

# IRELAND

FROM

A.D. 800

TO

A.D. 1600

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IRELAND  
FROM A.D. 800 TO A.D. 1600

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From the Earliest Times to  
A.D. 800.

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# IRELAND

FROM A.D. 800 TO A.D. 1600

BY

JOHN RYAN, S.J., M.A.

*Author of "Ireland from the Earliest Times to A.D. 800."*

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# IRELAND

FROM A.D. 800 TO A.D. 1600

## CHAPTER I.

### THE LONG STRUGGLE WITH THE NORSE.

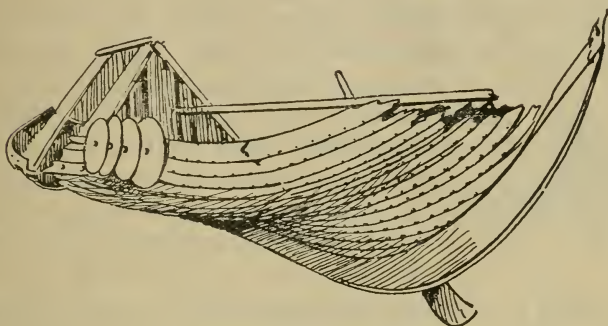
AT the close of the eighth century, when their dreaded barques first appeared off the Irish coast, the "North-men" (as the Teutonic inhabitants of Norway, Sweden and Denmark called themselves) had, properly speaking, no history. Their civilization was as yet rudimentary, and they were regarded rightly by the people whom they harried as fierce and cruel barbarians. Storm and billow had for long ages hindered their connection with the rest of Europe. Now, however, when the population had so increased that food was scanty and hunger was the lot of many, the more adventurous spirits among them began to seek fame and fortune along the highway of the sea. Their progress was easy, for in North-western Europe the art of seamanship, never over-popular, had long been neglected, and in some places was well-nigh forgotten.

### **Attacks upon Ireland. First Phase. Piratical raids without system or unity.**

English chroniclers record that in A.D. 793 a Viking fleet sacked Lindisfarne, and a year later destroyed the monastery of St. Paul, at Jarrow. It was probably

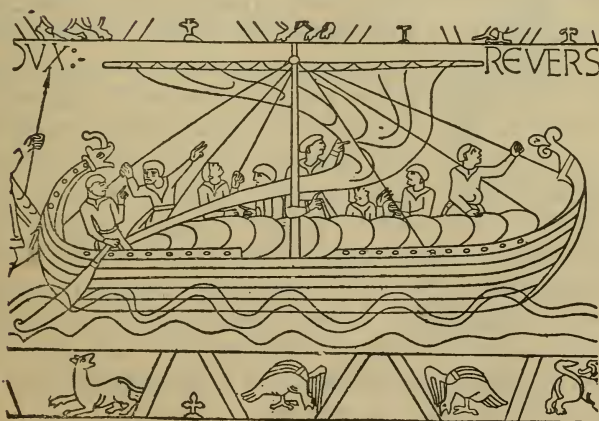
the same marauders who, in 795, landed in Skye, and, moving southwards, plundered the shrines of Rathlin, off the Antrim coast. In 797 they burned Inis Pádraig, near Skerries; the following year they ravaged the Isle of Man; then for half a century they raided Ireland from end to end, with hardly a year of respite. Inishmurray (807), East Ulster, Mayo, Connemara, Kerry (811-2), Howth and the southern coast (821), Sceilig Michíl and Bangor (824), Louth, Brega and several districts of Wexford and Ossory (827), Armagh (832), Clondalkin (833), and doubtless many other parts of the country were preyed upon in turn. At first the Irish called them simply *Genti*, "heathens," and this they emphatically were, for they ever pursued the Christian religion and culture with a deadly hatred. Their primary object was, however, booty. They struck where they could, seized what they could, and hurried off to some secluded stronghold with the gains. Thus they were pirates, pure and simple, with no idea of conquest or territorial domination. Nor had they any institutions to plant, any more than had the pirates of their kin who harassed the old Roman province of Britain four centuries earlier. Of these Sidonius Apollinaris had written: "Our enemy is the most truculent of all enemies. Like a bolt from the blue he attacks; when expected he disappoints; when unexpected he appears. Resistance he contemns. He never fails to secure his own or to cut off his opponent's retreat. Shipwreck he treats as a pleasant experience rather than as an object of dread. The tempest he loves. It throws the invaded off their guard, and saves himself from being espied in the distance; so he hails with joy the crash of the waves upon the rocks, for it gives him a good chance of escape from worse enemies than the elements."

Viking boats of this period were probably small. One from the end of the ninth century, 28 feet long



Remains of Viking Ship

Known as the "Gokstad ship"; found on the shore of Christiania Flord.



Picture of Norman Ship.

Showing the kind of ships (still similar to the "Gokstad" style above) in which the Normans crossed to England. Reproduced from the Bayeux Tapestry, a series of embroideries worked by ladies at the Court of Queen Matilda, and representing the story of the Norman conquest of England.

by 16 feet broad amidships, made of oak, clinker-built, with 16 pairs of oars, is taken as the ordinary type of war vessel. The gunwale of this boat was decorated with shields painted alternately black and gold, and it carried but one sail. Later came the



Norse Battleaxes.  
(National Museum,  
Dublin.)

famous dragon and snake boats, with 34 and even 60 pairs of oars. Rarely more than 3,000 fighting men would be carried together on any expedition. How was it, we may well ask, that such small bodies could imperil by land the life of a great society, comprising at least some two millions? The reason is threefold. During the Norse wars (as for centuries before and after) the Irish had no trained troops kept permanently under arms. There were only local levies, and these were not obliged to leave their peaceful occupations for more than a few weeks in the year. Again, the Norse were armed with the battle-axe, a weapon much superior to the Irish sword. Thirdly, there was no fleet at the disposal of the Irish

kings, for there had not been any need of such a force for centuries. Thus it was quite easy for passing hordes of pirates to swoop down upon some monastic city or some rich coastal district, drive off its wealth before effective resistance could be organized, and sail away without fear of pursuit.

What appalling sufferings these raids caused it is not difficult to imagine; but they came intermittently and affected at the one time small areas only, so

that their ultimate effect was slight. The monks buried their dead, rebuilt their monastery and their school, sought new books to copy, and went on with their life of work and prayer as before. Families bewailed their murdered sons and their daughters dragged into slavery; but they set themselves once again to till their lands, to travel, market and carry on almost as if life were normal. The strain, however, was severely felt. Arts and industries languished, and slipshod ways were readily excused where there was no security for the morrow.

**Second Phase. Permanent Settlements are made and some small territorial conquests attempted. Fionn Ghail and Dubh Ghail.**

During the first period (795-840) the Norse had learned the geography of the country, especially of its harbours and of its navigable rivers. Islands and promontories were now occupied and used as bases from which raids could be directed inland. Boats of light draught were rowed up the great rivers and carried overland past shallows and rapids where such impeded their course. Hostile fleets were thus stationed on the lakes, where they were safe against attack, and free to choose any point along an extended shoreline for their incursions. Turgéis or Turgesius, a Norse leader of note, seized Armagh in 832, and brought a powerful fleet into Loch Neagh. Forannan, *comarb* or successor of St. Patrick, fled with the shrine of the Saint to Munster. Turgesius devastated the country from Armagh to Derry, and very probably exacted tribute from the inhabitants. Soon afterwards fleets appeared on the Liffey and on the Boyne. In 839 Turgesius

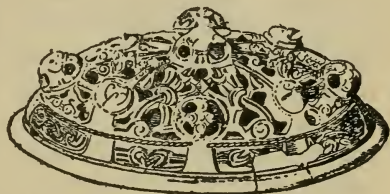


is found in command of a group of vessels on Loch Ree, and busy plundering Clonmacnois, Clonfert, Lorrha, Tír-dá-Ghlas, Inis Cealtra and the churches of Loch Derg. His wife, Ota, acting presumably as a pagan priestess, gave oracles from the high altar of the chief church at Clonmacnois. The marauding career of this leader ended in 845, when he was captured by Mael Seachlainn, then King of Meath, and executed by drowning in Loch Uair (Owel).

For such lengthy stays as this a strong base was necessary. Walls and forts had thus to be built; and, once complete, were not lightly abandoned, so that the base tended to develop into a permanent settlement. Two such fortified stations were constructed in 841, one at Ath na gCasan (Anagassan) in Louth, where the northern highway from Tara (the Slighe Midhluachra) touched the harbour; the other at the hurdle-ford on the Liffey where the dark waters of that river formed a *dubh linn*, "black pool," before falling into the Irish Sea. Each of these stations was originally a *longphort*, "shipstead," or place where boats drawn up on the shore were protected from attack by entrenchments on the land side. In later usage this word came to lose all connection with ships, and to be understood of any fortified camp. The station at Ath na gCasan was afterwards lost; that at Dublin survived, thanks largely to its convenient position and its commodious harbour.

That the settlement here was regarded as permanent became evident in 849, when the King of Lochlann (Norway) sent a fleet of seven score ships to establish his authority over the Norse of the growing city. Two years later the inhabitants were again in trouble, this time from an entirely new quarter. A fleet of

*Dubh Ghaill*, “Black Foreigners” or “Black Heathens” (Danes from Jutland and South Sweden, dark complexioned in comparison with the Norse), forced its way into the Liffey. The Fionn Ghaill made a gallant stand, but were defeated after a fierce struggle. Vast numbers were slain and beheaded; gold and valuables were appropriated; whilst a great prey of women was carried off to the slave markets of the north. But the settlement recovered, and in 853 received Amhlaeibh (Olaf), “son of the King of Lochlann,” as its ruler. Olaf remained and transformed the small city into an organized state, with himself and his brother Imhar



Bronze Brooch of Viking Period.

(Half size). Of gilt bronze, richly decorated in pierced work of scrolls and bosses, and further ornamented by a lacing of twisted silver wires.

(Ivar) as joint kings. A “Thing-mote,” or mound where justice was administered in the Scandinavian manner, was erected near the Liffey on the south side of what is now College Green; a fort was built near the site later occupied by the Castle; and the approaches to the city were occupied. Fingall (from *Fine Gall*, “foreigners’ territory”), as the district north of Dublin is still called, and such Norse names as Howth, Lambay, Dalkey, Leixlip and Skerries bear witness to the influence of the new settlers.

### Strength of the Norse in countries other than Ireland.

Having begun with isolated raids on the southern shores of Britain, the Norse gradually made their way up the east coast, and attempted permanent conquest.

London and Rochester succumbed to their attacks in 842. Twenty-five years later they advanced against York with a large army, and with little difficulty captured the town, making it henceforth the central stronghold of their power in northern England. They conquered the Mercian territory beyond the Tyne; defeated and slew the King of East Anglia and annexed his kingdom; fought Alfred the Great of Wessex to a standstill, and forced him to a peace which recognized their undisputed sway over at least half of England. Nor could Alfred hold the other half save by purchasing the limited goodwill of his foes with a subsidy or black rent (the "Danegeld"). Next they conquered the Orkneys, the Shetlands, the Western Isles (called in Norse *Sudhreyjar*, "Sodor") and Man. From the Orkneys they made settlements in Sutherland and Caithness, and from the Hebrides in Galloway. The Western Isles and Man had their own kings, but Northumbria was ruled either by the Norse king of Dublin or by one of his kin.

Raids on the coast of Western Europe grew serious in 810 when a fleet of 200 vessels ravaged Frisia and the neighbouring islands. Charles the Great took measures to protect the shore, but raids continued to occur almost every year. In 842 the Norse sailed up the Seine as far as Rouen; two years later they were ravaging along the Loire and the Garonne. Thence they moved to Spain, where they fought the Moors at Lisbon and again at Cadiz; after which they captured Sevilla and raided Córdoba. A call at Morocco ended their Mediterranean cruise. They seem to have parted on friendly terms with the Moors, whose Emir, Abd-ar-Rahman II., sent an embassy to Dublin to visit the Norse King.



In 845 they took and destroyed Paris, nor did they abandon the site until paid a large sum of money. For many years after this they acted almost as they pleased in the Rhine, the Scheldt, the Somme, the Loire and the Garonne. A great expedition to the Mediterranean (859-62) ravaged Morocco, the Balearic Islands, Southern France and Italy. "Blue men" (Moors from Morocco) were brought in chains to Dublin and sold as slaves to Irish masters. In 865 another Norse horde that had marched south through Russia was laying siege to Constantinople, so that Europe was encircled by their raids. A second siege of Paris (885-7) failed, though the Northmen had at their disposal 700 vessels and 40,000 men. Yet in 911 Charles the Simple was unable to oust them from the Seine valley, and thought it better to make a settlement which left them the territory still known as Normandy. Again in 907 we find them besieging Constantinople with a fleet of 2,000 ships, but the siege was raised on the payment of a heavy ransom. Such were the forces with which the Irish nation was now in deadly conflict.

### Course of the Struggle in Ireland. Many battles. Varying success.

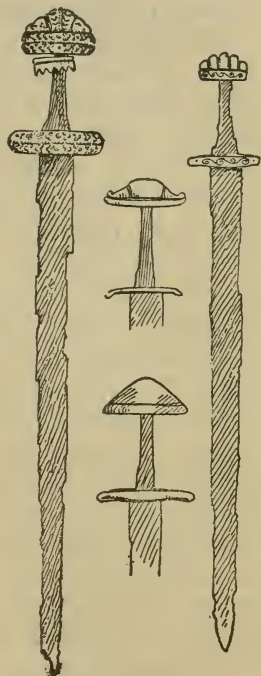
With the death of Feidhlimidh, King of Munster, in 847, Irish resistance to the *Genti* became more firm. This remarkable ruler, an ecclesiastic as well as a secular prince, had availed of the pre-occupation of the Uí Néill with the Foreigners to assert the claim of Cashel to the High-Kingship. He waged war with heathen ferocity, recking little of the lamentable consequences to his province and to his country.

