress, etc., and in the words of the great Dr. Johnson, "continued an illustrious race for upwards of two thousand five hundred years—the teachers of the West, the ardent cultivators of letters, arts and piety." The Phœnicians, occupying the sea-shores, devoted themselves to the navigation of the seas, the discovery of foreign lands, to manufactures and the propagation of letters, etc. The ancient city of Tyre, so renowned in history for the manufacture of the "Tyrian purple," was a Phœnician city. The Egyptians, though a distinct people, appear to have maintained a very friendly intercourse with the Phœnicians. Of the highly advanced degree to which both the Phœnicians and Egyptians had attained in all the arts and sciences, there cannot be the slightest doubt. Holy writ informs us that "Moses was brought up in all the learning of the Egyptians." Look at the stupendous monuments of labor and skill, the pyramids of Egypt, and you see a speaking witness of her ancient glory. Scriptural authority likewise asserts that Solomon sent to Hiram, King of Tyre, for assistance to cut the timber and quarry the stone intended for the magnificent temple to be built at Jerusalem. The stones were quarried, hewn and squared, and the temple was erected by Phœnician workmen. To return to Phœneus, the founder of the Phœnician colonies; his son Niul became so celebrated for his learning and wisdom, that his fame reached Pharoah, king of Egypt, who sent embassadors to conduct him to his court; and as a mark of his esteem, gave him his daughter Scota in marriage. Gadel was the eldest son of Niul by the princess Scota. I will give an extract from O'Halloran's history of Ireland, showing how we have retained the name of Phœnicians from his grand-

father. "This prince Gadel, was renowned in his days, so from him we are called Gadelians; and from his mother Scota," all this is confirmed by the ancient Irish verse,

"Phœni o Phœneus adbhearta brigh gan dochta
Gaoidhal o Gaoidhal-glas garta Scuit o Scota,"

i. e. beyond question, we are called Phœnians from Phœneus, Gadelians from Gadel-glas, and Scots from Scota. Other historians affirm that, in honor of the wife of Milesius, who was also called Scota, the island received the name of Scota. It is, however, reasonable to infer that the name of Scota became a very favorite one among the lineal descendants of Gadel in honor and esteem for his wife. The limits of this small work will not allow me to follow the migrations and various colonies founded by the Galedelians previous to their conquest of Ireland. They founded a colony in Spain, under Breogan, a lineal descendant of Gadel. This great prince had ten legitimate children. To the eldest was assigned the chief command. Mile-espaine, (i. e., hero of Spain) the grand-son of Breogan, greatly distinguished himself in feats of arms in many campaigns made under his uncles. To further satisfy this warlike spirit and gain additional laurels, this young prince sought permission of his father to allow him to go and assist their Phœnician ancestors, then greatly annoyed by continental wars. To this request his father yielded. Accordingly, he sails with a well equipped fleet of thirty ships from Corunna, in Spain, for Syria. In this expedition, were twelve youths of uncommon learning and abilities, who were directed to make remarks on whatever they found new, either in astronomy, navigation, arts, manufactures, etc., and keep an exact record of whatever was worthy of notice. They were all most kindly received, and treated

with distinguished honors by the Phœnicians, who were also desirous of cementing more closely the existing bonds of friendship by matrimonial alliances. The young prince received the Phœnician princess, Seang, for a wife, by which he had two sons, Don and Aireach. He became so endeared to the people, that his father-in-law, Riffleoir, growing old and suspicious, became so alarmed at the growing popularity of the young Spanish hero, that it was resolved to despatch him. He, however, being apprised of the plan, resolved to leave; but not before he had, with a chosen party, broke into the palace, putting to the sword his opposers, and especially the ungenerous Riffleoir. From Phœnicia he proceeded to Egypt, and offered his services to Pharoah, whose country had been assailed on every side by different invaders, especially the Ethiopians. So celebrated a commander was not long in rising to the highest military position. As a token of esteem for his signal services to Pharoah, in repelling the invaders of his country, he bestowed his daughter Scota in marriage—Seang, his first wife being dead. By the princess Scota, he had six children. With the two already named, we find he had eight legitimate children. Heber and Amhergin were born in Egypt. Some years after this, the decaying age of his father, with his own long absence from Spain, encouraged the borderers to renew their hostilities. He was earnestly entreated to return to his kinsmen, and aid them in averting the threatened danger. Taking a most friendly leave of Pharoah and his court, he quitted Egypt, and arrived safely in Spain. The report of his return, inspired his people with courage, and in a short time peace was restored. The literati, who accompanied him to Phoenicia and Egypt, were instructed in all the "wisdom and learning of the Egyptians." In Spain the succession fell to Heber, who associated with him his

younger brother Heremon in the government. Ambhergin was appointed high priest. The government of these two Princes was mild, and is characterized for great prudence, and the great care and encouragement they gave to arts and commerce. Powerful combinations arising against these colonists, sorely distressed them. Their limits were becoming more circumscribed, until finally reduced to a narrow tract; and being visited by uncommon droughts and consequent famine, they called a solemn council of their chiefs to determine what was best to be done. Ambhergin, on consulting the sacred book, directed their attention to the land in the west as the promised land, according to the prediction of their predecessor, Caicer; and now this prophecy was about to be fulfilled. This announcement, coming from the high priest, inspired them with spirit and confidence. They determined to make a descent on that western island. As a precautionary step, they deputed one of their number (Ith) to go and explore the country, and report on its strength. The following year a small expedition was fitted out, commanded by Ith, who sailed from Corunna. He landed safely in the north part of the island, and pleaded the laws of affinity and hospitality, on his own and that of his followers' part. He conversed freely with the Danaan princes, who then ruled; they spoke the Phœnician or Irish. Suspicion and fear incited the Danaans to cut Ith and his adventurous followers off. We find that Ith and the most of his men fell a sacrifice to the jealousy of the Danaans. His son, Luagaidh, conducted back the remains of his brave troops to their ship, and returned to Brigantium, bearing back the remains of his brave father. The sight of the dead body of their chief, inspired the sons of Milesius with a spirit of revenge and conquest. They made every preparation to equip an adequate fleet for the under-

taking. This fleet is variously estimated by historians. The book of Invasions sets it down as seventy-five ships. The Psalter of Cashel, does not specify the number, but relates it was a large fleet. MacGeoghegan (French) sets it down as sixty-five. We may safely infer that it was a pretty formidable fleet, commanded by men of approved ability and courage. Among the distinguished on board this squadron, were the eight sons of Milesius, with their widowed mother, Scota, the Egyptian princess. They made good their landing; the Danaans remonstrated in being taken unawares, and agreed if the Milesians should clear the coasts and "make good their second landing, they would submit the fate of the island to the sword. This proposition was readily received by the Milesians, who cleared the coasts and set out to sea. A violent storm arising, their fleet was dispersed and shattered, and many perished; among whom, were five of the eight sons of Milesius. The remaining portion of the fleet landed in different parts. They prepared for battle. The Danaans were commanded by three brothers, as were the Milesians; so that the fate of Ireland, like that of Rome, in the days of the Horatii, hung on the swords of these contending brothers. The battle was obstinate and bloody; the three Danaan commanders were slain by the hands of the three Milesian Princes, Heber, Heremon and Ambhergin. Victory declared in favor of the Milesians. Thus, by the most honorable mode of warfare, the Milesians established their sovereignty over the island. They did not reduce the conquered Danaans to the state of serfs; they permitted them to retire to other parts. Many of them settled in Cornwall and Devonshire. Others retired to Connaught, carrying with them their customs, laws and language. The island was divided, according to the learned Dr. Keating and others, into three parts. On

that point, I prefer to give O'Halloran's opinion, as more coinciding with the customs of the ancient Phœnicians and Hebrews, viz.: "That the high priest, as head of the Literati, was excluded from any participation in the land, adhering to that custom in the partition of the island, it was divided between Heber and Heremon—Ambhergin being appointed to attend to the duties of high priest and principal historian. By unanimous consent, Heremon became sole and first monarch of the Irish people, B. C. 1260, and the sceptral sway continued in his predecessors for the unprecedented space of two thousand four hundred years.

CHAPTER III.

LANGUAGE, ARCHITECTURE, CUSTOMS, ETC., OF THE MILESIANS.

It may be well to digress, briefly, from the historical narrative, and devote a short chapter to the language, the mode of architecture and manners of our Milesian ancestors. In this age of pyrrorism, when unsupported theories usurp the place of well-authenticated facts, and when libellers and defamers of the Irish nation have long and persistently thrown out their hireling slander on their faithful and unconquerable allies, it becomes the imperative duty of one who loves historic truth, to endeavor, as far as his humble abilities will enable him, to search the ancient annals of his country, consult the truthful writers of other countries, and produce the most uncontestible evidence in opposition to the venomous slander poured forth by some modern writers in the stream of history. I will endeavor to show—though necessarily brief—from the writings of credible historians and antiquarians, the origin and advanced state of civilization and arts attained by the ancient Irish, notwithstanding the sophisticated arguments and sneers put forth by many of Ireland's calumniators. In the last chapter, I said the Milesians were the descendants of Phœneus, the founder of letters. The discovery of the Eugubian tables, found in Italy in the fifteenth century, places beyond all doubt and cavil, that Etruria or ancient Italy and Ireland, were colonized by the Phœnicians. These

tables—seven in number, composed of bronze—had long remained an enigma to the learned, until Sir William Betham had made himself master of the Phœni (Irish) language, and gave to the world the writings on these tables,—what had hitherto remained a sealed mystery. It would appear, from the translation given by Sir William, that these tables had been set up in some prominent part of the city of Etruria, containing directions for mariners to sail to Ireland, for on them were inscribed a full account of the Phœnician voyages to Ireland. From these tables and more recent discoveries of antiquity, made in Italy, there cannot be a doubt as to the colonization of ancient Italy and Ireland by the Phœnicians, and that these Etrusca-Phœnicians must have attained to a higher degree in civilization, arts and sciences, than even after-Rome had in her most palmy days. In reference to the Irish language, against which a prejudice exists, because not understood by those who despise and ridicule it, I will endeavor to give the opinions of a few erudite and profound scholars, in relation to that much despised and neglected language. I will quote from that great scholar and antiquarian, Betham, on the "Celtæ." "It is a singular fact, not generally known, that the most ancient European manuscripts now existing, are in the Irish language—and that the most ancient Latin manuscripts in Europe, were written by Irishmen." The same learned and impartial authority says—"The languages of the Etruscans and Celts, may fairly be considered identical." After going into a critical analysis of the Irish language, tracing its letters and sounds to the most remote antiquity, he says: "It is the most ancient living language, more ancient than the Greek itself. It was the language of Tyre, of Carthage, of the refined and learned inhabitants of Italy, ages before 'Rome' was dreamed of.

Moreover, it is a twin dialect of the Syriac, the language used by our Lord on earth." Sir Richard Phillips, an English authority, says: "The Hebrew-written character was the Phœnician, but in their captivity they acquired the square chaldaic and lost the former"; and the same authority says: "The current native language of Ireland is *verbatim et literatim* that of Carthage, a territory of Phœnicia." I will give one more extract from the learned Colonel Vallancy, an English antiquarian, to prove from the language and customs of the ancient Irish, their identity with the Egyptians and Phœnicians. "What people, the Egyptians and Irish excepted, named the harp or music Ouini, Irish Aine? What people in the world, the orientalists and Irish excepted, called the copy of a book the son of a book; and echo, the daughter of a voice? With what northern nation, the Irish excepted, can the oriental names of the tools and implements of the stone-cutter, the carpenter, the ship-builder, the weaver, be found? And, with what people, the old Irish and Egyptians excepted, does the word oghamn signify a book? The Egyptian name of ermes, lies concealed in the Irish compound ed-airmes; that is, the root or art of invention. And, in what part of the globe, Egypt, Ireland and Scotland excepted, were the priests or holy persons denominated culds or caldes? in the Coptic, (Egyptian) Craldes sancitus? Again, in the Coptic esonab sacerdos, is the Irish eascab a bishop." Several hundred of similar examples might be added. The most striking example of the identity and intercourse of the ancient Irish with the Phœnicians and Egyptians, is to be found in the prefixes O or Ua and Mac to surnames.

The pioneers of colonization, who issued from the cradle and school of the human family in the valley of the Nile,

and along the shores of the Mediterranean, were very properly called Celts; which means quick movers, voyagers. This term is synonymous with Phœnicians; both denominations were applied to the same people. Dr. Warner, an English historian, says: "The great antiquity of the Irish language, which is the same as the ancient Scythian, affords another proof of the Phœnician origin of the Irish nation—and that the elements of their idiom were brought to Ireland when the use of letters was in its infancy. Indeed, the old Irish, bears so great an affinity to the ancient Hebrew, that to those who are masters of both, they appear plainly to be only dialects of the same tongue. This surely lays a strong claim for the great antiquity of the Irish nation; for a nation and language are both of an age; and if a language be ancient, the people must be as old." Raymond, an English antiquarian, says: "In order to discover the original of the Irish nation, I was at the pains to compare all European languages with that of Ireland, and I found it had little agreement with any of them. I then had recourse to the Celtic, the original language of the ancient Celtæ or Scythians; and I found the affinity so great, that there was scarcely a shade of difference, there being such an exact agreement between them, and the Irish language having no affinity with any known language in the world, excepting the Hebrew and Phœnician." Moore made this interesting subject a matter of strict research. I will give a brief extract: "Abundant and various as are the monuments to which Ireland can point as mute evidences of her antiquity, she boasts a yet more striking proof in the living language of her people,—in that most genuine, if not only-existing dialect of the oldest of all European tongues—the tongue which, by whatever name it may be called, according to the various theories respecting it, is

accounted most generally to have been the earliest brought from the East, and to have been the vehicle of the first knowledge which dawned upon Europe. In the still written and spoken dialect of this primeval language, we possess a monument of the high antiquity of the people to whom it belongs, which no cavil can reach, nor any doubts disturb." It is a fact not generally known, that sixteen of the twenty-six letters, now generally used, are the primitive Irish letters. It is to be regretted that a language which is the key to all others, should be neglected and excluded from our Irish colleges. Irishmen who are able to educate their sons for the higher walks and learned professions of life, would do well to endeavor to have them instructed in this ancient and erudite language. There is now a professor of the Irish language in Trinity College, Dublin; and who knows but some wealthy Irishman may yet imitate the great precedent of Flood, who bequeathed the reversion of his entire estates towards the revival and culture of the Irish language. Why not an Irish college, where the sons of Irishmen congregate to receive a classical education, have a professor of the Irish,—where the language of the sages and saints of Ireland may be taught and perpetuated on this continent, among the descendants of a once illustrious people? I trust the question will receive the attention of those who are blessed with the means of promoting so desirable an object. Most eminent Irishmen, who kept entranced assemblies hanging on their accents, were masters of the Irish language. In illustration of this, I will mention Curran and O'Connel; who has equalled or surpassed them in reaching the hearts of a jury? They imbibed the Irish language at their mothers' breasts. It is admitted to be the most powerful in debate, the most sarcastic in rebuke, the most expressive in suffering, the most animating in war, the

most melting in woe. The ancient architecture of the Milesians deserves notice, as strongly showing their identity with the Phœnicians and Egyptians. The first erections of this wonderful people yet live, defying alike the desolating hand of time and oppression. The stone erections of the ancient Irish, were of two kinds, viz: the round-pointed towers and the square-vaulted castles. Some learned men assert that the former were used for religious purposes and astronomical observations. It will be borne in mind that the specimens of architecture which I now refer to, existed many centuries prior to the christian era. Many of both kinds remain yet; it would seem as if they were designed to last forever. The materials of which they are built, viz., stone and cement—the properties of the latter have baffled modern science to discover; it has been subjected to the most minute and scientific analysis, yet it remains a mystery. The most eminent scholars of Europe, have made the round towers of Ireland a subject of deep research and controversy. They are co-eval with the pyramids of Egypt, and greatly resembling the towers found in India and China. From discoveries made in Ireland in the present and preceding centuries, there can be no doubt that the ancient architecture of Ireland was of Egyptian origin. They—the round towers—are three thousand five hundred years old. The following appeared in the "Dublin Nation" some years ago. I copy it as appropriate to the subject:

"The pillar-towers of Ireland, how wondrously they stand,
By the lakes and rushing rivers, through the valleys of our land!
In mystic file through the isle, they lift their heads sublime,
These gray old pillar temples, these conquerors of time!
Two favorites hath time—the pyramids of Nile,
And the old mystic temples of our dear Isle,
As the breeze o'er the seas, where the halcyon has its nest,
Passeth time o'er Egypt's tombs and the temples of the west!

The names of their founders have vanished in the gloom,
Like the dry branch in the fire, or the body in the tomb;
But to-day, in the ray, their shadows still they cast,
These temples of forgotten gods—these relics of the past!
Around these walls have wandered the Briton and the Dane,
The captives of Armorica, the cavaliers of Spain,
Phoenician and Milesian and the plundering Norman peers,
And the swordsmen of brave Brian and the chiefs of later years!
How many different rites have these gray old temples known;
To the mind, what dreams are written on these chronicles of stone.
What terror, and what error, what gleams of love and truth
Have flashed from these walls since the world was in its youth."

Besides these ancient architectural piles, Ireland presents other evidences of Phœnicio-Etruscan origin. The celebrated caves to be met with in different parts of the country, afford a striking proof of the similarity of sepulture among the ancient Irish and Etrurians, which was probably the most sumptuous and expensive of any nation, except the Egyptians.

CHAPTER IV.

FROM THE DEATH OF HEREMON TO THE REIGN OF OLLAMH FODHLA, AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF TRIENNIAL PARLIAMENTS AT TARA, ETC.

I WILL now resume the historical narrative at the death of Heremon, first Milesian monarch of Ireland. He was succeeded by his three sons—Muinhne, Luighne and Laishne, who were to reign each a year, alternately. Their government was marked by various contests for supreme command, between the rival princes of the two houses, Heber and Heremon. These battles continued to distract the nation, more or less, according to the varying or fluctuating strength of the rival factions, for nearly four hundred years, when they were greatly, if not wholly, subdued by the establishment of triennial parliaments. My limits prescribe the possibility of entering into these various conflicts for governmental sway. Neither do I believe the spirit of the present age demands a recital of deeds which were attended with much bloodshed. I will pass to the reign of Eochaidh, more commonly known as Ollamh Fodhla (learned doctor). For the sake of my young friends, I must not omit to mention, that nineteen kings reigned from the death of Heremon till the accession of Ollamh Fodhla, whose aggregate reigns, cover a period of about four hundred years. The reign of Ollamh Fodhla constitutes a memorable epoch in Irish annals; he was

solemnly inaugurated monarch of Ireland on the Laigh-Fail (or stone of destiny) B. C. 900. For the sake of round numbers, as being more liable to be retained in the mind, I make a slight variation from the authors before me. It will be borne in mind, that in the four hundred years previous, the nation increased in wealth, commerce and agriculture, —arts, science and manufactures flourished. One of the nineteen kings wrote a history of his ancestors, from the great Phœneus down to his own days. Pepper says, "according to Colgan and Molloy, this work of our royal historian, existed in the archieves of Tara, until St. Patrick, in the too ardent zeal of his christian ministry, committed it to the flames, with many more of our antique works." During the reign of Tighermas, the eighth king from Heremon, the scale and degree of colors to be worn by the different orders of the people, were instituted. The monarch was known by his mantle of purple and yellow; the vesture of the druids, bards, ollamhs and artists, was variegated by six dyes; that of the nobility, by five; that of betachs, or keepers of inns of free hospitality, by four; commanders of military companies, three; of private gentlemen, two; the soldiers and peasantry, one. It would appear that this regulation had scriptural authority to support it. "Jacob loved Joseph more than all his brothers, because he was the son of his old age, and he made him a coat of many colors." Bishop Nicholson, a learned authority, says: "They understood the composition of the celebrated Tyrian purple, which was extracted from a small shell-fish, found in abundance around the Irish coasts." Colonel Vallancy, an accomplished English author, says: "Though the garb of the ancient Irish was simple in its fashion, yet the materials of which it was composed, were of the most costly quality. Their kings wore mantles of an

immense size, generally nine ells of yellow and purple silk, (green had not then become the national color) which were studded with gems and precious stones. Their helmets, shields and ensign staffs, were of pure gold, as the country abounded with that precious metal." These and other testimonies, sustain us in believing the advanced degree of maturity to which civilization, art and manufacture had arrived at that period, among the ancient Irish. Though princes quarreled for supreme sway, as most of the ancients did, art, literature and manufactures progressed and flourished; and it cannot be a matter of surprise to us, when we reflect on the great degree of refinement possessed by their progenitors many centuries previous. The ancient bards and historians, eulogise the reign of Ollamh Fodhla, from the great reforms he made in the constitution. This prince deplored the strife which existed from the opposing claims and ambitious impulses of rival princes. He was aware of the petty acts of injustice, practised by feudatory princes and chieftains, on their vassals; he was possessed of sufficient wisdom and magnanimity to organize a tribunal, to whose decisions, monarch and people should yield implicit obedience. He began his contemplated plan of constitutional reform by convoking a triennial "assembly of the estates at Tara." This great assembly convened and began their deliberations under the most august and imposing order of ceremonies. This deliberative assemsembly was composed of the provincial princes, nobles, druids, brehons, bards, artists. It consisted of one thousand members, who were to enact laws for about two millions—a feature of democracy which will fairly vie with that of any modern legislative assembly. To give a faint idea of the perfect order and decorum which characterized the meeting and deliberations of this vast assembly, I will give an extract from O'Hal-

loran's history: "To avoid the least confusion or cause of complaint, the arrangement of the people was such as announced the highest degree of politeness. The Moidh Cuarta, (great court) where the chief assembly met, was three hundred feet long, thirty cubits high and fifty wide; it had fourteen principal entrances. The monarch's throne was elevated in the center of the room, with his face to the west. The king of Leinster had his at a proper distance, but lower, and fronting the monarch; the Munster king was on his left hand; the king of Ulster on his right, and the king of Connaught, behind him. The reason this last place was assigned to the Connacian prince, was his being of the Belgic race. Long seats were placed for the other orders in the state. In the first row, there were the ollamhs, or doctors, and which rank the christian bishops afterwards held. The hereditary marshal, standard-bearer, and treasurer, had places allotted to them. Next came the chief of nobility, at the head of whom were placed the knights; after these the betachs (or keepers of free inns) and representatives of towns and cities. This most august convention met three days before the great feast of Samhuin; that is, before the first of November. The two first days were spent in visits and friendly intercourse, the third in celebrating the feast of Samhuin, or the moon in the temple of Tlachta, just as their Phœnician ancestors met in the house of Rimmon*; i. e., of the moon from re, the moon, and muadh, an image; hence, Reamhan prophecying by the moon! The assembly was announced by sacred odes, set to a grand variety of musical instruments. In the days of St. Patrick, this meeting, in the presence of Loagaire, the monarch, was compared for grandeur and magnificence to that of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, on the plains of Dura.

* 2 Kings v: 18.

The Druids, having finished their rites and mysteries, the great fire of Samhuin was lighted up, and the deities solemnly invoked to bless the national councils. The three succeeding days were spent in entertainments and festivities, after which the national business commenced, in all its different departments." We read, with astonishment, of the wonderful order and regularity observed in these great festivals. "First notice was given by sound of trumpet, when the esquires of the nobility and other orders of the state, presented themselves at the door of the grand hall, and gave in the shields and ensigns of their different masters, to the deputies of the grand marshal of the crown; and by direction of the king-at-arms, they were arranged according to the qualities of the different owners, A second blast of trumpet, at a proper distance of time, gave notice to the target-bearers of the general officers, to deliver up their insignia, also; and on the third sound, the princes, nobility, etc., appeared, and were immediately seated under their different arms, without the least disorder or confusion." The proper business of this first assembly, was the policy of the kingdom, foreign alliances, peace and war, and a most strict examination of the national records. Was any nobleman, or other, treated unjustly by his prince, here was his sovereign appeal. Did any prince act contrary to the laws, or unjustly oppress a weaker power, to this great assembly they appealed for justice, and had it. The most severe penalties awaited such Senachies as should be convicted of the least falsehood; but in every other respect, their persons and properties were inviolable. In the most violent civil dissensions, their houses were asylums, and their lands and flocks free from depredation; and it is most unexampled, that in every revolution the nation experienced, a single instance does not occur of a Senachie's being convicted,

or this law being violated. Even at a subsequent period, when their numbers and insolence, aroused the resentment of the nation, the only punishment inflicted was banishment and a reduction of their number only. It was in this assembly that it was decreed that the number of doctors in different sciences, should not exceed two hundred. It was in this great national council, also, that the varions provincial records underwent a most searching scrutiny, and this was the first rise of the great "psalter of Tara," being an unerring epitome of facts, drawn from the other records of the nation. In this we find them imitating the example of their progenators, the Phœnicians, who kept their national records in the sanconiathon, or book of first time. It was also decreed that each province should, in future, have its history apart, and should submit it for examination, every third year; hence the psalter of Cashell, or book of Munster, the psalters of Ardmoch and Tuam, etc. From these provincial records, was expunged whatever was deemed doubtful, and nothing retained that was not authentic.

CHAPTER V.

IRISH HOSPITALITY—LAW OF GAVEL—TRIAL BY JURY, ETC.

I HAVE feebly endeavored to give some slight idea of the grand order of ceremonies which ushered in the first great deliberative assembly of the Irish nation; and if we examine briefly the legislative enactments of that body, we will find them in unison with the spirit and genius of that highly enlightened and magnanimous people. The most prominent among the ancient Irish code of laws, was the "law of hospitality." This law provided for the maintenance of houses of entertainment, at suitable distances from each other, throughout the kingdom. It enjoined that the keepers of those houses of national hospitality, betachs or hospitallars, as they were called, should each keep six herds of cattle; each herd to consist of one hundred and twenty head of cattle, and to have seven plows continually working on his lands; he was to have food ready at all hours for the traveler and destitute. A public place for entertainment, where charges were made, was for ages unknown in Ireland. To support these humane institutions, large tracts of land were granted by the nation and princes; those lands were called bally-betach. The province of Munster had eighteen hundred of those houses; and in the county of Monaghan, Sir John Davis, the Irish attorney-general of James I., says: "There were ninety-six thousand acres of betach-lands." After the introduc-

tion of christianity, these lands passed into the hands of the christian priesthood, so that hospitality, the hand-maid of religion, ever after went hand in hand. I need scarcely add, that hospitality is a marked characteristic of the Irish nation; in their fall and abject poverty, they cherish and cultivate this god-like virtue. No people transcends them in the generous warmth of their expression in this national sentiment; the cold forms of ceremony are lost; the friendly grasp and the "cead mille faultah," * are more cheering to the traveler or dejected stranger, than the heartless forms of conventional rules. This exalted virtue they have imbibed as a tenet of their faith; and no matter where fate or tyranny may exile them, they practise the one as ardently as they cherish the other. The ancient law of "gavel," was calculated to prevent the growth of a landed monopoly, or aristocracy. It provided that the property should be divided equally among the children of the dying parent. How different was this law from the law of "primogeniture, or baron law" of England, introduced there by the Norman dynasty. It is easy to see how well calculated the Irish law of gavel was to promote wealth, diffuse social happiness, and preserve a comprehensive basis of representation; the very reverse, engendered by the law of primogeniture, which concentrates in a few, a vast political power, which they wield as tyranny or caprice may dictate. This law of primogeniture, which provides that all the land estate shall fall to the next male heir, will be better understood, by showing how it operates in Britain and Ireland. I will give an extract from T. Mooney's history: "The whole surface of those kingdoms is owned by about five thousand prime proprietors in fee. The joint population of Britain and Ireland, amounts to some seven and twenty mil-

* A hundred thousand welcomes.

lions, (at present not so much, from the recent famine and constant exodus of the people) and these five thousand, with their families, by their compact action and great wealth, contrive to fill both houses of parliament with themselves and their nominees. It has been proven that four hundred out of the six hundred and fifty-eight, which comprise the house of commons, are directly returned by the landed interest. It is hardly necessary to remark that the British house of lords is made up nearly entirely of the landed aristocracy; and this faction have continued, and do continue, to rob the people annually, of forty millions sterling per annum, by their national debt, which they borrowed to preserve their estates, and which they compel the people to pay." We must admit, that any law which places in the hands of a few, the legislative power, which should be properly equalized, is arbitrary and tyrannical. From the same ancient Irish tribunal, sprung the "trial by jury." Leland, though no way imical to the Irish nation, says: "That among the old Brehon laws of Ireland, was one which referred all disputes about land to the decision of twelve men." It is assumed by those who are desirous of having us believe that Ireland is indebted to England for her civilization and literature, that it was king Alfred who introduced trial by jury. Alfred, after his return from Ireland, whither he was forced to take refuge during the invasion of his kingdom by the Danes, on his restoration to the throne, extended the trial of twelve men to all personal disputes, as well as land. In Ireland, at that time, "offences against the person," were settled by personal combat. It may not be generally known that king Alfred received his education in the college of Mayo, Ireland. It was there he learned to play on the harp, which was of such service to him afterwards that he was admitted to

the Danish camp, disguised as a harper. King Alfred transferred the most important of the Irish code of laws to England. He brought Irishmen over to England as instructors, among whom was the celebrated Erigina, under whose superintendence he founded the university of Oxford. I am induced to make an extract from the able McGeoghegan, a French writer, as it will show more fully than any words of mine, the advanced degree of literature and refinement of the Irish nation at that remote period: "In the first session of the assembly of Tara, it was established as a fundamental law of the land, that every three years, the king, nobility, and principal men in the kingdom, should, under certain penalties, repair in person, or in case of sickness or any other obstacle, send proxies to Tara at the time fixed, there to deliberate on the necessities of the state, to establish laws or to confirm or change the old ones, as the general welfare might require. It was afterwards agreed by the assembly, that each lord should maintain, at his own expense, a judge and historian, to whom he should assign a portion of land sufficient for their maintenance; so that, free from all domestic embarrassments, they might devote their time exclusively to their employment. The business of the historian, who was a sort of notary, was to preserve in writing, a record of their genealogies, alliances and noble actions, which was presented every three years to the national assembly, to undergo a criticism of a committee of nine, viz: three princes, three druids and three historians. An abstract of these things, to give them validity, was registered in the psalter of Tara. This custom of examining the records of private families and enrolling them in the psalter of Tara, lasted, without interruption, to the twelfth century of the Christian era; and without any change, except that when the pagan priesthood was abolished

by the preaching of the gospel in the fifth century, the three druids were replaced by three bishops. So when St. Patrick assisted as judge, with other bishops, at one of those assemblies, he had all the ancient books of the Milesians brought before him; and having examined them all very carefully, he approved of the psalter of Tara, with the several other histories, written long before his time; and at the same time, condemned and burnt, one hundred and eighty volumes of the bardic compositions. Besides the public offices created in the assembly of Tara, every lord or chief had a physician, poet and musician, to each of whom he assigned a certain portion of land. These lands, like those of the judges and historians, were considered sacred, and were exempt from all taxes and impositions, even in time of war, like those of the druid priests of Egypt—a convincing proof of the taste of the Milesians at that remote period, for the politer arts. Wise laws were also enacted to maintain the public peace. All violence against members of the assembly was prohibited, under pain of death. The same sentence was pronounced against those guilty of murder, violation and robbery, without the monarch having the power to pardon, as he had given up that royal prerogative in favor of justice. Copies of these ordinances were distributed amongst all the private judges in the land, to serve as rules in the administration of justice. A celebrated regulation was instituted for mechanics. They appointed sixty of each trade in every district, to inspect and govern the others. No one was allowed to work at any trade, without having been approved by these commissioners, who were called in the language of the country, "jollamuidh," which signifies well skilled, or expert in their art or profession. Such was the first organization of bodies of trades and mechanics in Ireland; and such was the origin of corporations,

first instituted for the management of trades, and subsequently for the management of town and city affairs. The English are indebted to Ireland for their corporate institutions, but they have not the honesty to admit it. They would prefer to acknowledge themselves indebted for these institutions to the Romans, their conquerors, than to the Irish, their ancient allies. Ireland will yet receive justice from the enlightened nations of the world. Ireland was familiar with those laws and institutions ere Carthage or Rome had yet been cities; ere Greece was honored by Solon and Lycurgus,—three centuries before Rome received from the Athenians the laws of the twelve tables. I cannot withhold giving this pleasing extract in full, from the able McGeoghegan: "About the time of our Saviour, the learned in the jurisprudence of the country, began to make collection of the laws and commit them to writing, several of which are mentioned by their historians. In the time of Conquovar, king of Ulster, who began to reign some years before the christian era, Forchern and Neid-Mac-Aidhna, two celebrated poets, composed a dialogue on the laws. The same with Aitherne, chief poet of Conquovar, were the authors of the axioms of the laws called 'judicia cœlestia,' (sacred judgments) as the axioms of the sages of Greece were called 'dicta sapientium.' Feardach, the monarch, and Moran, his judge, were celebrated for their justice and their writings on the laws. King Cormac and his son Cairbre, made a code of laws called 'dula,' which were divided into three parts, and contained regulations on various matters." All those works on law, with many others of the same nature, were collected in the eighth century and formed into one body of laws, by three brothers—Faranan, Baethgal and Moeltul; the first of whom was a bishop, the second a judge, and the third a poet and antiquarian. This collec-

tion was called "brathaneimhadh" sacred judgments. The matter it contained, is briefly explained in the following Irish lines:

Eaghies, flatha, agus filidh,
Breitheamh dhios gacbdligh,
Na bruigh fo aibh dar linn,
Na saor, agus na gabhan,

which are thus translated—

Priests, bards and poets,
Judges, human and divine,
That never oppressed in our time,
Trades, arts or science.