A hurried flight before the High-King, Niall Caille, in 847, brought his military career to an end. Niall's successor, Mael Seachlainn I., acted with courage and vigour against the common foe. In 851 he presided at a state assembly where a son of the King of Connacht was put on trial for participating in certain pirate raids. The accused man was found guilty, condemned and duly executed. From 856 onwards mercenary forces reappear, bands of *Gall-Gaedhil*, "Norse Irish," men of mixed race from the Hebrides and Man, probably half-Christian, half-pagan, and ready to fight as occasion demanded on any and on every side. Their first recorded leader was known to the Irish as Caittil Find, but to the Norse as Ketill, anglicized Kettle.

Aedh Finnliath, King of Aileach, succeeded to the High-Kingship in 862. A year later the Norse of Dublin under Olaf and Ivar raided the Bronze Age tumuli of the Boyne; and soon afterwards a Norse hosting ravaged Munster from Limerick to Cork. The High-King replied to these challenges in 866, when he attacked and captured all the strongholds of the Foreigners in the northern half of Ireland. Three years later, in 869, the Norse attempted to retrieve their losses, with help from Leinster and Brega. Once again they met with a crushing defeat at the hands of the High-King, and from this time forward made no settlement north of Dublin. Henceforth they are frequently found allied with some Irish state, without, however, securing thereby any permanent hold on the inland country.

After their defeat by Aedh Finnliath, the Norse Kings, Olaf and Ivar, turned their arms against Britain. Ail Chluaidhe or Dumbarton, the last stronghold of

the Britons of Strathclyde, was captured by them after a four months' siege; so enormous were the spoils that 200 ships were needed to bring them back to Dublin. Olaf was soon busy in Munster and Connacht, ravaging and burning according to his wont; but he was slain in 871. Ivar, his successor in the kingship, died in 873, and the country enjoyed an uneasy respite of some forty years. The relics of St. Colmcille were transferred from Iona to the comparative safety of Kells in 874. Flann Sinna, who succeeded Aedh Finnliath as High-King in 879, seems to have sought recognition of his suzerainty from the Norse, but his claim was resisted, and he failed to enforce it by arms. There is evidence, however, that some form of lordship over these Foreigners was exercised by Cearbhall, King of Leinster, who died in 909, and by a later High-King, Niall Glúndubh, who ruled 916-19.



Norse Swords.  
(National Museum, Dublin.)

### Battle of Bealach Mughna. Collapse of Eoghanacht power. Rise of the Norse in Munster.

For centuries the kingdom of Mumha had been blessed with peace and prosperity under its Eoghanacht princes, and had so grown in strength that it

could menace seriously the Uí Néill predominance in Ireland. The turn of the tide was now at hand. Cormac mac Cuilennáin, a bishop and a distinguished man of letters, succeeded to the throne in 901. He is said to have compiled a glossary of old Irish words then obsolete; also the *Psalter of Cashel*, a collection of historical and genealogical matter, to judge from the fragments of it that have survived; but, above all, the *Leabhar na gCeart* ("Book of Rights"), in which the relation of the different kingdoms towards one another are set forth with legal precision. This book has been described as "the most remarkable state document produced by any European country outside the Byzantine Empire in that age." Such was the esteem for Cormac's learning and virtue that he ruled with an authority almost equal to that of the High-King. It happened, however, that Cormac had an evil counsellor, Flaithbheartach, Abbot of Inis Cathaigh, himself a prince of the royal house and in the line of succession to the throne of Cashel. At the abbot's instigation Cormac claimed jurisdiction over the monastery called Mainistir Eimhin (Monasterevan) in Leinster, on the ground that Eimhin, its founder, was a Munsterman, and he sought to exercise his alleged right in despite of the High-King. With a large army he invaded Leinster in 908. Having induced the men of Ossory to join him he encamped for the night at Bealach Mughna (Ballaghmoon, in the extreme south of Kildare). Messengers were despatched at once to warn Flann Sinna, who hurried southwards to join the King of Leinster in opposing Cormac's progress. When day broke the unfortunate Munster ruler found himself confronted by the forces of both monarchs. Seeing how matters stood the men of Ossory became

alarmed and tried to retreat, but they were cut off and killed. A similar fate awaited the Munster host, for whom the battle ended in utter disaster. Cormac himself lay among the slain. With this catastrophe the glory of the Eoghanacht dynasty vanished, and the southern province lay helpless before the watchful foreign foe.

Six years later, in 914, a grandson of Ivar led a fleet to Loch dá Chaoch (Waterford Harbour), where he occupied the mainland and made a settlement for his followers. There was no opposition. Danes from the Hebrides raided the lands along the estuary of the Shannon (Luimneach) many times between 915 and 920, and finally fortified a position in what is now Limerick. Colonies were established in Cork and Youghal, and even in some places inland. Wexford seems to have been founded at an earlier date, but as a mere trading station, for its name is never found connected with military operations until the Anglo-Norman Invasion.

During the tenth century the cruel blows of fate fell every day more mercilessly on the Eoghanacht dynasts. Ceallachán of Cashel is indeed famed in saga as the hero of a hundred victories, but this saga seems to be the result of conscious invention rather than of natural growth. Eoghanacht greatness was in fact a memory. In Munster beyond the Shannon the sturdy kinglets of a small people, the Dál Chais, now emerged from age-long obscurity, and won an honoured place as defenders of the province against the Norse. The romantic tale of Ceallachán's exploits was a pathetic effort on the part of the older ruling kindred to maintain its traditional glories against the rival family which by this time had far surpassed it in achievement.



### The Struggle continues in Leath Cuinn.

Niall Glúndubh, son of Aedh Finnliath, succeeded Flann Sinna as High-King in 916. He began his reign by celebrating the great national Fair of Tailtiu, which had been abandoned then for many years. In 917 he fought the Norse of Waterford somewhere near Clonmel, but without success, and the Foreigners held that town until the coming of the Normans. Next year he made a determined effort to drive the Norse from Dublin, renewing the attack in 919 at the head of a wide confederation of northern kings, but he was defeated by Sitric on the Liffey near Islandbridge, at a place called *Cell-mo-Shámóg* from a neighbouring church. Niall fell mortally wounded in the battle. From the time of his grandson, Domhnall, onwards his descendants are known by the family surname Ua Néill.

Raids on northern lands by Sitric and his successor Gottfrich were avenged in 921 by Muircheartach, son of Niall, in a battle near Armagh, where the slaughter was such that only a few of the Norse escaped. For twenty-two years after this date Muircheartach remained the most prominent leader in the country, surpassing by far the new Southern Uí Néill High-King, Donnchadh, whose daughter he married. The chroniclers rejoiced in making long lists of Muircheartach's victories. His most daring exploit was a hosting in 941, from which he became known as *Muircheartach na gCocall gCroiceann* ("Muircheartach of the Leather Cloaks"). The frost that winter was unusually severe, so that the lakes and rivers were passable, and the Foreigners were frozen into their harbours. Muircheartach saw his opportunity. With

a picked force, said to number a thousand men, each provided with a protecting cloak of prepared skin, he made a circuit of the whole island, and exacted hostages from every king. His journey was easy, save over the wild hills of the Dál Chais. The royal hostages were brought to Aileach, and there for a few months liberally entertained, according to their rank. With self-sacrificing loyalty they were then handed over to the High-King. Never before had fighting men been called out for a winter campaign, and never before had so long a period of military service been demanded. But Muircheartach was a leader of outstanding quality and his enthusiasm was inspiring. In 943 this "Hector of the Western World" was killed by a son of the King of Dublin in battle near Ardee. A year later Donnchadh died. Neither for the moment found a successor of sufficient years or merit. The High-Kingship was therefore assumed by Conghalach, King of Brega, who had constitutionally no right to the position. Conghalach fought manfully against the Norse until slain by a Dublin army under Olaf Cuaran in 956. Domhnall, son of Muircheartach, then became High-King.

It seems to have been the aim of the new ruler to meet the Norse with their own weapons. Thus we find him at the head of large fleets active upon the inland waters, on Loch Neagh, Loch Erne, Loch Uachtar and Loch Ennel. Towards the end of his hard life as a war-leader he retired to the monastery of Armagh, where he died in 980, "after penitence."

Despite their many victorious raids, their excellent organization and their admitted skill, the Norse never succeeded in occupying more than a tiny portion of the country. Some square miles to the north of

Dublin, the Gall-tír round Waterford, a stretch of land round Limerick, were held precariously as their "kingdoms." At the two great northern "fiords" or inlets, still known as Carlingford and Strangford, they had no settlements. Wexford was a peaceful trading station, Waterford was comparatively weak, Limerick was dangerously inland, so that war was waged for the most part by the Dublin Norse and their allies. Compared with the territory lost in the Frankish realm and in England, the Irish loss in land was indeed almost insignificant.

### Partial assimilation of the Norse.

Before the close of the tenth century the majority of the Foreigners had completed the slow and halting passage from paganism to Christianity. Once this was accomplished the way was open for their entrance into the Irish body politic and into the unity of Christendom. Their conduct may not have been such as brought much credit on their new religion, but the ferocious savagery of earlier days had at least been overcome. Intermarriage between them and their Irish neighbours now became frequent. Thus Olaf, King of Dublin, was married to a daughter of Aedh Finnliath, and his successor, Olaf Cuaran, to a daughter of Muirheartach of the Leather Cloaks. From war they turned to barter as the main source of livelihood, with still a little piracy on occasion to break the monotony of a trading life. Larne, Carlingford, Dundalk, Drogheda, Dalkey, Howth, Lambay, Wicklow, Arklow, Wexford, Helwick, Cork, and Smerwick were all stations where they exchanged wares with the native Irish population. Dublin became one of the great marts of Europe. Its rulers recognized no external authority,



any more than did the rulers of Waterford or Limerick, and if these city states went to war in Ireland it was often now against one another, and in alliance with some Irish king. They thus regarded Ireland, in a very full sense, as their country and their home.

All things considered, the coming of the Norse was a calamity which Irishmen must grievously deplore. They strengthened, it is true, town life and they developed trade, but these are advantages which weigh little in the scale against the havoc wrought by them in other directions. The old missionary movement to the Continent, which brought untold honour to our people, was now transformed into a flight of refugees. The Norse everywhere had an evil reputation for cruelty, cunning and deceit, vices that spread inevitably by contact to the Irish chiefs. Viking drunkenness and immorality were notorious from Ireland to the west of Russia. Traffic in slaves was one of their most fruitful sources of revenue. What treasures of art and literature they destroyed during two centuries of ravages can never be fully estimated. Their civilization, at best, was of an inferior quality, as we see from Iceland, where it was left to develop along its own lines, and where it ended in social and political anarchy. Small wonder, perhaps, that their assimilation to the Irish people stopped at a certain point, beyond which it did not advance for centuries.

### **Rise of the Dál Chais in Munster. Brian aspires to the High-Kingship. His success.**

As a border territory the tiny kingdom of Dál Chais (occupying the eastern half of Clare) had strengthened itself by friendship and alliance with adjoining Connacht

states, the Aidhne, the Uí Máine and the Dealbhna. It first came into prominence under Lorcán and Cinnéide, grandfather and father, respectively, of King Brian Borumha. Cinnéide had endeavoured in 944 to wrest the kingdom of Munster from the Eoghanacht ruler Ceallachán, but without success. When, however, Ceallachán died in 954 the effective rule of the Cashel dynasty ended, and an opportunity was offered which Mathghamain, who had succeeded Cinnéide as King of Dál Chais in 951, soon turned to good account.

Assisted by his brother Brian (called Borumha from the high ring fort "Ballyboru," near Ceann Coraidh, where he was born in 941), he took up the struggle with the Danes of Limerick, and harassed them with guerilla warfare from the woods and fastnesses of Clare. Encounters were many and desperate; quarter was not asked nor granted on either side. Mathghamhain at last grew disgusted with the conflict, and made a truce with the Foreigners, but this Brian refused to recognize, and went on harrowing the Danish settlements till his followers were reduced to fifteen. At an assembly of the Dál Chais he impugned the inactive policy of his brother, and had it reversed by popular vote, so that Mathghamhain was compelled to take the field once more. The two brothers inflicted a crushing defeat on the Limerick Danes at Sulchóid, on the Limerick-Tipperary border. Next day they marched without opposition to the town, where they burned the fortifications and retired with immense booty. Probably after this battle (967) Mathghamhain was acknowledged as King of Cashel or Munster.

"More jealous of the Dál Chais than fearful of the Danes," the Eoghanacht dynasts looked with anger on the rise of a rival house to power. A conspiracy

against Mathghamhain's life seems to have been formed. At any rate, the Eoghanacht chief of Uí Fidhgheinte (Bruree to the Shannon in Limerick), one Donnabhán, captured the King in 976, and sent him prisoner to Maolmhuadh, Eoghanacht prince of Desmond, by whom he was put to death immediately. Two years later, in 978, Brian met Maolmhuadh in battle at Bealach Leachta, near Ardpatrik, and defeated and slew him there with 1,200 of his followers. But, politic in victory, Brian gave his daughter Sathbh in marriage to Cian, son of Maolmhuadh, who from that day to Clontarf remained his loyal liegeman and his devoted friend. Brian's claim to the kingship of Munster was now undisputed.

The King of Ireland from 980 onwards was Mael Seachlainn II., son of Donnchadh, one of the ablest of the southern Uí Néill. His victories against the Dublin Norse at least equalled in distinction those of Brian against the Limerick Danes. Mindful of what had befallen the Eoghanacht in Munster, Mael Seachlainn began to fear for his own security as High-King, should Brian's star continue to increase. His suspicions were certainly well grounded, for Brian's aim was nothing less than supreme authority in the land. In 982 Mael Seachlainn saw clearly the trend of events, and sought to forestall his rival by sending an army to lay waste his territory. Insult was added to injury, for the troops disgraced themselves by destroying at Magh Adhair the ancient tree under which the kings of Dál Chais were inaugurated. The stage was now set for an epoch-making contest, in which, however, strategy rather than the use of arms was to decide the issue.