These Irish laws were adopted by Alfred and Edward, the confessor kings of England, who formed the doomsday-book.* I might give extracts from other writers, in support of the wise laws enacted, and beneficent institutions founded by the Irish nation at that remote period, but it is a fact already fully established by the concurrent testimony of all impartial historians, both modern and ancient. Whatever we can glean from the writings of ancient historians, sustain us in the belief that all the various ceremonies, whether of national business and importance, or of social amusement, were conducted with the strictest propriety and decorum at the great national hall of Tara. It appears the ladies were used with the greatest defference at all these great national festivals which were celebrated at Tara, as a separate court was set apart for their use, called griannan na niaghean, (council of ladies) to which were deputed all matters appertaining to the gentler sex. Music must have been greatly esteemed and cultivated

* Several volumes of Brehon laws, in the Irish character, are now in Trinity College, Dublin.

by the Milesians at that remote period, as we find the harp was a constant companion of the refined at all their social assemblies. The "harps of Tara" have long been celebrated by bard and poet. Erin's sweetest bard, Moore, has rendered the "harp of Tara" immortal by his poetic genius.

CHAPTER VI.

ANCIENT MUSIC AND POETRY OF IRELAND.

After the settlement of the Milesians in Ireland, and its partition between the two princes, Heber and Heremon, these two brothers differed about a poet and musician. Historians inform us that the matter was left for arbitration to their third brother, Ambhergin, who adjudged the poet to Heremon and the musician to Heber. This incident, occurring more than three thousand years ago, goes to show that music and poetry were early cherished and cultivated by the Irish. And, after centuries of oppression, she still retains her love for that ancient and fascinating branch of human science. Every page of history proves that the ancient Irish were assiduous cultivators of the voice and musical instruments. The aubhran (song) accompanied the harp in all ceremonials, either of worship or joyous festivity; or in the funeral obsequies of the dead, the voice of lamentation mingled with the dolorous notes of the harp. The erudite Walker says: "The Irish music is in some degree distinguished from that of every other nation, by an insinuating sweetness, which forces its way irresistibly to the heart, and there diffuses an ecstatic delight that thrills through every fibre of the frame, awakens sensibility and agitates or tranquilizes the soul. Whatever passion it may be intended to awaken it never fails to excite. It

is the voice of nature and must be heard." The ancient Irish were not strangers to the powers of harmonized sound, in directing, as well as exciting the human passions. A nation, kept continually under the influence of music, must become softened, susceptible and refined; and yet we find that some English writers, to aid the base designs of tyranny, have asserted the calumny that Ireland was barbarious and illiterate until after her total subjugation by England in the sixteenth century. Ireland's ardent cultivation of music, in all ages, is alone a sufficient refutation of the foul slander. The bards and musicians of Erin have ever been the theme of the historian. It is her music alone which has evoked the praises of other nations. In support of ancient Ireland's great reputation for her musical taste and proficiency, I will give a few condensed extracts from some eminent men. Canbrensis, an Englishman, who wrote in the twelfth century, and who must have been well qualified to pass an opinion on the music of a country, as he had traveled all over Europe as the companion of Henry the Second, says, in his "book of travels:" "The attention of the Irish to musical instuments, I find worthy of commendation, in which their skill is beyond all comparison, superior to that of any nation I have seen; for in these, the modulation is not slow and solemn as in the instruments of Britain, to which we are accustomed; but the sounds are rapid and precipitate, yet at the same time, sweet and pleasing; that all may be perfected in the sweetness of delicious sounds, they enter on, and again leave their modulations with so much subtility, and the tinglings of the small strings sport with so much freedom under the deep tones of the bass, delight with so much delicacy and soothe so softly, that the excellence of their art seems to lie in concealing it." Wharton, in his history of Engish poetry, says: "Even so

late as the eleventh century, the practise continued among the Welsh bards, of receiving instructions in the bardic profession from Ireland." Logan, a Scottish antiquarian, says: "The members of the Irish church, brought sacred music to great perfection, and rendered it celebrated throughout Europe in very early ages; and left many treatises on it." The Scottish historian, John de Fordun, sent over to Ireland in the fourteenth century, says: "Ireland was the fountain of music in his time, whence it then began to flow into Scotland and Wales." Campbell, in his philosophical survey, asserts—"That the honor of inventing the Scots music, must be given to Ireland." I might quote other writers in support of the advanced degree attained by the ancient Irish in musical science, but I think the few authorities already cited, will be sufficient to convince any unprejudiced mind of the preeminence of the Irish nation above all others in music and poetry. In the early ages, and until the twelfth century, the poet and the musician were combined in the one person; after that period, they separated; each was pursued by different votaries. I regret that I am unable to give anything like a sketch of the musical instruments invented and played on by the Irish. Besides the harp, they had the carrabasnas, a chorus instrument of a complex form for measuring time; the creamtitine cruit, which was the parent of the violin and bag-pipes. The Irish bagpipes must not be confounded with the Scotch, as the latter are of Roman origin. What native of Erin can revert to the scenes of his boyhood and not bestow a glance of mingled emotions at the old Irish piper, the itinerant musician of the district; he was the welcome guest of every festive board; he was not alone welcomed on account of his melodious strains, but as being a living witness of that cruel policy of England which extinguished freedom,

silenced the bard, and forced the musician to seek sustenance by itinerancy. I cannot close this subject without a word or two on the Irish harp. It is exclusively Erin's. It has been improved at different periods by Irish musicians. The original Irish harp consisted of only eleven strings, like the Egyptian—though it was enlarged to thirty-two. No nation but the Irish alone cultivated the harp; it is graven on every Irishman's heart; it is the symbol of Ireland's ancient glory and renown, and

> "Must still be remembered,
> While there lives but one bard to enliven its tone."

It may interest the reader to give here a brief account of the celebrated harp of Brien—Baroimhe. I quote from the eloquent pen of my countryman, Mr. T. Mooney: "The hero struck this harp in his battles, and at the last glorious victory of Cloutarf, it was found in his tent, together with his crown, by his nephew, Donagh, who succeeded himself and all his sons who fell on that dreadful day. In the close of Donagh's life in Munster, he retired from the political theatre of his great uncle and sought repose in a monastery at Rome. Thither he carried with him the celebrated harp of Brien, together with his golden crown and other insignia of royalty, which he presented to Pope Alexander the Second as presents. The harp remained in the vatican until Pope Leo the Tenth sent it and other Irish relics as presents to Henry the Eighth, with title of king, 'defender of the faith.' Some time after, Henry presented the harp to his favorite, the first earl of Clanrickard, in whose family it remained until the beginning of the last century, when it came in the paraphernalia of lady Elizabeth Burgh into the possession of her husband, Colonel McMahon of Clenagh, in the county of

Clare; after whose death, it passed into the hands of Commissioner McNamara, of Limerick. In 1782, this wandering harp came into the possession of the Right Hon. William Coningham, the father of the Marquis of that name, who was such a favorite with George the Fourth. The Marquis, to his credit, with the view of fixing the future residence of the immortal harp of Brien, placed it in the museum of Trinity College, Dublin.

When George the Fourth visited that city, he touched the single remaining wire string, which so often with its lost companions, sped the voice of melody into heroic souls, under the masterly hand of the great Brien. This far-famed harp is thirty-two inches high and of extraordinary good workmanship. The sounding-board is of oak; the arm and curved pillar, of red sally; the point of the arm is capped with silver, extremely well wrought and chiseled; it contains a large and rich crystal, set in silver; and there was another, now lost; the ornamental knobs at the side are of silver; on the arms are the arms of the O'Brien family, chased in silver, the bloody hands supported by lions. On the sides of the curved pillar, are carved two Irish wolf-dogs; the holes of the sounding-board, where the strings entered, are ornamented with escutcheons of brass, carved and gilt. This harp has twenty-eight keys and as many key-holes; consequently, there were twenty-eight strings. The foot-piece or rest, is broken off, and the parts to which it was joined are very rotten. The whole bears evidence of an accomplished and expert artist." May the remembrance of this great relic of the immortal hero of Cloutarf, and of the brave men who fought valiantly and died nobly on that day, sooner than be slaves, arouse in our breasts a throb of liberty and a spirit of determination to restore Ireland to what nature designed her to be.

Relative to the poetry of Ireland: whatever is written of her ancient music, is equally applicable to her poetry, as both were cultivated by the same person, until, as I before stated, the twelfth century, when a separation took place. To show the great esteem in which the bards were held by the ancient Irish, I will state one historical fact. In theninth century, B. C., when the learned king Tighernmas regulated the order of colors to be worn, the bardic order was classed next to royalty; this fact of itself, is sufficient to sustain us in the belief that the ancient Irish cherished literature, and bestowed great privileges on the bardic order. The erudite Walker says: "Warlike as were the Irish in those days, even arms were less respected amongst them than letters." Our Irish bard, Oisin, speaks of an Irish king who retained one hundred poets in his service. * There were several orders; the most learned were admitted into the order of the druids, which appears to have been the highest. They had to undergo a long course of study and strict discipline, prescribed by druidical austerity. The ollamhs (doctors) had to study twelve years, before they received the square or barred cap, and ring on his finger, in token of his learning and station.

When we consider the great amount of mental labor that devolved on the different classes of the bardic order, we will not be surprised when we read of the long and rigid discipline enforced in the "schools of the bards." Some of them had to recite the genealogies of twenty kings; others had to recite the history of Ireland, its kings, laws and battles—from the landing of the Milesians to their own times. The memory was their great library, the fund from which they

* King Cormac in the third century.

drew their rich and varied stores of knowledge as occasion required. On the field of battle, the bards not only stimulated their chiefs to deeds of bravery, by the soul-inspiring strains of their harps, but also to notice and record the heroic deeds of their patrons. All their histories and recitations, were in verse or rhyming metre, the more easily to be retained in the memory. Doubtless, this practice was carried to a greater extent than might be, owing to the scarcity of books. Another important office fell within the province of the bard. In the ceremony of lamentation over the deceased, the bard sung the praises of his fallen chief, whether he fell in battle or died of natural causes. His pedigree was recited by the local seanachie, (historian) and the caione, (funeral song) composed and set to music on the occasion, was sung by the bards. This custom was considered of so much importance amongst the ancient Irish, that they considered a man accursed to whom it was denied. Walker says, speaking on this subject, "David's lamentation for Jonathan, and the conclamatio over the Phœnician dido, as described by Virgil, co-incide with the Irish caione, or Irish cry; the ululah of the Irish and the Greek word of the same import, are exactly alike." The custom is still found among the Irish peasantry. When a boy, I often heard, with emotion, the Irish caione. When some friend of the deceased would, at intervals, stand up and recite with plaintive voice, the excellencies and good qualities of the deceased, the pathos of this rhyming eulogy had the instantaneous effect of causing all the friends and relatives present on the occasion, to mingle their tears and sighs with the voice of the person reciting the caione. From the great privileges granted to the bards, they became, at a later period, rather too numerous and arrogant; so that, in the sixth century, they became a subject for

special legislation, in order to reduce and limit their number. Their person and property were considered sacred and inviolate. The great number of the bards, and the lenient measures adopted in their favor, must convince us of the great taste of the Irish nation for poetry and music, through a long succession of ages. Most of the ancient poetry of Ireland, has been destroyed. At three different periods, our poetic collections were destroyed; first by St. Patrick in the fifth century; secondly, by the Danes in the ninth; and lastly, in the sixteenth century, when the demon blaze of bigotry caught hold of Irish churches, monasteries and convents—those peaceful retreats of the pious, where the distressed and afflicted found a safe retreat and home. They, with their vast libraries, loaded with the literary collection of centuries, were consumed. But, thank heaven, sufficient remains to prove Ireland's pre-eminence above all other nations in poetry and music. Dr. McPherson gives a very interesting account of the bards of the McDonald, the most eminent of the chieftain race of Scotland—"The last of the race was a man of letters, and had, like his ancestors, received his education in Ireland, and knew Latin tolerably well." * The learned Wormius, who wrote in the sixteenth century, speaks in the most flattering manner of a learned pupil who received his education from a Scot—(the Irish were in those ages called Scots)—who was master of no fewer than one hundred different kinds of verse, with the musical modulation of words and syllables, which included letters, figures, poetic feet, tones and tune. The poetry produced by the Irish, from the second to the ninth century, is alone sufficient to entitle them to the reputation of having been a highly refined and cultivated

* See McPherson's letter to Dr. Blair.

people, and we must regret the existence of that ignorance, or that prejudice which now refuses to them that well deserved distinction.

> And shall our tyrants safely reign,
> On thrones built up of slaves and slain,
> And nought to us, and ours remain
> But chains and toil, etc.?

The above is a specimen of a triad very peculiar to the ancient Irish.*

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* See Thomas Davis' lament over Father Tyrell's grave.

CHAPTER VII.

MINTS—COINS—MILITARY FORTIFICATIONS—THE SIMILARITY OF IRISH AND CARTHAGINIAN SWORDS—INSTITUTIONS OF KNIGHTHOOD, ETC.—FROM THE DEATH OF OLLAMH FODHLA, 800 B. C. TO THE CHRISTIAN ERA.

In this chapter, I purpose to give a brief account of the most interesting facts recorded in Irish history, from the eighth century, B. C., down to the year of christianity. I shall only endeavor to give the name of the monarch, under whose patronage any important invention was developed or custom grew up. The limits of a small work like the present, will not allow a recital of their separate reigns, which, at least, would only prove dry and insipid to the reader of the present day. In the reign of Eadhna, 2d, we read, for the first time, of mints and coined money. In the seventh century, B. C., a mint was erected and money coined at Airgoid-Ross, on the banks of the Suir; where, at our earlier periods, shields and targets of pure silver were fabricated.* Previous to this period, gold and silver were disposed of as mere bullion. Bishop Nicholson says,—"Long before the birth of Christ, the Irish had stamped money; and their artists seem to have been as unrivalled in the fabrication of metals, as they were confessedly in lignarian architecture and martial

* See O'Halloran's History.

music." It may be asked why are not some of these coins preserved, in order to sustain our history, as some of the coins of other polished nations have been? To this I will mention for answer, that in the year 1639, A. D. a large quantity of Irish coins were discovered by some countrymen at Gleandaloch, in the county of Wicklow, a parcel of which fell into the hands of Sir James Ware. These coins are of great antiquity. * Ware, Harris and other eminent antiquarians, bear testimony to the very early use of money in Ireland. In a commercial country, where mines were worked, and when in later times the plate of the Catholic churches was mostly of gold, where quantities of that precious metal are found from time to time in bogs and morasses, to doubt of their wanting so essential an article as money, would be absurd. It has been the policy of the Normans, since their introduction into Ireland, to destroy or do away with whatever relic of antiquity that would tend to establish the claim of the ancient Irish to civilization, arts or science. To preserve coins, medals, etc., would be totally at variance with their policy towards the Irish; to ascribe such relics to the barbarous Dane was admissible, but to the Irish was insufferable.

One more extract in support of the early use of money and trade in Ireland—"There can be no doubt of the early use of trade and money in Ireland, into which it is probable, it was introduced as soon as it wss frequented by the Phœnicians. Before the reign of Echaidh the Fourth, seven hundred and fifty years B. C., the Irish made their payments of gold and silver, in bars and ingots, with which their rich mines supplied them." † The ancient Irish coins, alluded to

* Antiquities of Ireland, p. 206.

† Antiquities of Wales.

by Ware and others, had on the face a human head, encircled with a cap or helmet; and on the reverse, a horse; and the Carthaginian coins were in the same style. It is evident that the customs and policy of the Carthaginians were introduced into Ireland, as a regular intercourse was kept up between the two states. In support of this theory, I will mention that antiquaries have proved that Carthaginian swords, found near the plains of Cannœ, in Italy, which are now in the British Museum, and the old Irish swords, so often found in bogs and morasses, are, as to make, form and mixture of metals, so exactly similar as to appear to have come out of the same mint. Governor Powell compared some Irish swords, in possession of Lord Milton, found in the bog Cullen, in the county of Tipperary, with those in the British Museum, and was surprised at their similarity. He requested the assay-master of the mint to analyze both. He did so, and found the proportion of mixture of metals so exactly corresponding, that he declared they must have been cast in the same furnace. "They are both," says he, "a mixture of copper and iron, and perhaps some zinc. They take an exquisite fine polish, and carry a very sharp edge, and are firm and elastic. They are so peculiarly formed as to resist any kind of rust, as appears when taken out of bogs, after lying in them for ages." * As to the ancient Irish having been extensively engaged in mining operations and artistic labor, there cannot exist a doubt in the mind of the impartial reader. Camden, an English historian, says—"The massy gold and silver chalices, candlesticks, plate, utensils, ornaments, and images of saints, seized by Queen Elizabeth in the Irish abbeys, brought more than a million sterling! Warner, an

* An account of some Irish antiquities, read before the English Antiquarian Society, Feb. 10th, 1774.

English historian says—"The mountains of Ireland are full of mines and minerals. Gold and silver must have been very plenty in this country in ancient times, as all the knights wore golden helmets and chains, and a shield of the same precious metal." The Irish devoted some attention to the erection of military fortifications in those early ages, also. We read, for the first time, in the reign of Elim, of military fortifications. He completed seven of these fortifications. In after ages, during the Danish wars, these were greatly increased. The remains of many of these duns or fortifications are still found throughout the island. For these inventions, Elim got the name of Imboch, or stagnant water.* With the invention and erection of fortifications, we may well suppose that a warlike people, such as the ancient Irish were, gave much attention to military discipline and tactics. We read that Seadhna II., wrote a code of laws and discipline for the military, which was a standard for many succeeding ages. His is the first treatise on military tactics on record. In succeeding ages, Mago, the Carthaginian, and Arrian the Greek, wrote on the same subject. † To prevent oppression, he also regulated their pay, from the colonel to the common soldier; and to prevent the means of dissipation, so destructive to military discipline, this pay was part in money, in clothes and in food, which England copied and adheres to, at the present day. In the fifth century, B. C., and during the reign of Ciombhaoth, a prince celebrated for his prudence and moderation, the great palace of Emania or Eumuirania, was built in the north, near to Armagh. It was called in honor of his wife, who traced its plan and area most correctly with a golden pin of her handkerchief; hence its name, Eumuir-

* Psalter of Cashell.

† See O'Halloran's History.

ania, is Irish for pin, and muir for neck. This celebrated palace was, next to Tara, the most magnificent public structure of ancient Ireland. History informs us that this celebrated palace was erected and finished in the most costly and grandest style of architecture. Its arched roofs were lined with polished marble, brought from Italy, and the interior pillars were made of the same costly material, highly and beautifully carved; the marble quarries of Kilkenny, in the west of Ireland, and the north, furnished sufficient material to complete a rich and beautiful architectural pile. The remains of this great building could be traced in the days of O'Halloran, 1785. "This palace has been celebrated by succeeding writers for its sumptuousness, the splendor and hospitality of its princes, and the intrepidity of its troops.* The house of Craobh ruadh, (red knights) of Ulster, adjoining this great palace, whose fame and glory have been so often sung by our bards, and whose chivalric deeds have been recorded by our senachies, (historians,) was proportionately grand. After the death of her husband, Queen Macha would not relinquish the royal diadem, despite the Irish law which allowed no female to occupy the throne; but addressing her devoted troops, she led them in person, and after a hard contested battle, victory declared in her favor. As in the days of Joan of Arc, of France, her devoted troops mistook her fortitude for supernatural inspiration. In this battle we read for the first time of archers. In every subsequent period, we find that Irish soldiers obtained great renown for their skill in archery. The science of archery can boast as high antiquity in Ireland as among any nation. In several renowned battles in England and Scotland, the Irish bowmen

* See O'Halloran's History, p. 70.

obtained the victory. When Caledonia was saved from the yoke of the Romans, in the times of Fingal, O'Neil and Darthy, it was the Irish archers who spread terror throughout the ranks of the Roman legions. And in after ages, when Robert Bruce made, in 1314, that great stand for his country's independence against England, which history celebrates and succeeding ages admire, O'Neil, his brother-in-law, sent over a legion of Irish archers, which helped to win. Unsupported assertions are of little worth. I will give what Chaucer, an English poet, says in reference to this great battle—

"To Albion Scots we ne'er would yield;
The Irish bowmen won the field."

Spenser, another English writer, who wrote in the reign of Elizabeth, thus praises the Irish archers—"They certainly do great execution with their short bows and little quivers, and their short-bearded arrows are fearfully scythian." Hollinshead (English) says, "that the famous Robin Hood, the outlaw, fled to Ireland in the reign of Richard the First, and that an Irishman named Patrick Lawlor, excelled him in feats of archery. Robin sent his arrow eleven score and seven yards, but Pat Lawlor sent his three yards farther." This occurred, according to Dr. Hanmer, in Dublin, in A. D. 1195. I pass over a period of three centuries, as no organic change happened—no events of any importance to the reader of the present day, having occurred. About one hundred years before the nativity of Christ, Ireland was divided into five provinces by Eochaidth the Ninth. The fifth province, Meath, was set apart as the domain of the reigning monarch; its area was seventy square miles. Subsequently it was divided into Meath and West Meath, in the reign of Henry

the Eighth of England. I am now at that period of Irish history, when chivalry entered so fully into the social and political institutions of the people, and which in after ages so much engrossed the attention of the learned and polished nations of Europe. The most profound historians are at a loss to determine at what precise period chivalry had its origin in Ireland. Modern writers make the institution of chivalry of a much later period; some deriving it from the Moors, from Granada; others, from the Crusades—but all agreeing that it must have originated after the destruction of the Roman empire. On this subject I will give the opinion of the learned Mr. O'Halloran: "Cæsar assures us that the second order among the Gauls, was the esquires or knights;* surely, a better authority cannot be. Unfortunately for letters, the early histories of the Gauls and Britons, and indeed every other nation subdued by the Romans, are lost. These last showing themselves, everywhere, as much the enemies of science as of the liberties of mankind. Therefore, destitute of proper guides, later writers suppose the origin of chivalry in Europe to have commenced at, or very near the time in which they first find any mention of it by Celtic writers. For it is a point agreed on by those writers, that they took their rise from the knights of Rome. † Ireland, however, being free from any attempt of the Romans, preserved her ancient history; and it is the more valuable, as it plainly appears to be the only key to the laws and customs of the ancient Celtae, as handed down to us by Greek and Roman writers. So extremely ancient has the institution of chivalry been in Ireland, that we scarce know where to trace its origin. We find our ancestors had it in Greece, and the curettes or

* Cæsar's Commentaries, Lib. VI.

† Seldon's titles of honor (English.)

knights, among the first reformers of Greece, are mentioned with particular honor; and such is to this day the name of a knight in Irish. Certain it is, that from the foundation of the Milesian monarchy, this order of men has been particularly attended to, and their rank, their dress and their insignia determined. There were five equestiran orders in Ireland. The first was the knights of the golden collar. This order was peculiar to the blood royal; without it no prince could presume to become a candidate for the monarchy. Mr. O'Halloran gives a very able account of the different orders of knighthood established in Ireland, which I must necessarily omit. The utmost care was taken of their education and military training. Academies were founded for them at the national expense (like the military school of Paris or West Point.) The candidate was entered at seven years of age, when a slender lance was put in his hand and a sword by his side. From this to fourteen, they were instructed in letters and military discipline, when they took their first vows. At the use of the sword and target they were uncommonly skillful. They fought on foot, on horseback, or in chariots, according to their situation and circumstances. At eighteen they took their last vows. Their sentiments were most elevated—their ideas of honor and heroism most sensitive. To swear by their knighthood, was the most sacred oath; as it at once reminded them of all their vows. In the battle of Ventry, of Verry, called Catha Fiontragh, one of the knights in Fion's army, says,—"I affirm on my word, and on the arms of chivalry, etc." An oath which no one of them was ever known to break. Dr. Warner, (English authority), says—"It must be confessed that this was a period of great military renown in Ireland; for here were three principal orders of knights at that time, who were not only accounted

the greatest men of the age by their own provinces, but were so confessed by all the nations of the western world. We are told that their valor, their strength, and the largeness of their stature, (being the picked men of the nation), were the wonder of the surrounding countries, and their exploits are not to be paralleled in history." It was one of the principal customs of the ancient Irish to train up their youth to a military life, that they might either defend their country in times of distress, or carry the fame of their arms abroad. Llhuid, an old Welsh historian, has fully demonstrated that the names of the principal commanders who opposed Cæsar in Britain, are pure Irish, Latinized. And it is most natural to infer, that a people who so manfully assisted the Carthaginians and the Gauls, in their struggles against the Romans, would not remain idle and inactive spectators when the Roman army was approaching their coasts. The Irish records of chivalry, some of which are still extant, tell us that the knights of Ireland, in very early days, frequently traversed the continents, where they gained glory and honor; and so celebrated were they in Europe, that they were called, by way of pre-eminence, the heroes of the Western isle.

CHAPTER VIII.

FROM THE FIRST TO THE THIRD CENTURY OF CHRISTIANITY —CRIOMPTHON, HIS VICTORY OVER THE ROMANS—MORAN APPOINTED CHIEF JUDGE—COMPARISON BETWEEN IRISH AND ROMAN CUSTOMS — COMMERCE OF ANCIENT IRELAND —ARTS AND MANUFACTURES — CUSTOMS AND GAMES OF THE IRISH, ETC.

I MAY here remark, that forty-three kings reigned in Ireland during the six centuries preceding the birth of Christ, which gives an average reign of nearly fourteen years to each. And from the fifth year of Christianity to the invasion of Turgesius, the Dane, there reigned sixty-one kings, which gives an average reign of a little over twelve years, during a period of seven hundred and thirty-eight years. When this evidence of the civilization of Ireland for that period is placed against the history of five hundred years of Rome, (the whole time the Roman empire lasted,) it will be easy to tell in whose favor the testimony of approbation will preponderate. From the time of Julius Cæsar to that of Augustulus, A. D. 475, about five hundred years, there reigned sixty-four emperors over Rome, which does not give an average of eight years in full. Forty-six of these emperors were monsters of crime, thirty-three of them were murdered, seven were assassinated or poisoned, and one strangled; two fell by their own hands;

one was burnt, and one was drowned; only nineteen died natural deaths. If we open the pages of English history, we will find that twenty-eight kings of the Saxon heptarchy, were murdered in a period of three hundred and fifty years. Turn to Scotland, and we find of six successive princes, from Robert the Third to James the Sixth or First, of England, not one died a natural death. I will admit that the kings and princes of ancient Ireland, often brought on intestine wars and commotions, in order to secure for themselves sovereign sway. The warlike propensity of the Irish, unfortunately, led them into conflict with each other, especially when no foreign war presented the prospect of gaining additional military glory and renown. Yet those internal contests for supremacy were conducted by laws of the most honorable warfare. Frequently the rival claims of the combatants were settled by the single combat of the contending princes, while their respective followers remained spectators of the conflict. The fall of either of the combatants was the signal for mutual reconciliation and friendship. On this feature in their character, the eloquent Phillips founded the stanza—

> "Thy sons they are brave; but the battle once over,
> In brotherly love, with their foes they agree."

Relative to the feuds and quarrels of the Irish, which England sorely endeavors to aggravate and make capital out of, let her look to her own factional and treacherous quarrels of only four centuries past. The bloodshed and kingly murders which resulted from the "wars of the roses," or between the houses of York and Lancaster, ought to be quite sufficient to keep her tongue silent. Having come to the most remarkable era in the world's history—the birth of Christ—let us for

a moment turn our eyes to the Roman empire, which was then in the meridian of splendor, and follow her victorious eagles into Britain, and we will clearly see that it was Irish soldiers who aided the Picts in repelling the Romans. Rome was then "mistress of the known world"; and elated with the success of her arms and her extensive conquests, she turned her eyes on Britain. History informs us that Julius Cæsar landed near Dover, in England, fifty-five years before the birth of Christ. He quickly overcame the resistance of its undisciplined inhabitants, whom he says were destitute of any of the arts of life, were clothed in the skins of wild beasts, painted their bodies and led a wandering mode of life. "After Cæsar had established a temporary government in Britain, he returned to the continent. Britain remained in this state for ninety years, during which period it appears no Roman general landed in the country. In the forty-sixth year of our salvation, and during the reign of Conaire in Ireland, we find Platius, a Roman general, landed in Britain, fought and subdued the Britons. About thirty years subsequent to this, we find Julius Agricola making another invasion of Britain and establishing his authority. After the death of Conaire, Connor, of the red eyebrows, succeeded to the Irish monarchy. To him succeeded Criompton, noted for having penetrated Britain with a large army, destroying the fortifications built by the Romans. He brought home a large quantity of warlike stores. This victory over the Romans, occurred about A. D., 75. Twelve years subsequent to this period, we read of Moran, who was renowned for his wisdom and equity. To enable us to form a better estimate of the sterling qualities of this celebrated judge of Ireland, I will relate an incident which happened previous to his being invested with the golden collar. His father, Cair-

bre, known as the usurper, was of the Daan line, from Connaught. By cunning and treachery, he usurped the throne. His son, Moran, by his exemplary justice and integrity, won the confidence of all classes in the state. On the death of his father, who reigned only five years, Moran was called to accept the crown; but he, with an unexampled heroism and constancy, refused it. Not only this, but so great was his power and influence over these people, and in such animated eloquence did he lay before them the enormity of their crimes, and the utter impossibility of supporting the revolution they had inaugurated, that they abandoned their revolutionary schemes and consented to restore the royal line of Milesius. * His words on the occasion, were—"I shall never wear that crown to which I have no just right, except what I might derive from the violence which placed it on my father's brow. Do you conceive Moran so ignoble as to accept the power which is based on such dishonorable claims? No! legislators! You wrong me when you suppose that injustice should be the foundation of my personal aggrandizement. If my own honest merits cannot gain me the applause of posterity, let my deeds remain in oblivion." So celebrated was he for wisdom and just decrees, that the people were taught to believe that the golden collar he wore round his neck, would compress round the neck of his successors, according as they deviated from the line of truth and justice. Even to this day, people, in making a solemn asseveration, say—"by the collar of Moran." With the exception of Sir Thomas Moore, lord chancellor of England in the reign of Henry the Eighth, who was the purest judge that appeared in England for a thousand years, according to the testimony

* See O'Halloran's History.

of Sir James McIntosh, we have no judge in England or Ireland who merited the universal respect and approbation of Moran. I cannot close my remarks on that eminent chief justice of Ireland in a better way than by citing Dr. Warner's opinion of him. "There is not in all history, as I remember, another instance of a revolution like this, brought about by the self-denial and strength of a single man, called to the exercise of royal power through the wickedness and perfidy of his own father, divesting himself of this power and disarming a giddy multitude, in order to establish the public tranquility, and set the lawful heir upon the throne. Indeed, ancient or modern history affords no parallel of such self-denial, if we except the single instance of Lycurgus, the Spartan law-giver, who, though called by general consent to the throne, on the death of his brother, no sooner heard that his sister-in-law was pregnant, than he abdicated the regal sway and assumed merely the regency." Such is the testimony of the English historian, Warner, relative to Judge Moran. I believe he will compare favorably with Lord Norbury, of later date, and who also had the benefits of a christian education. Could Moran's collar have been adjusted around his neck, I believe he would have received many an uncomfortable squeeze. About A. D. 90, we find Tuathal, after an obstinate and bloody struggle, crowned monarch of the Irish people. This prince, desirous to see a more social intercourse existing between the various classes in the state; and in order to make their meetings more frequent, he revived the festive meetings on the plains of Meath with great splendor. Here he erected a splendid architectural pile where he reviewed the great fair, to which all classes of the kingdom repaired. This great fair lasted twenty-eight days; during which time, all the varied amusements of horse-racing, charioteering, feats of arms, etc.,

by the knights, took place at this great national gathering. O'Flaherty says of these games—"The strictest order and decorum was observed throughout. Here, rival knights contended at tilts and dexterous feats of grace and agility, for the ladies of their love, and poets sang, and rustics wrestled, to win the smiles and approbation of the fair. Matrimonial alliances were formed here, and the nuptials celebrated by the ministering druid. On the site of these festive games, a druidical cave has been erected in the earth." The learned Beauford, who visited the ruins, says—"They equal any time-honored remnant of ancient architecture which a Palmyra or Babylon could boast." Camden and Raymond, both English writers, bear testimony to this celebrated cave, "as being elegantly vaulted, with polished marble slabs indented into each other—is eighty feet long, with a marble-paved floor, and walls encrusted with the same material." Beauford further adds—"It is a ridiculous assumption in some English writers, who, to gratify their prejudices, maintain that the ancient Irish were not eminent in architecture before the English invasion. The round towers and antique cathedrals of Cashell, Clonard, Armagh, Ardfert, and many others, with hundreds of old abbeys and innumerable druidical altars and caves, are testimonials in favor of the taste, the architecture and genius of the ancient Irish." We find the amusements and games of the Irish, previous to the introduction of christianity, were rational, modest and invigorating. It may be well to see what were the amusements of Pagan Rome at the same period, and judge from the comparison who were the most refined, the pagan Irish, or pagan Romans. It was the custom of the Romans to have periodical combats with wild beasts, got up for their amusement. The animals were brought from distant countries for this inhuman purpose. There were three

different sorts of diversions with the wild beasts. The first part of the programme was when the people were permitted to run after the beasts and catch what they could for their own use; the second part, when the animals fought with one another; and the last, when they were let loose to engage with men. The men who engaged with wild beasts, were, some of them, condemned persons; others hired themselves at a set pay, as gladiators. Even, on such occasions, the ladies of Rome were ambitious of showing their courage.