For some time yet to come the hands of both kings

were tied by serious local disturbances. Mael Seachlainn was busy in Brega, a district honeycombed with petty rivalries and private understandings with the Norse. Brian's forces were divided between land hostings against Leinster, Dublin and Meath and river hostings with large fleets upon the Shannon. In 984 Brian invaded Meath and occupied Uisneach, thus ostentatiously flouting the authority of the High-King. Mael Seachlainn replied next year by laying the Connacht plain, known as Mágh Aoi, in ashes ; and when the Connachtmen made a secret raid on his own fortress of Dún na Sciath on Loch Ennel, he returned to their province and punished them without mercy. His next movement was against the fort of Dublin, which he carried by assault in 989. He placed the Norse under tribute, and carried off the famous insignia of their kings, Tomar's Ring and the Sword of Carlus ; but having no standing army he was unable to garrison or hold the city.

So far neither king had made appreciable headway against the other. Recognizing the deadlock the two came together on the shore of Loch Ree in 997, and agreed to divide Ireland between them—Brian to rule Leath Mogha and Mael Seachlainn to rule Leath Cuinn. Next year, "to the joy of all the Irish," the two united their armies and engaged in joint operations against the Norse.

By the agreement with Mael Seachlainn the kingdom of Leinster fell under Brian's overlordship. In 999 its king, Maelmórdha, rose in revolt, and was supported by the Norse of Dublin. Brian met the rebel host at Gleann Máma (a narrow defile near Saggart), and defeated them with terrific slaughter. Maelmórdha himself took flight and hid in a yew tree, but was

discovered and dragged into the open by Murchadh, son of Brian. After some weeks as a prisoner he was liberated and restored to his throne. The King of Dublin, Sitric Silkisgeggor, "Silkenbeard," fled to the north, and Brian entered the city in triumph. But he agreed to Sitric's return, and to his holding possession of the fortress on payment of tribute. Indeed Brian advanced much further along the path of conciliation, for he gave Sitric his daughter in marriage and espoused himself Sitric's mother, Gormfhlaith, a sister of Maelmórdha.

By 1001 it was evident that the agreement between the rival kings had lost its binding force. Mael Seachlainn constructed a ford over the Shannon at Ath Luain (Athlone), obviously for use against Brian, to whose doors he could now lead an army at the shortest notice. A year later the Munster king swooped suddenly upon the ford with a powerful force and, securely ensconced in that strong position, dictated terms to Mael Seachlainn. Deserted by the Uí Néill of the North, who were influenced solely at this crisis by the petty interests of their own territory, Mael Seachlainn had of necessity to submit. Thus in A.D. 1002 Brian Bórumha was undisputed King of Ireland.

### **Brian's reign. Third and Final Phase of the Struggle with the Foreigners : a contest for the Sovereignty of Ireland. Clontarf.**

Revolutionary in the Ireland of that epoch was the new High-King's idea of forming a strong central monarchy that would exercise more effective control over the whole country. None but the states of



Ulster now resisted his rule, and there he was determined to reduce. Twice he marched against them and twice retired without battle, as he had often done on similar occasions, when he felt that his forces were too weak to make victory absolutely certain. Such caution, it is hardly necessary to add, was the rarest of qualities in an Irish king. Once again, in 1004, he renewed the movement against the North, this time with complete success. "A hosting by Brian," record the *Annals of Ulster* under this year, "accompanied by the princes of Ireland to Ard Macha, where he left 20 ounces of gold on Patrick's altar. He came back bringing with him the hostages of Ireland." Armagh, the see of

Sic nqph i i beblia dca  
rcotoz egorc npr i  
to caluut p qm r i con  
rpecu biam impato  
m r cotoz a drc npr i  
m r e n r c p o m m i b r e s i b i  
mace n r

Reduced facsimil of the entry in the *Book of Armagh* made in the presence of Brian Boru, "Imperatoris Scotorum," A.D. 1002. (Trinity College, Dublin.)

St. Patrick and of his successors, was then regarded as, in a fashion, the national capital. During his stay in the primatial city Brian was shown its famous book (the *Book of Armagh*, still preserved in the library of Trinity College, Dublin), and his official historian made in it

an entry which concluded with the words: "I, Mael Suthain, wrote this in presence of Brian, Emperor of the Irish." To the description of Brian as Emperor special significance may be attached. From the early centuries of the Faith the notion of the unity of Christendom—a series of independent states over which the Emperor or "King of the World" held a primacy of honour—was dominant in Ireland. But now the East had become separated from the West; the world empire of the old historians was shattered, and the new Christian empire under Charles the Great

and the Ottos inspired no loyalty. Brian felt fully justified in regarding himself as supreme temporal ruler within his own dominions.

Though sixty-three years old when his claim to be Emperor of the Irish was recorded, Brian was still a vigorous ruler, and made constant circuits of the country to administer justice and receive dues as High-King. "Thrice," says a Norse account, "he forgave all his outlaws the same fault, but if they misbehaved oftener he let them be judged by the law; and from this one may judge what a king he must have been." For the traditional rights of the subordinate kings he showed much respect. He strengthened his own residence at Ceann Coraidh (on the high ground near the bridge at Killaloe), and many other places of the south, with solid stone fortresses, a novel form of military defence in Ireland. During his reign he "continued prosperous and venerated, giving banquets, hospitable, just judging, ruling with devotion and law, with prowess and valour." Churches were rebuilt, monasteries and schools re-opened, books bought from overseas, "because the books and writings in every church and in every sanctuary had been burned and thrown into the water by plunderers." The peace of his rule was symbolized by the story of the solitary woman, who could pass in safety from end to end of the island, carrying a gold ring upon a horse-rod. It must be confessed that the annals afford but limited support to this popular belief; yet it cannot be denied that Brian did much to heal divisions, to revive learning and the arts, and to weld all the peoples of Ireland into a great and prosperous commonwealth.

Leinster, however, remained unreconciled; yet more so the Norse, still smarting under their many and

grievous defeats. Brian's political marriage with Gormfhlaith, mother of Sitric and sister of Maelmórdha of Leinster, had turned out unhappy, and the vindictive queen, the most fierce and restless woman of her day, sat brooding on her wrongs and planning dreadful measures of revenge. When her brother of Leinster visited Brian at Kincora she taunted him bitterly with his cowardice in yielding service to a "superior" king. What Maelmórdha answered on that occasion we can only guess; but next morning as he stood watching a game of chess between Murchadh, son of Brian, and Conaing, a prince of the royal house, he prompted Conaing to a move which lost Murchadh the advantage. The latter, in anger, made a rude remark about Maelmórdha's promptings to the Norse leaders at Gleann Máma; to which that prince replied in high passion that his advice next time would have better results. He departed without the courtesy of leave-taking, and felled the messenger sent with an urgent appeal for his return. Brian forbade pursuit, but he felt the outrage keenly and promised that satisfaction would be demanded, in an imperative manner, at Maelmórdha's own doorstep.

Leinster identified itself with its king, and the standard of revolt was forthwith raised. The Norse of Dublin were but too anxious to help in levelling a decisive blow at the authority of the High-King. Now was the time, they thought, to bring the greatest of Irish dynasties to ruins, and to transform the ancient state of Ireland into a Norse dominion under a Norse king. Events oversea lent fuel to their ambition. Sweyn, King of Denmark, at the head of a mighty fleet, had landed in the Humber in July, 1013, to complete the subjugation of England, and had suc-



ceeded in his task after a campaign of a few months. When he died in January, 1014, the inheritance fell to his young son, Cnut. Why should not a similar conquest be achieved by Norse arms in Ireland? Feverish efforts were made to collect ships and fighting men from the Viking territories of the north. Heralds from Sitric Silkenbeard, King of Dublin, arrived at Yule in the Orkneys, to request aid from Sigurd the Stout, Jarl (Earl) of the islands. Gilli, Earl of the Hebrides, arrived to support the appeal of the heralds. Sigurd did not relish the prospect of conflict with the Irish, but when promised Gorm-fhlaith to wife and the kingdom of Ireland as his reward he agreed to lay aside his scruples. Brodir, leader of a battle-fleet with base in the Isle of Man, consented to come on the same terms. He was a man of powerful build, with black hair so long that he tucked it under his belt; in early years he had been a student for the priesthood, but had lost his vocation and abandoned his faith. Another Norse leader, Ospak, not only refused to take part in the expedition, but gave instead warning to Brian of the preparations that were being made against him. Mercenaries, too, were hired from the Baltic islands, and from the English and Scottish coast. Well armed and well disciplined, they would prove under Sigurd a formidable host when they appeared in Dublin at the appointed time—shortly before Easter, 1014. The contest was now at hand, a contest in which both sides clearly realized that the prize was nothing less than the sovereignty of Ireland.

On St. Patrick's Day, 1014, Brian left Kincora at the head of his troops and started on the march to Dublin. With him were the men of South Connacht

under O h-Eidhin of Aidhne, O Ceallaigh of Uí Máine and the chiefs of Dealbhna. To join them came the Eoghanacht hosts of Munster (albeit old enemies of Dál Chais), the Déisi, many smaller chiefs, and finally the Norse of Waterford. From the borderland of the north came the kings of Breifne and Conmaicne (Leitrim and Longford), from Scotland the Mór-Mhaer or High-Steward of Mar, proud of his descent from Irish ancestors. With Mael Seachlainn came numerous battalions from Central Ireland. The Uí Néill of the north stood aloof; whilst the forces of Leinster, save O Mórdha of Laoighis and O Nualláin of Fotharta in Carlow, supported the Foreigners against their own countrymen. By Palm Sunday the hostile fleets had arrived in the bay, and the Irish army, under 70 banners, lay encamped north of the Liffey in readiness for the dread encounter. Sorcerers were busy within the city, and the sky was full of portents.

To Brian's sore disgust the Norse forced the battle on the morning of Good Friday, April 23, 1014. The lines stretched from Dubhghall's Bridge (near the modern Four Courts) up to the high ridge where Parnell Square and Mountjoy Square now stand, then down to the Tolka at Clontarf. All this, of course, was open country, for the city lay then entirely to the south of the Liffey. Domhnall, Mór-Mhaer of Mar, on the one side, and a champion from Norway on the other, are said to have opened the battle. Murchadh led the Irish forces; Sigurd and Brodir the Norse; for Sitric, King of Dublin, did not himself take part in the conflict. In a tent just behind the Irish lines Brian awaited the result, praying earnestly the while for victory. From dawn till evening the battle raged, until at last the Norse ranks were utterly

broken. Alas! then, for the foreign fighting men, with the rising tide between them and their ships and the Irish army between them and the bridge. Panic speedily prevailed, and the day ended in a wild pursuit. So unrestrained was the excitement at this hour that the High-King was left unguarded. Brodir, in headlong flight, stumbled by accident on his tent, and cleft his head in twain before rushing onward to his own death. Ireland was saved, but Brian, the great king, was no more.

Victory, it must needs be said, was purchased at a high price. Almost all the chiefs on the Irish side lay dead, Murchadh amongst them, with Toirdealbhach his son, and Conaing his nephew. Sigurd, too, lay among the slain, and Brodir (who slew Brian), with many scions of Sitric's house and innumerable minor leaders. Then, according to the Ulster annals, came the successor of St. Patrick with his clergy, to Sord Coluim Cille (Swords), "and carried the body of Brian, King of Ireland, and the body of his son Murchadh, and the head of Conaing and the head of Mothla (a Déisi chief) and interred them in Ard Macha in a new tomb. Twelve nights were the congregation of Patrick waking the bodies, in honour of the dead king." No such tribute had ever been paid before, or would ever be paid again, to a dead monarch of Ireland.

To the Norse strongholds along the northern seas the doleful news of Clontarf was carried. The Sagas tell how keenly the calamity was appreciated. It marked indeed the end of an era, for the attempt to establish Norse supremacy in Ireland would never be renewed. In Dublin the colony remained much as it was before the battle, always a distinct but henceforth a very petty state, paying tribute, as a rule, to Irish kings.

From every other point of view the effect of the battle was adverse. Brian's purposes as king were certainly worthy of the highest praise. As a statesman he has few compeers in our history ; but his work was barely begun, and a cruel fate decreed that it should never be completed. A more effective central authority than that which the Uí Néill had exercised would doubtless have been of advantage to the country. Brian died before such an authority could be constituted. Princes of his own and of rival dynasties might have learned much from his career ; but all that in fact they learned was the bad principle that the High-Kingship was a prize for which strong hands might contend. What an evil influence this had on the internal peace, and ultimately on the security of the nation, the following chapters will demonstrate.

## CHAPTER II.

### FROM CLONTARF TO THE COMING OF THE NORMANS.

ON the morrow of Clontarf the armies of Meath, Breifne and Connacht seem to have returned to their homes. The men of Munster, who had held the foremost place in that desperate struggle and whose part in the sorrows of the day had been heaviest, were too weary as yet to travel. During Saturday and Sunday they lay encamped at Kilmainham, within sight of the gory battlefield. On Monday they buried their dead and made stretchers to carry the wounded; then the heroic remnant of that once powerful host began its painful march homewards.

Brian's death left vacant the thrones of Munster and of Ireland. Had Murchadh survived he would probably have made good his claim to both, but Murchadh, too, had fallen, and Donnchadh, now leader of Dál Chais, was a man of little experience and of mediocre ability. At Ráith Maisteann (Mullaghmast), where they camped on the second night of their journey southwards, the thorny question of the Munster kingship was raised. Cian, the most prominent of the Eoghanacht princes, urged his own claims as a candidate. Donnchadh regarded the very suggestion as insolent, and the two, so lately comrades in war, parted now as rivals. Before he crossed the Leinster frontier near Athy, Donnchadh was again reminded sharply that the supremacy of Dál Chais



in Ireland was no longer recognized. Mac Giolla Pádraig of Ossory, helped by detachments from Leinster, blocked his path, and demanded hostages or battle. So great was the indignation in Donnchadh's camp that the wounded insisted on taking their place in the fighting line. They stuffed their wounds with moss and propped themselves against stakes cut from a neighbouring wood. Such determination was more than the men of Ossory cared to face; they withdrew and scattered. But for many of the suffering the crisis was to have fatal consequences—they died of over-exertion and excitement. Some were buried there where death found them by the river-side; the rest were borne back beyond the Shannon to await the resurrection beside their fathers in some hallowed nook of their own peaceful churchyards.

### **Mael Seachlainn restores the traditional Uí Néill supremacy over Ireland.**

With the aid of Flaithbheartach O Néill, King of Tír Eoghain (his heir, according to the old constitutional principle of alternate succession), Mael Seachlainn II. assumed again the High-Kingship which he had resigned unwillingly to Brian in 1002. Leinster was compelled to give hostages; nor could the southern princes, fully occupied for the moment with their own troubles, offer any opposition. Mael Seachlainn, a soldier and a statesman, laboured—as ever during his long life—to secure peace and to encourage arts and learning, but his power after Clontarf was very limited. He died in the island of Cró Inis, on Loch Ennel, opposite his fort of Dún na Sciath, on September 2,



1022, with the successor of St. Patrick and the leading men of Ireland at his bedside.

Flaithbheartach O Néill, King of Tír Eoghain, should have succeeded to the High-Kingship, but there is no evidence that he claimed the honour. Indeed there is a story in the annals that supreme authority was now held in commission by two representatives of the peaceful professions, Cúán O Lothcháin, "the most learned man in Ireland" (*priméces Érenn*), and Corcrán Cléireach, a distinguished ecclesiastic. What precisely this record means we cannot determine. Possibly there was an assembly of the men of Ireland, who failed to select an acceptable High-King, and decreed, as a makeshift compromise, that hostages (in guarantee of peace) should be handed over provisionally to the poet and churchman. The arrangement, at best, was shortlived, for Cúán was slain in 1024.

By this time, too, the situation in the South had completely altered. Donnchadh and Tadhg, sons of Brian, had defeated the Eoghanacht of West Munster. The brothers then had quarrelled, but in 1023 Tadhg was slain by the Éli, and Donnchadh, now acknowledged as master of the province, was able to claim succession to Brian's supremacy. A stronger sense of national unity of all Irishmen, as the children of a common mother, now became apparent; henceforth the struggle is for a kingship that implies a more real authority over the whole island. The contending parties are three families, the O'Briens of Thomond, the Mac Lochlainns of Tír Eoghain, and the O'Connors of Connacht. In 1166 the conflict—long in itself, but no longer than conflicts of a similar kind elsewhere in Europe—ends with the recognition of Ruaidhre O Connor as undisputed High-King.

**Further political changes within the country : strong states lose prestige ; weak states rise to power. Ruling families replace ruling septs.**

When the *Book of Rights* was compiled about A.D. 900 and revised a century later under Brian Bórumha, the island was still divided into seven major kingdoms—Caiseal, Cruacha, Aileach, Airghialla, Ulaidh, Midhe, and Laighin. After a defeat at Leath Camh, in 827, the kingdom of Airghialla had to pay tribute to Aileach, and declined to a position of dependence from which it never afterwards recovered. Armagh, the ecclesiastical capital of the country, was within its territory, a fact which the powerful Uí Néill leaders could not overlook. Niall, son of Eochaidh, raised the small state of Ulaidh to considerable strength before his death in 1063, but the pre-eminence was not maintained. Mael Seachlainn's successors in Meath wasted their energies against one another, and were unable to provide further candidates for the High-Kingship. After Clontarf the Uí Cennsealaigh of South Leinster succeeded Maelmórdha's kin as rulers ; for a brief moment they promised to be serious claimants to the sovereignty of Ireland, but the promise was unrealized, and the contest remained between Aileach, Caiseal and Cruacha.

Remarkable is the progress now achieved by some of the states whose position in the political world had hitherto been quite subordinate. Donnchadh Mac Giolla Pádraig, of Ossory, actually attempted to place Munster under tribute, and, though he failed in this, he was able to seize the kingship of Leinster in 1033, and to celebrate the great Fair of Carman. He died in 1039. After a lapse of several centuries Brega,

or Eastern Meath, availing no doubt of dissensions among the descendants of Mael Sechlainn, again showed a desire to win for itself a small place in the Irish sun. Its king, O Riagáin, captured Olaf, son of Sitric, in 1029, and held him to ransom at a price so unusual that it is recorded in the annals—1,200 cows, six score Welsh steeds, three score ounces of gold, three score ounces of bright silver, the sword of Carlus, and the restoration of various Irish hostages held by the Norse. In 1045 we find Gairbhedh O Cathasaigh, chief of an insignificant sub-state (called *Saithne*), becoming King of Brega, an indication of the changes which the new era had ushered in. Breifne, the Déisi, the Uí Máine, the Uí Fáilghe are other small states that now fill roles of some importance in the political development of the country.<sup>1</sup>

**Struggle for the High-Kingship. Momentary predominance of Diarmuid of Leinster. Issue then knit between O'Briens and Mac Lochlainns.**

When Tadhg, the brother and rival of Donnchadh O'Brien, was slain by the men of Éli, his son Toirdealbhach was sent to the King of Leinster to be fostered. When the boy grew to man's estate he returned to head a strong party among the Dál Chais, and with the help of his foster-father, Diarmuid Mac Maoil na mBó, defeated his uncle in battle. Donnchadh thereupon resigned the kingship and went on pilgrimage to Rome, where he died in 1064. Twice Toirdealbhach

<sup>1</sup> Surnames, introduced about 950, became general in the eleventh century, so that ruling families, rather than ruling septs, will henceforth occupy our attention. A short list of such families will be found at the end of the present chapter.

appears in a position of dependence to Diarmuid, once when they invaded Connacht together, and again when Toirdealbhach invaded that province alone, but handed over its hostages to the Leinster king; yet Diarmuid never seems to have asserted his claim to the High-Kingship. He was defeated and slain by Conchubhar O Mael Seachlainn, son of Mael Seachlainn II., whilst raiding Meath with the Norse of Dublin in 1072.

Within a year after Diarmuid's death Toirdealbhach had secured the submission of Munster, Connacht, Meath, and Breifne; he was ready then to march against the North, where Domhnall Mac Lochlainn resolutely opposed his claim. The armies met in conflict near Ardee, and Toirdealbhach suffered a reverse; yet the expedition, on the whole, seems to have been successful, for Toirdealbhach's cousin, Conchubhar, is found soon afterwards King of Tealach Óg, in the very centre of Tyrone. When this prince was killed in 1078, his brother (or kinsman), Cinnéide, succeeded to the throne. Not content with this experiment, Toirdealbhach made his son Muircheartach King of Dublin. Hopes for the progress of this scheme of expansion were rudely shaken in 1084, when Cinnéide of Tealach Óg assisted O Ruairc of Breifne in an attack on Muircheartach of Dublin. The latter, with his Norse, was more than equal to the trial, for he met the invaders on the battlefield and defeated and slew them both. No further attempt was made to settle an O'Brien king at Tealach Óg. In general, however, Toirdealbhach's supremacy was unquestioned; a proof of this, if proof were needed, is the title "Illustrious King of Ireland" by which he was addressed by Pope Gregory VII. Toirdealbhach died in 1086 at the age of eighty-seven.

Munster was divided between his three sons, but soon Tadhg, one of the brothers, died, and a second, Diarmuid, was expelled, so that Muirheartach was left in possession of an undivided kingdom. His advance to higher honours was impeded by the able northern prince, Domhnall Mac Lochlainn, who was by this time an active candidate for the High-Kingship. The duel between the two rulers lasted twenty years, and was marked by some very bitter fighting. Domhnall was the first to move. In 1088 he invaded Munster, sacked Limerick, and returned to the North with numerous captives. The effect of this victory was seen two years later when, at a great conference of princes, Muirheartach agreed to acknowledge Domhnall as High-King.

But peace did not continue beyond another two years, for in 1092 Muirheartach was again in the field. By 1097 he felt so confident of his superiority that he undertook to invade the North. Domhnall marched against him, but meanwhile the successor of St. Patrick intervened, with a moderate measure of success, for the rivals were induced to agree to a short-term truce. This was renewed the following year. In 1100 the temper of both was such that the worst was again feared; but it was not until a year later that hostilities were resumed. Muirheartach then invaded Tír Chonaill, destroyed Aileach in revenge for the destruction of Kincora (each of his soldiers receiving, it is said, an order to carry off in his knapsack one stone of the famous northern fortress), and proceeded triumphantly through Tír Eoghain and eastern Ulster to Dundalk and Tara. His claim to the High-Kingship could not now be gainsaid. Domhnall, however, recovered with amazing rapidity, and by 1102



was in a position to take the field effectively against O'Brien. Thus a deadlock was again reached, for either king was at once too strong to forego his claim and too weak to enforce it. Both, for the moment, saved their honour by handing over their hostages to Domhnall, successor of St. Patrick.

Outside of Ireland O'Brien, rather than Mac Lochlainn, was regarded as the superior king. Muirheartach entered into an alliance with Magnus, King of Norway, to whose son he gave his daughter, Bjadmunja (Beith Mumhan ?) in marriage (1102). There is a tale to the effect that Magnus contemplated the conquest of Ireland. If this be true the project was soon cut short, for Magnus was killed in a petty skirmish near Downpatrick in 1103.

Domhnall, successor of St. Patrick at Armagh, died at Dublin in 1105, whilst making peace between the hostile armies. Cellach, the new Primate, completed his predecessor's work ; and repeated his good offices in 1109 and 1113. Next year Muirheartach fell sick of a wasting disease and lost his old authority ; but he did not die till 1119. Two years later his great rival, Domhnall Mac Lochlainn, followed him to the grave, aged seventy-one, after penance in a monastery. Each had weakened but neither had conquered the other ; each could claim with equal justice that he was King of Ireland, but it was in each case a kingship " with opposition " (co rfeardbpa).

**Connacht now enters the lists. The Struggle continues between O'Connors and O'Briens.**

At this period the O'Connors of Connacht come unexpectedly into the foreground, bent on winning



back for the West the position it had lost at the Battle of Ocha in A.D. 483. Toirdealbhach Mór O'Connor was now supported by the whole strength of a great province, and he had the ambition and the energy to use it with effect. His first expedition (1118) was to Munster, where he emphasized already existing conditions by making the Eoghanacht of Desmond (Deas Mhumha) and the Dál Chais of Thomond (Tuadh Mhumha) still more independent of each other. Munster may henceforth be regarded as consisting of two distinct kingdoms, one ruled by the McCarthys, the other by the O'Briens. Eoghanacht power in Caiseal was now but a memory ; indeed Muircheartach O'Brien had many years before (1101) deprived the site of its traditional political importance by granting it to the Church. It was soon to win a new dignity and a new greatness as ecclesiastical capital of the South.

Toirdealbhach next invaded Meath, expelled its king (who happened to be his father-in-law), and divided the province into three parts, over which he placed princes chosen by himself. One of these was killed within a few days ; but Toirdealbhach was able to secure that the kingdom should not be re-united.

The King of Leinster at this time was Enda Mac Murchadha, of the southern sept known as the Uí Cinnsealaigh ; his position, however, was challenged by the northern sept of Uí Faeláin, from which, till recently, the rulers of the province had been taken. Toirdealbhach, for obvious reasons of policy, supported the Uí Faeláin in their opposition to Mac Murchadha. Over a province thus weakened the King of Connacht could carry his forces almost at will. When the Norse of Dublin submitted to his authority he placed over them, first one of his own sons, then Domhnall

O Faeláin, a prince of the Uí Faeláin sept just mentioned. During all this time he received loyal aid from Tighearnán O Ruairc, King of Breifne, who expected, in return for his services, the destruction of the O Mael Seachlainns and the addition of their lands of Meath to his own dominions.

Toirdealbhach O'Connor showed a high conception of his duties as king. He built abbeys and bridges,



Irish "Bracteate" coins—i.e., struck on one side only.

(National Museum, Dublin.) (From Petrie's *Round Towers*.)

encouraged arts and learning, helped commerce by the introduction of a coinage, and in many other ways sought to bring prosperity and honour to the country. To him also is due the erection of a castle at Athlone in 1129, the first fortress of its kind ever seen in Ireland.

Against the O'Briens he made but little headway until fierce dissensions between the brothers Tadhg and Toirdealbhach gave him an opportunity of interfering. He supported the former, whose cause Diarmuid Mac Murchadha, now King of Leinster, had already espoused. The opposing forces tried issue at Móin Mhór, near Emly, in 1151. O'Connor was successful. Toirdealbhach O'Brien was utterly defeated, whilst the losses of the Dál Chais were so heavy that their rulers quickly descended to the status of petty kings.

Next year O'Connor presided as High-King over the Synod of Kells, but a new rival whose star had long been waxing strong in the North, now appeared to contest his supremacy.

### **The Struggle continues between the O'Connors and the Mac Lochlainns.**

Muircheartach Mac Lochlainn had been King of Cineál Eoghain since 1136, but he had grievous troubles with the O'Neill family within his own borders and with the states of Airghialla and Ulaidh without, so that years passed before his place on the throne was secure. By 1148 his predominance in Ulster was recognized, and he could turn his attention to the winning of the High-Kingship. A quarrel was picked with O'Connor in the traditional way. Muircheartach took under his protection Toirdealbhach O'Brien, the defeated of Móin Mhór, and restored him to the kingship of Thomond in despite of O'Connor and O'Connor's protégé. Next year he was defeated by O'Connor in a naval battle off Inis Eoghain. But the days of the Connacht monarch were now drawing to a close; he died in 1156 aged sixty-eight, and was buried at Clonmacnois, leaving in his last will and testament gold, silver and many treasures to be divided among the churches of Ireland.