"Nor Mars alone his bloody arms shall wield,
Venus, when Cæsar bids, shall take the field;
Not only wear the breeches, but the shield."

These female gladiators fought with sharp spears or swords, until the combat ended with the death of one. Some of the more intrepid and daring, engaged with the men, and even the wild beasts. Juvenal, in his sixth satire, (as translated by Dryden), says of their barbarious manners—

"Behold the strutting Amazonian there!
She stands in guard, with her right foot before,
Her coats tucked up, and all her motions just;
She stamps, and then cries, ha! at every thrust."

This barbarous and beastly state of morals prevailed in Rome for six hundred years. Such was Rome, whose history our children are taught to study as the essential part of classics, while the history of brave, virtuous and hospitable Ireland is neglected. With regard to the arts and commerce of Ireland at this early period, I may remark that Bede, a Saxon ecclesiastic, has candidly admitted that to Ireland, his country

was indebted for their naval and murel architecture. * King Alfred, who had been exiled in Ireland, on regaining possession of his kingdom, invited over Irish ship-builders, who constructed for him a large fleet. Some of the vessels then built, had seventy-six oars, and were generally navigated by sixty or seventy men." † Such evidence is surely sufficient to convince any unprejudiced mind of the progress of the ancient Irish in arts and commerce. It was during the reign of the monarch Tuathal, in the beginning of the second century of christianity, that the Romans had laid waste a great part of Britain. Owing to the auxiliary forces of the Irish having been previously withdrawn to quell a provincial struggle for the Irish crown, the unaided Picts could show but a feeble resistance to the powerful legions of Rome, who were triumphantly marching on the road to further conquest. In this threatening aspect of affairs, king Tuathal called a meeting of the estates of Tara, to consider their danger. He made a most powerful and eloquent appeal to his parliament, on the menacing attitude of the Roman army in Britain, and the possible invasion of their own sacred isle. His heart-stirring appeal to the nation was immediately responded to, in the equipment of a large force to aid the Picts in driving back the Romans from Caledonia, which the Irish nation was bound by treaty to protect from invasion. This force was placed under the command of the celebrated Irish hero, Gealta Gooth, whose fame has floated down the stream of history to us, surrounded with glory, and whose descendants gave kings to Leinster for many years after. The combined forces were placed under the command of the Irish general who defeated the Romans in two engagements, and forced them to retreat

* Bede's Ecclesiastical History.

† See Dundele's inquiry into the Rise and Progress of the British Navy

to Newcastle. The Emperor, Adrian, repaired in person to the scene of disaster, and commenced a wall of clay from Carlisle to Newcastle, a distance of sixty miles. This wall was afterwards replaced by a wall of stone, built by Severus; the remains of which, still proclaim to the world the valor of the ancient Irish and their kinsmen, the Picts. A reign so pregnant with the most happy results to the Irish nation at home, in the revival and enactment of laws for the protection and encouragement of manufactures, arts and commerce, and abroad, in the success which attended her arms, its duration should be noted here. Tuathal, after a glorious reign of thirty years, fell by the sword of Mal, a revolter. *

* See O'Halloran's History.

CHAPTER IX.

THE WILL OF CATHOIR MORE—CALEDONIAN COLONY PROVED TO BE IRISH—THE REIGN OF THE GREAT KING CORMAC, ETC.

It may not interest the reader of the present day to read or know anything of a will made by an Irish monarch over seventeen centuries ago; still I am tempted to transcribe the principal heads of it, as it shows a piece of great antiquity, as well as it proves the great wealth and splendor of the Irish nation in those days. Cathoir More was the grandson of Gealtha Gooth, or, as called by Tacitus—a Roman historian—Galgacus, that celebrated Irish general who repelled the Romans from Caledonia. History informs us that in the third year of his administration, on the night preceding the fatal battle of Moigh-catha,* which was to decide the issue between Cathoir More and Con, known in history as Con of the Cead-catha.† Cathoir More, filled with apprehension for the fatal results of the ensuing day, called his chief bard or secretary and his ten sons, together with his chief councillors to his presence, whom he thus addressed—"To-morrow's sun will beam on my dead body; but I shall die, like my gallant ancestors, resisting the foe while I have strength to stand at

* In Meath.

† Hundred battles.

the head of my brave army, in whose ranks there is not a single coward." He then told all to withdraw themselves except his chief bard, whom he caused to engross his will. Part of the heads of this curious will are delivered by Mr. O'Flaherty, from an authentic copy; * and I find it more minutely detailed in the third book of Lecan. † To his Rosa, called Failge, or the rings, he bequeathed his kingdom of Leinster; to which he adds ten shields richly ornamented, ten swords with gold handles, ten gold cups, and wishes him a numerous and warlike posterity to govern Tara. To his second son he bequeathed Fingal and part of the county of Wicklow, and he wishes him to become a successful hero, and always to rule over the Gilean glas (part of the ancient Belgæ.) To this he adds one hundred and fifty spears, ornamented with silver; fifty shields, ornamented and embossed with gold and silver; fifty swords of exquisite workmanship; fifty rings of the purest gold; one hundred and fifty cloaks of rich manufacture, and seven military standards. To his third son, seven ships of burden; fifty shields, richly ornamented with gold and silver; five swords, with gold hilts, and five chariots with harnesses and horses. To these he adds the lands on the river Amergin, and charges him to watch over the old inhabitants, who will be otherwise troublesome to him. To the fourth, he leaves possessions, thinking it a pity to separate him from his brothers, though it were on free lands. To the fifth, he left nothing; but his brothers assigned to him ample possessions. To the sixth, his backgammon tables and men; saying, that neither the possession of lands or towns would be of any use to him, as he never attended to any study but gaming. To the seventh, he gave

* Ogygia, p. 311.

† See O'Halloran's History, p. 104.

nothing, but this defect his brother supplied. To the eighth, he left his benediction, only, wishing his posterity may adhere to their blood; and calls him Treath-fear, or weak man; for he was so far imposed on as to give away a tract of land claimed as a promise in his sleep. To the ninth he leaves fifty brass balls, with brass maces to play with, ten backgammon tables of curious workmanship, and two chess tables. To the tenth, Fiancha, called Baicadh, (lame), I give the name of the youngest, as his issue gave more kings to the province of Leinster than all his brothers united, he gave the country around Wexford; he praises him for his bravery and for the universal love he gained, and commends him to support his brother, and bequeaths him, besides fifty large vessels, made of yew, fifty drinking cups and fifty pied horses, with brass bits. To his nephew, Tuathal, he gives ten chariots, with horses and harnesses, five pair of backgammon tables, five chess tables with ivory men, thirty shields embossed with gold, and fifty swords highly polished. To Mogh Chorb, one hundred black and white cows, with their calves coupled two and two with brass yokes, one hundred shields, one hundred gavelins colored red, one hundred polished spears, fifty saffron colored cloaks, one hundred horses of different colors, one hundred gold pins for cloaks, one hundred goblets elegantly finished, one hundred large vats made of yew, fifty chariots curiously finished, ten of which were of exquisite workmanship; fifty chess tables, fifty playing tables of different kinds, fifty trumpets, fifty standards, fifty copper caldrons, with the privilege of being privy consellor to the king of Leinster."

The above is a part of the will of Cathoir More, as found in third book of Lecan, now in the Irish college at Paris. The details of wealth and luxuries therein specified, prove the

advanced degree of maturity to which arts and manufactures had arrived in Ireland, as well as the all but incredible wealth of the testator. Dr. Warner says—"He was the richest monarch that ever appeared in Europe." The battle of the following day, proved fatal to the monarch, Cathoir, as he had himself predicted; but the posterity of his ten sons gave to Ireland several of the most patriotic and noble families, who distinguished themselves for many ages. Con, of the "hundred battles," succeeded to the monarchy. After a turbulent reign of thirty years, he fell by the sword. This reign is noted in Irish history as being prolific of many hard contested battles between Eogan, a Munster prince, and the monarch, Con. The result of this hostility led to a partition of the island—the southern half to Eogan, the northern to the king. This division apparently reconciled the contending parties for a brief period. Eogan, the Munster prince, from a personal tour of the kingdom, became convinced that the revenues of the northern part exceeded those of his own part of the kingdom, and resolved to make that the ostensible pretext for the renewal of hostilities, but the real design of Eogan was the dethronement of Con and the restoration of the Hibernian line. His ambition proved fatal to himself—he was slain by the general of the king's army, Goll McMorni, and chief of the knights of Connaught. * The body of Eogan, pierced by a thousand wounds, was raised up on the shields of the soldiery, and exposed to the view of both armies; which Goll perceiving, cried out, "lay down the body of the king of Munster, for he died as a hero should die—covered with wounds and glory." Thus ended this mighty conflict between two military heroes. I make this brief digression in order to show another instance of that custom,

* See O'Halloran's History, p. 109.

found from time immemorial, amongst the ancient Irish, viz.: that the issue of the battle solely depended on the skill and bravery of the two contending chieftains, while the hostile armies remained silent spectators. The "assembly of the estates" convened at Tara to elect a successor to the throne vacated by the death of the famous Con "of the hundred battles." The majority declared in favor of Connaire, of the northern or heremonian line. He was accordingly crowned monarch. So far as this reign relates to the transaction of any important events or organic changes in the administration of Irish affairs, it might be passed over in silence, were it not that it furnishes another link to the long chain of evidence which sustains the historical fact that Caledonia (Scotland) was a province subject to the Irish kingdom. We find, toward the close of Connaire's reign, one of his sons, Carbrai kidha, was sent over to Caledonia to protect it as an Irish province against the Romans. On this subject I must, for the benefit of those Scotchmen who deny their lineage or affinity to the Irish, give a few extracts from writers of unquestionable authority. The venerable Bede says—"From this leader, whose name was Riada, the posterity of those settlers are to this day, called Dal Raidimh, or the Irish occupiers of the part." The able Abbe Geoghegan, (French), says—"It is true, that before this time, the Albanian Picts were, for centuries, tributary to the crown of Ireland; yet it remained for Carbrai to form the first regular settlement in Scotland." Primate Usher, a learned authority, says—"This prince reduced all Scotland under his dominion." And, O'Kennedy, in his chronology of the Stuart line, published in Edinburgh in 1780, asks, in reply to some Scotch writers, who contended for an origin from the north of Europe for their ancestors—"How can the Caledonians, in the face of the authorities of

Bede and Fordum, have the egregious folly to deny their Irish origin?" In addition to the testimony of these eminent writers, there are all the Irish historians, unanimous in supporting the same great facts. In a very able essay, entitled "an inquiry into the origin of the Scots in Britain," written by the learned Dr. Barnard, protestant bishop of Killaloe, which has never been refuted, there are detailed proofs given, which would alone sustain the claim of Ireland to the government and colonization of Scotland. A brief extract from the "Inquiry," may not be inappropriate. "The original of that portion of the inhabitants of Britain, properly called Scots, has been a point of history so established by the concurrence of all writers on that subject, both native and foreign, from venerable Bede down to Sir George McKenzie, that for a period of at least nine hundred years, it was never estimated as matter of question, until some late Scottish antiquarians, anxious to support an hypothesis inconsistant with their own annals and tradition, have thought proper wholly to reject the received opinion of their ancestors on this head, and offer to the public in its place, an entire new system of their own, founded on arguments sufficiently plausible and ingenious, but unsupported by written testimonies or any authentic documents whatsoever."

About the close of the fourth century, we find all Scotland subject to the crown of Ireland. About the same period the great Niall, of the nine hostages, began his reign in Ireland—he who vanquished the Romans in several engagements through Britain, and finally extinguished their power in that country, after it lasted for about four hundred years. From this period, the settlement of the Scots (Irish) assumed a monarchial aspect. It appears that they determined to have a king and government independent of the mother country,

as they invited Earca, monarch of Ireland, to send them his son Feargus, to be their king. The proposal was accepted, and it was on this occasion that the Irish monarch made the Scots colony a present of the celebrated Laigh Fail, or "stone of destiny," which the Milesians brought with them to Ireland, and on which all the Irish kings, from Heber, the first Milesian monarch, down to that period, were crowned.

A few words relative to the "stone of destiny," may prove a little interesting. That celebrated relic of remote antiquity remained in Scotland, and on which all subsequent kings of Scotland were crowned until the conquest of the country by Edward the First, in the thirteenth century; when it was carried by that prince to England as a great trophy of victory, and placed in Westminster Abbey. From that period down to the present, all the sovereigns of England have been crowned.

It was a popular belief of the Irish, for many centuries, that an illegitimate branch of the royal family could be detected on being placed sitting on the stone. From the superstitious properties attributed to this stone, doubtless, no Irish monarch would have parted with this famous relic; but christianity having disrobed it of all its superstitious habiliments, we find Feargus the Second, at the close of the fifth century, consenting to give it to his subjects in Scotland; probably with the idea that it would tend to create in the minds of his new subjects, a superstitious veneration for his person; and that they would not attempt to disturb or undermine a throne apparantly established by fate itself. The English, who are so fond of laughing at the "superstitions of the poor ignorant Irish," imagine that the coronations of their monarchs would be incomplete; in fact, illegal, if the ceremony of sitting on this stone was omitted. Her present majesty, Queen Victoria,

was crowned sitting on this ancient Irish stone in Westminster Abbey, surrounded by all the bishops, peers, chancellors, and heralds in England, and ambassadors from the courts of all civilized countries in the world. And yet these English are the people who absurdly sneer at the "superstitious Irish."

To return to the early settlement and government of Scotland by the Irish, I trust I have conclusively, though briefly, proven from the testimony of eminent writers, that the Scotch are the Irish inhabitants of north Britain; and through the posterity of our Irish monarchs, we gave Scotland and England a long race of kings. It is quite common in individuals swelled by tempory affluence, to deny connection with poor friends and relations—no matter how respectable they may once have been. So the Scotch, after boasting for nine centurries of their Irish origin, turned round when Ireland had fallen in political opulence and literary fame, and endeavored to disown their parentage and protection.

I now come to the reign of king Cormac, one of the most enlightened and brilliant of the Milesian princes who sheds a lustre on the page of Irish history, and who adorned the halls of Tara by his bright genius and profound literary acquirements. He came to the throne two hundred and fifty-five years after the birth of Christ. Having arrived at the summit of his ambition, his first great care was the revision of the national code of laws, and the administration of justice throughout the kingdom. Any that were deemed in the least degree inequitable, were abolished, and a code of jurisprudence was established, which remained in force from that time down to the end of the monarchial dynasty of the Milesians in the twelfth century. Dr. Warner says of him—"The ordinances which he established for the public good, which

are yet to be seen in the old Irish records, and which show his great skill in the laws and antiquities of his country, were never abolished whilst the Irish regal government had existence." These laws were approved of by the representatives of the people in the national assembly. It was deemed a treason or sacrilege to attempt to change them in the least. They were called "celestial judgments." So true was it, that no people in the world loved justice more than the Irish —a feature in their character remarked centuries later, by Lord Coke and several other English jurists.

Cormac had the old palace of Tara and hall of assembly, which were built principally of oak, pulled down, and a magnificent palace and legislative hall of marble erected on its site. This grand marble edifice was deemed the most elegant structure in Europe. Torna Eigis, who wrote in the fourth century, says that "the marble statues of two hundred Irish kings, princes and generals, adorned the niches of the halls of Tara." To give a slight idea of the regal splendor of king Cormac's court, I will give a brief description of it. On his side-board on public festivals, were displayed one hundred and fifty cups of massy gold and silver. One hundred and fifty brave knights, constantly attended on his person; and one thousand fifty soldiers mounted guard every day, on all the approaches to the palace, (which were five), to point out to the public, with greater dignity, where the monarch resided. Besides his state bed, were one hundred and fifty in the apartments of the palace, only, to lodge such as were in immediate attendance. An open table was constantly kept for fifteen hundred persons; and he regulated the great officers of his court and determined their number, which was invariably continued to the dissolution of the monarchy, in the twelfth century; these were, first, a prince of the blood, for

a companion; secondly, a chief judge to consult in all critical cases; thirdly, a chief druid, to direct his conscience—an office now filled in the person of the Lord Chancellor of England towards her present Majesty; fourthly, a chief physician; fifthly, an antiquarian to consult in points of history and chronology; sixthly, a poet to recite his praises and those of his ancestors; seventhly, a chief musician with his band, in times of relaxation; and three stewards of his household to see the contributions from the different provinces paid in, and to superintend the economy of his household. He also added three new foundations to these already established at Tara. The first, a military academy for instructing the young nobility in feats of arms; the second, an historic one, where doctors in history assembled from time to time, to examine the public records; and the third, an academy for lawyers to meet in, to superintend, explain, and make law and justice compatible *— (an object much to be desired at the present day.) The Irish were not then blessed with packed juries; that feature was reserved for the English mis-government of Ireland.

Cormac, after a brilliant reign of twenty-three years, resigned the crown in favor of his son, and retired to a cottage in Meath, near the royal palace. It was in that humble abode that he wrote his "advice to princes," addressed to his son, a copy of which is in the possession of the O'Halloran family of Limerick. The Gælic society of Dublin, says of this great man—"Cormac was pre-eminently distinguished, above all others, for his profound knowledge in the history and jurisprudence of his country. The schools he endowed, the books he composed, and the laws he established, bear unquestionable testimony of his munificence, wisdom and learn-

* See O'Halloran's History p. 119.

ing. Dr. Warner adds—"King Cormac had convinced himself of the absurdity of idolatry, upon principles of philosophic reason." There never had been a monarch on the throne of Ireland who was attended by such a numerous retinue. The ensigns and distinctions of royalty, which he had about him, which were equal to the dignity of the greatest prince of that time, made the court of this monarch the theme of universal theme. What added something to its lustre, was his numerous issue—three sons of great renown in arms, and ten daughters of distinguished beauty and rare accomplishments. Of the magnificent marble court which he erected on Tara Hill, not a stone of it is to be seen.

The far-famed hill of Tara, is about sixteen miles from Dublin. It was, for many ages, the theater of the deeds of Milesian kings and senates. It is a spot consecrated in the memories of the Irish people. The fall of Tara is associated in their minds with the fall of their country. When I come to that exciting period in Irish events—that great moral agitation created by D. O'Connell, I will have a few words to say about Tara Hill.

CHAPTER X.

FION MC'CUMHALL — OISIN, THE HOMER OF IRELAND — THE FOUR DYING INJUNCTIONS OF AN EMINENT IRISH JUDGE TO HIS SON.

I CANNOT pass over this era in Irish history, without devoting a page or two to the two great men — father and son — who have, by the military fame of the one, and the transcendent genius of the other, shed a luster on this page of their country's history. Fion flourished in the beginning of the second century of the christian era. His great military exploits, and feats of personal bravery, render his niche in the temple of fame to be surrounded by a romantic drapery. The history of this great general appears doubtful to those who are unwilling to believe aught that is brave and virtuous of Ireland, in the ages of her bright career — her independence. Fion was a great hero, a great general, and a great legislator; he resided chiefly on the hill of Allen, in the county of Kildore. He was, for many years, the terror of the Romans, in Britian. It is said, he made no less than thirty descents on Wales, which was then under the government of the Romans, and carried thence great quantities of spoils each time. He was general-in-chief of the Irish militia.

Warner says in reference to the Leinster militia—"That great body of Irish heroes (the militia) was commanded by Fion, the gallant son of Cumhall, who was married to the daughter of Carmac-cas." He had two sons, Oisin and Feargus. Oisin commanded in his father's legions, in Caledonia, against the Roman army. His poems were principally written in the camp, or on the march, and were founded on the wars, successes or reverses, victories or deaths of the Irish heroes who accompanied his father's legions in their warlike expeditions against the Romans. MacPherson, a Scotchman, who wrote about one century ago, claims him to be a Scotchman, but MacPherson's historical absurdities have been too fully exposed to need any further exposition. The learned Dr. Young, bishop of Clonfert, went to Scotland in 1784; an extract from his letter, written in the highlands, and published by the Gaelic society of Dublin, is alone sufficient to quelch MacPherson's heresy. "They readily assented to the dishonest fabrication of MacPherson, and declared they knew from undisputed tradition that Fingal, Oisin, Oscar, and all the other Finnian heroes were Irish." † The talented Pepper, says:—"Has not the voice of literary Europe reproached them (the Scotch) for national vanity in pluming themselves with borrowed feathers, clandestinely plucked from the wings of Irish songsters? And for clothing the meager, deformed, and decayed skeleton of their history in garments stolen from the wardrobes of our learned antiquarians and annalists? So much for Scottish arrogance in vainly endeavoring to build up a Scotch fame at the expense of Irish antiquities and annals. A specimen of the poetry of the Oisianic age, as I find copied by Mr. Mooney in his

† See publication of Gaelic Society, Dublin.

history; it is an address from Fion to his son Oisin, on choosing a wife:—

My son of the noble line,
Of Heremonian heroes!
Thou gallant descendant of Erin's kings,
The down of youth grows on thy cheek;
Martial renown is loud in thy praise;
Romans fear thee — their eagles
Were dazzled by the lightning of thy spear!
They flew before thee like timid birds
Before the hawks of Leinster!
Is it in the morning of thy fame,
Bright with the sunbeams of martial glory,
That thou wouldst ally thyself
With the daughter of the Pict,
And thus sully
The royal purity of Milesian blood?
Thy country is proud of thy exploits,
And the royal virgins of Erin
Sigh for thy love,
While Cormac's bards
Sing the deeds of thy bravery,
In the battles of the mighty!
O! then, Oisin,
Of dulcet harmony,
Listen to the voice of thy father.
Albanian maids are fair,
But fairer and lovelier are
The chaste daughters of thine own
Wave-washed isle
Of wood-crested hills!
Go to thy happy isle — to Branno's
Grass-covered field,
Ever — Allen the most brilliant gem
In the diadem of female loveliness,
The trembling dove of innocence,
And the daughter of my friend,
Deserves thy attachment. †

† From Baron Harold's tranlation.

Oisin's lament for his sight is, according to competent judges, equal to Milton's on the same bereavement. It is remarkable that the three celebrated poets, Homer, Milton, and Oisin, were each blind, for many years of their lives. This memorable era — King Cormac's reign — is rivited on the mind by the brilliant array of those great minds which acted so prominent a part on the stage of Irish events at that period, and the great display of military and literary genius which was fostered and cherished by royal patronage. Among the number of learned and illustrious personages who graced the court of Cormac, was his chief justice, (Fiothill.) Being deeply versed in the ways of men and kings, on his dying bed he gave a particular charge to his eldest son and successor, and on whom he bestowed a most liberal education, carefully to observe the four following maxims. As it appears to convey some useful information, I shall give it as found in O'Halloran's history. "First, never to undertake the tuition of the son of a king; secondly, never to communicate a secret of importance to a woman; thirdly, not to be instrumental in advancing a person of low birth to an exalted station; and, fourthly, not to entrust the management of his affairs, or the keeping of his money, to a sister." The young lawyer, though he much revered his father, was resolved to put all these maxims to a trial. He therefore undertook to educate the young prince Carbre, king Cormac's son. When about four years old, he had the child conveyed, in the most private manner, to a wood by one of his fosterer's; there to be concealed till he sent a certain token agreed on, when, and not before, the child was to be produced. Having thus provided for the child's security, he returned home, exceedingly dejected, which his wife perceiving, requested to know the cause. His evasive answers rather inflamed her curiosity, and she became

more importunate. He seemed to relent, and after binding her to the most solemn secrecy, he told her that he had the misfortune to kill his royal pupil. The poor woman, big with this secret, waited the first opportunity of displaying her prudence and discretion. Some altercation arose between them a little time after. She charged him highly with this crime — had him bound by his own servants, and delivered to the proper judges. He had already by his interest promoted the son of a rustic to an honorable employment; and on the death of his father, entrusted his sister with considerable sums of money. The death of the young prince being proved by the depositions of his wife, he was condemned to die. He now solicited the interest of his upstart dependent, who sought only to destroy him, as his existence served only as a constant memento of the meanness of his extraction and dependence. Thus disappointed, he applied to his sister for a sum of money to raise friends among the courtiers; but she having a husband in view, denied having any property of his in her hands, and refused him the smallest sum. Thus circumstanced, he desired to be brought before the monarch — had the child produced in perfect health, and explained to Cormac the injunction which his dying father laid on him, and the means he used to examine the truth of them.

CHAPTER XI.

NIALL OF THE NINE HOSTAGES — VICTORIES OVER THE ROMAN LEGIONS — CONDITION OF IRELAND AT THIS PERIOD — IRELAND THE GREAT SCHOOL OF EUROPE — ADMISSIONS OF BRITISH WRITERS, ETC. — FROM THE THIRD TO THE FIFTH CENTURY OF THE CHRISTIAN ERA.

In the few preceding pages, I have feebly endeavored to show the great progress of arts and literature in Ireland, ere yet the radiating beams of christianity illumined her hills and valleys. We are now approaching that epoch in her history when her military glory, christian spirit, and evangelical deeds shine in bright refulgence on the historic page. At the close of the third century, we find Carbre, called Liffechaire, on account of his being nursed near the river Liffey, called to the throne. He inherited all the good qualities of his father, (Cormac) and exhibited in the government of the nation, the wisdom and virtues of that great monarch. He caused the history and antiquities of the country to he carefully revised. The reign of this prince is also noted as being the period in which that great body of Irish heroes — the Leinster militia — was disbanded and broken up. The history of that celebrated corps deserves a notice here, and a special place in our memory. Mr. O'Halloran goes into a lengthy account of the origin, progress, and discipline of military

institutions in Ireland; my limits will not allow me to go into detail on this subject. On the partition of the island, between Heber and Heremon, the different orders of people who attended them from Spain, were also divided; and the lands assigned to the military, were on condition of each chief's supporting a stipulated number of armed troops to attend the prince when called on. The land thus disposed of was called Fearanan Cloidheamh, or Sword-land. Behold then the origin of military tenures in Europe, and their antiquity! Every provincial king had this fine, or regular, military corps, and these were seldom less than seven legions, or twenty-one thousand men. From this, we infer the national forces amounted to one hundred thousand men—eighty-four for the provinces, and the remainder for the imperial domain around Tara. None were admitted into these legions but men of large stature, without the least deformity or blemish; they must be scholars, and well versed in poetry and history; they must be perfect in the use of arms, and give proofs of their dexterity as well for offense as defense. Each soldier must be endowed with sufficient activity to clear a wall as high as himself, and to run under the branches of a tree as low as his knee; he was bound not to fly singly from nine armed men. We find also, that to each legion were appointed a proper number of physicians and surgeons, taken from the most eminent universities in the kindgom. Each legion had also a band of music attendant on it; as well as a number of poets, to rehearse their mighty deeds, and excite them to feats of glory. We read in the battle of Ventry, in the County of Kerry, when Oisin was hard set in single combat, the poet Feargus animated him aloud, and he killed his adversary. I apprehend that neither ancient nor modern history can furnish a more wise and

formidable military institution than this. The constant exercise of the Irish military, will explain very clearly not only why they kept their own country free from foreign domination, but why also they were enabled to pour their troops on the continent, and why, in the days of Cæsar, and other successive Roman generals, they so successfully fought the Roman legions on the plains of Britain.

In this reign, the celebrated Moghcarb ruled over Munster. As his name and great exploits are intimately connected with the destruction of the Leinster militia, I here introduce the name of that famous hero. His mother was a Danish princess, called Illcrotach — all-lovely. The two brothers of this princess were forced to fly to Ireland, to look for aid from their nephew — to dethrone the usurper of their father's crown. Through the persuasions of his mother, Moghcarb prepared a large fleet, and with a select body of troops, taken out of the Munster and Leinster militia, he invaded Denmark. The Danes prepared to meet him. The battle was fierce and obstinate. The superior bravery and discipline of the Irish at length prevailed. The Danes were totally routed. There fell on the Danish side, the usurper, his four sons, and four brothers, numbers of his commanders, and three thousand of his soldiers. Moghcarb caused his two uncles to be proclaimed joint Kings of Denmark; exacted tribute from the Danes for the expenses of the war, and returned home crowned with glory. The fame of Moghcarb naturally begot the enmity of other princes of his own country, which finally ended in open hostilities, and unhappily we are pained to read of those brilliant arms, which won such trophies abroad, turned by Irish heroes on each other. Carbre, the prince of Ulster, led his forces toward Munster, the territory of Moghcarb. The contending armies met on the plains of Meath,

near Tara. The Leinster and Connaught militia were rivals since the days of Con. The entire forces of both provinces appeared under arms that day, and as neither knew fear, or thought of retreating, it became a total carnage upon both sides. Of Fion's troops, not one escaped, but Oisin, the father of Osgur, the Clani Marni, or Connaught troops, met the same fate. Osgur, the general, after performing prodigies of valor, fell by the sword of Carbre, the king of Ulster; and he, in turn, met the same fate from the arm of the great Moghcarb. This battle was fought at the close of the third century. The only princes who survived this dreadful day, were the hero Moghcarb and Aadth, king of Connaught; the latter, the year after, raised a new army, engaged Moghcarb on the borders of Munster, in which action the gallant Moghcarb fell. The Leinster militia were thus totally destroyed. Osgur, their general, was slain. This band of heroes was totally extinguished by that misfortune. The Munster militia, which was revived by Moghcarb, continued to exist for many centuries after.