Toirdealbhach was succeeded by his son Ruaidhre, who took up the struggle with Mac Lochlainn. The latter was now the stronger, as we learn from his presence at the consecration of the abbey church at Mellifont in 1157, where he seems to have been regarded by all as High-King. A combination of Connacht and Munster against him was repulsed at Ardee in 1159;

but Mac Lochlainn was unable to secure hostages when he marched into Connacht after his victory. Two years later, however, the Four Masters record that "Diarmuid Mac Murchadha and Ruaidhre O Conchobhair came to him [at Lecc Bledhma in Meath]. He gave all Connacht to Ruaidhre and Leinster to Diarmuid, and so was King of Ireland without opposition." The Norse of Dublin likewise submitted. Meath was carved into yet smaller portions, and reduced more and more to political impotence.

Mac Lochlainn's triumph was thus complete; yet after a short space of four years his reign was to end in disaster and dishonour. In 1165 the Ulaidh of Eastern Ulster revolted against his supremacy. Muircheartach invaded their territory, expelled their king, Eochaidh Mac Duinn Shléibhe, and replaced him by a kinsman, Donn Sléibhe Mac Duinn Shléibhe. Next year (1166) Muircheartach incurred the guilt of an incredibly irresponsible act: he had his prisoner Eochaidh blinded, though under the solemn guarantees of the Archbishop of Armagh and the King of Airghialla. A wave of indignation swept over Ireland when this deed of sacrilege and cruelty became known. Muircheartach was deserted by all save a few followers, and was slain soon afterwards by the King of Airghialla in an insignificant skirmish near Armagh.

Ruaidhre O'Connor was not slow to profit by this unexpected opportunity of winning back for his house the High-Kingship. Assisted by Tighearnán O Ruairc he marched through Meath, Dublin, Leinster and Ossory to Munster and thence to Tír Chonaill and Armagh. Everywhere he was hailed as King of Ireland, and, as far as the eye could reach along the Irish horizon, no rival seemed likely to contest his

sway. Next year (1167) Ruaidhre presided over the last of the great reform Synods at Tlachtga (Hill of Ward) in Meath, where 13,000 horsemen thronged the town and hill, "and good decrees were enacted regarding veneration for churches and clergy and for the governance of people and states." A year later (1168) he celebrated the Aonach of Tailtiu with unusual splendour. At this gathering of the nation, we are told, the horses that had carried the travellers were tethered along the roadside for a distance of six miles. United for long centuries in language, in law, in civilization, united now in obedience to a single supreme ruler, the people of Ireland seemed to have emerged at last from the desert wastes and to have arrived at the very gates of the Promised Land.

But at this moment Diarmuid Mac Murchadha, forgiven, despite innumerable crimes, by an over-indulgent Ard-Rí, and restored to the throne of Leinster, sat gloomily in his palace fort at Ferns, and cursed the tardy counsels that left him still without stranger friends from overseas. A few months more and they will be with him, ready to co-operate with might and main and deadly skill in the destruction of his motherland.

#### NOTE ON THE INTRODUCTION OF SURNAMES.

It is probable that in very early times, in Ireland as elsewhere, one name only was borne. A man would be distinguished by a soubriquet—Nuadu Airgetlam, "Nuadu of the Silver Hand"; Cuscraid Menn, "Cuscraid the Stammerer"; or by a patronymic: Cúrói mac Dáire, "Curoi son of Daire"; Cormac mac Airt, "Cormac son of Art," etc. From the beginning of Christianity or earlier, to about A.D. 700, another system was common in Ireland. This consisted in prefixing *moccu* (a word whose



derivation is unknown) to a sept name, e.g., Dubthech moccu Lugáir (one of St. Patrick's first converts); Miliucc moccu Buain (St. Patrick's master); Muirchu moccu Maetheni (his biographer). After 700 the older system—*mac*, "son," in its literal sense, and descriptive epithets added to personal names—seems to have been revived, and to have prevailed until the new surnames were introduced more than two centuries later. These arose when the son (*mac*) or the grandson (*ó*, also in the alternative form *ua* since the seventh century) adopted as his distinguishing appellation the name of the progenitor to whom he bore that relation, whilst descendants henceforth kept the same term, though in fact neither sons nor grandsons of the persons whose names they bore. Thus Mac Cárthaigh (from Cárthach, who died in 1045), O Néill (from Niall Glúndubh, died 919), O Briain (from Brian Bórumha, died 1014).

A short list of the leading families in the different states may here be given:—

*Ailech*.—Cenél Eoghain; O Lochlainn or Mac Lochlainn (chief family to 1241); O Néill (chief family after 1241).

Others: O Maol Fhabhaill (Lavelle); O Gairmledhaigh (Gormley); Mac Cathmhaoil (McCall, Campbell); O Catháin (O'Kane); O h-Inneirghe (Henry); O h-Agáin (O'Hagan); O Conchubhair (O'Connor); O Ceallaigh (O'Kelly).

Cenél Conaill: Chief families: O Maol Doraidh (O'Muldorrey); replaced by O Canannáin (Cannon), who about 1200 was replaced by O Domhnaill (O'Donnell).

Others: O Gallchobhair (O'Gallagher); O Dochartaigh (O'Doherty); O Fearghail (O'Friel).

All these belong to the northern Uí Néill.

*Midhe*.—Clann Cholmáin: O Maol Seachlainn (chief family to the Norman Invasion).

Siol Aedha Sláine: O Ceallaigh Breagh (O'Kelly); O Riagain (O'Regan) [succeeded by O Cathasaigh (O'Casey) of Saithne].

Others: Mac Cargamhna (O'Growney); O Ciardha (O'Carey); O Maolmhuidh (O'Molloy); Mac Eochagáin (McGeoghegan); O Caoindealbháin (O'Quinlevan, O'Quinlan); Mac Cochláin (Mac Coughlan).

These were of the southern Uí Néill.



Others : O Fearghail (O'Farrell) : Sionnach (Fox) ; O Dubhthaigh (O'Duffy).

*Connacht*.—The chief families belonged to the sept Uí Briúin.

Uí Briúin Aoi : O Conchubhair (O'Connor) ; Mac Diarmada (McDermott) ; Mac Donnchadha (McDonagh).

Uí Briúin Breifne : O Ruairc (O'Rourke) ; O Raghallaigh (O'Reilly).

Uí Briúin Seóla : O Flaithbheartaigh (O'Flaherty).

Uí Briúin Umhaill : O Máille (O'Malley).

Uí Briúin na Sinna : O Birn (O'Beirne).

Others : O Dubhda (O'Dowd) ; O h-Eidhin (Hynes) ; O Cléirigh (O'Clery) ; Mac Giolla Cheallaigh (Kilkelly) ; O Seachnasaigh (O'Shaughnessy) ; O Ceallaigh (O'Kelly) ; O Madadháin (O'Madigan, O'Madden) ; Mac Aodhagáin (Egan) ; O h-Eadhra (O'Hara) ; O Gadhra (O'Gara) ; O Mainnin (Manning).

*Airghialla*.—Of the few that survive : O (F)laimn (O'Lynn) ; O Ceallacháin (O'Callaghan) ; Mac Cana (McCann) ; O Cearbhail (Carville) ; O Leathlobhair (Lawlor) ; Mac Mathghamhna (MacMahon) ; Mag Uidhir (Maguire) ; O Flannagáin (O'Flanagan) ; O Maoil Dúin (Muldoon) ; O h-Innreachtaigh (Hanratty) ; O h-Annlúain (O'Hanlon).

*Laighin*.—The ruling septs (all of the *Dál Niad Corb*) were as follows :—

Uí Fáilghe : O Conchobhair (O'Connor).

Uí Muiredhaigh : O Tuathail (O'Toole).

Uí Faoláin : O Broin or O Brain (O'Byrne).

Uí Dúinchadha : Mac Giolla mo Cholmóg ([later] FitzDermot).

Uí Cinnsealaigh : Mac Murchadha (McMuirough).

Others : Mac Giolla Pádraig (FitzPatrick) ; O Mórdha (O'More) ; O Díomasaigh (O'Dempsey) ; O Duinn (O'Dunne) ; O Nualláin (O'Nolan) ; O Riain (O'Ryan) ; O Ceallaigh Cualann (O'Kelly).

*Ulaidh*.—O Duinn Shléibhe (Dunleavy, Dunlea).

Others : O h-Eochadha (Hoey) ; Mac Aonghusa (McGuinness) ; Mac Artain (McCartan) ; Mac Giolla Muire (Gilmore).

*Caiseal*.—Dál Chais: O Briain (O'Brien); O Cinnéide (O'Kennedy); Mac Mathghamhna (MacMahon); Mac Conmara (McNamara); O Déaghdha (O'Dea); O Gráda (O'Grady.)

Eoghanacht: Mac Cárthaigh (McCarthy); O Súilleabháin (O'Sullivan); O Donnchadha (O'Donoghue); O Mathghamhna (O'Mahony); O Donnabháin (O'Donovan).

Others: O Cearbhaill (O'Carroll); O Conchobhair Ciarraighe (O'Connor); O Faoláin (O'Phelan); O Fógartaigh (Fogarty); O Meachair (O'Meagher); O Maoil Riain (O'Mulryan, O'Ryan); O h-Eadarsgeoil (O'Driscoll); O Conaill (O'Connell).

## CHAPTER III.

### LITERARY AND ARTISTIC DEVELOPMENT.

LEARNING in Ireland during the early Christian centuries was so excellently organized that it survived the unsettlement of the Norse era. Great monasteries like Clonmacnois might be burned and destroyed forty-one times in the course of four centuries (719-1119); peaceful scholars in hundreds might fall victims to barbarian fury; others might flee to happier lands, carrying in their satchels the rich manuscript treasures of their own country; the general insecurity might make a life of defenceless seclusion increasingly burdensome; yet the schools continued quietly at their work with admirable courage and devotion.

A short summary of the literature produced (for the most part) between the coming of the Norse and the coming of the Normans will give some idea of their activity.

### Religious Literature.

Works in the native tongue for the instruction and edification of the faithful were particularly abundant and varied. Thus in prose there were numberless sermons, homilies and tracts on the Resurrection, the Last Judgment, the seven deadly sins, the chief Christian virtues, and similar subjects. There were also numerous stories of the sufferings of the martyrs,

legends of every description, monastic rules, detailed regulations for the penances to be imposed in confession, "alphabets," or simple sets of rules that might be regarded as the A B C of the spiritual life. Next come commentaries on the Bible, sketches from biblical history, dealing with the creation of man, the childhood of Christ, the destruction of Jerusalem, Heaven and Hell (of which unearthly lands a vivid description is offered in a tract called "The Evernew Tongue"); lastly prayers, litanies and instructions likely to prove of benefit to the soul.

The *Lives of the Saints*, written in Irish and Latin (two volumes of each with a fifth volume of *Miscellanea*) have been published by Plummer from various MSS. Another large volume of Irish lives was edited by Whitley Stokes from the *Book of Lismore*; and yet another great volume of Latin lives was published by the Bollandists from a Salamanca MS. Numerous lives, anecdotes and legends, in addition to these, will be found published in such books and journals as Standish Hayes O'Grady's *Silva Gadelica*, *Ériu* and the *Revue Celtique*. The *Voyage of Brendan*, originally a single episode in his *Life*, was expanded in the Middle Ages, and, in a Latin version, became popular throughout all Europe. Two *Visions*, one ascribed to St. Fursa (who died A.D. 650), the other to Tnudgal (written by an Irish monk at Ratisbon in A.D. 1149), were likewise well known on the Continent. So common was this type of literature in Ireland that it gave rise to parodies; one of these, the *Vision of Mac Conglinne*, was written in the twelfth century, and may still be read in a modern form, which we owe to Father O'Leary's pen, under the title *An Craos Deamhan*.

Poems connected with religious literature may be divided into two groups—the first written in a learned style and designed to convey information ; the second purely lyrical. To the former class belongs the *Féilire* (or Feast Register) of Aengus, written about A.D. 800, and containing the names of over a thousand saints ; also the *Saltair na Rann*, written about A.D. 990, and relating in 150 poems various incidents from Old and New Testament history. To the second or lyric class belong hymns in praise of God, the Cross and the Blessed Virgin ; likewise quatrains or poems in which wise sayings, prayers, blessings, warnings and moral reflections find expression. Many of these are attributed, probably with justice, to well-known poets, such as Fothad *na Canóine* (ninth century), Cormac Mac Cuileannáin (died 908), Mael Isu O Brolcháin (died 1086), Mael Muire O Moirin (twelfth century), Donnchadh Mór O Dálaigh (died 1244), and Gilla Brighde Mac Conmidhe (fourteenth century). Very numerous are the poems said to have been written by St. Colmcille, but most of these belong, at least in their present form, to the thirteenth century.

### Nature Poetry.

To this, or to an earlier period, belong four exquisite nature poems ascribed to Finn Mac Cumhaill ; they have been published and translated by Kuno Meyer under the title *Four Old Irish Songs of Summer and Winter*. It would not be easy to give an idea of their contents, short of quotation in full. Meyer points out that in an ancient treatise on prosody extracts are given from 340 poems, few of which have been preserved in their entirety. To exemplify the genius of the Irish

poets as writers of lyric verse we have *Liadain and Curithir* and *King and Hermit* (both also published by Meyer), the one ascribed to the ninth, the other to the tenth century. In the first a young man and maid who have plighted their troth are about to separate for ever and make their last farewells in language of deep feeling. In the second Guaire the Generous of Connacht enquires of his brother, Marbán, why he dwells by preference in a forest hut, keeping flocks and herds, rather than in the royal palace. Marbán in reply sets forth the beauties of nature, as viewed from a shieling, in terms so enthusiastic that Guaire exclaims: "Glorious as is my kingship, I would give it gladly to be in thy company, Marbán." Hardly later than the tenth century, too, is the *Song of the Old Woman of Beare*, the lament of a vanished beauty for the golden days of long ago, when her graces held captive many a manly heart. Charming snatches of verse are likewise scattered through such prose romances as the *Serglige Conculaind* ("Cuchulainn's Sickbed"), the *Tochmarc Étaíne* ("Courting of Étaín") and the *Voyage of Bran*.