I must necessarily skip over the reign of several monarchs who succeeded Carbre, before I light on the reign of the celebrated Niall of the nine hostages. The deeds of the intervening princes were of the average character. About the middle of the fourth century, a vote of the estates at Tara, placed young Niall upon the throne. Troubles and invasions arising in Scotland, between the Irish settlements there and the Romans, on the British side of the border, Niall went over with a large force. The colonists submitted, and acknowledged that all Scotland, except that part north of the Friths of Clyde and Forth, was subject to the Irish monarch, to be governed by laws made by the parent power in Ireland. Even Hume, the English historian, admits this. "In very

ancient language, Scotland means only the country north of the Friths of the Clyde and Forth. I shall not make a parade of literature to prove it, because I do not find that the Scots themselves deny the point." The second great military expedition, fitted out by Niall, was for the purpose of suppressing the Roman power in Gaul. With an immence force he entered that country, marched through the provinces, and encamped on the banks of the Loire. He laid waste the Roman settlements, returned home loaded with spoils and treasure, and many captives, among whom was the youth that became afterwards the apostle St. Patrick.

On Niall's second descent upon Gaul, where in the midst of a triumphant career, he fell by an arrow shot at him from an assassin. His army re-embarked, taking with them his dead body, which was interred in Ireland, with great pomp. He was called the "Hero of the Nine Hostages," because he compelled nine nations to send him hostages. No monarch carried the glory of the Irish arms further than Niall. He drove the Romans out of Caledonia, and pursued them to the banks of the Loire, in France. The first invasion of Gaul by Niall, and consequently the caption of the future great Apostle, with his two sisters, took place A. D. 388. The second, which proved fatal to this renowned prince and hero, happened A. D. 420.

After the death of the great Niall, Dathy, his nephew, was called to the Irish throne. Like his predecessor, he too headed a powerful army, drove the Romans out of Britain; passed with his victorious army over to Gaul, where he subdued the recruited legions of Rome, and chased them to the very foot of the Alps, where he was killed by lightning. Dathy was the last pagan monarch of Ireland. The Roman power was now completely extinguished in Britain; her prov-

inces broke away from her, and finally she collapsed, after having persecuted mankind for seven centuries.

As this chapter closes on pagan Ireland, and before we proceed to consider her career, under the mild and renovating influences of the christian religion, it may be well to introduce here the testimony of a few writers of unquestionable authority, to prove that even pagan Ireland was the Athens of Europe. Three great circumstances mainly contributed to render Ireland the great seat of literature for western Europe. First, the nations of Europe were kept constantly agitated and harassed by the Romans, which drove the studious to Ireland, the only spot in Europe which preserved its independence, and where their persons and properties were safe from outrage. Secondly, the sons of Milesius brought with them the arts and sciences, known in ancient Egypt, the knowledge of manufactures, the art of dyeing, and working metals, which were known in Tyre — then the queen city of the world. In the preceding pages, I have adduced proofs to sustain this. Thirdly, the healthful climate of Ireland, its fruitful soil, its delicious air and water, its romantic recesses, time-honored by the study of the bards, and Druids,—all would conspire to attract the studious to its inviting bosom. I will now endeavor to present the testimony of a few eminent historians, to show what ancient Ireland was ere it had been reduced to the benignant sway of the gospel, through the missionary labors of its patron saint. Sir James Mackintosh — the ornament of English literature — whose philosophic eye penetrated the recesses of nature and of science; the advocate of civil and religious liberty; the companion of Henry Brougham. He honored Scotland by his birth — honored literature by his genius — honored Ireland by the honest testimony he gave of her ancient greatness, and learning —

he honored mankind by his moral worth. Hear what that shining light of the nineteenth century says:—"The chronicles of Ireland, written in the Irish language, from the second century to the landing of Henry Plantegenet, have been recently published, with the fullest evidence of their genuineness and exactness. The Irish nation, though they are robbed of many of their favorite legends, by this authentic publication, are yet by it enabled to boast that they possess genuine history, several centuries more ancient than any other European nation possessess, in its present spoken language. They have exchanged their legendary antiquity for historical fame. Indeed, no other nation possesses any monument of its literature, which goes back within several centuries of those chronicles. Some of Dr. O'Connor's readers may hesitate to admit the degree of culture and prosperity he claims for his countrymen, but no one, I think, can deny, after perusing his proofs, that the Irish were a lettered people, while the Saxons were still immersed in darkness and barbarism." † The English historian, Warner, says:—"Will it be any longer doubted, after this, whether the ancient Irish had any philosophy, literature, or arts, in their pagan state? Will any critic in this country, (England) any longer confidently assert, that the Irish had not the use of letters till the arrival of St. Patrick? and the conversion of the Ireland to christianity? Ought we Englishmen not rather to take shame to ourselves, that we have hitherto always treated that ancient, gallant people, with such illiberal contempt, who had the start of the Britons for many ages, in arts and sciences, in learning and laws." Camden, another Englishman, says:—"St. Patrick found the Irish Druids, who contended with him at Tara, eminently versed in Grecian literature and astronomy."

† Sir James Mackintosh's History of England. Vol. 1, chap. 11,

Bishop Stillingfleet, an adverse authority, says:—"St. Patrick certainly brought no accession of literature to Ireland, as the Irish Druids were then the most learned body of men in Europe, and stood unrivalled in the cultivation of letters." Such testimony as this cannot be shaken by any doubts or cavils. Where is the man, that can stand forth, and say, in opposition to such evidence, that the Irish received the civilization and literature from the Saxon or Norman hordes? Such were Ireland and the Irish ere they embraced the christian religion. And this bright reflection on the page of Irish history, should cheer the exiled emigrant, as he wanders from that Island, whose soil is consecrated with the dust of Milesian saints, sages, and heroes. As we proceed, we shall see her embracing christianity, without the shedding of one drop of blood. Her missionaries going forth instructing and converting the Saxon, the Pict, the Gaul, the Belgian, the German, the Italian, during the brilliant ages that she was mistress of the world's literature; when Greece was all but forgotten; when Rome had fallen beneath the weight of her own corruption and wickedness; when England was the theater of contending barbarisms — Saxon and native Britons,—and when Europe was trod alone by the barbarian, Goth and Vandal,—then was Ireland the seat of learning and piety; revered among the nations, and honored by the appellation of "*Insula doctorum et sanctorum*"—Island of saints and doctors.†

† T. Mooney's History. Vol. 1.

CHAPTER XII.

CHRISTIANITY IN IRELAND PREVIOUS TO THE ARRIVAL OF ST. PATRICK — ST. PATRICK — HIS MISSION — CHURCHES AND COLLEGES FOUNDED IN THE FIFTH CENTURY, ETC.

It is a popular belief among many persons, that St. Patrick was the first christian bishop who announced to the Irish nation "the glad tidings of the gospel." This is a mistake, and requires that the opinions and testimony of a few eminent early writers should be here introduced in opposition to this common but erroneous theory. The constant enmity which existed between the Roman emperors and the Irish, for the first four centuries of the christian era, prevented any kind of friendly intercourse between the two nations. Had it not been for this political strife, doubtless, the christian religion would have been first introduced by the Roman See into Ireland. The christian doctrine first came from the churches of Asia, and not immediately from Rome, to Ireland, To prove that christianity was preached in Ireland, at a much earlier period than is generally supposed, O'Halloran, and others, go into a learned discussion on that point. Mansuetus, an Irishman, the first bishop and patron of Toul, and cannonized by Leo the Ninth, is said to have been a disciple of St. Peter.* From this opinion, O'Halloran dissents.

* O'Halloran's History — Dolby's edition.

"To me," says O'Halloran, "it would seem that Mansuetus, and the other Irish christians, were rather the disciples of St. John the Evangelist; and I ground my opinion on what the venerable Bede relates, touching the famous controversy about the celebration of Easter." * He tells us, that in defense of the Irish time of celebrating this feast, in opposition to that of Rome, Colnan, the Irish bishop of Tindisfarn, among other reasons, declares — "that he had received it from his forefathers, who sent him to Northumberland as their bishop; and, that it was the same custom, St. John — Christ's specially beloved disciple — with all the churches under him, observed." St. James, the son of Bebedee, it is said, also preached the gospel in Ireland. † In the reign of Con, in the second century, Ireland sent forth the famous St. Cathaldus, to preach the doctrine of Christ; and he became bishop and patron of Tarentum, in Italy. ‡ In the next age, Cormac, as great a legislator, and as wise a prince as any nation produced, before his death became a christian, and died in that faith.

I have, in a preceding chapter, alluded to king Cormac's conversion. In the next reign, we read of an Irish bishop's suffering martyrdom in Britain. The missionaries in the fourth century not only produced, but founded churches, and opened colleges in Ireland. Among those, was the holy Diana, whose name, a church near Adare, in the county of Limerick, still bears. Ibarus, soon after, founded an academy at a place called Beg-lire, in Leinster, where, as Usher notes, "he instructed very great numbers of Irish, as well as foreigners, in sacred and polite letters." § Father Colgan,

* Usher's Primord, p. 747.

† Usher, p. 5.

‡ Hist. Eccls. Brit. Lib. 111, chap. 25.

§ Usher Primord, p. 301.

says — "that people from all parts crowded to his schools to be instructed in christianity and letters." * Albe, archbishop of Munster, and his cotemporary, Usher, tells us, after preaching through the whole kingdom, founded his church and schools at Emely. St. Kieran and St. Declan, also preceded St. Patrick, and founded churches; and we find that when this apostle required their acknowledging him as primate of all Ireland, it produced some dissensions. "Ibarus, particularly protesting against giving the supremacy and patronage of Ireland to any but a native." Bede affirms, that in the eighth year of the reign of the emperor Theodosius, Palladius was sent by Celestin, bishop of the Roman church, to the "Scots believing in Christ." The Irish were unwilling to acknowledge ecclesiastical obedience to Rome — a power whose arms they so bravely and successfully resisted in the field. They did not then perceive the distinction between the temporal power of the Roman emperors and the spiritual power of the chief bishop of the christian church. His mission was attended with no great success. To his successor was reserved the glory and honor of having totally extinguished the pagan worship in Ireland. All historians admit, that before St. Patrick alone, did the mysterious ceremonies of the Druids vanish.

Without entering farther into the efforts of the first christian missionaries to convert the Irish, I will proceed with St. Patrick, and his mission. With regard to the birth place of this great apostle, some discussion has arisen among writers. The generally adopted opinion is, that he was from Wales; his mother was a Frank; she was sister of St. Martin, bishop of Tours. Patrick, with his father, mother, brother, and five sisters, embarked from Wales for Brittany; probably

* Vita St. Albani.

to avoid the dangers and distresses incident to constant invasions. One thing is admitted by all, namely, that he and his two sisters were taken as captives to Ireland, by Niall, the grand. According to the custom practiced in those ages, in reference to captives taken in war, St. Patrick, then sixteen years of age, and his two sisters, Lupida and Deverca, were sold as slaves, for the period of seven years. He was sold to one Milcho, living in that part of the island known as Antrim, where he was appointed a shepherd. The mountain now known as Sliobh Miss, was the place of his meditation and prayer. After his term of servitude was ended, he returned to the continent, and obtained entrance into the college of Tours, in which his uncle, Martin, was a teacher. In this place, he studied four years. After St. Martin's death, in four or five years, he set out for Rome; where he was admitted among the prebendaries of St. John of Lateran; he was then thirty years of age. He studied for some time here. He afterwards visited several holy retreats in the islands of the Mediterranean, and attached himself to the bare-footed order of St. Augustine. From these he went to study with St. Germain, at Auxerre. Here he prepared himself more especially for performing the important services to christianity, which subsequently crowned his life. Leaving St. Germain, he entered the monastery of the Isle of Lerius, where he continued for nine years, in close study. After his leaving Lerius, he returned to Auxerre, to his beloved friend, St. Germain. When the news of Palladius' death had reached them, St. Germain sent him to Rome, with instructions, upon the mission to Ireland. He was then thirty-eight years old. After having had his interviews with Pope Celestine, he hastened towards Ireland, with twenty men, eminent for their wisdom and sanctity, appointed by the Pontiff him-

self, to assist him in his mission. This took place A. D. 430. The limits of this brief work will not permit of a detailed account of the signal and miraculous successes which attended the labors of this great apostle in his missionery career of over sixty years. So great and signal was this success, that in a few years, the princes and chief nobility of the kingdom became christians. Not only this, but so great was their zeal, and so pure their intentions, that they did not deem it sufficient to devote a part of their riches, their flocks, and corn, to God, but bestowed also their sons on the church. Hence the amazing number of devout recluses and holy bishops of the purest blood of Ireland, which passed over to Britain, Gaul, and the continent, to establish the christian doctrine by their precept and example. It is recorded that, during St. Patrick's mission, he ordained no less than three thousand priests, aad consecrated three hundred and sixty bishops — none of whom were received who had not given the clearest evidences of a holy and devout life. By the prudence, moderation, and good sense of the apostle, was the whole kingdom reduced to the mild, sovereign sway, of the christian religion. And this wonderful reform was conducted with so much wisdom, that it produced not the least disturbance. Holy abbots at that time, and for centuries after, erected their retreats in the most sequestered spots of Ireland, that nothing might disturb their prayers and meditations. Scarce an island, or solitary spot, in Ireland, that spiritual retreats were not already made in, and churches and abbeys erected — the remains of some of which, are still visible. The apostle was so anxious to purify the laws and literature of the country, that, for this purpose, he obtained a committee of nine from the national assembly. Among these were the king, and some others of the provincial nobles. It is related that,

during the session of this committee, the saint, with his own hand, burned several hundred volumes of poetry, and other works, of the Druids. A general destruction of the poetic works of the ancient Irish ensued. In the course of this rigid scrutiny, all the Brehon laws were thoroughly examined, and among them was discovered that priceless feature in our jurisprudence of the present day — the "trial of the twelve men." Here, then, is the great foundation of that palladium of human liberty, found entwined in the ancient Brehon code of laws, which existed in Ireland centuries previous to the christian era. Persons who are in the habit of reading scarce anything else but British history, entertain the idea that king Alfred invented the trial by jury. A reference to Leland's history of England, and O'Halloran's history of Ireland, might tend to remove that erroneous impression to a great extent. No scholar, or jurist, will venture to say that the trial by the jury of twelve men was known to the laws of the Greek islands. It cannot be found in the laws of the twelve tables of Rome, nor in the pandects of Justinian — a work which embodied the entire laws of the Roman empire. No feature of it can be found in the institutions of the Visigoths, whose kings succeeded those of Rome, in Italy, and who introduced, throughout the south of Europe, a new code of jurisprudence. It cannot be traced in the laws of the Astrogoths, who swarmed around the shores of the Baltic; and, least of all, can a trace of it be found among the customs of the Saxons, who were the most ferocious and illiterate of the barbarian hordes of ancient Europe. This great vital principal of jurisprudence can only be first found in the Brehen code of laws in Ireland. It was classed amongst the "breathe nhime" — celestial jugdments. It was found in operation by Alfred, when he received his education in Ire-

land, where many Saxon princes and priests came, in those ages, to be instructed in law, literature, and religion.

St. Patrick, having completed the conversion of Ireland, departed for Rome, to report to his holiness the success which attended his labors. The order of "patricius" — a Roman title — was there conferred on him. Some historians assert that, that order was conferred before his mission to Ireland. This as it may be; it was a title of marked distinction and honor. It was more honorable than the ancient Roman order of the "patricii", for the christian order of patricii, ranked next to the emperors. It was instituted by Constantine the Great, the first christian emperor of Rome. When Ireland became thoroughly christian, her people, in reverence toward their beloved apostle, called their male children "patricius," after him. Afterwards, it becams abbreviated into "pat," and corrupted into "paddy." Do the great masses of vulgarity, who use the term "pat" or "paddy," as a medium of reproach towards the expatriated Irishman, know that it was a title of the highest honor, which the Roman emperors could confer? A title which was woven in the fondest memories of the Irish—a name honored, for fourteen hundred years, by the children of Erin — a name that will go down honored to the remotest posterity — reminding all nations that a mighty change was effected in the minds of an entire nation, by its illustrious bearer, without resorting to a single act of persecution! It was a title which the nobility of Europe, in succeeding generations, were proud to wear. We find that the emperor Charlemagne, and other kings of France, assumed the title of patricii, in the eighth and ninth centuries. The apostle retained the title during his life time, by which title he is recognized by posterity. *

* Mooney's History.

On his second visit to Rome, he was received with the utmost degree of honor. He was appointed legate, or chief, of the clergy of Ireland. He returned to the scene of his loved labors; he appointed thirty new chief bishops, and divided the kingdom into sees, deanaries, rectores, and parishes; over which, he placed eminent ecclesiastics of learning and piety. Those divisions constitute the boundaries of the English church in Ireland, at the present day. This great apostle of Ireland, toward the close of his life, retired to Lough Derg, in the county of Donegal, where he spent the last years of his life in pious meditation and prayers — occasionally presiding over great synods of the clergy. After a long life of piety, usefulness, and fame, the saint sank to rest, at the age of one hundred and twenty-six, honored and revered by nations. He sank peacefully — the bright luminary of heaven in the distant west — blending his glory with the light of the gospel sun. Like his divine Master, no pomp heralded his coming; no mailed armies guarded his dying couch; the winged messengers of heaven bore him to the presence of his Creator. He was buried in Dounpatrick, in the north of Ireland. A splendid shrine was erected here for the saint, which was adorned with costly and precious jewels; his staff was laid by his side. Here his sainted bones rested, and here remained his shrine, and the offerings of piety which adorned it, till the reign of Henry the Eighth, when the fanatics of that age scattered the sacred pile, and carried away the sacred staff which the apostle carried when he performed the sacred offices of his ministry. Cambrensis visited the tomb of this saint in 1174, and upon it found the following Latin inscription:—

"Hi tres Duno, tumulo tumulanter in uno,
Brigida, Patricius, atque Columba Pius."

"In Down, three saints one grave do fill,
Bridget, Patrick, and Columb-Kille."

It is recorded, that during the mission of St. Patrick, upwards of seven hundred religious houses were built and consecrated. Besides these, the celebrated St. Bridget founded her famous monastery in Kildare, toward the close of the fifth century. Lismore, another famous seat of learning, was celebrated, even in pagan times, for its literary fame. It is situated in the south of Ireland, on the banks of the river Blackwater, which runs into the Atlantic at Youghal. It was here that the great Irish missionary and St. Cataldus studied, and king Cormac was educated; and here, Cormac of Cashell, was entombed. It was the sepulchre of sages and kings for many ages; and when the cross was raised upon its time-honored towers, the pious of the European nations came thither to worship. "Lismore is a holy city. It was filled with cells and holy monasteries, and a number of holy men are always in it. The religious flow to it from every part of Ireland, England and Britain, anxious to emigrate to Christ, and the city itself is situated on the southern banks of the river." *

* Allemand's Monastic History of Ireland.

CHAPTER XIII.

RESUMPTION OF THE MILESIAN HISTORY—STATE OF EUROPE IN THE FIFTH CENTURY — SAXONS OBTAIN A FOOTING IN IRELAND; THEIR TREACHEROUS MASSACRE OF UPWARDS OF THREE HUNDRED BRITONS — IRISH MISSIONARIES — THE ENGLISH INDEBTED TO IRELAND FOR THEIR LITERATURE AND LAWS, ETC. — FROM THE FIFTH TO THE EIGHTH CENTURY.

In a preceding chapter, I have stated that Dathy was the last pagan monarch of Ireland. He was the successor and nephew of Niall, of the nine hostages. He also invaded Gaul with a powerful army, and pursued the Roman army to the foot of the Alps, where he was killed by lightning. This happened A. D. 430. The estates were convened to elect a successor; and Logaire, the son of the renowned hero, Niall, was unanimously called to the monarchy. He was the first christian monarch of Ireland. He invaded Briton, and caused the Britons to pay a heavy tax to insure themselves from the unwelcome visits of an exasperated enemy. Many of the Britons evinced a strong predeliction for Roman supremacy; they were eager to obtain Roman offices; they preferred the flesh-pots of Rome to their country's independence, which I am pained to record, is the case with some Irishmen, too, in preferring Saxon offices and emoluments to

their own, and their country's independence. This conduct of the Britons so exasperated the Scots and Picts, that they combined to punish the Britons, whom they viewed as the avowed slaves of Rome, in manifesting a veneration for Rome and slavery, rather than a love of liberty. We find the Britons were often reduced to great extremities from these frequent invasions of the Scots and Picts. Being unaided by the Roman arms, they could offer but a feeble resistance to their more powerful neighbors. The Romans had, at this period, abandoned Britain, after having held a nominal possession of it for about four hundred years. The Roman occupation of Britain, appears to be a blank in the page of history, so far as it relates to the improvement of the country, or the introduction and establishment of industrial or literary institutions for the people whom they governed. The Irish monarch, Logaire, after having chastised the Britons for their contumacy, returned home, flushed with victory, resolved to compel the Lagenians or Leinster people to pay their usual tribute; which, it appears, they seemed to refuse. The Leinster prince entered into treaty with the king of Munster, in order to secure the services of the Munster troops, in case the monarch should resort to arms. The Leinster prince foresaw that a refusal, on his part, would lead to immediate hostilities; and in order to prepare himself for that event, he had, by secret treaty, secured the powerful assistance of the Mamonian* army. The contending armies met in the county of Kildare. The battle was bloody and well fought on both sides; but the superior discipline of the Mamonians, at length prevailed, and the imperialists gave way on every side. The monarch was taken prisoner, and purchased his liberty by swearing to exonerate the province of Leinster from all future

* Munster.

demands of tribute. Logaire, after a reign of thirty years, was killed by lightning.

I must necessarily pass over the reigns of many monarchs who filled the Irish throne, from the death of Logaire to the close of the eighth century. I will only introduce the names of such monarchs as appear to merit our special interest and attention. I may here remark that there reigned thirty-one kings from Logaire, the first christian monarch, about 430, to the close of the eighth century; which gives an average reign of nearly twelve years. The average kingly reign of the Milesian dynasty in Ireland, for two thousand years, comes up to thirteen years; which is an unerring index of national civilization. A few digressional remarks on the state of Europe at this period, viz: the close of the fifth century, may not be out of place. We find Ireland, at this period, wholly subject to the mild sway of the cross. For the previous eighteen centuries of her career, she preserved an unbroken sovereignty and a brilliant fame. She witnessed the rise and fall of Carthage and of Greece; the rise of Rome—her career of conquest and aggrandizement; and she beheld her fall a victim to her own tyranny and vice.

About the close of the fifth century, we find the Roman empire in the west broken up, and the Goths seated on the throne of the Cæsars. It is computed from that period back to the foundation of the city by Romulus, there passed twelve hundred and twenty years. During the first five hundred years of its existence, there was no written history of Rome or its people. The history of Ireland was commenced by the arch druid, Ambhergin, thirteen hundred years B. C., as before stated in the early part of this work. Ireland was a nation ere Rome had risen; Ireland was in her meridian splendor of nationality when Rome fell. The northern na-

tions, at this period, shaking off the fetters of her broken power, swept like a tornado over Europe. Arts, science, literature—all that was valuable in letters, were covered in the chaos of eternal night. For nearly a hundred years, this desolating scene of carnage and commotion continued. Hundreds sought refuge in Ireland—the only spot that was found in Europe, sacred to liberty and literature. In Britain, the Saxons, about this time, obtained a footing in the country. It appears that the Irish monarch, Logaire, formed an alliance, offensive and defensive, between the Saxon tribe in Germany, and the Picts and himself, for their mutual protection against the Romans. The treacherous addictions of the chiefs in Britain, towards their tottering masters, presented a reasonable cause for this alliance, and a just ground for the infliction of punishment on them by the Scots and their allies. The Irish monarch had the address to prevail on the most influential and national of the old Britons, to invite the Saxons into their country, and allot them lands to colonize and cultivate. Thus, the Saxons got their first footing in Britain; and they, observing the weakness of the Britons, in cherishing an abject subserviency to a fallen power, formed the design of seizing on the government. This appears to have been favored by the Irish princes, on account of the protection it would afford their own territories. This alliance—the result of their immediate wisdom, proved, in after ages, the cause of their fall. This accounts for, and explains the great care the Irish had then for the Saxons, the attention they paid to reform their rude manners; to instruct them in the principles of christianity and in letters; to ordain bishops and priests for the Saxon mission; to found schools and seminaries for them in different parts of the kingdom, which is fully set forth by the venerable Bede—a Saxon—in his eccles-

iastical history of Britain. * The first body of Saxons landed in Britain in the middle part of the fifth century. They landed at the isle of Thanet. They came from the north-west of Germany, under the command of two brothers—Hengist and Horsa. They were kindly received, and they enlisted in the service of Vortigern, then king of the Britons. After a short time, they sent for further reinforcements. In this second expedition, there came Danes and Angles, and also the fair Rowena, niece of Hengist, with whom the British prince became enamored and soon after wedded. This alliance served to strengthen the bonds of amity between the prince and his hired auxiliaries. The new-comers assuming more authority than the old inhabitants thought prudent or safe, loudly called for their dismissal, and their return to their own country. The Saxons refused, and the unfortunate Britons, who had but just been freed from Roman oppression, had now to fight for existence against Saxon tyranny. Active hostilities commenced between the Saxons and the native Britons. This struggle for sovereignty, lasted for nearly a century. The Saxons being constantly reinforced, became too powerful for the Britons. In 542, a decisive battle was fought. The celebrated Prince Arthur commanded the Britons. The battle was sanguinary and obstinate; the Saxon general fell, and the brave Arthur fell, also, and with him sank the cause of the Britons. Finally the Saxons and Angles became so numerous, that they agreed to partition off the kingdom into seven principalities, known as the "English heptarchy." This took place towards the latter part of the sixth century, and continued from this period to the beginning of the eighth, when another organic change took place, by the invasion of the Danes.

* See O'Halloran's History—Dolby's edition.

To show some of the means employed by the Saxons in establishing their first power in Britain, it will be necessary to give a brief account of probably one of the blackest crimes which stain the page of history. It fails to find a parallel in the whole catalogue of man's crimes. In the whole annals of the collected perfidy of mankind, it stands unequalled. It will be remembered, that on the arrival of the first body of Saxons, the niece of Hengist, one of the Saxon leaders, was married to Vortigern, (British.) By him, she had a daughter, who, when grown to maturity, was given in marriage to Vortimer, the commander-in-chief of the Britons. A conspiracy was formed, under the dictation of Hengist, to destroy this general. Rowena accomplished the deed by administering poison to her own son-in-law. The conspiracy between this cruel woman and her execrable husband, afterwards extended to the destruction of her own husband and three hundred of the chiefs of the Britons, under the following circumstances: Hengist gave a great entertainment, to which, under pretence of settling amicable conditions, then under negotiation, Prince Vortigern, with three hundred of his chiefs, were invited. At the urgent solicitation of this woman, they attended. In the midst of the banquet, they were surrounded by a body of armed Saxons, and all were butchered, only one escaping to tell the foul deed. This early specimen of Saxon treachery, was only the prelude to that more extensive and systematical drama of perfidy, which was subsequently introduced into Ireland, and which is so successfully repeated from time to time, in order to retain that ill-fated country in their unhallowed grasp. When we come to speak of modern Ireland, we shall then see more fully the iniquitous means employed by the successive British governments to enslave and degrade a whole nation. To return to the history of Ireland, during

the first ages of her christian career, I must, for brevity's sake, say, that during the fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth centuries, the attention and enthusiasm of the nation, seem to have been exclusively directed to the erection of churches, monasteries and colleges. If we except this great christian spirit and missionary zeal, which pervaded all classes in the kingdom, there is little else to dwell on. It would be a hopeless task to attempt to give in a work of this nature, anything like a detailed account of the literary and christian labors performed by the thousands of Irishmen who went forth into all parts of Europe to establish literature, and propagate the doctrines of the cross, during the first and second era of christianity. I cannot give more than the names of a few of the most eminent Irish missionaries, and the places they favored by their learning and sanctity. Camden, an English historian, remarks on this subject—"The disciples of St. Patrick made so great a progress in christianity, that in the following age, Ireland was called the Island of Saints; and none could be more holy and learned than the Irish monks, both in their own country and Britain, who sent swarms of most holy men into all Europe." The following are the names of a few Irish saints, who flourished in the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries, and who adorned their own and other countries by the eminence of their sanctity and learning: Catuldus, Sedulius, Columba, Columbanus, Colmanus, Aidanus, Gallus, Maildulphus, Brendanus. The first in this bright constellation of Irish divines, Catuldus, received his education in the celebrated college of Lismore. After having presided for some years over the bishopric of Ratheny in Ireland, he went to visit the holy land. On his return through Italy, he re-established the christion religion in Tarentum, as the Tarentines had already renounced it and returned to the wor-

ship of idols. They adopted him as their patron saint. "Rejoice, O happy Ireland, for being the country of so fair an offspring; but thou, Tarentum, rejoice still more, which encloses—within a tomb—so great a treasure!" * Such is the closing remarks of the celebrated Bishop Usher on this eminent Irish missionary. Sedulius, a most eminent scholar, who traveled through Europe, wrote several works in prose and verse. St. Columb-Kille, flourished about the beginning of the sixth century. He spent over thirty years of his life in north Britain, in diffusing knowledge and religion among the Picts and Scots. He established his monastery in the isle of Hy; and from thence, with his followers, entered the country of the Picts, and by his zeal and preaching, converted the whole country. He was interred in the abbey of Hy, about the close of the sixth century, but his remains were removed in the beginning of the ninth, and deposited in the monastery at Doun, with those of St. Patrick and St. Bridget, as noticed in the preceding chapter. Ireland has, in all ages, cherished a deep reverence for her great Columb-Kille. There is now deposited in Trinity College, Dublin, a copy of the "four gospels," in the hand-writing of Columb-Kille. Speaking of Iona, (Hy), Dr. Johnson writes—"We are now treading that illustrious island, which was once the luminary of the Caledonia regions. That man is little to be envied whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plains of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer upon the ruins of Iona." † Columbanus, a native of Leinster, performed a distinguished part in the foreign missionary field. He preached through several provinces of France, established monasteries in Luxen and Fontaine, in that country. Afterwards he w nt

* Usher's Church History.

† Journey to the Western Islands.

to Italy and founded the abbey of Bobbio, in Milan. He died there in the early part of the sixth century. His fame in Italy still lives in the every day remembrance of his name, which lives in the beautiful town of San Columbano, in the territory of Lodi." * Maildulphus, an Irish monk and a very learned man, went to England towards the close of the seventh century. The English historian, Camden, shall be my authority here. "Nor was it known by any other name for a long time, than Ingelborn, till Maildulphus, a certain Hibernian Scot, a man of the soundest erudition, and a peculiar sanctity of life, being taken by the deliciousness of the grove, after his opening a school and devoting himself, with his congregation to a monastic life, built a monastery in it. From hence it began to be called Maildulphus, and afterwards contracted into Malsbury. Among the disciples of Maildulphus, Aldelmus, who had been appointed his successor, was particularly noted; for he was the first of the English people who wrote in Latin, and was the first who taught the English to compose Latin verse." † I think the impartial reader will admit, when he weighs the unimpeachable authorities produced in favor of Ireland being the school of Europe during the early and middle ages of christianity, that Englishmen and Scotchmen are much indebted to Ireland for their political and literary institutions. With those who are disposed to keep Ireland in slavery and an Irishman in rags and filth, the testimony of honest writers avails little. Bede, Warner, Sir James McIntosh, Dr. Johnson—all are swamped by the British anti-Irish howl of death, expatriation and extermination to the Irish race. Let the testimony of such men be presented to the impartial, liberal-minded American; let it be rehearsed

* Moore's History.

† Camden, p. 176.

in every hut and palace throughout the length and breadth of the United States; let it be paraded before the rising and expansive intellect of this republican age and country: then will just conclusions follow, righteous and favorable convictions will multiply and preponderate in behalf of down-trodden Ireland. "This country, (the Danes), pressed upon Ireland, likewise, with the like carnage. There were in it, at that time, many nobles and gentry from among the English, who, having drawn themselves thither, either for the sake of divine study, or to lead more chaste lives—some gave themselves up to a monastic life, and others attended to hear professors. All of them the Scots most freely admitted, and supplied them gratis with daily sustenance, with books and masters." * McPherson, (Scotch), says—"In the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries, religion and learning flourished in Ireland to such a degree, that it was commonly styled the mother country of saints, and reputed the kingdom of arts and sciences." Camden, (English), who wrote in the sixteenth century, says—"Our Anglo-Saxons went, in those times, to Ireland, as if to a fair, to purchase knowledge. And we often find, in our authors, that if a person were absent, it was generally said of him, by way of a proverb, that he was sent to Ireland to receive his education. It even appears that our ancestors, the ancient Anglo-Saxons, had learned the use of characters in Ireland; and from the Irish, our ancient English ancestors appear to have received their method of forming letters, and obviously made use of the same characters which the Irish now make use of." † The characters here spoken of, refer to the old Irish letters. There was a college dedicated in Mayo to the exclusive education of the Saxons.

* Bede's Church History, vol. 3, ch. 27.

† Camden—British edition, p. 730.

It was called Maigh-Coan Sasson, or Mayo of the English. Bede informs us, that at one time, it contained one hundred Saxon saints. I must close this imperfect, but interesting sketch of our literary and christian missionaries, who appeared in the early ages of christianity, and resume the historical narrative.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE INVASIONS OF THE DANES — KING ALFRED — BRIEN BAROIMHE — THE BATTLE OF CLONTARF — THE DANES COMPLETELY SUBDUED — FROM THE EIGHTH TO THE BEGINNING OF THE ELEVENTH CENTURY.

During the three hundred years, over which I have ranged, viz., from the reign of Logaire, about the middle of the fifth, to the close of the eighth century, little material is left connected with civil or kingly affairs. The nation seems to have been wholly occupied in the diffusion of religion and literature over Europe. We are now approaching that epoch noted in the history of the christian world, as the dark ages, and more particularly marked in the history of western Europe by the eruption of the Scandinavian hordes of the north, commonly called Danes. They issued from the north of Europe in vast numbers. Inured to the hardships incident to a cold climate and sterile earth, they were prepared to risk any degree of hardship; even death, for the luxuries of a southern soil. They issued from the Baltic in large fleets, the construction of which was greatly facilitated by the abundance of ship timber which their country produced. They usually put to sea in the summer, plundering the European coasts on the Atlantic. It appears that their first incursions were only predatory. Emboldened by success, they increased

in numbers, and penetrated into the very heart of Europe. In the reign of Charles the Bald, towards the middle of the ninth century, they plundered many parts of France. Even in the reign of Charlemagne, they attempted the same thing, but were restrained by the military power and genius of that monarch. In 844, they attacked England, Ireland, France, Spain and Germany. Affrightened Europe stood astonished at their great numbers, their formidable fleets, and their extensive plunders. They sailed up the Thames, sacked Loudon, drove the Saxon kings from their stools, and laid the whole country under tribute. They were of a plunderous character, and consequently, merciless; they observed none of the usual conditions of warfare; they respected no age, sex or condition; they viewed literature and books with the most savage enmity—making it their especial duty to destroy every literary collection which they could seize. About the close of the eighth century, they first visited Ireland. They sailed up through her rivers, landed suddenly from their small craft, plundered the people, murdered the clergy, destroyed the churches and monasteries, burned the libraries, and returned quickly with their spoils to the sea. This harrassing warfare was kept up on the Irish for many years. In vain, that thousands of their numbers were slain in countless battles. They seemed to be nothing the less in numbers or ferocity. The taxes and impositions levied by the Danes on Ireland, were not dissimilar to those at present levied by the Saxons. A brief outline of the former, will help to convey a pretty accurate idea of the latter. "Every town, besides its old magistrate, was superintended by a Danish captain, with his company; every village had a sergeant, and in every farm-house was billeted a Danish soldier. The cattle and the produce of the land was at the disposal of the rapacious sol-

diery. Religion and letters were interdicted; the nobility and gentry were forbidden the use of arms, and the very rudiments of education denied the people. This was not all; the owner of every house in the land was obliged to pay annually to Turgesius, the Danish chief, an ounce of gold; and such as could not comply, were to forfeit the loss of their nose, or become slaves. Hence, this tax was called nose money. The inhabitants submitted for a while to this galling servitude and degradation, as the best blood of the country had already saturated the soil in its defence. What emotions of pity seize us, as the page of history opens to our vision the sufferings in Ireland of those days. Horror-struck, we turn from this revolting spectacle of Danish tyranny, and eagerly seek to organize some powerful combination that would utterly annihilate it. Had we lived then, and escaped the torture of the Dane, what a spirit of resolution would nerve us to arm to free our countrymen from the yoke. Go through Ireland to-day; converse with seven eighths of its inhabitants; witness the squalid appearance, the rags and extreme poverty of its peasantry; and all will convince you that, in religious liberty, only, does the Saxon domination over Ireland differ from the more ancient tyranny of the Danes.

This may be a proper place to introduce a glance at England, and the great prince Alfred. He was the sixth king of England, and flourished from about the middle to the close of the eighth century. Alfred, on coming to the throne, was reduced to the greatest distress by the ravages of those inveterate enemies, the Danes. He had been defeated in many battles by the Danes, but his spirit was invincible, and his courage dauntless. At a time, when the Danes thought he and his followers were completely subjugated, he got into their camp, in the dress of a bard, and lulling their apprehensions with

the music of his harp, informed himself of their position; returned, collected his forces, attacked them at a moment he knew they feasted and indulged in excess, and by this and other signal acts of valor and generalship, freed his country from their yoke. It is said, that he fought fifty-five battles with that barbarian power, and finally drove them from his kingdom. He next turned his attention to the improvement of the country. He established many wise and equitable laws, founded literary institutions, and, by his wisdom, laid the foundation of that great bulwark of civil and religious liberty in England — the British constitution.

I will now introduce a brief sketch of the closing career of Danish power in Ireland, and the celebrated Brien-hero of Munster, and renowned monarch of Ireland. To arrive at this exciting and interesting period in Irish annals, I must necessarily pass over many sanguinary conflicts and bloody battles previously had, between the Irish and those ruthless invaders, the Danes. Malachy, the Irish monarch, who reigned about the middle of the ninth century, completely checked and destroyed their power for a time. During the reign of his successors, Hugh the Seventh, and Niall the Fourth, those barbarians again renewed their invasions of the country. They were met, and thousands of their seemingly inexhaustible numbers were slain. The total extinction of their power in Ireland, did not take place before the beginning of the tenth century. The glory of having freed his country from foreign tyrants, appear to have been reserved for the immortal hero of Clontarf — to cast an additional luster on his brilliant feats and exploits. Brien was a Munster prince. He began his reign as the provincial king of Munster, about the middle of the ninth century; the length of his reign was forty-nine years — thirty-seven he was king of

Munster, and the remaining twelve, monarch of Ireland. His first care was to subdue the Danish power throughout Munster; his next was to give vigor to the laws. The ruined schools and monasteries, he rebuilt and repaired; he also rebuilt all the royal houses and colleges through Munster at his own expense. The damages which the nation suffered during the last hundred and fifty years of strife, were, through the indefatigable zeal, and splendid munificence of Brien, repaired. New houses of public hospitality were erected; the Psalter of Cashell informs us, that no less than eighteen hundred of such houses were established in Munster. Brien restored such good order in his dominions, and so well organized the local government, that a single outrage was not heard of. About this period of his reign, we are told, that a young and beautiful virgin undertook a journey alone from one end of the kingdom to the other, carrying in her hand a wand, at the top of which, was affixed a valuable diamond ring. This singular feat she performed without receiving the least injury or insult. On this incident, Moore wrote the beautiful song, "Rich and rare were the gems she wore."

Toward the close of the ninth century, the celebrated Malachy the Second, was crowned monarch of Ireland. Shortly after his accession, we find the Danes appearing, with considerable force, to give battle. Malachy met them at the head of his brave troops, and killed five thousand of them, on the plains of Meath. It was at this battle, that Malachy encountered two celebrated Danish chieftains, one after the other, whom he killed on the spot — taking a collar of gold from the neck of one, and carrying off the sword of the other, as the trophies of victory. Ireland was now pretty well freed from the Danish power; but unfortunately, jealousies, which grew up in the breast of Malachy toward Brien,

were near subjecting the nation to the power of the Danes again. These jealousies terminated in a battle, in which the hero Brien was victorious. The Munster hero was then saluted, and proclaimed monarch of Ireland. This occurred about the year A. D. 1000. It pains us when we have to record and read of those dissensions, which too frequently sprung up between the proud chieftains of Ireland, and which unfortunately, afforded well-founded hopes to the enemies of their country. In obedience to the demands of truth and history, we must introduce them. Brien was married to the sister of the prince of Leinster. He came, as customary, to pay that obedience due from a provincial prince to the monarch of Ireland. This act of duty, provoked the censure of his sister, who, in her fancied dignity of blood, would not suffer her brother to bend before her husband. This affair, trifling as it was at first, finally led to serious and disastrous consequences. The Danes, profiting by this dissension, promised the Leinster prince secret supplies of men and arms, to resist the authority of the monarch Brien. The Danes made great preparations, and had a powerful army in Dublin. They came from Sweden and Norway, and also from their settlements in England. Never before was there so powerful an army landed on her shores. United to the numerous tribes of Danes, already scattered through the country, together with the forces of the treacherous prince of Leinster, it formed an apparently invincible army. The Danes garrisoned Dublin with about eighteen thousand men, besides the troops which remained in their ships, which lay in Clontarf bay, about three miles from Dublin. Brien, fully aware of their movements, was not idle. He appeared before Dublin, in the month of April, 1014. He offered the Danes battle, on Palm Sunday, which they declined; but on Good

Friday, it appeared, by their dispositions, that they were about to attack. It was painful to the christian heart of Brien, that so sacred a day should have been chosen by the heathen invaders for the work of death. No alternative remained, but to fight. At the earliest dawn, the good and gallant monarch, accompanied by his son Murrough, and his grandson Turlough, rode through the ranks, animating his troops. The aged hero carried in his hand a crucifix, reminding them of the day the invaders chose to give them battle. His brief address, to his devoted army on this memorable occasion, deserves to be inscribed in letters of gold, and find a place in our memories. The greater part of the army formed a circle around their venerated monarch — he being then eighty-eight years of age. "Be not dismayed, my soldiers, because my son Donough is avenging our wrongs in Leinster; he will return victorious, and in the glory of the conquest you shall share. On your valor rest the hopes of your country to-day; and what surer grounds can they rest upon? Oppression now tempts to bind you down to servility; will you not burst its chains, and rise to the independence of Irish freemen? Your cause is one approved by heaven; you seek not the oppression of others; you fight for your country and your sacred altars. It is a cause that claims a heavenly protection. In this day's battle, the interposition of that God, who can give victory, will be signally manifested in your favor. Let every heart, then, be the throne of confidence and courage. You know the Danes are strangers to religion and humanity; they are inflamed with the desire of violating the fairest daughters of this land of beauty, and enriching themselves with the spoils of sacrilege and plunder. Victory they shall not have. From such brave soldiers as you, they can never wrest it; for you fight in defence of

honor, liberty, and religion — in defence of the sacred temples of the Deity, and of your sisters, wives, and daughters. Such a holy cause, must be the cause of God. Onward, then, for your country, and your sacred altars!" The above has been translated from the annals of "Innis fallen," as found in Mr. F. Mooney's history, to whose elegant and patriotic effusions, I am indebted for much of what has already entered into this inperfect compilation.

The body-guard of Brien raised the sun-burst standard of Fingal — marked with the arms of the O'Brien — the hand and swords bearing the inscription, "Victory or Death." The clash of battle commences; the Irish army fought with that valor and heroism worthy of the fame of Ireland. The Danes fought with a desperate resolution. Every inch of ground was contested. "I never," writes a spectator, "beheld with my eyes, nor read in history, a sharper and bloodier fight than this." Murrough and Turlough, the son and grandson of Brien, fought like invincible beings; everywhere they darted on the foe, like flashes of lightning. The Danish princes, Carolus, Sitric, and Conmeal, fell by their swords. It appears, that one thousand of the Danes were clad in tight armor, who proved the most formidable. The fight had raged from sunrise till long past meridian, when the valiant Murrough snatches the standard of Fingal — the geall greana † — waves it aloft, exclaiming — "Before the lapse of an hour, this must float either above the tents of the Danish camp, or over my dead body!" The other chiefs catch the fire of his kindling heroism, and furiously precipitate themselves on the foe. The Danes were thrown into confusion — fled on every side — pursued to their very ships, by the victorious Irish. Murrough's arm became so swollen,

† Blazing sun.

by the violent exertions of wielding his sword all day, that he could not raise it up, and knelt beside a brook, to bathe it. At that moment, a straggling party of retreating Danes came up, and one of them, a chief, set upon him; but Murrough, though unable to use his right arm, tripped the Dane, and placed the point of his sword on his prostrate body, and leaning on it, drove it through into the earth; while Murrough was so stooped over his foe, the expiring Dane snatched a cimeter from Murrough's girdle, and plunged into his body; he lingered for a sufficient time to receive all the rites and consolations of his holy religion. Thus fell the valiant Murrough — the Ajax of Clontarf. The aged monarch, on first hearing the news of his brave son's death, imagined that the Danes gained the victory; he was found kneeling in his tent, before a crucifix. "Do you," said he, to Corcoran, one of his marshals, and the other chiefs, "fly to Armagh, and communicate my will to the successor of St. Patrick; as for me, I came here to conquer, or to die, and the enemy shall not boast that I died of inglorious wounds." At this instant, Broder, the Dane, with a small party, rushed, in the madness of despair, into Brien's tent. He seized his sword, and cut off the legs of the first Dane that entered. The next who entered, struck Brien on the back of his head, with his axe, but, in spite of the blow, Brien, with all the rage of a dying warrior, cut off his head, and killed the third Dane that attacked him; and then resigned himself to death. Thus fell one of the bravest and most patriotic of Ireland's princes, whose long and glorious reign sheds a glory on the annals of his country. This celebrated prince, and warrior, commanded in twenty-nine pitched battles, against the Danes — the last, fought by him, totally extinguished their power in Ireland.

The memorable victory of Clontarf was dearly bought — from seven to ten thousand Irish fell on that day, and upwards of fourteen thousand Danes, with every one of their principal officers. On the return of the provincial troops to their respective provinces, an incident took place, which, as it exhibits a degree of valor and heroism, unprecedented in the whole range of ancient or modern history, deserves notice. The Munster troops, one-half of whom were wounded, began their march toward their homes under the command of Donough, the son of Brien; passing through the territory of Fitzpatrick, of Ossory, that inglorious chieftain came to give them battle — owing to an old grudge he entertained toward them. The wounded men, the shattered remains of Brien's brave army, to the number of eight hundred, addressed their leader — "Let you, brave prince," said they, "cause a sufficient number of stakes to be cut down in yonder wood, and driven into the battle-ground, to which, let us be tied, in such a manner, as to have our hands and arms at liberty, to wield our weapons; between every two of us let a sound man be placed, and let us stand to conquer, or to die, with our brave comrades." The prince, moved to admiration at the glorious proposition, reluctantly complied. The wounded men stopped their wounds with moss. When the adverse forces made the first onslaught, and saw the condition of the wounded heroes, they suddenly halted, and refused to repeat the charge. Such were the silent, but eloquent, appeals of those brave wounded heroes — thus upheld in the battle by stakes — that the prince of Ossory could not urge his troops to a second attack. That gallant band of heroes then passed with glory to their homes — the proud conquerors of their country's invaders.

CHAPTER XV.

STATE OF ENGLAND — NORMAN INVASION OF ENGLAND — IRISH AFFAIRS — RODERICK O'CONNOR, LAST MONARCH OF IRELAND — THE NORMAN'S OBTAIN A FOOTING IN IRELAND, THROUGH THE TREACHERY OF M'MURROUGH, A LEINSTER PRINCE — FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE ELEVENTH TO THE DISSOLUTION OF THE MONARCHY IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY.

After the battle of Clontarf, the Danes were completely crushed in spirit. They made no further attempts of any consequence upon Ireland. After a bloody and cruel career of plunder and sacrilege, which extended over two centuries, they were forced to abandon all further hopes of subjugating a country in which so many millions of their best soldiers had been slain. They had made themselves masters of England, and over a large part of France, called Normandy, they established their sovereignty. They never established a sovereignty over all Ireland. Their nearest approach was made during the leadership of Turgesius; and then that haughty Dane only reigned jointly with Maladry — a compromise degrading to the latter. England yielded to them in despair, and received from them a race of kings. Ireland gave, in every generation, a new race of heroes, who valiantly contended for their freedom; and falling, bequeathed the battle

to posterity. It is estimated by historians, that five millions of Irishmen fell, during the two centuries, for the independence of their country. Double that number fell on the Danish side. The Danes, impelled as much by the desire of plunder as by the hatred of the cross, invaded the sanctuaries of piety and literature, scattered the shrines of the dead, desecrated the altars of sacrifice, burnt the valued libraries of colleges, demolished the venerated evidences of architectural genius; and yet the Milesian race refused to yield their country up. Six generations had fought and bled, and the seventh was found by the Danes as unconquerable as the first. Let every Irishman of the present day remember that proud fact. The present race is not less brave, or less oppressed than those who lived in the days of the glorious Brien. This may be a proper place to take a hasty glance at the political and social condition of England at the epoch we are now considering, viz., the eleventh century. The Saxon heptarchy existed from the close of the fifth to the invasion of the Danes in the beginning of the ninth. The final conquest of England by the Danes, broke up the frame of the Saxon government. Alfred, during the latter part of his life, hunted them from his soil; but after his death, they returned; and under Canute and other Danish chieftains, England was brought again under the Danish yoke. At this time the English Saxons were bought and sold as slaves by their conquerors. The price of a slave was quadruple that of an ox.* On the death of Hardicanute, without issue, the crown of England, by will, fell to the celebrated Edward—a monk, called the confessor, who was a brother of one of the previous Saxon princes. By the accession of Edward, the Saxon line was restored in England. This religious and learned monk,

* See Wade's recent history of England.

though unexpectedly called from a cloister to a throne, displayed great wisdom and fitness for the trust.

Edward having been educated at Normandy, gave the highest offices of trust and emolument at his disposal, to the Normans. He built many churches in England. Among others, Westminster Abbey, demolished by Henry the Third, but since rebuilt. He reigned twenty-three years; and at his death, the crown of England was claimed by Harold, son of the Danish Earl, Godwin. This claim was contested by Tosti, aided by Harold's brother, who met with their respective forces on the plains, near Stanford bridge, when a great carnage took place — it is said, the field being whitened for fifty years after by the bones of the slain. In this battle, Harold was victorious; but in four days after it was fought, William, duke of Normandy, landed on the Sussex coast with a formidable army. Harold was at the time at a banquet in York. They met at the celebrated field of Hastings, where Harold's forces were cut to pieces, himself slain, and William proclaimed king. This occurred in October, 1066. That great victory and triumph of William of Normandy, has been called the Norman conquest, by which England came under the rule of a new dynasty. William proved a terrible scourge to England. He carried fire and sword into every part, and spared neither age nor sex. Several risings were attempted in the course of his reign, but these he suppressed with great cruelty. He affected to hold England as a tributary province to Normandy. The organic changes effected by this tyrant, are beyond my limited space to even compress a short recital. He introduced the Curfew law into England, which compelled the nation to put out their fires and candles at eight o'clock every night. He demolished churches in every part of England, and appropriated their lands to his hungry followers.

He disarmed the English militia and broke them up; he took possession of all the lands of England, which he divided into baronies, reserving fourteen hundred manors and estates to himself. The man who acquired all this power, was the illigitimate son of Robert, Duke of Normandy, by the daughter of a tanner. The general character and effects of William's conquest of England, may be best given in the words of an English writer — "It would be difficult to find in history a revolution more destructive, or attended with a more complete subjection of the ancient inhabitants. Contumely was added to oppression; and the unfortunate natives were universally reduced to such a state of servility, meanness and poverty, that, for ages, the English name became a term of reproach!" * This brief glance at the condition of England, under her new masters, will enable us to understand more clearly, the organic changes which shortly after took place in Ireland.

I will now resume the narrative of Irish affairs, from the death of the illustrious Brien Boroima to the accession of Roderick O'Connor, presenting a brief outline of the revival and progress of literature and religion throughout the kingdom; the great energy and perseverance displayed by the nation in rebuilding their colleges and churches, the indomitable zeal they manifested in restoring all that had been sacrilegiously destroyed by the Danes. On the death of Brien, and of his heroic son Murrough, on the field of Clontarf, Malachy, the second, resumed the crown of Ireland. His reign was devoted to arts of peace and works of improvement. After the death of Malachy, the supreme government of the nation devolved on the reigning prince of Munster, Donough O'Brien, son of the renowned hero, Brien. His reign

* Wade.

was peaceful and devoted, like that of his predecessor, to works of improvement. Being suspected of having been accessory to the death of his brother, he was dethroned by the nobles of the kingdom and reduced to the rank of a private individual. He undertook a pilgrimage to Rome, according to the custom of those ancient times. Here he spent the remainder of his life in a monastery, having presented the crown and harp of his father to the pope. After his abdication, a regency of a few years intervened before the young Turlough O'Brien, grand-son of the hero of Clontarf, assumed the functions of supreme command. He was a prince of great abilities, courage and piety. He closely imitated the virtues of his illustrious grandsire. As no event of any great importance occurred beyond the general character of those times, I shall pass on to the reign of the great Turlough O'Connor, of the Connaught line. He was installed monarch about the middle of the twelfth century. Historians have drawn of this prince a high character. He was a great general, and an accomplished politician; he protected trade, manufactures, letters and religion; he caused many churches and castles to be built; he repaired the cathedral of Tuam, founded there a great priory; he founded and endowed several universities throughout Ireland, and by his will left great wealth to the churches and colleges. We find in the year 1166, Roderick O'Connor, son of Turlough, installed monarch of Ireland. We are now arrived at that epoch in Irish history noted for that incident in our history that led to all the misfortunes and misery which Ireland has endured from that day to the present. A cause, apparently trifling at first, and circumscribed within the limits of personal interests, subsequently led to all the most disastrous results to the whole nation. M'Murrough O'Kavenagh, prince of Leinster, nursed a passion for the

daughter of the king of Meath; and though she was subsequently married to O'Rourk, prince of Breffny or West Meath, yet their mutual affection was not extinguished by that event. At length an opportunity offered which brought matters to a crisis. O'Rourk having gone to Lough Dearg, a religious retreat in the north of Ireland—as was the custom for princes in those days to perform religious pilgrimages; in his absence, M'Murrough carried off his wife to his castle at Ferns. On the injured husband's return, his feelings were worked up to a pitch of anger. His first act was to write to the monarch Roderick, setting forth the cause of his grievances. I cannot give more than one or two extracts from this letter, as found translated by O'Halloran: — "O'Rourk to Roderic the monarch, health. Though I am sensible, most illustrious prince, that human adversity should always be supported with firmness and equanimity; as this most horrible crime must have reached your ears before the receipt of my letters, and as it is a crime hitherto so unheard of, as far as I can recollect, as never to be attempted against any king of Ireland—severity impels me to seek justice, whilst charity admonishes me to forgive the injury." This appeal of O'Rourk to the monarch, caused the latter to convene a national council; at which it was decreed that M'Murrough, for this and other enormities, was unworthy to reign longer over Leinster. An army was fitted out, and the command given to O'Rourk. He invaded the territories of M'Murrough, who made some feeble resistance; but his friends everywhere abandoning him, he sought safety in flight, and embarked for Bristol. The unfortunate lady, the cause of all this war, flew to St. Bridget's nunnery in Kildare, where she passed the rest of her life in penitence. Peace and tranquility quickly followed the chastisement of

M'Murrough; and while the Irish nation indulged in the consciousness of perfect security from foreign enemies, they little suspected that a plot was hatching to disturb their peace and destroy their independence. The exiled M'Murrough repaired to Normandy, in France, where Henry the Second of England was then sojourning. Henry was the fourth Norman king of England, after William the conqueror. Henry espoused the cause of the exiled Irish prince so much, as to grant him letters of marque, authorizing him to raise all the aid he could from among his subjects, for the recovery of his lost possessions. M'Murrough passed over to Wales, entered into a treaty with Richard, earl of Strigul, (commonly called Strongbow.) To this Welsh Norman chieftain he offered considerable tracts of land, also his daughter Eva in marriage, if, by his means, he should be restored to his dominions. Two other Welsh chieftains, Fitzstephen and Fitzgerald, entered into the project. With such forces as he could collect, M'Murrough suddenly landed on the Irish coast and seized on a portion of his old territories. O'Rourk, his mortal enemy, was soon in arms to expel him. M'Murrough then had recourse to negotiation with Roderic the monarch, whom he besought to interpose his influence to appease the vengeance of O'Rourk. The appeal, made through an eloquent ecclesiastic, was favorably heard by the monarch, who allowed him (unfortunately for Ireland) a large portion of the lands of Wexford; he delivered seven hostages to the monarch, and presented O'Rourk with one hundred ounces of gold. Thus, everything appeared settled; but alas for Ireland, that gave birth to such a traitor as M'Murrough! Having now artfully gained a settlement in his native country, forgetful of his oaths or hostages to the Irish monarch, he turned his whole energies and cunning to the base object of

binding that native country in the toils of the stranger. He sent his private secretary to Wales to remind his friends of their promises, and to tell them that he was ready to receive them. Accordingly, we find, by appointment with his Welsh associates, that there landed in May, 1169, in five small vessels from Wales, about seven hundred foreigners, under the command of Fitzstephen, Fitzgerald, Barry and Hervey.

The traitor, M'Murrough, being apprised of their landing, sent his son, at the head of five hundred horse, to meet them; he soon followed himself, at the head of two thousand infantry. Wexford, being nearest them, they commenced military operations against it. The attack was unsuccessful, and after the loss of many knights and soldiers, they sounded a retreat. For three successive days did they renew the attack, but with no better success. At length the bishop and clergy of Wexford, in order to save the effusion of christian blood, offered their mediation to bring about terms of peace. The result was, the citizens returned in their allegiance to M'Murrough — putting hostages into his hands for this agreement. They little suspected that he had, by a sort of mortgage, conveyed the city, and liberties of Wexford, to the strangers. All this took place in Wexford, without exciting any alarm throughout the other provinces of Ireland; not producing more than the ordinary curiosity incident to border warfare.

M'Murrough, having refused to pay his annual tribute to Roderick, the monarch, the latter became justly alarmed at such manifestation of independence. He called a council; when it was resolved, that M'Murrough should dismiss the strangers from his dominion — compensating them for their services. This proposition was not at all palatable to the majority of those adventurers, as they were principally fugitives from justice in their own country. They persuaded

M'Murrough not to yield. But the Irish monarch, at the head of twenty thousand men, marched into Leinster, and would have exterminated the invaders, but for, unluckily again, the interference of the clergy, who were authorized by the crafty M'Murrough, to offer a complete submission to Roderick, on the part of himself, and to dismiss all the foreigners, with proper awards for their trouble. This agreement, being accepted, was ratified by the oath of M'Murrough. From an active correspondence kept up between M'Murrough and Strougbow, finally that chief, at the head of a considerable force, landed at Waterford, in 1170; where, being joined by M'Murrough, they attacked the city, but were bravely repulsed. Raymond LeGros, one of the foreigners, hit upon an unthought-of expedient for entering the town,—observing a projecting house, built on the city walls, one side of which rested on a few wooden piles — these, he pulled from under the house, when it tumbled, and thus, in the night, opened a pass. The beseigers rushed in, and fell upon the inhabitants, sword in hand, committing the greatest carnage, and the most atrocious acts of cruelty, sparing neither age nor sex. By this stratagem, the city fell into their hands, and its vast wealth became their spoils.

The infamous M'Murrough, amidst this scene of carnage, gave his daughter in marriage to Stroubow. M'Murrough and Strougbow, emboldened by their successes, determined upon extending their conquests, and prepared a considerable force to move on Dublin. They arrived there before the monarch, and by taking an unfrequented and mountainous route, they avoided being intercepted by the royal army. Without further detail, I will say, St. Lawrence O'Toole, the archbishop of Dublin, and one of the most learned men of Europe, at this period, proposed a negotiation between the

beseiged and the beseigers. A deputation of the citizens, with that most venerable prelate at their head, met M'Murrough and Strongbow, at their camp; but, during this negotiation, Raymond Le Gros and Miles Cogan, were examining the city walls, and having found the weakest and least defended parts, returned to their camp, and ere yet the negotiation ended, rushed in, at the head of one thousand picked men, and fell on the inhabitants, putting to the sword old and young, male and female — committing the most revolting acts of violation on the latter, in presence of their dying husbands and brothers. As a reward for this treacherous act, Cogan was installed governor of Dublin. The twenty-first of September, 1170, was the day of this dreadful massacre. The treachery and cruelty of these new invaders, astonished and terrified the whole nation.

Upon this crisis in the fate of Ireland, the able M'Geoghegan, makes the following comment: — "The reign of Roderick O'Connor is remarkable for a revolution, which forms an epoch fatal to Ireland. An invasion of the English, which in its beginning, would not have alarmed even the petty republic of Ragusa, became, from its having been at first neglected, so serious, that the liberty of a powerful nation became its victim, and a monarchy, which had lasted for more than two thousand years, was overthrown. Politicians endeavor to account for the fall of empires; by some, it is ascribed to the weakness of those rulers who introduce a bad system in the administration of their laws, and by some, to exterior causes; while others, with more reason, assign it to the will of the Supreme Being, who has drawn all things out of nothing; who governs all, and sets bounds to the duration of all created objects." The Able, after referring to a few organic changes effected in the Irish constitution, previous and sub-

sequent to the christian era, and which he views as the first blows which the Irish constitution received, closes his remarks on the subject, as follows:—"The fall of monarchies occurs suddenly. The change takes place by degrees, and from a chain of events, which imperceptibly undermine the constitution of the state, (as sickness enervates the body,) till it requires but a slight shock or stroke to complete their destruction. The Irish monarchy received this fatal blow, in the twelfth century, through the debauchery and boundless ambition of one of its own princes."

The formal invasion of Ireland, by Henry the Second, took place October, 1171. From which date, we reckon the dissolution of the Irish monarchy.

CHAPTER XVI.

HENRY THE SECOND DID NOT CONQUER IRELAND — THE FORGED BULLS — HENRY'S CHARACTER — ABDICATION OF THE IRISH MONARCH—RODERIC O'CONNOR—BRIEF SKETCH OF ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND DURING THIS PERIOD — PENAL LAWS AGAINST THE IRISH — STATE OF IRELAND AT THIS PERIOD — FROM THE 12TH TO THE 15TH CENTURY.

In the preceding chapter, I have endeavored to present, to the minds of the impartial reader, the iniquitous means by which the Norman adventurers secured a settlement in Ireland. As many persons are prone to construe this invasion of Ireland, by Henry the Second, as a conquest of the whole island, this may be the proper place to present the testimony of a few writers, in opposition to this theory.

Sir John Davies, the English attorney-general of James the First, says: — "Henry departed out of Ireland, without striking one blow, or building one castle, or planting one garrison among the Irish; neither left behind him one true subject more than those he found at his first coming over, which were only the English adventurers, spoken of before, who had gained some ports, towns in Munster and Leinster, and possessed some scopes of land thereunto adjoining."

Henry received the submission of seven counties, when he presented the forged Bull of pope Adrian, at a synod of the clergy, which he convoked after his arrival. Those counties, seven in number, comprising about an eighth part of the whole island, and known for centuries as the English pale,

constituted the whole extent of the English possessions in Ireland for four centuries. And this is the great conquest, so much paraded by the English. Plowden, an English historian, remarks—"The English adventurers governed their district by their own model. The native chiefs, owning by far the greatest part of the island, acted independently of the English government—made war and peace—entered into leagues and treaties, and punished malefactors by their own laws, customs, and constitutions."