### Professional Literature.

It was the duty of the learned *filid* to preserve the history, genealogy, topography, law and traditions of the country in poetic form. Their poems were constructed in the classic metres with amazing technical skill. Beyond this and the intrinsic value of the matter they record (greater or less, as the case may be) they have no merits; they are as dry as the driest annals, and as far removed from genuine poetry as faultless verse can be. The more distinguished writers



of the period A.D. 800–1100, and the subjects they dealt with, may find fitting commemoration in a short catalogue:—

Mael Muru Othna (*d.* 887).—Poem on the Milesian Migrations.  
Flannacán mac Cellaig Breg (ninth century).—Poems on deaths of Kings of Ireland.

Flann mac Lonáin (*d.* 918).—Historical poems.

Cormacán éces mac Maelebrigte (*d.* 946).—Poem on Circuit of Ireland by Muirchertach of the Leather Cloaks.

Cinaed Ua h-Artacáin (*d.* 975).—Antiquarian poems.

Eochaid O Flainn (*d.* 1003).—List of Kings of Ulster to Destruction of Emain Macha in A.D. 331.

Mac Liaig (*d.* 1016).—Destruction of Kincora; Glories of Brian Bórumha.

Mac Gilla Coim Urard O Coise (*d.* 1023).—Chief poet to O Mael Seachlainn II.; Greatness of that family.

Cúán Ua Lothcháin (*d.* 1024).—Poems on antiquities of Tara.

Flann Mainistrech (*d.* 1056).—Chronology; Synchronism of Kings of Ireland with Kings of ancient world.

Gilla Coemgin (*d.* 1072).—Accounts of early Ireland; Annals of world to A.D. 1014.

### Great MSS. Collections.

When the fury of the Norman Invasion was spent our Irish scholars showed keen interest in the old literary documents, and gathered all they could lay hands on into *bibliotheculae* or great codices. Some of these, such as the *Yellow Book of Slane* and the *Psalter of Cashel*,<sup>1</sup> were lost in the troubled course of the centuries. The oldest that has survived is

<sup>1</sup> Possibly the whole, certainly a part, of this book survived to the fifteenth century, when such pages as remained legible were copied by the O'Clerys for Edmund Mac Richard Butler. This copy (now in the Bodleian Library—Laud 610) with the *Book of Carrick* was portion of the ransom paid the Earl of Desmond for Edmund's release after his capture at the Battle of Pilltown in 1462.

the *Leabhar na h-Uidhre* (LU.), compiled in part by Maelmuire Mac Celechair (*d.* 1106) at Clonmacnois. Its name, "Book of the Dun (cow)," is derived from a legend which tells how St. Ciaran of Clonmacnois took down the story of the Táin Bó Cuailnge on a parchment made from the skin of his favourite cow. The contents of the book are almost completely romantic, and the tales belong mainly to the Ulster cycle. Next in point of age comes the *Book of Leinster* (LL.), transcribed by Finn Mac Gormáin, Bishop of Kildare (*d.* 1160). In addition to romance it contains much historical and genealogical material. The *Yellow Book of Lecan* (YBL.) was written by various members of the Mac Firis family, but chiefly by Giolla Iosa, son of Donnchadh Mór Mac Firis, about 1391. Remarkable in this collection is the vast quantity of romance. Greater in size than any manuscript hitherto mentioned is the *Book of Ballymote* (BB.), compiled by various scribes about the beginning of the fifteenth century. In 1522 it was purchased by the O'Donnells from the chiefs of Ballymote for 140 milch cows. Valuable historical and genealogical matter has been preserved in this book. Of later date is the *Leabhar Breac* (LB.) whose contents are almost wholly ecclesiastical and religious.

Of lesser note but important are the *Great Book of Lecan* (compiled in 1417); the *Book of Lismore* (belonging to the latter half of the fifteenth century); the *Book of Uí Máine* (written before 1372), and the *Book of Fermoy*. O'Curry estimated that if the five oldest vellum MSS. were printed the result would be 6,400 quarto pages. Later vellum MSS. (of the period 1300-1600) would fill 9,000 pages of the same size; whilst the innumerable paper MSS. would cover 30,000

pages. D'Arbois de Jubainville, in an incomplete catalogue of Irish epic literature, published in 1883, mentions 953 MSS. in Irish and English libraries, and 56 others on the Continent---133 of the former and 35 of the latter written before 1600. It may be added that the Irish spoken by the people underwent great changes from about A.D. 950 onwards. Chief among these was a simplification of the verbal system, which till then had been incredibly complex; and the dropping of the neuter gender. The language thus modified is known to us now as Middle Irish, and in it the majority of extant MSS. are written. Often, however, the medieval scribes interfered but little with the text they were transcribing, so that compositions of the tenth, ninth and earlier centuries have been preserved, almost as originally written, in documents of a much later date.

### Romantic Tales.

In the Middle Irish period some portions of the *Táin* that possessed a deep human interest were so expanded that they became sagas in themselves. Again, in the twelfth century, the stories of Finn and the Fian, and their destruction at the battle of Gabra, were fully developed, and began to supplant the tales of the Cúchulainn cycle in popular favour. Characteristic of these romances are dramatic force and humour. The unexpected and weird is always happening; nor is any effort made to modify the grimness of the chief actors. The dialogues in particular are remarkably brilliant and clever. With material so promising an excellent drama ought naturally to have arisen, but there were circumstances

which successfully hindered any such evolution. Important among these was the traditional predominance of the story-teller. On the long winter nights when the pattering rain dripped monotonously from the eaves, and the bitter wind howled mournfully through the sheltering oaks and yews, the Irish loved to gather round the blazing log-fire, and there cosily seated, listen enraptured to some moving exploit of the heroic past. A company so bright and nimble of wit needed, above all else, laughter, and laughter the storyteller could most easily provide by constant exaggeration and grotesque extravagance. It is likewise evident that the listeners were displeased when a good story came to a speedy end, so that the entertainer was tempted to continue beyond the logical stopping point, and thus destroy the artistic proportions of his narrative.

### **Irish Scholars on the Continent.**

#### **John Scotus Eriugena.**

St. Vergil of Salzburg, who died in 784, may be regarded as the last of Ireland's great missionary sons on the Continent. The place of these was now taken by scholars, whose influence was directed not so much to the revival of religion as to the preservation of classical and patristic literature. Notker of St. Gall traces the advance of learning in medieval Europe back to the arrival of two Irishmen, who, having disembarked at a Frankish port, found a mart in progress, and joined the sellers with "wisdom" as their wares. Charles the Great had them brought to his court, and finding them ready to part with their "wisdom" on very moderate terms, engaged

them as professors. One, Clemens Scotus, remained in the palace school until he felt death approaching, when he retired to Würzburg, and there spent his last days in prayer and penance beside the tomb of his martyred countryman, St. Kilian. His companion was sent to Italy, where he taught in the monastery of St. Augustine at Pavia. An Irishman, Dungal, was made director of this school by the Emperor Lothaire in 825. Three or four other Dungals and a Josephus Scotus are likewise prominent in the Carolingian literary renaissance. Cambrai, Rheims, Soissons, Laon and Liège harboured colonies of Irishmen, celebrated no less for their beautiful caligraphy than for their knowledge of the liberal arts.

By far the greatest of these exiles was John Scotus Eriugena, who appeared at the court of Charles the Bald about 845. In knowledge of Greek he surpassed all the scholars of his time, but his fame rests chiefly on a philosophical work, "*Περὶ Φύσεως Μερισμού*" (*De Divisione Naturae*), written between 865 and 870. The elements of his thought are derived from earlier philosophic writers like pseudo-Dionysius the Aeropagite, St. Augustine, and St. Gregory of Nyssa, and go back ultimately to Plato, but the system he constructed was entirely his own. His originality is therefore unquestioned. "It was only a metaphysician of great insight who could have found all that he needed in the incomplete and disorderly literature to which he had access, and it was only a philosopher of great speculative power who could have wrought it all into so massive a system." In the four centuries preceding his birth, and again in the two centuries after his death, his equal in intellectual strength could scarcely have been found in Europe.



Martin, the Irishman. and Sedulius Scotus were likewise distinguished scholars; and lesser lights find a passing mention—Dermot, Fergus, Benchell and others. Heiric of Auxerre speaks of the swarms of philosophers from Ireland who landed in France in the days of Charles the Bald. In the oldest library catalogue of St. Gall a special section is found for books written in Irish script; whilst in several libraries of Germany and France references occur to books of a similar kind.

### Architecture.

In ancient Ireland the better-class houses were certainly made of wood; the stone huts that have survived were the dwellings of the poor. The same, no doubt, holds good of the early Christian churches. At any rate the finest early church of which we have record was constructed of the softer and more workable material. This was the church of Kildare, of which a long description is given in an eighth-century Life of St. Brigid. "I must not be silent," says her biographer, "concerning the miracle [connected with an ill-fitting door] at the restoration of the church in which rest the glorious bodies of Bishop Coulaeth and the virgin St. Brigid, on the right and left of the decorated altar, deposited in monuments decorated with various embellishments of gold and silver and gems and precious stones, with crowns of gold and silver hung above them. For owing to the increase in the number of the faithful, and their being of both sexes, the church occupied a wide area and was raised to a towering height, and was adorned with painted pictures. It had within it three spacious oratories,

separated by plank partitions under the one roof of the greater house ; wherein one partition, decorated and painted with figures and covered with linen hangings, extended along the breadth of the eastern part of the church from one wall to the other. Moreover, another wall separates the floor of the house into two equal parts, stretching from the eastward part to the cross wall. The church has in it many windows, and one ornamental doorway on the right side, by which the priests and faithful of the male sex enter ; and another doorway on the left side by which the community of virgins and faithful women are wont to enter. And thus in one very great temple a multitude of people, separated by partitions, but with one mind, worship Almighty God."

As wooden buildings, without a solitary exception, have disappeared, we are left with structures of stone only—nearly all, unfortunately, in ruins. Three periods are distinguished in the history of these : the *Primitive*, lasting probably to the end of the seventh century ; the *Transitional*, occupying, perhaps, the eighth and ninth centuries ; and the *Romanesque*, from the tenth to the twelfth centuries.

The most remarkable building of the primitive period is that of Gallerus (Gall-árus—"foreign house") in the barony of Corca Dhuibhne in Kerry. This oratory is built on the *clochán* model, of loose stones without mortar, laid in courses so arranged that one overhangs the other inwards until the top is capped with a single stone ; but, whereas the *clochán* was round or oval in shape, and thus when finished resembled a beehive, the plan of Gallerus is rectangular. Only the sides approach each other towards the top ; the ends remain vertical. The stones were knit together with such

skill that they have kept their position through centuries that have elapsed since the building was erected. The jambs of the door are not perpendicular, but slope towards each other—a convention common to the three periods—and are covered with a double lintel; for the principle of the arch—though possibly known—was not made use of at this period in Ireland.



Oratory of Gallerus.

The best preserved of these ancient buildings. Rectangular plan. Exterior measurements: 22 ft. long by  $18\frac{1}{2}$  ft. broad; height, at highest point, 17 ft. 2 ins.

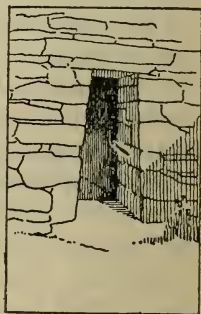
Church buildings of the *clochán* type are rare, but monastic cells seem often to have taken this form.

To this house type of structure belong, too, the

churches of St. Benén, above Cill Eanna in Aran; the Lady Chapel at Glendalough; oratories on Mac Dara's Island, off the Galway coast; on Inis Gluaire, off Mayo, and Inis Muiredhaigh, off Sligo; at Killylea in Armagh; Oilean tSenaigh in Kerry; and Nendrum in Down—to mention but a few.

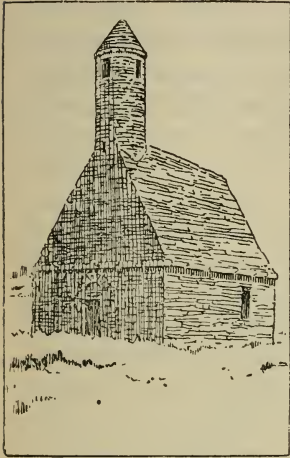
Churches which show a combination of lintel and of arch construction are ascribed to the second or transitional period. Well-known examples of this type are St. Columba's "House" at Kells, and St. Kevin's "Kitchen" at Glendalough.

Early examples of the third period, when arch



Doorway of Oratory of Gallerus.

Height  $5\frac{1}{2}$  ft.; breadth at top, 21 ins.; at bottom, 27 ins.



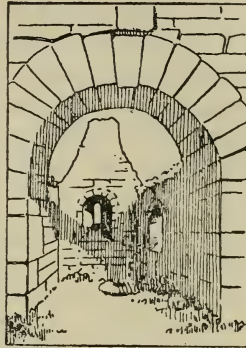
St. Kevin's Kitchen.

Oblong building, 23 ft. by 15 ft. ; high-pitched stone roof, with small, round-towered belfry rising 9 ft. therefrom. The arch is 9 ft. high by 5 ft. wide.



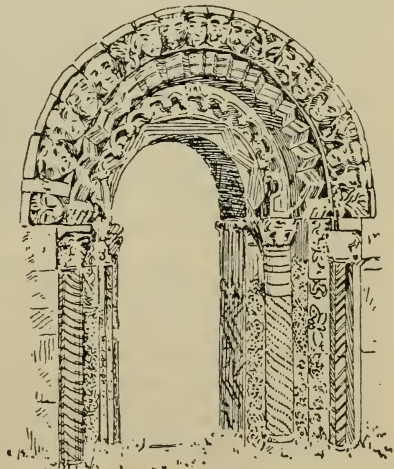
Inis-an-Ghoill—Western Doorway of the Saint's Church.