The supposed interposition of the See of Rome did more towards reconciling a few of the Irish chiefs to Henry's sovereignty, than physical force could effect. In proof, I need only refer to Donald O'Neil's letter to John, the twenty second pope of Rome, found in the Scotic chronicle of John of Fordum, vol. 3, page 908. In reference to the means by which Henry the Second obtained the submission of some Irish chieftains, it says—"During the course of so many centuries, our sovereigns, jealous of our independence, preserved it unimpaired. Attacked more than once by foreign powers, they were never wanting, in either courage or strength, to repel the invaders, and secure their inheritance free from insult. But that which they effected against force, they failed to accomplish in opposition to the will of the sovereign pontiff." Such were the causes which led to the subjugation of a portion of Ireland to English jurisdiction.

On this unfortunate crisis in the affairs of Ireland, it will be gratifying to every Irishman to know that the great American philosopher and statesman, John Quincy Adams, wrote a beautiful poem. For the gratification of my countrymen, I take the liberty of inserting a few stanzas; to notice also, that the writer in his able preface, reproves the moral veracity of Hume, who painted Henry the Second, as a hero.

'So much for Hume's philosophy, teaching by the example of Henry the Second.' If there be in the annals of the human race, a transaction of deeper and more melancholy depravity than the conquest of Ireland, by Henry the Second, it has not fallen under my notice. It would seem that it could not be accomplished, but by a complication of the most odious crimes, public and private."

"Among those kings, there rose, from time to time,
One braver, or more skilful than the rest,
With brighter parts, and genius more sublime,
Who bore, among them all, a loftier crest;
His power, while in the vigor of his prime,
O'er the whole island, was at once impressed;
And, at the time precise, of which I sing,
Roderic O'Connor was fair Erin's king.
"And then the people were, as they are now,
A careless, thoughtless, brave, kind-hearted race,
With boiling bosom, and with dauntless brow,
With shrewdest humor, and with laughing face;
Their women, purer than the virgin's vow,
Blooming in beauty, and adorned with grace;
But some exceptions, I must own, were there,
As in all ages may be found elsewhere.
"Christians they had been from St. Patrick's day;
Their priests for learning, had been long renowned;
Though not accustomed Peter's pence to pay,
Nor tithes unto the pontiff triple-crowned.
Music they loved—they loved the minstrel's lay,
Their hearts were tuned to harmony of sound;
As if from heaven's most hallowed notes it stole,
The harp of Erin searched the inmost soul."

ON THE DEATH OF THE TRAITOR, M'MURROUGH.

"Expect no mercy from thy Maker's hand!
Thou had'st no mercy on thy native land.
And to the shades, the indignant spirit fled,
And thus was Erin's conquest first achieved—
Thus Albion's monarch first became her head;
And now her freedom shall be soon retrieved,
For mark the muse, if rightly she has read,
Let this her voice, prophetic, be believed,
Soon, soon, shall dawn the day, as dawn it must,
When Erin's sceptre shall be Erin's trust."

I regret that my limits will not allow me to insert a few more stanzas of that poem, which portrays so vividly that fatal epoch in our country's history.

To return to pope Adrian's Bull, and its alleged confirmation by pope Alexander — let them be real or forged — they worked as a powerful engine in the hands of Henry the Second, in subduing the prejudices of the Irish native to foreign jurisdiction, and reconciling them to their altered state and condition. Many eminent writers contend that those Bulls were forgeries! The Abbe McGeoghegan, in proving them forgeries, asks — "Is it likely, any pope would select such a monster as Henry the Second, to effect a reformation of a nation's morals?" He then draws Henry's character, from Cambrenis, and other historians, thus — "The bull of Alexander the Third, must appear a paradox to all who strictly investigate the morals of Henry, and his behaviour to the court of Rome. A bad christian makes a bad apostle. What was Henry the Second? A man who, in private life, forgot the essential duties of religion, and frequently, those of nature; a superstitious man, who, under the veil of religion, joined the most holy practices to the most flagrant vices — regardless of his word, when to promote his own interests — he broke the most solemn treaties with the king of France; he considered principle as nothing, when the sacrifice of it promised to produce him a benefit. It is well known, that without any scruple, he married Eleanor, of Aguitaine, so famous for her debaucheries, and branded by her divorce from Louis the Seventh. He ungratefully confined this very woman in chains, though she had brought him one-fourth of France, as her marriage portion. He was a bad father — quarreled with all his children, and became engaged in wars, on every side. As a king, he tyrannized over his nobles, and took

pleasure in confounding all their privileges; like his predecessors, he was the sworn enemy of the popes; he attacked their rights, persecuted their adherents, sent back their legates with contempt, encroached upon the privileges and immunities of the church, and gloried in supporting the most unjust usurpers of them; which led to the martyrdom of St. Thomas, of Canterbury. Behold the apostle — the reformer — whom the holy See would have chosen to convert Ireland! The pope refused either to see or hear the ambassadors whom Henry had sent to exculpate himself from the murder of Thomas, of Canterbury; but the Roman court cried out — 'desist, desist!' as if it were impious for the pope to hear the name of Henry, who had sent them. By the general advice of the council, the pope dispensed with expressly mentioning the name of the king, and the country beyond the sea." * It is said that Daniel O'Connell gave it as his opinion also, that those bulls were forgeries. However, as it is a question which can in no way alter the determination of the present race of Irishmen, or affect the lofty and patriotic pulsations of the millions of exiled Irishmen throughout the world, I may be excused from devoting more space to the subject, to the suppression of matter of more interest to the general reader.

To return to Henry the Second. After his arrival in England, he called a council, and there conferred upon his son John, the title of "Lord of Ireland," Anno Domini, 1177.

In the following year, William Fitzaldehn was appointed the first English deputy, to control the affairs of the English pale, in Ireland. From that appointment to the present, the entire history of the Lord Lieutenants of Ireland is nearly alike throughout — pervaded with political jobbing and treachery.

* Hoveden, p. 526.

Henry the Second died in Normandy, in 1189, cursing his children — all of whom attempted, in turn, to have him murdered.

The monarch, Roderic O'Connor, having previously abdicated the throne, retired to a monastry, where he beheld, with bitter anguish, his country torn to pieces by invading armies, or the battles of rival chieftains.

Henry the Second was succeeded by his son Richard, and on his death, by John, from whom the charter of liberty was rung, by the barons and clergy, on the field of Runnymede. King John, having partly conquered Scotland, made descent upon Irelend. On this occasion, he received the homage of some Irish chieftains, but was forced to return to England, where he soon after died.

Henry the Third came to the throne of England; his attention and forces were occupied in attempting to subjugate Wales. In this reign, the Irish reconquered from the invaders much of their lost territory.

We find, in 1272, Edward the First, king of England, and in 1300, he held the first legislative assembly in England, called a parliament; a shadow of which, was soon after held in the English colony, in Ireland. During this reign, several battles were fought between the Irish and the invaders, in which the former gained many successes, and if only followed up with unity, would have established Ireland in her independence, but it would appear that fate ruled otherwise.

In this reign, the ancient and independent kingdom of Wales, was annexed to the crown of England. The celebrated Llewellyn, the last Welsh king, having fallen in battle, his forces fled. This prince, ambitious of further conquests, and military exploits, marched into Scotland, took Baliol, the king, and several of the nobility, prisoners, and carried to

London the celebrated stone of destiny, which had been sent from Ireland, by Feargus, eight centures previous. Edward had it placed in Westminster Abby, where it has since remained. On it is engraved, in Irish lines —

> "Or fate's deceived, and Heaven decrees in vain,
> Or where they find this stone, the Scots shall reign."

It was in this reign, that the celebrated William Wallace, of Scotland, appeared as the champion of his country's rights. His brave followers were defeated, and ten thousand of them slain in one battle. Wallace was taken prisoner, and executed. A patriot worthy of a better fate.

Next to him, appeared the valiant Robert Bruce, who defeated the English, in several engagements.

Edward the First, suddenly dying, Scotland reassumed her kingly powers.

Edward the Second now came to the throne of England, about 1315. During his troubled reign, the Irish resolved on doing something worthy of their former fame. After the glorious battle of Bannockburn, Bruce was invited, by the Irish, to be their king. Bruce sent his brother Edward, who was an inferior commander. This proposition was based on their common lineage, language, and customs; and afforded strong grounds for mutual friendship. Edward Bruce landed in the north of Ireland, 1315, with about six thousand men, and being joined by vast numbers of the Irish, suddenly overran Ulster. It is recorded, that, during three years, Edward encountered the English in eighteen battles, in Ireland, in every one of which he had been victorious. He was killed in battle, owing to the desperate valor of one John Mampus, who rushed in among the Scots and Irish, and stabbed Bruce to the heart; though Mampus was instantly killed,

the Scots were routed. On this occasion, the Irish chiefs came boldly forward—giving the English battle. Ten thousand Irish were slain, together with the very flower of the Irish chiefs. This battle, though not crowned with complete success, had the effect of driving the English into their fortified towns. The English king's laws were not, for a long time after this, obeyed twenty miles from Dublin.

We find at the memorable parliament, called at Kilkenny, in 1367, by the duke of Clarence, son of Edward the Third, that penal laws were then and there enacted against the Irish. "That intermarriages with the natives, or any connection with them, in the way of fostering, or gissipred, should be considered and punished as high treason; that any man of English race, assuming an Irish name, or using the Irish language, apparel, or customs, should forfeit all his lands and tenements; that to adopt or submit to the Brehon law, was treason; that the English should not permit the Irish to pasture upon their lands; nor admit them to any ecclesiastical benefices, or religious houses; nor entertain their minstrels, rhymers, or news-tellers." On this head, Plowden, an English historian, quoting Sir John Davies, says—"Imagination can scarcely devise an extreme of antipathy, hatred, and revenge, to which this code of aggravation was not calculated to provoke both nations. Whenever the English lords obtained a footing, by petty conquest, they quartered their soldiers on the inhabitants."

In the reign of Edward the Fourth, so generally had the Irish reconquered their lands from the invaders, that not more than four counties remained subject to the crown of England. The entire revenue, raised by the king of England, did not exceed ten thousand pounds a year.

Richard the Second, the successor of Edward the Fourth, determined to invade Ireland anew, and reduce the whole

country. He landed with a large force. A few of the Irish chiefs did him homage, for which he proposed to Knight; but they refused the honor — remarking, they had been Knighted since they were seven years of age, when arms were first put into their hands. Towards the close of the fourteenth century, Richard was called hastily back from Ireland, without having gained any material advantage to himself. He had now to contend against the forces of the celebrated Bolingbroke, duke of Lancaster, who had organized a rebellion in England, and had taken the field to usurp the crown.

Now began the wars between the two great houses of York and Lancaster — known in English history, as the wars of the "Roses." The rival of Richard was elected king, under the title of Henry the Fourth. During these wars, the little English colony, in Ireland, was govered by some Deputy, who made such laws and regulations as seemed best for the government of his own limited territory.

Perhaps the best evidence I can produce here, to show the small portion of Ireland, at this time, subject to the crown of England, is the ninth of Henry the Sixth; we find the limits of the English pale set forth. It proceeds, after a long preamble, to record — "That the enemies and rebels, (the Irish) had conquered, and put under obeysance and tribute, in the parts of Munster, and well nigh all the counties of Limerick, Tipperary, Kilkenny, and Wexford; and in the nether parts; well nigh all the counties of Carlow, Kildare, Meath, and Uriel — so that there is left, unconqured and out of tribute, little more than the county of Dublin." Such is the testimony, of an act of parliament, to the great fact, that Ireland was unconquered, by England, up to the middle of the fifteenth century.

The fall of the celebrated Richard the Third, at the decisive battle of Bosworth field, terminated the Plantagenet line.

The crown now passed unto the family of Tudor,— the victorious Richmond, being crowned as Henry the Seventh. This prince, having married the heiress of the house of York, united on the throne the heads of the contending parties This event terminated the long and bloody contest of the white and red Roses, which had entailed so many evils upon the nation, and reduced it almost to a state of barbarism — the arts of peace having been neglected for those of war. The general state of things continued during this period, in Ireland, without any material change.

The animosities engendered by the protracted civil war, in England, among the Anglo-Irish, continued to be kept up for some length of time afterwards. Finally, the king sent Sir Edward Poyning, with a thousand men, to settle matters, and curb the aristocracy of the Pale. He introduced the famous act, in Drogheda, called Poyning's law, which forbade the holding of any parliament, in Ireland, without the king of England's authority, or the proposing of any law, without previously receiving his assent, and that of his privy council. This law, Grattan succeeded in repealing, in 1782.

As we are now approaching that memorable event in the history of christendom, known as the reformation, I may observe, that in the preceding centuries, the higher clergy exercised much power in the temporal affairs, both in England and Ireland. The monks superintended all the schools and universities; were the physicians of the needy; and wrote all the books for the schools. Being masters of a large extent of territory, both in England and Ireland, in right of their extensive possessions, they maintained a very powerful influence. They were kind, indulgent landholders; and the rents they received were again distributed amongst the people. We shall soon see how this happy state of things was changed by the genius of the arch-reformer, Henry the Eighth.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE REFORMATION — HENRY THE EIGHTH — EDWARD THE SIXTH — QUEEN MARY — QUEEN ELIZABETH — RESISTANCE OF THE IRISH — O'NEIL, PRINCE OF ULSTER — HIS HEROIC STAND FOR HIS COUNTRY AND RELIGION — FROM THE FIFTEENTH TO THE BEGINNING OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

We are now to enter on the eventful era of the reformation. This event is associated in our minds with the reign of Henry the Eighth of England. As Ireland may date the beginning of her most grievous sufferings and sorrows from that period, it may be pardonable for me to review, briefly, the causes which produced throughout Europe, as well as Ireland, such important changes. It will be borne in mind, that up to this period, the religion of England, Ireland and the whole continent of Europe, was one and the same. It was Catholic, and in communion with the See of Rome. The movement against the Pope and the Catholic religion, first inaugurated in Europe by Luther, an offended monk, Zuingle and Calvin, gave a new direction to men's thoughts throughout christendom. This religious revolution attracted all elements into its vortex. In several continental kingdoms, opposition to the Pope, opposition to princes, opposition to ecclesiastical authority, a desire of the riches contained in the monasteries, were the principal motives which led men of every rank and

grade in society to enter into that alliance against the spiritual authority of the See of Rome. We find in many parts of Europe, mobs were excited to madness. Churches and monasteries were broken up, and their rich contents distributed among the most prominent apostles of the new religion. In the midst of this half religious and half civil commotion, princes lost their crowns, and their possessions were seized upon by men who presented them with a new code of religion in the one hand and a new code of civil law in the other. Henry the Eighth distinguished himself amongst the theologians of Europe, who wrote against the reformers. Henry composed and published a work entitled the "Assertion of the Seven Sacraments," which he dedicated to Pope Leo the Tenth; and in return, received from that distinguished father of the church, the title "defender of the faith," which title the sovereigns of England still retain. Such was the exalted position of Henry the Eighth, at the commencement of the reformation in Germany. Henry the Eighth was the second son of Henry the Seventh—his eldest brother, Arthur, having died at the age of fourteen, Henry became heir to the crown at the death of his father, viz., 1509. He was only eighteen years of age when he began to reign. He was handsome, accomplished and well educated. Immediately after his accession to the throne, he married Catherine, the daughter of Phillip, king of Spain. This lady had been nominally married to Henry's brother, Arthur, who, as I have just said, died at the age of fourteen, and the marriage was therefore never consummated. But care was taken to have a dispensation, or a nullification, of that nominal marriage effected by the Pope, before the second marriage with Henry the Eighth took place. The marriage with Henry was therefore solemnized with the full approbation of all the church authori-

ties of England, Spain and Rome. King Henry had several children by his virtuous queen, one only of whom lived, viz., the princess Mary, afterwards queen of England. They lived happily for fourteen years, when Henry began to express doubts, which greatly preyed upon his conscience, as to the religious regularity of his marriage. Another strong impulse which accelerated the avowal of his distressed state of mind, was his secret love for Anne Boleyn, a beautiful maid of honor to his queen. Finally he gave full expression to his doubts and scruples of conscience, and applied to the pope for a divorce. A trial was granted, which was commenced before English commissioners, the pope's legate presiding. Queen Catherine's appeal to all present, with the king's own admission as to her virtue and fidelity, caused the council to break up without having come to any decision. Protracted discussions took place throughout the kingdom. Books were written *pro* and *con*, and constant negotiation held between the courts of England and Rome on the divorce question, but all in vain, the holy See refused its consent. Henry tried all the means within his power; went so far as to try to tamper with the cardinals, in order to secure the approbation of the holy father, but all in vain; for we find the whole college of cardinals, with the exception of one, decided in favor of his marriage with Catharine. "It is well known," says the able McGeoghegan, "what bribes, threats and sums of money were lavished by Fox, (Henry's almoner, and Gardiner, secretary of state in both the universities, namely: Cambridge and Oxford), to gain their approval of the divorce. The English began now to murmur loudly; and it was publicly declared, that in spite of whatever might be decided upon, he who married the princess Mary, should be the king of England." Henry had already made up his mind to break with

the pope, in case of an adverse decision. He no longer kept his intention secret. He dismissed the famous Cardinal Wolsey from his various offices. He raised Sir Thomas Moore in his place to the office of lord chancellor. The celebrated Cranmer, who wrote a book in favor of the divorce, was raised to the archbishopric of Canterbury. I mention Cranmer's name, as he bore a prominent part in establishing the reformation. Henry caused an act to be passed, declaring the power of the pope in spiritual or temporal affairs, at an end in his dominions. Another act made it treasonable and punishable by death, to deny the king's supremacy. Whelpley, a protestant writer, says — "The cruelty and crimes of Henry, increased progressively with his years. The noblest blood of England flowed to satisfy his savage barbarity of heart." "But we will not waste time," says O'Halloran, "in tracing the atrocities of a villain of the first magnitude, who, considering his superior advantages, deserves to sink into the shades of eternal infamy, ten thousand degrees below Nero or Domitian." The following few extracts are given from Moore's history, as found in the recent edition of O'Halloran's History by William Dolby, which I have presumed to copy: "Having now assumed to himself (Henry) a sort of spiritual dictatorship, and usurped in his own person, that privilege of infallibility against which he had rebelled, as claimed by the pope, he proceeded to frame and promulgate a formulary of faith for his whole kingdom, which instead of being submitted to the boasted tribunal of private judgment, was ordered to be adopted by all, implicitly, under pain of tortures and death." In 1539, the last of those spiritual ordinances, by which Henry sought to coerce the very consciences of his subjects, made its appearance in the form of an act for abolishing diversity of opinions; or as it was called — from the

savage cruelty with which its enactments were enjoined — "the bloody statute of the six articles." Before removing this monster of iniquity from the scene, I pass him over to the able and impartial pen of McGeoghegan, who thus delineates his character in a brief, but comprehensive manner: — "Notwithstanding, however, the various opinions of writers on Henry's character, it may be affirmed that he was a bad king, a bad husband, and a bad christian. A tyrant is a bad king. Henry spent the first eighteen years of his reign at plays, masquerades and nocturnal amusements. He soon squandered the eighteen hundred thousand pounds; which, through the avarice of his father, (Henry the Seventh) he had found in the treasury on his accession to the throne; so that, though possessing more considerable revenues, he found himself more indigent than any of his predecessors. He, however, supplied the deficiency by tyranny. The immense wealth of the monasteries, churches and hospitals, which were suppressed; the silver ornaments and vessels of these houses; the estates of several noblemen of the first distinction, which were confiscated for his use, and the large sums that were extorted from the clergy, increased the king's exchequer to a considerable extent, but were not sufficient to support his profligacy. Of Henry's six wives, two were repudiated; two were beheaded, and one died in child-bed; the survivor, in all liklihood, only escaped a cruel fate by the sudden death of the prince." "Neither the most depraved of the Roman emperors," says Higgins, "nor even Christiern of Denmark, Don Pedro of Castile, nor Vasilowich of Russia, surpassed him in cruelty and debauchery." This writer, like Sir Walter Raleigh affirms, that were the portrait of tyranny lost, the original might be found in the life of Henry the Eighth. He was a monster of depravity, that never spared man in his

anger, nor woman in his lust; and from the consciousness of his crimes he died in utter despair." Hear what his countryman, Cobbett, has written of him: — "Thus expired in the year 1547, in the fifty-sixth year of his age, and the thirty-eighth of his reign, the most unjust, hard-hearted, meanest, and most sanguinary tyrant that the world had ever beheld, whether christian or heathen. That England, which he found in peace, unity, plenty, and happiness, he left torn by factions and schisms — her people wandering about in beggary and misery. He laid the foundation of immorality, dishonesty and pauperism; all which produced an abundant harvest in the reigns of his unhappy, barren, mischievous and miserable children, with whom at the end of a few years, his house and his name were extinguished forever.

Before entering into the reign of Henry the Eighth's successor, namely, Edward the Sixth, it may be well to take a glimpse at Irish affairs, and see how the new religion was established in Ireland, during the eventful reign of the tyrant Henry. For the first twenty-five years of his reign, he resigned the entire management of Ireland to his deputies and the parliament of the Pale. The Earl of Kildare, the king's deputy, and his successor, Surry, were principally occupied in strife with the Irish chiefs. The contending parties met with various successes and reverses. After the king's supremacy had been pretty well established in England, Bishop Brown, in conjunction with others as commissioners, were sent to Ireland to introduce the principles of the new religion, which did not differ materially from the old Catholic faith, as the mass and seven sacraments were not yet abolished. The proposed supremacy of the king in spiritual matters, met with a decided opposition from the Irish people. His commissioners were every where treated with scorn and contempt. The

parliament of the Pale, in imitation of the English parliament, confirmed Henry the Eighth and his successors on the throne, in the title of supreme head of the church in Ireland, with the power of reforming and correcting heresies in religion! They prohibited all further appeals being made to Rome, under pains and penalties; and ordained that the clergy should pay the annats, or first fruits of their livings, to the king; to deny the king's supremacy in spiritual matters was rendered treason. * This abject and convenient parliament, also granted to the king and his successors, forever, a twentieth part of the revenues and annual rents of the secular livings, abbeys, friaries, and religious houses in the kingdom of Ireland. In addition to all this, they suppressed many abbeys, and confiscated their property to the king's use. As the promulgation of such acts, by a parliament held in Ireland, may appear rather inexplicable to those who are not conversant with Irish history, I will explain that the parliament which had fabricated the above-named laws, and by which the schism of Henry was introduced into Ireland, was a parliament solely composed of Englishmen, by birth and origin; the ancient Irish had no seat in it; they were excluded from all offices in the militia and magistracy, which is the cause of their not being mentioned by English writers. In order to establish the principles of the new religion, acts of sacrilege and cruelty were resorted to by the king's commissioners. In 1538, the Irish lord-deputy burned the cathedral of Down, and destroyed the monuments of St. Patrick, St. Bridget, and St. Columkill. He then made war against images, particularly those that were most revered. The celebrated statue of the Blessed Virgin, at Trim, was burned, as also the crucifix of the abbey of Ballybogen and St. Patrick's

* See O'Halloran's History—Dolby's edition.

crosier, † which had been removed in the twelfth century from Armagh to Dublin. The harsh measures instituted by Henry and the parliament of the Pale, did not effect the establishment of the new religion to any extent among the native Irish; Henry resorted to a milder policy, by vainly endeavoring to seduce the Irish by the proffer of titles and estates to the principal chiefs, but English titles were generally too distasteful to the Irish to be accepted of by many. I will close this eventful reign in the history of England and Ireland, by giving one or two extracts from the "Dublin Review," as found in Dolby's edition of O'Halloran's history — to which I am already much indebted — showing the social and moral effects of the ancient religion, and the bitter fruits produced by the "reformation." I desire that this comparison may be viewed apart from any religious aspect of the question. "It was the religion under which England was governed, without a standing army, a star-chamber, a national debt, or poor law unions; under which all the best and proudest institutions of the country arose and flourished, and attained maturity; which freed the nation from the tyrannical exactions of the forest laws; and which now, and then, consecrated by her sanction, the great charter of our liberties. It was the only religion that ever really provided without any state assistance, for the education of all classes — of the poor as well as of the rich— in school, in convent, or in college. It was the first religion

† Upon this circumstance I find McGeoghegan has given an interesting note: "Providence has preserved a croiser to posterity, which St. Patrick had used at the baptism of Aongus, king of Cashel, the holy apostle having left it with O'Kearney of Cashel (to be used by the bishops of that church on days of ceremony,) whose descendants have preserved it with veneration to the present time. This venerable monument of Christian antiquity is still in possession of Brien O'Kearney, of Fethard, in the county of Tipperary, the chief of the ancient family of that name."

that ever advocated the cause of the slave in the face of power and interest, which broke down the wall of separation between the singular, and even antagonist diversities of the human race, and placed the 'son of the stranger' upon an equality with the more favored and cherished of her children. It was the only religion that ever threw her mantle over the persecuted, the forlorn, and the unfortunate. Her voice was ever raised in their defence, and her laws were ever devised for their protection." This will serve to illustrate what beneficent offices the church discharged previous to the fatal epoch we are considering. I will now proceed to give a brief outline of the political and social effects of the "reformation" in England and Ireland. In lieu of monasteries we have workhouses; in place of voluntary charity, an unfeeling compulsory assessment for the poor; jails are multiplied or enlarged; whole masses of the population are unemployed or starving; while vice and crime are increased beyond all former precedents, and discontent and turbulence reign throughout. I will close by giving an English authority on this feature of my subject: "That the 'reformation,' as it is called, was engendered in beastly lust, brought forth in hypocrisy and perfidy, and cherished and fed by plunder, devastation, and by rivers of innocent English and Irish blood; and that, as to its more remote consequences, they are, some of them now before us, in that misery, that beggary, that nakedness, that hunger, that everlasting wrangling and spite, which now stare us in the face, and stun our ears at every turn, and which the 'reformation' has given us in exchange for the ease and happiness and harmony and Christian charity enjoyed so abundantly, and for so many ages, by our Catholic forefathers." —See Cobbett's History of the Reformation.

On the death of Henry the Eighth, his only legitimate son,

Edward the Sixth, ascended the throne. Edward was only nine years of age when called to the throne; consequently the government was, during his minority, vested in a council, composed of sixteen, nominated in the "will" made by his father, Henry. The Earl of Hertford, maternal uncle of the young king, was vested with supreme authority in matters of state.

The reformation was now openly preached before the people — Cranmer, Cox, and Latimer, and other English preachers — the country was infested with swarms of them from Germany; all, and each, trying to establish their own several doctrines. Such a formidable array of preachers, prosecuting with vigor a schismatic crusade throughout England, appeared to be a matter in no way palatable to a parliament who favored only the young king, and the protector's schism. That tribunal acknowledged none other in religious matters; it received its commission expressly from the king, who caused himself to be declared the head of it. In order to reconcile the different religious propagandists, and, at the same time, to preserve a semblance of unity, the parliament adopted certain articles of the tenets of each of the sects, whereof the religion of the country was composed; and, in order that none should have cause to complain of having been excluded, they added a portion of Calvinism — which was, at that time, becoming popular. †

From the many changes made, and innovations effected, in the ancient religion of the kingdom, the people became alarmed. The celebration of the mass was abolished; the marriage of priests allowed; the images were removed from the churches, and public prayers said in the dialect of the country; many bishops were removed from their sees, and thrown into

† See O'Halloran's history, Dolby's edition.

dungeons; the revenues belonging to the churches, together with their vessels and ornaments, were converted to profane purposes; and, by act of parliament, a new liturgy was substituted for the old one. Such a sweeping change made in the ancient faith of the people, gave rise to a rebellion in many parts of England. The effects of the reformation were now (A. D. 1548) beginning to be more severly felt, in Ireland. Several of the nobility were incarcerated for conspiring against the adoption of the new religion.

As Edward's reign was only of seven years duration, I will pass on to the accession of his sister Mary — merely observing, that during the brief period of his reign, the form of the new worship was changed three times; also, that an interregnum of a few days occurred after the death of Edward the Sixth, — the Duke of Northumberland having caused the Lady Jane Gray, to be proclaimed. In the year 1553, Mary made her entry into London, with all the pomp and magnificence incident to monarchial pageants, and regal displays. Before proceeding with the reign of this princess, I may remark, that English writers have attached the epithet "Bloody," to her name; why she should come down to posterity branded with that infamy, any more than her sister Elizabeth, historical facts, based on an impartial examination of the acts of her reign, will not sustain us in believing her to have been deserving of the reproach and comtempt cast on her character by partizan writers. Queen Mary, who had been a steadfast catholic, was crowned according to the ritual of that church. Her first act was, to restore the currency to its proper standard, which was debased in the preceding reigns; her second was, to pay off the debts due by the crown. The new forms of worship, which had obtained a footing the previous reign, were all reversed; the old altars were re-

stored; the married clergy were dispensed with; and, in short, the catholic religion was restored in England. The supremacy in spiritual matters, usurped by her father, Henry the Eighth, she wisely resigned. She was compelled to make examples of some distinguished personages for having conspired against her crown and person. It was for treasonable offences, and not for their religious belief, that caused Mary to send men to the tower. In Ireland, the old bishops were restored, and the ancient religion adopted. The policy of restoration was vigorously prosecuted, until old Erin once more enjoyed that ancient faith first preached to them by St. Patrick. In 1554, Mary and Francis, son of Charles the Fifth, of Spain, were married. Mary was then thirty-eight years of age. She reigned only six years, and died without issue. During her reign, the large tracts of country, owned for centuries, by the O'Moores, O'Connors, and O'Dempseys, of Leinster, were confiscated, and were changed in name into the "King's and Queen's counties. It was also during her reign, that the cruel and treacherous massacre of Mullaghmast took place; where three hundred Irish chiefs, who had been invited to a peaceful conference, were basely butchered, by orders of the Earl of Essex.

Though pressed as I am to condense the remainder of my narrative within the limits of the few remaining pages, I cannot forbear taking the liberty of inserting a couple of stanzas of that thrilling and beautiful poem, by the writers of the "Nation," founded on the massacre of Mullaghmast.

"At the feast unarmed, all,
Priest, bard, and chieftain, fall
In the treacherous Saxon's hall,
O'er the bright wine bowl;
And now, nightly, round the board,
With unsheathed and reeking sword,

Strides the felon lord,
Of the blood-stained soul,
Though the Saxon snake unfold
At thy feet his scales of gold,
And vow thee love untold,
Trust him not, green land!
Touch not with gloveless clasp
A coild, and deadly asp,
But with strong and guarded grasp,
In your steel-clad hand!
Then raise the cry, to Heaven;
Let the tyrant's chains be riven,
And freedom now be given
To our own green land!

The Abbe McGeoghegan, closes his remarks on the reign of the princess Mary, in the following words — "The short reign of this princess only checked for a time the progress of heresy, which soon afterwards acquired new strength, and re-ascended the throne, with Elizabeth." "It is remarkable," says Cox, (continues the Abbe,) "that though Mary was a zealous Papist, the Irish were not more tranquil under her reign than under that of Edward; on the contrary, their antipathy to the English, and their government, hurried them to commit the same excesses as under the preceding reigns." † Taylor has given the following excellent review of this unfortunate queen's government of Ireland:—"The queen commenced her reign by several acts equally just, humane, and politic. She granted an amnesty to those who had proclaimed Lady Jane Grey, in Dublin; she restored the heir of Kildare to his titles and estates; and she liberated O'Connor, of Ofally, who had been so long a prisoner." The restoration of the old religion was effected without violence; no perse-

† Although she endeavored to protect and advance the catholic religion, still her officers and lawyers did not cease to inflict injuries upon the Irish. Cox.

cution of the protestants was attempted; and several of the English, who fled from the furious zeal of Mary's inquisitors, found a safe retreat among the catholics of Ireland. It is but justice to this maligned body, to add, that on the three occasions of their obtaining the upper hand, they never injured a single person, in life or limb, for professing a religion different from their own. They had suffered persecution, and learned mercy, as they showed in the reign of Mary, in the wars from 1641 to 1648, and during the brief triumph of James the Second. In Ireland, we find, during the most brilliant period of her reign, that military violence and martial law were the means employed to silence the clamors of suffering innocence, or to punish resistance to intolerable oppression.

The Septs, occupying the devoted districts of Ofally and Leix, were pursued with fire and sword. In the words of an old historian, "the fires of burning huts were slaked by the blood of the inhabitants; it was with difficulty that a miserable remnant was saved by the generous interference of the earls of Kildare and Ossory. †

I may here introduce to the notice of the reader, the celebrated and turbulent chieftain of Ulster, John O'Neil, as we shall find him acting a prominent part in the theater of Irish affairs, during a portion of Elizabeth's reign.

Mary reigned only six years, and died without issue. I shall now pass on to the reign of her successor, Elizabeth, who was the daughter of Henry the Eighth, by Anne Boleyn. She ascended the throne of England, in 1558, and was twenty-five years of age when she began a long and eventful reign. She soon manifested a disposition to rule alone and supreme, in all matters, temporal and spiritual. In order that she

† Taylor's Civil Wars.

might not afford a cause to excite the alarms of the catholics, or repress the rising hopes of the protestants, she selected her council from among noblemen of either side. Two powerful circumstances contributed to irritate the feelings and excite the fears of this ambitious princess, namely: The refusal of the See of Rome to recognize her right to reign, and the legitimate claims of the unfortunate Mary Stuart — "Queen of Scots"— to the throne of England.

I must necessarily pass over the career of the beautiful, but unfortunate, Mary Stuart. Her tragic end casts an indelible blot on the character of her cousin Elizabeth. On this point, Whittaker, an English protestant divine, remarks — "The legal murder of Mary of Scotland, took place on the eighth of February, 1587 — a day of everlasting infamy to the memory of the English queen, who had no sensibilities of tenderness, and no sentiments of generosity; who looked not forward to the awful verdict of history, and who shuddered not at the more awful doom of God. I blush, as an Englishman, to think that this was done by an English queen, and one whose name I was taught to lisp, in my infancy, as the honor of her sex, and glory of our isle."

Before I present a brief view of the penalties, persecutions, and sufferings endured by the Irish, for adhering to the religion of their forefathers, under the tyrannical sway of Elizabeth, it may be well to have a glance at some of her acts, in England. Penal laws were enacted; imposing fines and imprisonment on all who refused to acknowledge the queen the spiritual head of the English church. These laws were directed against those dissenters who had dissented a little beyond the point noted in that book — commonly called "the Book of Common Prayer"— as authorized and set forth by the parliament of Elizabeth, as well as against the catholics.

A great body of these dissenters, in Scotland, moved under the powerful influence of John Knox, were quite as obnoxious to Elizabeth, and her laws, as the poor Irish papist, with his beads and amulets. No matter, the new religion must be established on a permanent basis, "either by hook or by crook"; and Elizabeth lost no time in having the several semi-religious and political acts passed, to insure that end. The book of Common Prayer and Liturgy, published under the boy, Edward the Sixth, were revised and corrected by commissioners, and approved of by the English parliament. The sacrament, in both kinds, was established; the mass abolished; the queen declared sovereign pontiff, or, to avoid the ridiculous appellation, supreme governess of the church; the tithes and revenues of the monasteries were to revert to the crown. At this trying period, the bishops displayed a fortitude truly apostolic. †

The Abbe McGeoghegan thus remarks — "Such was the reformed religion, which was firmly established in England, in the beginning of Elizabeth's reign. That capricious nation, which accuses its neighbors of inconsistency, changed her religion five times within thirty years. The English were catholics in 1529; immediately after this, they became schismatics, and formed a religion, no part of which, they understood. In Edward's reign, the heresy of Zuingle prevailed; under Mary, the catholic religion was restored; and on the accession of Elizabeth, another was established, composed, with some alterations, of the tenets of Luther and Calvin, to which was given the name of the English church."

Such was the state of affairs, in England, in the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth. Let us now take a glance at un-

† For a fuller account on this head, I would refer the reader to Dolby's edition of O'Halloran's History.

happy Ireland, during this reign. The suffering, cruelties, and massacres endured by the Irish people, under the tyrannical sway of this woman, baffle all description. Plunder, rapine, and confiscation were the order of the day; thousands of the English flocked to Ireland, to seize on the lands and possessions of the Irish. For the previous three hundred and sixty years, the battles between the English and the Irish were mostly confined to the English deputy, with a few thousand men, on one side, and some noted Irish chieftain, with his devoted followers, on the other. These frequent and sanguinary conflicts, could not extinguish the Irish clan, for, if the chieftain of the day was conquered and beheaded, and his head placed on a spike, there was, anon, "another Richmond in the field." It was the old Irish law, when the chieftain died, or fell in battle, his place was supplied by election from the best of his family. This erroneous political principle led to ambitious rivalry among themselves. The chieftain, always bound by the increasing number of his clan, to extend his territory, and his own natural ambition to extend his own sway, his neighbors were viewed with as much jealously by him, as the invaders of his country — anglo-Normans. It was from the disastrous results incident to the general application of this principle throughout Ireland, that the crafty invader gained great advantages; in fact, it might be reckoned as the secret source of English domination in Ireland. The plan pursued by the emissaries of Elizabeth, in their efforts to reduce Ireland, and establish the reformation there, was different from that system of warfare which prevailed during the four preceding centuries. They inaugurated the dread policy of the chieftains and clans to oppose each other; to array in deadly combat one Irish warrior against another. In some places, they fought openly, and cut down whole dis-

tricts — appropriating the lands of the slain to the needy adventurers who swarmed the country. Religion was the pretence used, in order to confiscate the property of the nation. The most monstrous absurdity of all, was the Irish people did not really know what the form of faith was which this "supreme governess of the church," (Elizabeth) prescribed for their adoption. And horror of horrors! the Irish were deprived of liberty, property, and life, for not complying with an undefined religion, or form of worship. The spirit of religion shrieks in anguish to think that such barbarities could be perpetrated in her name. To detail the various battles fought by the Irish during this reign, in defence of their country and the religion of their forefathers, would far exceed the limits of this work. Rivers of blood were shed ere they would submit to intolerable oppression and tyranny, or yet abandon that faith which was "once believed by the saints."

Foremost among the illustrious champions of his country, stood the dauntless John O'Neil, prince of Ulster. This prince greatly engrossed the attention of the English government; his unyielding spirit sorely perplexed the various deputies of Elizabeth. The proffered titles of Earl of Tyrone and Baron of Dungannon, were not sufficient to seduce that high minded man from the path of rectitude and duty to his country. His reply to the Commissioners of Elizabeth, who sought an amicable negotiation, portrays his character better than any words of mine can. "If Elizabeth, your mistress, be queen of England, I am O'Neil, king of Ulster; I never made peace with her without having been previously solicited to it by her; I am not ambitious of the abject title of earl; both my family and birth raise me above it; I will not yield precedence to any one; my ancestors have been kings of

Ulster; I have gained that kingdom by my sword, and by my sword I will preserve it." At the same time, he expressed his contempt of O'Carly More, who had just then accepted the English title (earl.) The English government, finding O'Neil fixed in his purpose, determined to use force against him.

I must pass over the various battles and military exploits of John, commonly called Thane O'Neil. His military tactics and bravery, could not save him from destruction. He detached from his interest some powerful noblemen, of Ulster, who arrayed themselves, with their vassals, against him. O'Neil, finding himself hemmed in, was reduced to the sad alternative of seeking safety among his enemies. O'Neil had defeated the Scots on two occasions,—on the first, he killed their chief, James MacDonnel, and on the second, Turly-Boy MacDonnel, brother of the latter, was taken prisoner. In 1567, he set out for northern Clanneboy, where the Scots were encamped, under the command of Alexander MacDonnel, brother of Turly-Boy, whom O'Neil had restored to liberty. O'Neil, with a few attendants, was received with apparent kindness; but the Scots, either through revenge, for past injuries, or hoping to receive a large reward from the English government, stabbed him, with all his followers, and sent his head to the English deputy, who exposed it upon a pole, on the Castle of Dublin. The following year, 1567, the parliament passed an act, confiscating his estates for the queen's use. After the death of Thane O'Neil, the reformed religion began to spread in Ireland.

In 1570, Turlough Lynogh O'Neil, who had been acknowledged chief of that illustrious house, continued to support the catholic cause, in Ulster. In Munster and Connaught, the confederates bravely resisted.

I will close my remarks on this protracted struggle, by the Irish people, for civil and religious liberty, by an extract from Taylor, on the civil wars. "But, though the war against O'Neil had no connection with religion, either in its cause or progress, its consequences were most injurious to the reformation. The detestable policy by which their favorite leader was destroyed, inspired the Irish with a fierce hatred against every English institution, civil and religious. They judged of the new system by its effects; and these they found were treachery, robbery, and assassination."

It was about this time, that Philip the Third, of Spain, equipped a large fleet, to make a descent on the coast of England; this fleet, commonly called the "Invincible Armada," was shattered by a violent storm. Philip, on learning the sad intelligence, calmly replied — "I did not send them to fight against the elements."

This struggle, by the Irish, for liberty and religion, preyed, as a virulent canker, on the fast declining Elizabeth. The brave resistance of O'Neil, for fifteen years, finally extorted from this princess, peace, the sovereignty of his principality, and freedom of religion. Sir Robert Naughton, an English writer, who lived about the time of her reign, and was appointed secretary of state, under James the First, says, in his Regalia Fragmenta — "The war in Ireland may be styled the distemper of the reign of Elizabeth — having continued to the end of her life — proved such an expenditure as affected the health and constitution of the princess, for, in her last days, she became sorrowful, melancholy, and depressed. Her arms, which had been accustomed to conquer, meeting with opposition from the Irish, and the success of the war, for so long a time, becoming not only doubtful but unfortunate, afflicted her to distraction." This admission of an English

writer, must be cheering to us of the present day — it conveys the instructive lesson, that, notwithstanding the whole power of England, put forth against Ireland, during the fifteen years war, she signally failed in conquering the brave men of that generation. Elizabeth, after a troubled reign of forty-four years, died A. D. 1603.

CHAPTER XVIII.

IRELAND'S SUFFERINGS AND HEROIC RESISTANCE — FROM THE ACCESSION OF JAMES THE FIRST, VIZ: 1603, TO THE CLOSE OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

James the sixth, of Scotland, the son of the unfortunate Mary "queen of Scots," ascended the English throne under the title of James the first. This prince was weak and pusillanimous. According to Wade the strong feature of his character was insincerity. He was a rigid Presbyterian, and on his accession promised toleration to all religious denominations; his noncompliance with this expected boon soon incited his disappointed subjects to conspire against his throne and person; and engulph by one sudden stroke a parliament who had outraged every principle of law and justice. From deep resentment and a firm resolve to rid the nation of a set of men who committed extensive robberies under the sanction of constitutional authority, we find a few men engaged to consummate a plot which, if successful, would have effected that object. On the 5th of November, 1605, the parliament of James was to meet; on that day also was its destruction determined upon. A plot commonly known as the "gunpowder plot," terrible in its design, was to have been executed. This plot is viewed by some persons as a popish plot; I will admit that some of the conspirators were catholics, yet we know also that some catholic peers were also in this parliament. A timely intima-

tion to one of the peers, namely, Lord Mounteagle, frustrated the designs of the conspirators. Shortly after this the great fire of London took place; this act was also ascribed to the papists. A lofty monument was erected in commemoration of a portion of the city being saved. This monument is branded with the character of liar by Pope;

> "London's column pointing to the skies,
> Like a tall bully, lifts its head, and lies."

Ireland, during this reign and subsequent ones, bled at every pore; she it was who drank to the very dregs the bitter cup held forth to her by the remorseless hand of oppression and fanatical persecution. To show the iniquitous and shameless means employed by James' followers, I will give an extract from Leland (English): "It was an age of project and adventure. They who were too poor, or too spiritless to engage in distant adventures, courted fortune in Ireland. The most iniquitous practices of hardened cruelty, of vile perjury, and scandalous subornation, were employed to despoil the fair and unoffending proprietor of his inheritance." For the previous four centuries, it had been considered lawful for any Englishman to rob, despoil, or kill an Irishman, or ravish an Irish woman; and if brought to trial it was a sufficient plea for a defence for any of the above crimes, that the injured person was Irish.—See O'Connell's Memoir, Casserly's edition, page 43.

Charles the first, son of James the first, came to the throne A. D. 1625; he also gave early promises of toleration. Being an Episcopalian, he endeavored to force that form of worship on the scots, which they successfully resisted in the field. To the catholics of Ireland he proved unfaithful. They were forced to pay a fine since Elizabeth's time for not attending

the places of the new religion. The catholics sent over agents to England to make a tender of their support and pecuniary assistance to king Charles, with a view of being relieved from their fines and to obtain some material ameloriation of their distressed condition. The king promised to guarantee to them certain rights; he received one hundred thousand pounds of their money, but never granted the promised rights, or as they were called "king's graces," to the poor duped catholics. To the English he proved a vacillating, arbitrary and absolute monarch, spurning the sanction of his parliament; he imposed taxes on his subjects by the force of his own will; his deputy Strafford instituted a grand scheme for plunder and confiscation in Ireland. Strafford and his royal master were both executed. I must pass over many of the events in the reign of this unfortunate prince. In Ireland the catholics beheld themselves deceived by the king, their property confiscated, their ancestral halls given to strangers, their priests hanged, or hunted, the exercise of their worship, which they valued dearer than life, broken in upon by infuriated fanatics, their women and children butchered; surely all this was more than sufficient to drive them to the most desperate acts, to deeds of madness. A petition was sent to the parliament praying that the Irish papists should quit the kingdom or turn protestants; otherwise they were to be hanged at their doors. When we read of these diabolical means employed to exterminate the Irish, or force them to abjure their ancient faith, we naturally shudder with an instinctive horror at the depravity of human nature, while at the same time we are consoled by the instructive lesson, that notwithsanding all the horrible enactments of the English parliaments against the Irish, or the odious means employed by England's emissaries, they were unable to seduce the Irish from their faith.

Thank heaven, the Irish element is to-day more powerful than ever. After seven centuries of mis-government, oppression and persecution, Ireland is at present the great source of discontent and fear to English statesmen; she is as restless and unmanageable as though she had never tasted of the hated lash of the stranger. After the decapitation of Charles the first, Oliver Cromwell, the military dictator, became protector of the commonwealth (England). The monarchy being overthrown in England, the house of lords abolished, the supreme power vested in Cromwell and his parliaments, whom he called and dismissed as he thought proper. The heroic resistance of the Irish under the leadership of the valiant O'Neil of Ulster, with some other Irish chieftains, the recently acquired victory of O'Neil's forces against the Scotch and English at the battle of Benburb, irritated all parties in England, and the government of Ireland became a question of dispute and annoyance to the parliamentarians. Several were named for the responsible trust of leading the parliament forces in Ireland, and crushing out the rebellious papists and non-conformists. Oliver Cromwell was finally entrusted with the command of prosecuting the war of extermination in Ireland, and right well he did it.

To show the reader what the Irish were to expect and suffer from the inhuman policy of this monster of vice and crime, I will insert a resolution passed in the house of commons, England, Oct, 24th, 1644: "The lords and commons, assembled in the parliament of England, do declare that no quarter shall be given to any Irishman, or to any papist born in Ireland, which shall be taken in hostility against the parliament, either upon sea or within the kingdom or dominion of Wales; and therefore, do order that the lord-general, the lord-admiral, and all other officers and commanders, both by

sea and land, shall except all Irishmen and all papists born in Ireland, out of all capitulations hereafter to be made with the enemy, and shall upon the taking of every such Irishman and papist born in Ireland, as aforesaid, forthwith put every such person to death." Cromwell spread fear and consternation far and wide. The garrisons of Drogheda and Wexford after having surrendered he caused to be put to the sword. In Clonmel he met with a stronger resistance from Hugh O'Neil. Leland, an English historian, speaking of the fearful execution of the garrison at Drogheda, says: "Cromwell with an infernal calmness and deliberation, resolved by one effectual execution, to terrify the whole Irish party; he issued his fatal orders, that the garrison should be put to the sword. Some of his soldiers with reluctance butchered their prisoners; the governor and all his gallant comrades, numbering three thousand men, were butchered in cold blood. A number of ecclesiastics were found within the walls, and these seemed to be the more immediate objects of his vengeance; he ordered his soldiers to plunge their weapons into the helpless men's bodies. For five days this butchery continued; thirty persons only out of the whole garrison and citizens remained unslaughtered, and these were transported as slaves to Barbadoes." For this and similar executions at which humanity shudders, the parliament of England laughed and passed a vote of thanks to the usurper—Cromwell. "For this important success of the parliament's forces in Ireland, the house appointed a thanksgiving day, to be held on the first of November ensuing throughout the nation; and further a letter of thanks was voted to be sent to Cromwell, lord-lieutenant of Ireland, in which notice was to be taken that the house did approve of the execution done at Drogheda, as an act both of justice to them, and mercy to others who may be warned

by it." * Can any man be surprised who reads this resolution, that the Irish should hate England? And this natural hatred begot and engendered by the policy and cruelty of England toward Ireland, will exist so long as England retains her sovereignty over Ireland. Let England only relinquish her hold of Ireland, and leave to the Irish people the right of self government, which is the legitimate right of all people and nations, then we would behold a mighty reversion of feeling take place in the mind of the Irish nation toward England; she might find her a worthy friend, a firm and unconquerable ally.

To follow the career of this cruel usurper—Cromwell—or to detail but a very small portion of his cruelties and cold-blooded butcheries of the Irish, would far exceed my limits. I will sum him up as I find him pictured in the Liberator's book, † which should be in the hands of everybody. "Cromwell gorged himself with human blood; he committed the most hideous slaughters, deliberate, cold-blooded, persevering; he stained the annals of the English people with guilt of a blacker dye than has stained any other nation on earth; and after all, for what? Some four or five years of precarious power! And if his loathsome corpse was interred in a royal grave, it was so only to have his bones thence transferred to a gibbet! Was it for this he deliberately slaughtered thousands of men, women, and children?" The following description of the state of Ireland during this terrific period has been given by an eyewitness, a man who was employed in hunting to death the Irish; he says; "The natural result of the promiscuous slaughter of the unarmed peasantry wherever

* Parliamentary His., Vol. III, p. 1334.

† O'Connell's memoir—Casserby's ed.

the English soldiers could lay hold of them, was, as a matter of course, an appalling famine. About the years 1652 and 1653 the plague and famine had swept away whole counties, that a man might travel twenty or thirty miles and not see a living creature, either man, beast or bird, they being either all dead, or had quit those desolate places. Our soldiers would tell stories of the place where they saw a smoke; it was so rare to see either a smoke by day, or fire or candle by night, and when we did meet with two or three poor cabins, none but very aged men, with women and children, were to be seen, and those, like the prophet, might have complained: "We are become as a bottle in the smoke; our skin is black, like an oven, because of the terrible famine," &c.—Colonel Lawrence's Ireland, pp. 86–87. It is recorded that Cromwell sent away one hundred thousand Irish to foreign countries; they were principally the flower of the Irish army. The lands of Ireland he coolly divided among his followers, reserving the whole county of Tipperary for his own demesne. On Cromwell being re-called to England to oppose Prince Charles, he left Ireton, his duplicate in cruelty, to govern Ireland. A proclamation, issued from Dublin castle, announced that every Romish priest found in Ireland was deemed guilty of rebellion, and sentenced to be hanged. A reward of five pounds was offered for the head of a priest, being the amount awarded for the head of a wolf. What a dismal, trying period this was to the Irish people; to see their nobles, prelates, priests, and citizens sacrificed by thousands; whose blood stained the scaffolds without end; others were stoned, cut asunder, racked, or put to death with the sword; others wandered over the world in hunger, thirst, cold, and nakedness—being in want, afflicted, wandering in deserts, in mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. Such was the unhappy state to which

Cromwell reduced Ireland and the Roman priesthood. After the death of O'Neil, and the treachery of Lord Inchiguin, who basely surrendered some important garrisons, Ireland became a more easy prey to Cromwell and his rapacious followers. After being lord protector for four years, this inhuman monster of depravity terminated a stormy existence. His son, Richard, was proclaimed protector; his reign was of short duration, as the nation was getting tired already of the change, and was resolved to return to its former mode of government, consequently the exiled prince, Charles the Second, was invited to return and assume the crown of his decapitated father. This event is denominated, in English History, the "Restoration." Charles the Second proved no better to the Irish nation than his ancestors, notwithstanding the vigorous resistance they—the Irish—made to the usurpation of his crown, and the generous aid they afforded him in his adversity, he—true to the Stuart family—was guilty of ingratitude, "the basest of crimes." The very men who most opposed the Stuart cause, and espoused the cause of Cromwell and the parliamentarians, and who persecuted the Irish, were the very men he appointed to govern Ireland. The ingratitude of this prince toward the Irish is alone sufficient to cause every Irishman to hate the name and race. This king owed his life twice to catholic priests, who had in over fifty instances held his life at the mercy of catholics, and when hunted by the blood-hounds of Cromwell, through Scotland, had been concealed, and then guided in safety by one of those catholics, a poor man, who could have made himself rich by giving him up. Charles the Second confirmed the claims of those who had robbed the Irish of their property. By an act of "settlement" brought into parliament over eight millions of acres of the best land confiscated from the catholic Irish!*

* T. Mooney's History.

The doom of Ireland was now evidently sealed; her choicest spirits exiled, and for the first time sought employment in the armies of France and Spain, where they distinguished themselves by bravery and genius. Ireland, in one way or other, presented the sad spectacle of a bleeding, manacled victim. "That spirit was broken which never would bend." After spending twenty-five years of a profligate and corrupt life on the throne of England, Charles the Second died, A. D. 1685. In the midst of political strife, civil and religious dissensions, James the Second came to the throne. This prince, on his accession to the throne, publicly avowed his catholic principles. He proclaimed liberty of conscience to all his subjects in Ireland. The catholics resumed their positions in the State; many of the Irish chiefs were re-instated in their hereditary castles and estates. A parliament was convened in Dublin, composed of catholics and protestants, who, it is allowed, passed several salutary and wise laws for the promotion of trade and manufactures. Ireland revived and began to assume the features of happiness and prosperity, only to be again speedily crushed out. About this time a political conspiracy against the king of France engendered a persecution against the protestants of that country, commonly called the "French Huguenots." Many of them fled to England and Ireland, where they were kindly received; King James ordered a collection to be taken up in all the churches for their relief. The toleration granted to the catholics excited the fears and aroused the indignation of the high church protestant party in England. The protestant archbishop of Canterbury, with other protestant divines, refused to read in their churches James' declaration of freedom of conscience to all his subjects. The bishops remonstrated and denied the king's power to grant such liberty, though they had, from Henry the

Eighth's time, by the oath of supremacy, sworn the kings of England to be chiefs in all religious matters. The bishops were imprisoned and tried for contempt, a very unwise act; the jury, after a lengthy and stormy debate, brought in a verdict of "not guilty," which caused the king's army, which was stationed near London, to set up a cheer, rather an ominous index for a cowardly king.

The protestant confederation determined upon changing the succession. Accordingly, they sent deputies and addresses of invitation to William, prince of Orange, the son-in-law of James. William landed, with about thirty thousand men, at Torbay, on the fifth day of November, 1688 and marched toward London. The king met him with thirty thousand men, at Salisbury, but instead of fighting, his principal officers joined the usurper. The king fled to London, whence he retired to France.

Ireland determined to fight for their legitimate monarch. The case of the Irish nation, at this period, is set forth as follows, by the graphic pen of Sir Jonah Barrington — "James, a monarch de jure and de facto, expelled from one portion of his empire, threw himself for protection upon the loyalty and faith of another; and Ireland did not shrink from affording that protection. She defended her legitimate monarch against the usurpation of a foreigner, and whilst a Dutch guard possessed themselves of the British capitol, the Irish people remained faithful to their king, and fought against the invader. In strict matter of fact, therefore, England became a nation of decided rebels, and Ireland remained a country of decided royalists. Historic records leave that point beyond the power of refutation." And now we are again to behold the Irish devastated, and the country bleed for their adherence to their lawful sovereign. It was at this

trying crisis in their affairs, that the Irish raised, clothed, and equipped thirty thousand men, for the king's service, mostly at their own expense,—a spirit of devotion and patriotism worthy of the cause of a better man than James the Second. He was, to say the least, a cowardly paltroon, and he is best known to the Irish of to-day by the famous sobriquet of "Sheamus a hocha." * Whilst the Irish were making every disposition to support James's cause, he, (still in France,) saw their unfaltering devotion. He concluded to embark for Ireland — thinking that his presence there would check, to some extent, the plans of his enemies. He landed at Kinsale, with some French officers, and proceeded to Dublin, in the midst of a grand procession of forty thousand brave Irish soldiers. Londonderry, Coleraine, and Culmor, in the north, had declared in favor of the Prince of Orange—William. Thither the Irish generals led part of their forces. Coleraine and Culmor were reduced; the garrison of Derry offered to capitulate. This garrison, consisting of six thousand men, and General Hamilton, (Irish) who knew the importance of the place, promised them their lives, and protection, on condition that the city would surrender the next day, at twelve o'clock; which terms were accepted, and ratified. The king marched directly to the north, disapproved of the terms granted by General Hamilton, and demanded an unconditional surrender of the garrison. This change, made by the king, justly alarmed the inhabitants, who now resolved to hold out to the last extremity. The siege began, and nobly did the protestants of Derry, under the enthusiastic and courageous leadership of a protestant clergyman, named Walker, hold out, until finally, reduced to the awful state of famine, when they were forced to eat cats, dogs, &c. For seventy-three days

* Cowardly James.

they resisted, with extraordinary bravery, the beseiging army. Finally, a fleet arrived, bringing provisions and war-like stores for their relief. Thus we see, by the imbecility of James, was that important garrison lost to the Irish. At Dundalk, he showed a weak compassion for the English, and an imprudent clemency toward subjects armed against their sovereign, and ready to bear the scepter from his hands, after they had violated all respect due to royalty. It was in these circumstances that M. Rose observed to the king — "Sire, if you possessed a hundred kingdoms you would lose them." *

At length William appeared in person; he brought as large a force as he could muster — joining his experienced and veteran general, Schonberg — his army amounted to thirty-eight thousand.

The immortal Sarsfield had, by this time, returned from Sligo, where he routed all the king's enemies, and had now come to bear a glorious part in the approaching and memorable battle of the Boyne. William, at the head of his forces, marched towards king James' army, stationed on the right bank of the Boyne. I take the following condensed description of the celebrated battle of the Boyne, from an English historian, (Smiles.) "William reached the Boyne, at the head of his advanced guard, early on the morning of the thirtieth of June. After carefully surveying the lines of the Irish, on the opposite side of the river, he resolved to force the passage, on the following day. The rich plains of Meath were within sight; the clear and joyous river ran sparkling through a fair and fertile pasture-land, and the very summits of the hills were clad in verdure. 'Behold,' said William, turning to his officers, 'Behold a land worth fighting for!' On the site of James, there was little of the resolute deter-

* See McGeoghegan's History.

mination that was so conspicuous on the part of his opponent. At the appearance of William's army marching into quarters, on the opposite side of the Boyne, the last vestiges of James' courage completely evaporated. This cowardly monarch now appeared as anxious to avoid an engagement as he had been formerly to court one. A council of war was held, late in the evening, when the French generals, who had perceived William's superiority in numbers and artillery, seconded James in his efforts to avoid an encounter. On the other hand, the Irish generals were eager to engage with the enemy, and urged that William's passage of the river should be desperately resisted. The result was, that James resolved to risk a partial battle — keeping himself out of harm's way the while — and then to retreat by the pass of Duleek, without risking a general action. In the meantime, James, in anticipation of a retreat, ordered the baggage, and the principal part of the artillery, to be sent forward to Dublin. The fighting part of the affair, on the morrow, was entrusted to the Irish; while the six thousand French — the best appointed part of the army — were to take care of the wretched monarch, and conduct him in safety from the field of battle. Thus did James deliberately make his preparations to throw away his last chance for his own throne, and to sacrifice, without a struggle, his brave and loyal adherents among the Irish people. The best part of James' force — the French — were never brought into action. Only fourteen thousand Irish, with six pieces of artillery, opposed to a veteran army of thirty-eight thousand, with fifty pieces of artillery. Yet, with all these disadvantages, the issue was doubtful, even to the close of the day. William gained nothing but the ground on which his army encamped that night, and the dead bodies with which the field was strewed; for, with the exception of

Hamilton, he took no prisoners; neither did he take any spoil from the Irish, who retreated in good order, with all their baggage and artillery. There is little doubt that, had not the Irish the misfortune to be commanded by a coward, the result would have been very different. After the battle, the cry of the Irish was, 'change generals, and we will fight the battle over again.' The brilliant and successful charges of the Irish cavalry, under Hamilton, showed what might have been accomplished had James but possessed a tithe of the chivalrous spirit of this leader." The Irish army, under Tyrconnel and Sarsfield, made good their retreat to the fortifications on the western side of the Shannon. They secured their positions in the strongholds of Sligo, Athlone, Limerick, and Cork. The Athlone garrison, of only one thousand men, resisted, with heroic bravery, a besieging force of eight thousand, under General Douglass, who, after seven days firing on the town, drew off his forces to Limerick, and joined William, who was now fast preparing, to attack that city. Limerick being the key of the west and south, William laid furious seige to it. The Irish still retained three-eighths of the kingdom; their king, for whom they had taken up arms, left them to their own fate. The French allies partly returned to France, under the instigation of the ignoble Lawson, who marched out of Limerick just as William appeared before the walls. The Irish, under all these discouraging circumstances, determined to make one more heroic and death-like stand for their country and freedom. William's besieging army, before the walls of Limerick, amounted to twenty-five thousand, with a considerable train of artillery. The Irish amounted to twenty thousand — one-half of which only, were armed. During twenty-seven days, forty pieces of ordnance played on the walls; at length a breach was effected. The assault was

ordered; five thousand men, supported by a reserve of eight thousand, rush to the breach; the Irish open upon them a deadly fire. Under a tremendous fire, fighting foot to foot, and hand to hand, the advance men enter — the Irish close behind them — are all cut to pieces; new charges press on, faster and more furious. The invaders enter the breach, and fight for four hours, under cover of the thunder of forty pieces of artillery; the Irish oppose themselves in masses to the invaders. The women fought with desperate fury, taking hold of the arms of the slain, and levelling them against their foes — picking up every sort of missile, they hurled them in the very teeth of the invaders — they flung themselves into the ranks, with the men. The beseigers retreated, dismayed; under cover of their guns, they advance a second time to the breach, but with no better success. On this occasion, they were forced to retreat faster than before, to the great dismay of William, who rebuked his commanders."

The battle was described as so terrific by a looker-on, that, with the thunder of the cannon and the roar of the musketry, the very skies appeared rending asunder; the smoke that came from the town reached in one continued cloud to a mountain at least five miles off!* And yet amidst this terrific and death-like fire the women and men of Limerick stood, fought, and drove back the broken and dismayed forces of King William. I am not aware that the page of universal history presents a more brilliant spectacle or a braver military exploit than the defence of Limerick, when considered under the disadvantageous circumstances it was maintained. The imbecility of king James, the unfaithfulness or rather treachery of allies, the unfortunate reverses previously encountered, were more than sufficient to crush their faith in

* O'Callaghan's Green Book, page 200.

the cause they fought for. Despite all this, the Irish people fought the forces of the Prince of Orange with a valor and heroism which wins from posterity the tribute of admiration, and casts a radiance on the page of their country's history that will yet light the votaries of liberty to victory.

> "The man that is not moved with what he reads,
> That takes not fire at such heroic deeds,
> Unworthy of the blessings of the brave,
> Is base in kind, and born to be a slave."

William asked the garrison for a cessation of arms to bury his dead, which was refused. Finally, in a few days after this defeat, he was forced to raise the seige. The English army moved away under command of General Ginckle. King William in the meantime embarked for England. The Irish, with persevering bravery, kept up the war all that winter. William sent over the celebrated Duke of Marlborough with a force of ten thousand. Cork and Kinsale were reduced by him after a brave defence of some days on the part of the Irish under Magelligot in Cork and McCarthy in Kinsale. Ere they surrendered, they consumed their ammunition, and obtained a capitulation as "prisoners of war," which was perfidiously broken by Marlborough. The prisoners were starved in prison, the dead left unburied, and disease carried off four thousand who had surrendered.*

The summer of 1691 came, and with it came fearful struggles, successes, and reverses to the Irish people. King William poured troops all the spring into Ireland. He had a formidable army concentrated there, with plenty of arms, ammunition, clothing, and money, to prosecute the war. The French aid arrived in May, under command of Marshal St.