Described by Dr. Wilde as a "marvellous doorway; a grand specimen of Irish decorative art." It is deeply recessed within three ornamental piers, with beautiful capitals which support corresponding arched members elaborately moulded and overlaid with ornament.



Holy Trinity Church, Glendalough.

A chancel, 13 ft. 6 ins. by 8 ft. 9 ins. ; lit by a small east window. The chancel arch, of the same width, is formed of fine blocks; it has a semi-circular head, and the keystone has slipped a little.



South Doorway, Dysert O'Dea.

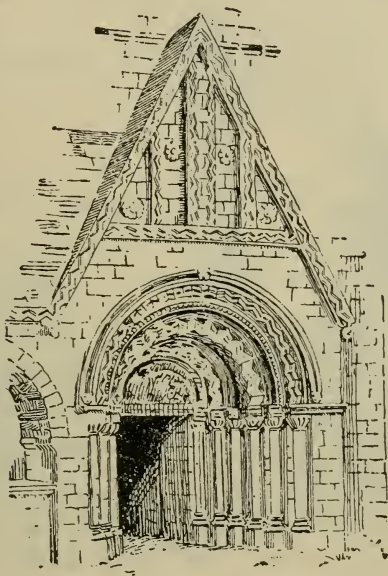
A beautiful Romanesque doorway with a row of curious heads and rich adornment of flowers, leaves, and interlacings.

construction was fully developed, are the church of the Holy Trinity at Glendalough, and the small church on Inis-an-Ghoill in Loch Corrib. Features of Irish Romanesque are the use of the round-headed arch throughout, the enrichment of important orders by grouping them in succession, the use of elaborate mouldings, the absence of towers, compensated for by the erection of circular campaniles detached from the main building, the preservation of sloping jambs, steep roof and other primitive characteristics; finally the occasional mingling of native Celtic forms of decoration with ornaments derived from continental Romanesque. This style is extremely well represented all through the country. Special attention may be called to the doorway and chancel arch of the convent church at Clonmacnois, the arch at Dysert O'Dea, the sculptured arcading at Ardmore, the round window at Rahan, near Tullamore, the richly carved chancel arch in six orders at Tuam, and the doorway in four orders at Killaloe.

For ingenuity of plan, proportion of parts, variety, wealth and harmony of ornament none of the churches mentioned above can compare with the chapel of Cormac McCarthy at Cashel. Resting upon the famous "Rock" it has been aptly described as "the Holy of Holies of Irish Romanesque," and "the finest building of its size and time in either England or Ireland." Excellently constructed of hard sandstone, the chapel consists of nave and chancel, joined by an arch of four orders. The greater doorway, in six orders, is equalled in beauty only by the doorway at Clonfert. Within and without the surface of the walls is broken up into arcade panels. A spiral staircase leads to an overcroft above the vault, which was heated by an arrangement of hot air flues.



In 1166, thirty-six years after Cormac's chapel, was erected the cathedral at Clonfert, whose doorway, "small though it be, is one of the art treasures of the world," and whose east window, "a perfect dream of just proportion and simple dignity," spoke of greater



Doorway, Cormac's Chapel.

(A cast is in the National Museum.)

triumphs yet to come could the development of our native architecture progress unhindered.

The campaniles, or belfries, to which we have already referred, are now known as "Round Towers." Occasionally they were used as watch-towers, and frequently, no doubt, as keeps. Stoutly built of stone they offered the monks a comparatively secure refuge against

raiders who were ignorant of the art of siege. To make capture by assault more difficult, the doorway was often, but not always, placed at a considerable distance from the ground. The top storey generally contained four openings through which the bell was rung on



Clondalkin Round Tower, Co. Dublin.

A good specimen of its class: 84 ft. high; 45 ft. in circumference at the base; walls 3 ft. thick; door 15 ft. from the ground. The part of the structure below the door is a solid mass of masonry.

Sundays and holy days to summon the faithful to Mass and devotions. Similar belfries are found in Scotland and England; and there is a world-famed Italian example, the campanile of Sant Apollinare at Ravenna.

Native architecture ceased with the Norman Invasion, and in consequence of that event, as unprejudiced

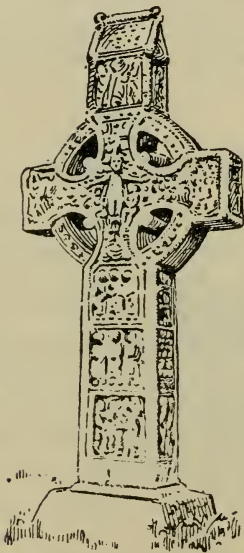
witnesses testify, Gothic, which had grown spontaneously in other countries of Northern Europe, was then imposed upon Ireland from without, and remained to the end a foreign language to our Irish builders. It would be wrong to pretend that nothing worthy of note was produced in the new style, but there certainly was nothing that could challenge comparison with the little architectural *bijou* on the Rock of Cashel or the gorgeous doorway of St. Brendan's cathedral at Clonfert.

### Sculpture. Monumental Slabs. High Crosses.

Sculpture in wood was probably an important branch of Irish art, but in our humid climate wood rapidly decays, so that sculpture in stone is now all that is left for study. First in order of time come the flat recumbent slabs, begun, it would seem, in Clonmacnois about A.D. 750, and continued in an unbroken series to the end of the twelfth century. Each slab is decorated with a cross, and very many bear the stereotyped inscription, OROIT DO N. OR OROIT AR N., "a prayer for so-and-so." In a few instances the profession (*sacart*, *epscop*, *rí*, *saer*—priest-bishop, king, wood or iron worker, etc.) is added; otherwise we learn at best but the name of the person for whose eternal rest suffrages are requested. The prototype of the "Celtic" cross, with the wheel connecting the two arms, is found fully developed on crosses of the ninth century. At Inis Cealtra (Holy Island in Loch Derg) may still be seen a twelfth-century graveyard with 110 of these slabs in position over the graves to which they belong. Elsewhere the slabs have been removed from their original places, but at Clonmacnois

many have been preserved and may be seen collected in one of the roofless churches. An incomplete list of these monuments gives a total number of nearly 900, of which Clonmacnois is responsible for a third part.

More important than the memorial slabs from every point of view are the standing or "High" Crosses. As many as 251 of these are known to us. They were seldom raised as monuments to the dead, but were designed rather to commemorate some public event, or to mark the boundaries of monastic lands, or to indicate the point where ecclesiastical sanctuary commenced. Some, perhaps, served the simple purpose of edification, whilst the great figure crosses (like the paintings on stained glass windows of a later date) served as illustrated books for the unlettered.



High Cross of Muiredach, Monasterboice.  
(Cast in National Museum.)

Conspicuous among "high" crosses is the smaller cross at Monasterboice, described very fully by Professor Macalister in

an excellent monograph. It is called after Muiredach, an abbot of Monasterboice who died in A.D. 925. So perfect is the execution that the art of sculpture in early Ireland may be said to touch here the high-water mark. On the base of the cross there is a series of six large panels

decorated alternately with key pattern and interlacing ornament. All the panels save one can be identified; they show Adam and Eve eating the forbidden fruit; Cain and Abel; David slaying Goliath; Moses striking the rock; the arrest in Gethsemani; the incredulity of St. Thomas; the Crucifixion (with two angels supporting the Saviour's head); the Last Judgment; Our Lord in glory; St. Michael with a balance, weighing the merits and demerits of a soul, with Satan underneath trying to drag down the scale on the adverse side; St. Paul, the first Hermit, visiting St. Anthony; Pilate washing his hands; and the Divine Hand, issuing in omnipotence from the clouds.

At Monasterboice there are two other crosses—one, "the tall cross," well over 20 feet in height, and crowned with a capstone modelled on an Irish shrine. Kells preserves a group of four or five crosses; whilst other Columban foundations, such as Durrow, Drumcliffe, Glen Colmcille and Moone (Co. Kildare) are also enriched with similar monuments. That at Moone stands  $17\frac{1}{2}$  feet high and is lavishly decorated. At Tuam there was a cross (now broken) over 30 feet in height, bearing four inscriptions in Irish. One of these asked a prayer for Toirdealbhach O'Connor, King of Ireland, who died in 1156. Perhaps the best known monument of the type in existence is the "Cross of the Scriptures" in Clonmacnois, so-called from its wealth of figures drawn from Scripture subjects. One panel, however, is thought to be non-scriptural; it illustrates rather the celebrated story of how St. Ciarán set up the corner post of his church with the aid of Diarmait mac Cerbaill, then an exile, but afterwards a powerful High-King. Amid the remark-



able crosses not yet spoken of are those of Dysert O'Dea (Clare), Castledermot (Carlow), Killeany and Temple Brechin (Aran), Duleek (Meath), Donoghmore (Tyrone), and Cashel (Tipperary).

### **Metalwork: Bells, Chalices, Shrines, Brooches.**

Of artistic handiwork in metal comparatively few specimens have survived. The reason is sufficiently obvious: silver and gold were objects of greed in every century, and consequently attracted the attention of many to whom a high cross or an illuminated book presented no temptation.

Two types of ecclesiastical bell were common—one of iron, the other of bronze. The iron bells are four-sided, tall and narrow, formed from plates of metal that have been bent into shape and riveted. So accustomed was the eye to the rectangular form that it persisted in the cast bells of bronze. Bells used by founders of the great monasteries were preserved as highly prized relics in these institutions. Special veneration attached, as we have seen,<sup>1</sup> to the bell (now in the R.I.A. collection) which was supposed traditionally to have belonged to St. Patrick himself.

Only one ancient chalice remains to us (called the *Ardagh Chalice* from the rath near Ardagh, Co. Limerick, where it was discovered in 1868), but this solitary survival is amongst our very greatest treasures. It is made of an alloy of gold, silver and copper, in the proportion of one part of gold to twenty-one of silver and nine of copper. Lead, enamel, glass, amber and mica are also used in its construction and decora-

<sup>1</sup> See illustration in companion volume, *Ireland from the Earliest Times to A.D. 800*, p. 155.

tion. The chalice is composed of 345 separate pieces, riveted together with consummate skill. Many patterns are executed in gold and filigree; others in plaited silver wire; whilst a leaden plate between the upper and lower sides of the flat rim at the base gives stability to the cup. Rectangular tablets of blue glass, with wrought silver decorative pieces behind them, give a brilliant effect when the light is good. In the centre of the base there is a large rock crystal, surrounded by a delightful series of ornamental rings in gold. "The complicated construction of this vessel," writes Professor Macalister, "and the masterly way in which effects are produced not only by the decoration of the surfaces, but by the combination and contrast of the different materials, is very noteworthy. This work shows that the metal workers were in their own way as skilful as the illuminators." In date the chalice can hardly be earlier than the end of the eighth century.



Ardagh Chalice.  
(National Museum.)

For the reception of books or relics beautiful shrines were frequently made. Of those designed for books examples are forthcoming in the shrine of St. Molaise's Gospels, made in the year 1010; that of the Stowe Missal, made in 1023; and that of the Cathach, wrought in part in the fourteenth century. A fine reliquary shrine for St. Patrick's Bell is dated at about A.D. 1100. The shrine of St. Mainchin, still preserved in his church in Offaly, is in the form of the contemporary



Shrine of Stowe Missal.

Made of oak, covered with plates of silver. It bears an inscription asking for prayers. Held to have belonged originally to the Monastery of Lorrha, Co. Tipperary, it passed to the Continent and was found in Austria in 1784; later removed to England, and finally came into the possession of the Royal Irish Academy.



Shrine of St. Patrick's Bell.

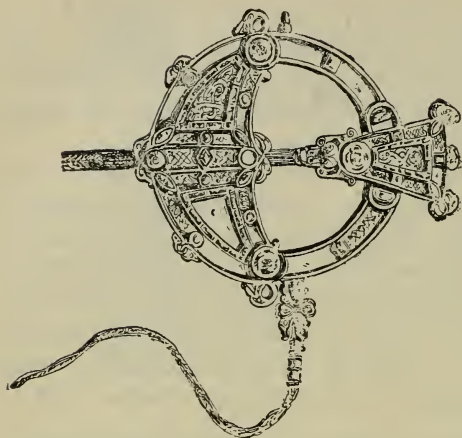
Made of brass, on which the ornamental parts are riveted. The front is adorned with silver-gilt plates, decorated with scrolls, gems and crystals, and with knot-work in golden filigree.

type of church building, but was intended by the artist to represent King Solomon's Temple. Well known, too, is the shrine made in 1118 to contain the arm of St. Laichtin, who had been abbot of Achadh Ūr, Co. Kilkenny, in the seventh century.

Of brooches the most perfect example is that popularly known as the "Tara Brooch," though it has no connection whatever with Ireland's ancient capital. It is made of bronze and decorated with gold filigree, enamels, amber and glass. The ornamentation is so beautiful that the brooch must be ascribed to that period of supreme artistic excellence which saw the production of the Ardagh Chalice and the *Book of Kells*.

The processional Cross of Cong, made about 1130 for the High-King, Toirdealbhach O'Connor, to enshrine a fragment of the True Cross, shows Scandinavian influence in the dragonesque nature of its filigree work. In the centre, where shaft and crossbeam meet, is a large rock crystal, behind which the relic was deposited. Round this crystal are eight panels, filled with scrolls of gold filigree work on the face of the cross; the remaining thirty-eight panels are filled with similar filigree in copper gilt. Along the margin of the cross is a moulding of silver, with small knobs at intervals, each bearing a button of enamel. At the back, though naturally in a smaller degree than at the front, the ornamentation is still very rich. One of the inscriptions records the name of the artist of this superb cross—Mael Isu mac Bratdan u Echan—whose request for a prayer will, it is to be hoped, be favourably entertained by every generation of his grateful countrymen.

Some fine specimens of traditional Irish croziers



The Tara Brooch.



The Cross of Cong.



Lismore Crozier.