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* O'Callaghan, page 204.

Ruth. The Irish and French forces, amounting to twenty thousand, under command of St. Ruth, moved toward Athlone, which is in the center of Ireland. Ginckle moved from Dublin toward Athlone, which garrison he reached on the morning of the 18th of June, 1691. St. Ruth, who lay within a few miles of the city, neglected to send forward a sufficient force to defend the garrison. To notice the several acts of bravery displayed during the defence of this garrison by the beseiged, would exceed my limits. Suffice it to say, that after a most heroic resistance for twelve days, Ginckle effected an entrance and dislodged the Irish, who contested the ground inch by inch with their pursuers. "Thus," says O'Callaghan, "not through native but foreign misconduct, not through the fault of the Irish but of their general, Athlone was at length taken, after a resistance that does honor even to Irish valor." St. Ruth, though an able general, had, by his arrogance toward the Irish commanders, and his loss of Athlone, ("the key of Ireland,") so disgusted and dispirited his army that five thousand abandoned his camp. St. Ruth, now anxious to make amends and retrieve the misfortunes caused by his own negligence and too haughty demeanor, busied himself in infusing fresh confidence and courage into all around him. The noble Sarsfield alone remained unreconciled to the imperious and haughty Frenchman. The fatal error of losing Athlone preyed too keenly on the lofty mind of that patriotic son of Erin to allow him to make friends with St. Ruth. A fatal error, also, as the plans of the battle of Aughrim were unknown to all but St. Ruth, and when that brave general, in the moment of victory lost his head, Sarsfield, on whom devolved the chief command, knew not the lost plans. "Aughrim was bravely fought, and lost without dishonor; gained by the enemy more through

one of the accidents of war—the sending casks of cannon shot to Aughrim castle instead of bullets—than to bravery or skill."* The Irish now entrenched themselves in the remaining strong [garrisons yet in their possession, viz: Limerick, Galway, and Sligo. To these places the invading army repaired. Limerick was strongly fortified. From July to September the English army poured a continued volley of cannon balls and bombs on the town, still the word was "no surrender." On the continent the affairs of William were extremely embarrassing. His army fighting the combined forces of Spain and France was greatly reduced and demoralized. King William sent word to his commander-in-chief, Ginckle, to conclude a peace with the Irish on any terms provided they would acknowledge him as their King. Whereupon the famous "treaty of Limerick was agreed upon, signed, and ratified by the contracting parties. This famous treaty was signed on a large stone mid-way between the contending parties. It is called the "treaty stone," and held in much veneration by the Irish people, especially the inhabitants of Limerick, who view it as a token of their heroic bravery and devotion to their country, and the cause of civil and religious liberty. Thus ended the Williamite war in Ireland; barren of any material advantages to William save whatever delight he might have taken in beholding rivers of Irish blood shed in defence of their lawful king, country, and religion. The result of this sanguinary conflict secured to the Irish people a general pardon and amnesty for the past, and a complete guaranty for the future exercise of their civil and religious rights. The very thing for which the Irish contended and fought for during the preceding two hundred and fifty years, and now

* Mr. T. Mooney's History, vol. I., page 779.

wrung from their reluctant enemies through their own valor. This historic fact conveys to us the instructive lesson of self-reliance and perseverance, and that the English never granted any concessions to the Irish, but what the mighty resolve and indomitable valor of the Irish people wrung from her. The treaty of Limerick was signed on the 3d of October, 1691. A solemn compact ratified and signed by William and Mary, but afterwards perfidiously broken by the English. I cannot close my remarks on this brilliant feature of Irish heroism, namely, the siege and treaty of Limerick, without bestowing my small tribute of admiration for the brave men and women of Limerick; could I inscribe their names in letters of gold, or emblazon their fame by poetic genius, I would feel proud in discharging so lofty and sacred a duty; I feel that my own inability to give proper expression to the homage due their glorious memories is fully redeemed by the poetic fervor of Mr. T. Mooney, who dedicated a few patriotic stanzas to the men and women of Limerick, from which I take the liberty to insert one.

"Hurrah, for the women of Limerick town
Whom the power of William could never put down;
Hurrah for brave Sarsfield, tho' dead in his grave,
His spirit yet fires the valiant and brave.
And if ever the day shall come again,
When Limerick women and Limerick men
Shall be called to the breach to defend their own land,
May we all be there just to give them a hand."

I regret my limits will not admit of my inscribing the above in full.*

It is computed that four hundred and fifty thousand Irishmen entered the continental armies, from the reign of Eliza-

* The above may be seen in full in Mooney's History, Vol. 1 page 797.

beth to the treaty of Limerick. The Irish brigade—nineteen thousand strong entered the service of the King of France, in whose service they signalized themselves by deeds of bravery, and at the famous battle of Fontenoy, in their impetuous charge on the English, covered themselves with undying glory. It was at this defeat of the English forces on the continent, owing to the valor of his exiled Irish subjects, that caused the English sovereign—George the Second— to exclaim, "Curse such laws that rob me of such subjects." The laws referred to by his Britannic majesty were the penal laws enacted against the Irish catholics. In addition to this unprecedented exodus of the Irish people, William caused upwards of eleven millions acres of land to be confiscated from the Irish. After his seven years' continental war, he was forced to conclude a peace by the treaty of Ryswick. A large amount was due his army, which had now returned home; to obtain the means of payment, William turned his attention to the estates of the Irish catholics. A commission was appointed to inquire into the validity of their patents and titles to those estates, which came to them by heirship through a long succession of ages, and not by leases from the kings of England. Thus were the Irish again robbed of their lands.

I will close this sketch of the miserable and degraded state of Ireland at the close of the 17th century in the words of an English writer, (Smiles): "This extensive seizure of Irish estates by the government of William completed the confiscations of the 17th century,—a century of injury, exasperation, and revenge—of war, bloodshed, and spoliation. The forfeiture for 'rebellion' during the century amounted to about eleven and a half million acres. Add to this unparalleled confiscation of the property of the nation, the surrender of their manufactures, the independence of their country, the

proscription of religion and education—all through the bigotry of William's parliament, and in direct violation of the solemn "treaty of Limerick," and you have a faint idea of the sad and gloomy state of the Irish people at the close of the 17th century.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION—THE VOLUNTEER MOVEMENT IN IRELAND—AN INDEPENDENT IRISH PARLIAMENT AND FREE TRADE—THE REBELLION OF 1798—THE LEGISLATIVE UNION OF ENGLAND AND IRELAND IN 1801—THE CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION ACT PASSED 1828—FROM THE DEATH OF WILLIAM THE THIRD, PRINCE OF ORANGE, TO THE ACCESSION OF HER PRESENT MAJESTY, QUEEN VICTORIA, IN 1838.

Before I drop the curtain on the scenes and tragic end of this turbulent actor, William the Third, I will sum up his life and character in the words of the English historian Wade: "In furtherance of his ambitious aspirations, he was unscrupulous as to the means he employed. Parliament was bribed, the morals of the people corrupted, and the pernicious principle introduced of borrowing on remote funds, by which was engendered a swarm of loan-contractors, speculators, and stock-jobbers, whose harvest is gathered only in the midst of a nation's difficulties. It is to this monarch we owe the commencement of the practice of issuing exchequer bills; of raising money by lottery; the excise and stamp duties, which burdened posterity, and generated and supported wars of despotism and folly." And this is the king whom bigotry would immortalize by the title "of glorious and immortal memory, who put down popery, brass money, and wooden shoes." But

it is gratifying to know that this god of the Orange faction in Ireland is yearly losing their veneration and homage, proportional to the increase of catholics, paper money, and bare feet. After a reign of thirteen years King William died from a fall from his horse. Ten years of his mischievous reign were spent in foreign or domestic wars. Having died without issue, Anne, princess of Denmark, daughter of James the Second, came to the throne. It was during her reign, through bribery and the venality of a portion of the members that the Parliament of Scotland was united to that of England.

I will pass on to the reign of George the Third, as more deserving of our notice than the reigns of the two preceding Georges. It is a reign associated in our minds with the revolutionary struggle of the thirteen colonies, and their final declaration of independence, as the "United States of America"; as also that era in Irish annals, known as the "Volunteer movement," and characteristic for its temporary benefits to the Irish nation. Before proceeding with the events connected with the reign of George the Third, I may observe, that the parliament of England passed over the lawful succession, by calling in George the First, from a remote branch of the Palatine family, in Germany. It was thus the Hanoverian line was called in, to govern England. George the First, destitute of any sound qualities, either of heart or head, ascended the throne, A. D. 1714. After an intemperate and imbecile reign of thirteen years, George the Second, came to the throne. This prince's narrow-minded and vacillating policy, led him to war with Spain and France. At about this period, the English government, smarting under the well administered blow of the Irish brigade, under Dillon, at Fontenoy, turned their attention to the policy of allowing France to draw on the military resources of Ireland. Their prohibi-

tory acts of enlistment in foreign service, the Irish despised; despite the spleen and malice of the British ministry, of the day, they shortly afterwards contributed to the overthrow of the English army, at Lafelt, "which decided the fate of the war, and compelled Great Britain to accede to an inglorious peace." † What a bright historic truth, for Irishmen of the present day, to treasure up!

It was during the reigns of the First and Second Georges, that the Scots rebelled in favor of the heir of the house of Stuart. These rebellions were suppressed.

The eventful reign of George the Third commenced A. D. 1760. He possessed a more enlightened and refined mind than the previous Georges, but not sufficiently liberal in his ideas, to realize, or properly estimate, the advantages of religious liberty, the expansion and growth of commerce and manufactures.

Ireland was, at this period, reduced to the lowest extremity of human misery and degradation, through the inhuman operation of the penal laws. I will allow the English historian, (Smiles) to give the picture of Ireland's sufferings at this period. "A century of unmingled oppression and suffering followed the peace of Limerick; during every period of which, the Irish people suffered more than they had done during even the hottest part of the war. One set of governors followed another, but always with the same results to the Irish nation. Bigotry succeeded bigotry, and oppression succeeded oppression. The records of each succeeding reign, or administration, was only a repetition of the same course of tyranny on the part of the governors, and of suffering on the part of the governed. Any descriptive detail that we could give of the sufferings of the Irish people, during this lamentable

† Smiles History, p. 295.

period, must fall far short of the reality. It would indeed be impossible for any pen, no matter how graphic or eloquent, to depict the daily and hourly sufferings of a whole people — endured, without intermission, from infancy to old age, from the cradle to the grave." I ask, can any one who is conversant with these historical facts, be surprised at the natural hatred which the Irish entertain toward England? England must be arrayed before the tribunal of public opinion — indicted before the bar of the christian world — for her enormous crimes towards the Irish people. Her foul, iniquitous, and perfidious deeds will stain her escutcheon, until wiped out by deeds of justice and severe retribution.

After George the Third's accession, the stamp act and bill for collecting customs, were resisted by the people of Boston. At this period, the American colonies were restrained in their commerce and industral pursuits, by the British ministry, just as Ireland was. Next, came the proposition to tax the colonies, in order to increase the revenue of England. An agitation, in opposition to these measures, was begun in Philadelphia, in 1765, by Charles Thompson, an Irishman. The agitation continued — the colonists were resolved not to submit — Benjamin Franklin was sent to remonstrate with the British ministry; he could effect nothing — the crown was determined and inexorable, in its demands.

In January, 1774, thirty men-of-war were sent to scour the American coast, and prevent the importation of European manufactures. Immediately after, the propriety of coercing the American colonies, was warmly debated in the British parliament; it was carried in the affirmative, by ayes 304, noes 105. In the minority, were the prominent Irish members, Burke, Barry, Connelly, and others.†

† Mooney's History, vol. 2, p. 827.

In May, 1775, the delegates of the thirteen colonies met in congress, at Philadelphia. Charles Thompson was appointed secretary, and had the honor of bearing to the immortal George Washington, his commission, as commander of the revolutionary forces.

The first blood was shed at Lexington, on the nineteenth of April, 1775. In June following, the celebrated battle of Bunker Hill was fought, which proved disastrous to the British forces.

In this great struggle for independence, we find Irishmen held prominent positions — Montgomery, O'Brien, Barry, and others acted well their part, as American history testifies.

In Ireland, public meetings were held, censuring the hostile attitude of the British government, and supporting their struggling cause, by their timely contributions in money, clothing, &c.

The American cause gained strength every day; it finally triumphed — their independence was acknowledged by France, and finally by England. This grand result was the first material step towards establishing more extensive liberties in Europe. "As the Irish brigade struck down the British power, at Landen and Fontenoy, so did the refugee Irish, in the ranks of the American patriot army, contribute to pluck from the haughty brow of Britain, the palm of empire." †

The spark of libery was lighted up — the spirit of indedendence had crossed the Atlantic — the colonies of America had thrown off the yoke of England,— Ireland caught the spirit of freedom — it aroused in her long dejected and spiritless bosom, the lofty aspirations for national independence!

Ireland was called on, by the British parliament, to protect herself from the combined fleets of France and Spain; and,

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† Smiles.

that same spirit which called her to repel foreign aggression, also prompted her to shake off domestic tyranny, at the same time.

The volunteer movement began, and with that great, glorious step, party distinctions vanished, religious animosities were forgotten; a universal thirst for independent legislation and unrestricted native trade seized all classes in the nation. Ireland was about to achieve her independence, and raise her head once more among the nations of the earth. Foremost in this great cause of liberty stood Grattan, Flood, and other bright stars entered into that glorious constellation of exalted patriotism, worth, and genius. The parliamentary session of 1799 opened. Grattan moved his amendment to the address, viz: "That the trade of Ireland required freedom from all restraint, as the natural right of Irishmen." The motion carried. The first barrier to the nation's independence broken down! Free trade was carried in the Irish parliament, but not yet sanctioned by the king. The signal and electric word of the volunteers, "Free trade or speedy revolution," frightened his majesty into the concession. It is beyond my power or limits to describe the joy of all classes in the nation at this announcement. All classes had participated in this achievement, and had seen the first-fruits of their united labors; it immediately intensified the national appetite, and created an insatiable desire for the concession of further rights. An independent parliament was talked, canvassed, and debated by all persons in the kingdom, from this time to the memorable session of 1782. Grattan was entrusted with the weighty obligation of introducing the question of Irish rights and constitutional independence. I regret that my limits will not allow to notice the incidents and scenes which occurred in the Irish parliament on the memorable evening of

the 16th of April, 1782. On ordinary occasions, trivial incidents and transactions unworthy of notice, become on a solemn and momentous occasion—when the destiny of a nation is at stake—full of peculiar interest. For a full account of this interesting and exciting scene in our country's annals I would refer the reader to the graphic pen of Barrington.* Irish independence was won after six centuries of oppression and misery. What a bright day in the history of Ireland. Is it vain to wish, to sigh, for the recurrence of such another happy day? From this period down to 1800, the prosperity of the nation increased with an expansive and accelerated growth. Commerce flourished, trade and manufactures revived and flourished, a fresh impetus was given to the industrial and agricultural pursuits of the nation. As Lord Clare justly said, "that no nation on the habitable globe advanced in cultivation, commerce, and manufactures, with the same rapidity as Ireland from 1782 to 1800." The population increased from three to five millions; wages doubled, and in some cases trebled. As T. Mooney very properly observes, it could not be otherwise, "with the general impartial and ubiquitous application of her own vast resources to their self-development, it would be impossible for her to be otherwise than prosperous, great, and happy." It will be borne in mind that the catholics were still disqualified to exercise their rights as citizens; the penal laws were not wholly abrogated. Parliamentary reforms, and the discussion of the catholic rights created a new field for intrigue and dissension. Religious animosities were engendered, party confederacies formed, and a recent flourishing and happy nation hovering around the fearful crater of civil war. I will not detail the various events which operated from 1798, the year of the rebellion, to 1803, in

* "Rise and fall of the Irish nation."

order to plunge the nation again into the vortex of rebellion. The prominent parties in this insurrectionary movement were the "United Irishmen" on one side, and the English government with the Orange faction of Ireland on the other. The most conspicuous leaders and patriots at this gloomy crisis were Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Wolf Tone, T. A. Emmett, Dr. McNevin, Russell, and Arthur O'Connor. Pitt was prime minister, and Lord Castlereagh secretary of state for Ireland, about this period. In the meantime agents of the Irish confederacy had obtained the promise of powerful assistance from the "French Directory;" but British treachery and gold were able to reveal to Pitt the plans of all. The British ministry had resolved to rob Ireland of her nationality by deeds of treachery and bloodshed. The demon of civil war was loosed, slaughters and massacres were again the order of the day, the gibbets were hourly fed by unoffending victims, that from this bloody field England might reap her coveted harvests—the violation of her recent sacred compact with the Irish parliament, and a pretence to bring about the legislative union of the two countries. About this time flourished, under the fostering care of royalty, two noted characters, namely, Major Stirr and Jemmy O'Brien, whose business was to swear away the lives of his majesty's subjects in Ireland. After the close of the rebellion, the state of Ireland was truly miserable and wretched. Let T. Mooney give the picture. "Ireland was now seized as the spoil of the pirates. Her chiefs were either all destroyed, in captivity or in exile. The government abandoned the country to the licentious soldiery, to spies, informers, and pillagers. Desolation swept along its verdant plains; ruin was pictured on all its towns and villages. The weeping of widows and orphans disturbed the repose of the dead. The ground went untilled; the executioners were

busy, and the work of death alone proceeded. A famine came the following year and carried off hundreds of thousands." Such was the miserable and helpless condition of Ireland at the close of the eighteenth century—1799—after a contest which swept away upwards of twenty thousand British troops, and fifty thousand Irish patriots, thousands of whom were coolly and deliberately butchered!

"Then here's their memory! may it be
For us a guiding light,
To cheer our strife for liberty,
And teach us to unite.
Through good and ill be Ireland's still,
Though sad as their's your fate;
And true men, be you men,
Like those of ninety-eight."*

I regret that my limits prescribe the possibility of my even noticing the many stirring events, or the brave and virtuous patriots which that eventful period produced, some of whom earned for themselves a lasting fame on this continent. I will pass on to the next important phase in the prostrate condition of unhappy Ireland, the legislative union of England and Ireland—"a union of the wolf with the lamb," as designated by Lord Byron. At the most gloomy period that a nation could present—her children banished, or in dungeons, her bosom reeking with the blood of her slaughtered thousands—at this gloomy moment did the British ministry propose the "Union," and approach the portals of the unguarded temple of the nation's liberty. Pitt, Cornwallis, (English), Clare, and Castlereagh, (Irish), were the prominent personages in bringing about and consummating the nefarious act of "Union." Discussions were held, pamphlets *pro* and *con* were issued on

* From the "Nation."

the great impending question. In January, 1799, the proposed union was defeated in the Irish House of Commons, on the second division the British minister was left in a minority of six. The parliamentary session of 1799 passed over. During the recess, the ministry set all their machinery of bribes, corruption, and perfidy at work. The session of 1800 opened. Lord Castlereagh was sure of a majority. The fervid eloquence of Parsons, Bushe, Plunkett, and Grattan, was unable to avert the ruin of their country. Castlereagh had his band of traitors marshaled and prepared to inflict the fatal blow on his hapless country. The motion for a "Union" was carried by a majority of 43. For a full description of the last night in the Irish parliament, when the liberties of a once powerful nation were bartered away, defrauded of her constitutional rights, and disrobed of the last great mantle of her nationality—an independent legislature, I would refer the reader to the eloquent and graphic pen of Sir J. Barrington.* During the three years following the "Act of Union," the state of Ireland was truly lamentable. The whole nation, merged in stupefaction, astonished and horror-stricken at the fatal change, the people resigned to the miserable and helpless condition of slavery, yet in this national calamity we find a few exalted spirits walked among the people and infused into their breasts new hopes and aspirations. England may proscribe, persecute, execute and exile the Irish people, but she can never extinguish the undying vitality of the Celtic race. In this season of despair arose Russell and R. Emmett, two men of lofty station and refined intellect, who now bent their energies to resuscitate the long-entombed hopes of their country, and arouse a spirit of activity among a people long resigned to pining inactivity and despair. The life and times of these

* Rise and Fall of the Irish Nation.

two illustrious patriots would alone form a volume. After fruitless endeavors to restore their country's independence, they fell victims to English tyranny. The tragic end of Emmett and Russell cast a deep gloom over the nation's mind, the shadows of which will ever hover around Erin till their martyred blood is avenged, when the gorgeous sun of liberty will arise, and by the power of its refulgent beams restore Ireland to her place "among the nations of the earth." The next great national agitation arose on the question of "catholic emancipation," and to the superhuman exertions of the immortal D. O'Connell, who struggled and toiled for over forty years in the cause of human liberty, and finally forced the tory government of England to introduce the bill. O'Connell wrung from the conqueror of Napoleon — the duke of Wellington—the boon of "catholic emancipation." In 1820 George the Third died at the advanced age of eighty-two, sixty of which he reigned king of England. Being mentally incapacitated, during the latter portion of his life, the kingly offices devolved upon his eldest son, George, prince of Wales.

The year 1821 is memorable for the death of Napoleon on the barren rock of St. Helena. Napoleon was gone, but England was bankrupt. The vast burdens thrown on the nation for the expenses of a continued war of fifty years duration, the sudden depression of trade, the discharge of upwards of two hundred thousand government employes, the stoppage of factories and commercial houses, the dismissal of thousands of artizans and laborers, reduced England to the verge of civil war. Castlereagh treated the English, when they now clamored for bread, in about the same style as he did the Irish in 1798. One hundred and seventy thousand bayonets pointed at their breasts if they dared say "boo." The political atmosphere of England was everything but healthy

on the accession of George the Fourth. The catholics were still excluded from the British Constitution. The catholic cause was the hobby of all political jobbers, the pass-word of all isms, the wand of the "ins" and the "outs." It was during this political Babel that O'Connell formed the "Catholic Association," and with other leading spirits conducted it to a triumphant termination. O'Connell was returned for the county of Clare, took his seat in the British parliament in 1830, and was the first catholic who had sat in the English or Irish parliament for the previous one hundred and forty-five years. In 1830 George the Fourth died, after having reigned ten years. His character is given in one sentence by the eloquent pen of Mooney: "A heartless, indolent sensualist, an accomplished master of ceremonies, without any sentiment or feeling." * William, duke of Clarence, third son of George the Third, came to the throne as William the Fourth, in 1830. He found the Wellington and Peel ministry in office, which he did not change. Parliament was dissolved, and a new election took place. The Grey ministry succeeded the Wellington in office. They assumed the reins of government on the liberal basis of "reform and retrenchment." In Ireland all was bustle and activity. The electors there succeeded in electing some catholic members. In the Grey administration there was one man who deserves a passing notice. It was Mr. Brougham, afterward Lord. He was a Scotchman by birth, possessed of a Celtic impetuosity and a Scottish perseverance. He was a bold reformer and educator, the warm advocate of the catholic. The continued and increasing agitation which arose in Ireland and which arrested the attention of the British government and the lord lieutenant of Ireland, (Lord Anglesey) was the "repeal question." The question

* Mooney's history, Vol. 2, page 1346.

was debated for the first time in the English Commons in 1834. The motion was defeated. In 1835 the English "corporate reform bill" and the bill for the suppression of Orange and other secret societies in Ireland, passed. The passage of these salutary measures exalted O'Connell still higher in the estimation of the English and Irish people. In 1836 and 1837 the Irish poor law bill was loudly debated and finally passed in 1837. In 1839 and 1840 its inadequate provisions for its intended object, relief, were brought into operation throughout Ireland. On the 20th of June, 1837, William the Fourth died in the seventy-third year of his age and the seventh of his reign. Princess Victoria, daughter of the Duke of Kent, ascended the throne in her eighteenth year. The history of Ireland from that period to the dissolution of the "Young Ireland Party" in 1848, will form the subject of the next and last chapter.

CHAPTER XX.

REPEAL AGITATION—THE ARREST OF O'CONNELL WITH SEVEN OTHERS — MAYNOOTH COLLEGE — THE "YOUNG IRELAND PARTY"—CLOSING REMARKS.

In 1841, Daniel O'Connell was elected lord mayor of Dublin. It was the first time that religious tests were abolished in Irish corporations, for the previous three hundred years, (except the few years of James the Second's power) and that civic honors and emoluments were thrown open to every citizen. O'Connell, robed in his insigia of office, was truly a gratifying sight for his countrymen to behold,—it showed them plainly that the shackles, which bigotry and intolerance had flung around them, for three centuries, were cast off. As the "Liberator" appeared in front of the assembly-house, in order to address the congregated thousands, his first words — "Boys, do you know me?" That short interrogative — expressed in that drollery, for which the Irish is proverbial — conveyed to the vast crowd a comprehensive history of his own triumphant labors, and their emancipation.

In 1843, a vigorous agitation of the "repeal," commenced, as it had lagged the preceding year or two. Monster meetings were held, in different places; the fervid eloquence of O'Connell, and other spirited leaders, inspired the nation with

fresh hopes for the speedy restoration of its lost parliament. The excited state of public feeling throughout the United Kingdom, in England and Scotland; the "chartists" had petitioned the British parliament; and, to the credit of the English and Scotch people, be it recorded, among other things, they prayed for a repeal of the union. The British ministry — Peel and Wellington — resolved to quash the repeal agitation, by coercion. The great political meeting, held on the hill of Taka, in August, 1843, with its sweet associations, reaching back through the long vista of time; its glorious memories, crowding on the minds of the millions gathered there on that memorable day, must have inspired an enthusiasm — a fervid devotion to the great cause they met for.

In October, 1843, Daniel O'Connell, with seven other distinguished men, were arrested, and held to bail. Their trial lasted several days; the crown obtained a verdict; the prisoners were finally sentenced, on the thirtieth of May, 1844, and were incarcerated in "Richmond bridewell," where they remained till the following September, when they were liberated by an order from the law lords, who had granted the writ of error, in their case, on the ground of a fraudulent jury list, and other informalities in the trial. Their release threw the nation into an ecstacy of delight. Peel found his ministry now (1845) standing on a single slippery plank, resolved to introduce some measures that would conciliate both England and Ireland. Import duties were taken off many articles of ordinary use, in England, and the export duty abolished on the produce and manufactures of England. For Ireland, his measures were undoubtedly conciliatory. He proposed to increase the grant to Maynooth College, from nine to twenty-six thousand pounds — further to enlarge the college buildings, at government expense, and that the grant

should be secured forever, by a bill of endowment. This was indeed quite liberal for a tory minister.

A word or two on Maynooth, may not be out of place. In 1795, the Pit ministry proposed, to the Irish parliament, to appropriate a grant of eight thousand pounds, to support a college for the education of the Irish priesthood, who were previously educated on the continent, by reason of the operation of the penal laws. "Of two evils, choose the least," so the British ministry preferred home education rather than the importation of French principles, so dangerous to British connexion, in Ireland. Maynooth, which is about ten miles from Dublin, was fixed upon as the site. Lord Dunboyne, in atonement for his apostacy, bequeathed to this college a large property — the income of which was to be devoted to the education of young men. From all sources, the college was enabled to support three hundred and fifty students. The students receive lodging, board, and instruction from the funds of the college; they paying about one hundred and twenty dollars per annum, for clothes, books, bedding, washing, &c., and an entrance fee of about forty dollars, is required. The rules and discipline are very strict. Maynooth College has given to the catholic faith over 6,000 priests, within the last sixty years. And allow me to record, in attestation of the zealous, toil-worn, virtuous priesthood of Ireland, that the Irish population, instructed by them, are the most virtuous and religious people within the British empire.

It is a fact, noted in the parliamentary reports, that out of eight hundred and seventy-seven, confined in the county jail of Sussex, when examined by the commissioners, one hundred and forty-one knew not the Saviour's name, and four hundred and ninety-eight just knew the name, and no more. *

* Parliamentary Reports.

Other measures of conciliation towards Ireland were proposed by the tory ministry in order to break up that powerful confederacy, the "repeal association," which had grown truly alarming to the government. Irish impetuosity did what the British ministry could not effect. The peace policy of O'Connell did not suit the ardent temperaments of Smith O'Brien, Thomas F. Meagher, and other fiery spirits of the day, viz: 1847. I may be here pardoned if my feelings lead me to close for a moment the historic page, and offer my small tribute of respect for one whose name is intimately woven with the events of 1847 and 1848, but alas, now no more, (Brigadier General Meagher.) As I pen these lines, the telegram announcing his melancholy end is before me. That gifted son of Erin, the unflinching patriot, the Irish Demosthenes, the valiant and courageous soldier for his adopted country, sleeps in a watery grave beneath the dark waters of the Missouri. Remorseless destroyer of all that is dear to man on earth! thou hast snatched from us a loved one, one whose memory is dear to every true Irish heart, and whose absence creates a blank in the exalted ranks of worth, genius, and patriotism, which his native and adopted country will long mourn.

In 1847, the O'Connellite and "Young Ireland" party assumed different attitudes. Thomas F. Meagher was the presiding genius, the awakening spirit of that brilliant but short lived confederacy. Meagher, O'Brien, with other illustrious chiefs, took to the southern parts; in August, 1848, they were arrested, tried in October, and sentenced to be hanged, subsequently commuted to transportation. A season of gloom and deep distress ensued. A dreadful famine, raging all over Ireland, carrying off hundreds of thousands by starvation, pestilence, and emigration, as those that could, all fled the

"hapless land." During this fearful crisis—the famine—I had daily evidences of its fearful inroads in the district around me. Being at the time a school-boy, the heart-rending scenes I witnessed then made a deeper impression on my mind than they would at a maturer age. The healthy, stalwart man, pining in a lonely hut for bread, and England within twenty-four hours sail of her starving, suffering subjects! Ye philosophic few! point out to me under the broad canopy of heaven, a more patient, suffering, and enduring people than the Irish! Ye modern divines! tell me by what ennobling power, heaven-born virtue—they have been enabled to withstand the oppression, cruelty, and tyranny of perfidious England for seven centuries? They are to-day more numerous and powerful than ever, despite the exterminating wars waged against them by Henry the Eighth, Queen Elizabeth, Cromwell, James the First, Charles the First, and William the Third; and in later days by William Pitt and Castlereagh, whose tragic end proclaims his apostacy to his country. To-day the Irish element is the greatest source of annoyance to the British government.

The London Times exultingly said at one time, "The Celts are gone." Yes, only to return with an armed vengeance. To use the words of the great orator and patriot of 1782, Grattan: "The spirit has gone forth, the declaration is planted." Yes, let English statesman understand, let the tyrant aristocracy of Britain realize the fixed, unalterable fact,—Ireland's restoration to nationality,—is irradically rooted in the breasts of the scattered millions of her exiled sons. The genius of liberty has not forsaken them in their adopted homes; the renovating influences of civil and religious liberty; the power and influence enjoyed under republican institutions; the untrammelled exercise and enjoyment of their rights as freemen,

have conspired to nerve them for the glorious conflict of liberty, in which falling, they will bequeath the battle to posterity, and like the father of Hannibal, snatch their children in their arms and swear them on their altars to undying hostility to the invaders of their country. "It is delightful to contemplate the possibility of Ireland's ascension,—to think that when England's star shall pale, and her felon flag be furled forever, her long-oppressed sister isle shall assume a glorious destiny." * † I must close. I regret that I have been forced to omit recording many memorable scenes and the names of many noble patriots which occur in Irish history, whose memory we must ever cherish. I have already exceeded the limits agreed upon with my publishers. I shall feel happy if my labors shall have been productive of removing misrepresentations heaped on my countrymen, and placing in a more favorable light that land whose memory is still dear to me.

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*O'Connell to his friends, by T. D. McGee, page 205.

† Cursed English gold! thou hast perverted the noble intellect of poor d'Arcy to serve thine own base designs.