Measuring 3 ft. 4 ins., and consisting of a case of pale-yellow bronze. Most of the ornaments are richly gilt; there are decorations of coloured enamelling, of silver, and of a deep bluish metallic substance called niello.



have been preserved. These consisted generally of a wooden staff or core (the original crozier) enclosed in a light case of silver or other metal and adorned richly with enamel, glass and precious stones. Well known are the early croziers of Lismore, St. Mura (Donegal), St. Mel (Longford), Dysert O'Dea, Clonmacnois, Durrow, Kells, Killarney and Prosperous. Hereditary crozier keepers were the O'Luans of Monaghan, the O'Hanlys of Roscommon, the MacGeoghegans of Offaly, the O'Quinns, O'Shaughnessys and O'Heeneys of Clare.

Like the art of illumination and sculpture the artistic treatment of metals received at the Norman Invasion a blow from which it never recovered.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE REORGANIZATION AND REFORM OF THE CHURCH.

FROM the first appearance of the Norse in 795 to the battle of Clontarf in 1014 the history of Ireland is a record of continuous warfare. Now it is the common experience of mankind that such an era is marked, almost of necessity, by the worst disorders. Spiritual restraints are swept aside, and the ordinary moral laws, universally binding, are in practice readily repudiated. Small wonder, then, that during the conflict with the Norse the fame of our nation for high Christian virtue should undergo some eclipse. The Church at the time was exceptionally weak, owing to the simple fact that its sanctuaries were singled out for special attack and its clergy butchered in such numbers that many districts must have been deprived of the exercise of religion. Nor could these evils be remedied at once after Clontarf owing to the confusion which then reigned in our national affairs; the movement for reform did not in fact take concrete shape until the end of the eleventh century.

**Nature and Extent of Abuses in the Irish Church at this period. The most serious amongst them.**

St. Bernard of Clairvaux, in his *Life of St. Malachy*, enumerates six abuses prevalent in Armagh and in the dioceses of Down and Connor at the beginning

of the twelfth century. It may be taken for granted that what he says of this portion of Ulster would hold good, in greater or less degree, for the rest of Ireland, and that the evils complained of had taken root long previously in the days of the Norse aggression. The abuses, as given by St. Bernard, are these : (1) There was no chanting of the canonical hours. (2) Confession was not practised. (3) Confirmation had fallen into disuse. (4) Marriages were not lawfully celebrated. (5) Neither tithes nor first fruits were paid. (6) Ministers of the altar were exceedingly few. To this indictment we may add from the annals frequent breaches of faith and acts of cruelty on the part of noted leaders ; and sacrilegious attacks on churches and monasteries.

St. Bernard's plaint about the canonical hours may be accepted as substantially correct, though we hear that St. Malachy learned singing in his youth, and that there was chanting at the funerals of Brian Bórumha (1014) and Mael Seachlainn II. (1022). Confession cannot have fallen completely into disuse, for the *anamchara*, whose duty it would be to absolve as well as to direct, is frequently mentioned during these centuries. It may be noted, too, that, though confession at stated times was always obligatory upon Catholics, the precept of yearly confession was not imposed by the Church until the fourth Council of the Lateran in 1215. As to Confirmation, introduced by St. Patrick, who "confirmed in Christ" those whom he had "begotten to God," it may have been neglected locally, or it may have been administered in a manner which St. Bernard did not recognize as valid. Clandestine marriages, or such as, though valid, were entered into secretly (behind the back,

as it were, of the Church) remained an evil in Europe until the Council of Trent, and indeed until a much later period. St. Bernard's strictures probably refer to these. There was also much trouble about the forbidden degrees of kindred, for, until the Lateran Council above referred to, marriage between relatives was prohibited to the seventh degree inclusive. In a country like Ireland, where family connections were of the highest political and social importance, this canonical regulation was found very irksome, and was constantly violated. Tithes were paid in Ireland long before the Norman Invasion; if not contributed in the twelfth century they probably were not needed, since the Church had other revenues for its support. Priests seem to have grown few during the Norse wars, and to have remained scarce, at least in the north-east, until the twelfth century; monks, however, were numerous during this period, so that but a small part of these can have been raised to the sacerdotal dignity. The burning or desecration of churches by princes on warlike expeditions was at this time of fairly common occurrence, but there is evidence that the conscience of the faithful was profoundly shocked by such sacrileges, and that they were often punished with becoming severity by superior kings.

Amid the virtues of the age—for virtues there were, though, as usual, overlooked by the zealous and eloquent reformers—special mention must be made of the readiness of the greater leaders to support and foster religion and learning. Damage done to the monasteries was in most cases speedily made good, and work was carried on in these with an earnestness to which the previous chapter bears testimony. Priests, too, if few, were highly respected, a proof in itself that their

lives were in keeping with their profession. Nor must we forget the many kings and princes who, after strenuous years of warfare, withdrew to some secluded cell, there to do penance for their sins, and to sleep, when the last summons came, tranquilly in the Saviour. Others journeyed on foot to Rome, braving endless perils by land and sea, to pray at the tomb of the Apostles, and to show reverence to St. Peter in the person of the reigning Pope.

One abuse remains to be considered, more serious of its nature than those we have already mentioned, since it affected the divine constitution of the Church. When treating of the sixth and seventh centuries we saw that abbots who were mere presbyters usurped the jurisdiction that properly belongs to bishops. How this arose has never been satisfactorily explained, but it is clear that by the eighth century it had become a leading feature in the ecclesiastical life of the country. Bishops, when not abbots, were thus placed in a subordinate position, though possessing the higher order. Nor was this all. In the tenth century the primatial see of Armagh, as regards its temporalities, passed into the hands of men who, far from being bishops, were not even priests, and was transmitted by them to their descendants as if it were family property. Again, the revenues of churches and monasteries were often usurped by lay stewards (called in Irish documents *airchinnig-erenachs*), and bequeathed by them as an inheritance to their children. Since lay-abbots and lay-stewards were unable, through lack of orders, to perform the sacred offices connoted by their titles, they were obliged to have these functions performed by priests and bishops properly ordained and consecrated. This, it must be said to



their credit, they conscientiously did. But the church tithes and revenues remained to a considerable degree in the hands of laymen, and were notorious objects of worldly ambition. Rights of succession were claimed, contested and settled by force of arms exactly as in the case of secular principalities. All this, of course, was a grave departure from Catholic tradition, "the parent of many evils," as St. Bernard truly characterized it. A remedy was urgently needed if Ireland was to retain the place she had so long held with honour in the Catholic world.

### **Beginning of the movement for Reform. Connection with Europe re-established.**

The defeat of the Norse opened the way for a renewal of communications between Ireland and continental Europe. Students came once more from other lands to pursue their studies in our Irish schools. Of these students the most remarkable was Sulien the Wise, afterwards Bishop of St. David's, who spent thirteen years in this country before returning to establish a famous college at Llanbadarn Fawr in Wales. Unlike the earlier centuries, scholarship now tended to concentrate in a few noted seats of learning, such as Armagh, Clonmacnois, Kildare and Kells. Prominent in these was the *fer léigind*, or chief professor, first mentioned in the tenth century; thereafter with growing frequency. Derry, Kildare, Killaloe, Emly, Iona and many other monasteries had each its *fer léigind* in the twelfth century, an indication that they were then in a flourishing condition. The Synod of Cloenadh (Clane) in 1162, of which more presently, ordered that in future only pupils or graduates of

the School of Armagh should obtain the position of *fer léigind* in any ecclesiastical school, a decree, notes Professor MacNeill, "equivalent to a recognition of the School of Armagh as a national university for all Ireland."

If visitors and students came to Ireland, Irishmen, too, began to betake themselves, as in byegone ages, to various countries of Europe. Thus Flaithbheartach an Trostáin (of the [pilgrim's] staff) O'Neill made the long pilgrimage to Rome in 1028; and his example was followed by others. There were even some permanent settlements. Thus a colony of Irish monks took up residence at Cologne, in the monastery of St. Martin, where abbots with Gaelic names ruled for more than a century. In 1067 Muiredhach Mac Robhartaigh (Marianus Scotus) left the north of Ireland with two companions for Rome, but was induced to break his journey at Regensburg in Bavaria. A priory was there placed at his disposal, and a monastery was in time founded which was to become the mother-house of a great congregation. The first seven successors of Marianus in the abbatial chair came from his own province of Ulster. Under their care monasteries were established at Nürnberg, Würzburg, Constance, Vienna, Eichstatt and Erfurt, whilst a close connection was maintained with their Irish house, the priory of Our Lady at Ross. That monks from these foundations travelled beyond Germany is clear from a letter of one of their abbots to King Vratislav of Bohemia in 1090, asking that an escort be provided for some messengers who were being sent into Poland. It is even recorded that Frederick Barbarossa encountered an Irish abbot at Scribentium in Bulgaria, whilst the Emperor was on his way to the Third Crusade in Palestine in 1189.

Another Marianus Scotus (whose Irish name was Maol Brighde) lived for some years in the monastery of St. Martin at Cologne, but left it in 1059 to travel to the basilica of St. Kilian at Würzburg, where he was ordained to the priesthood. Then for a long period he lived the rigorous life of an *inclusus* at Fulda. Before his death at Mainz in 1082 he wrote a world chronicle, still highly valued by historians. We hear, too, of another Irish *inclusus* named Paternus, who met death by burning at Paderborn in 1058; and of a hermit named Animchad who died at Fulda in 1043. There were doubtless many more of whom no account has been preserved.

From the intercourse with Europe thus abundantly restored, it must soon have become plain to Irishmen that their ecclesiastical organization was out of harmony with that of the rest of the world. The remedial measures needed were likewise evident—the restoration of Armagh to a bishop, ruler of a fixed territory in virtue of his episcopal office, not in virtue of his dignity as abbot; and the constitution of various dioceses with accurately defined limits, governed freely by bishops, under the primacy of Armagh.

### **The Norse Towns help by their example.**

After the battle of Clontarf the Scandinavian settlers were left in peaceful possession of their cities, and allowed to develop, ecclesiastically as well as politically, more or less according to their own ideas. Dublin received a bishop for the first time in 1040; Waterford in 1096; Limerick in 1102 or 1104. These bishops ruled over clearly defined dioceses, in Dublin and

Waterford hardly extending beyond the city boundaries, but in Limerick taking in the land along the Shannon to the Kerry border. It is a remarkable fact that the earliest bishops of the Norse dioceses were of Irish birth: Dunan, Giolla Pádraig, Donnchadh O'Hanly, Somhairle (Samuel) O'Hanly and Gregory *natione Hibernensis* in Dublin, Maol Iosa (Malchus) in Waterford, Giolla Easpuig (Gilbert) and Patrick in Limerick. The Dublin bishops for a time professed obedience to Canterbury, feeling, it would appear, a communion of interest with the new Norman rulers of England, whom they regarded as distant kinsmen. For this reason the influence of Dublin on the movement for reform was small. With Gilbert of Limerick, who owed no obedience to Canterbury, and Malchus of Waterford, who soon found means of transferring his allegiance to Armagh, the case was otherwise. Both soon appear as enthusiastic advocates of the change.

Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, and his successor, St. Anselm, had an indirect part in the beginning of the movement, for they lost no opportunity of impressing upon the two powerful kings, Toirdealbhach and Muircheartach O'Brien, the principle that Ireland must come into line with the other lands of Christendom. The object of both prelates was not merely to repress abuses, but at the same time to bring the Church in Ireland into dependence on themselves. In the latter aim they failed utterly, for their pretension to primacy was repudiated.

Valuable help was also given by Maelmuire Ua Dunáin, a Meath bishop, described by the Four Masters as "learned bishop of the Gaoidhil and head of the clergy of Ireland and steward of the almsdeeds of the world." Probably owing to his influence the kingdom

of Meath was divided into a number of tiny dioceses early in the twelfth century.

In 1105 the small group of reformers was strengthened by the election of Cellach, a man of high character, deeply in sympathy with their aims, to the abbatial succession of Armagh. The new Primate belonged to the sept *Uí Sinaigh*, which, since 957, had held the office of abbot by a sort of hereditary right. He was a layman when appointed, like eight of his predecessors, but, unlike them, he had himself ordained priest six weeks afterwards. A year later he journeyed through the territory of the Cineál Eoghain, to receive his customary dues as *comharba* of St. Patrick. Next he directed his steps to Munster, where he discussed the position of the Church with his bishop friends, Gilbert and Malchus. Before he left the South news reached him of the death of Caincomhrac O Baighill (O'Boyle), Bishop (but not ruler) of Armagh, and Cellach had himself consecrated bishop in his stead, so that the divorce of the abbatial from the episcopal succession was ended. Armagh being the principal ecclesiastical city of Ireland, Cellach was now, in dignity, if not in jurisdiction, an archbishop, and as such he is spoken of by St. Bernard.

Gilbert of Limerick had been bishop but a short time when he was appointed Legate of the Holy See, and thus, as representative of the supreme authority, virtual head of the Church in Ireland. At the request of many friends he published a treatise showing how the Church, in normal circumstances, is organized. Each parish is administered by a priest, and each monastery by an abbot, also in priests' orders. The bishop rules all the churches (and of these there should be at least ten) within a clearly defined territory,



but he should also have a pontifical church of his own, within which his see is fixed. An archbishop rules his own diocese, but he also rules subject bishops, not less than three nor more than twenty. The Primate, whose privilege it is to crown the king, must have under him at least one archbishop. Primates and archbishops should be consecrated at Rome by the Pope, or at least receive the pallium from his hands as a symbol of their authority.

According to this teaching one archbishop, at the minimum, should owe obedience to Cellach before the latter's position as Primate could be recognized as canonically valid. Cashel was selected by Cellach, before his return from Munster in 1106, as the see upon which this dignity was to be conferred. Malchus of Waterford became its first archbishop, and was thus released from the profession of allegiance he had already made to Canterbury. The time had now arrived when the country as a whole could be divided into dioceses, and these placed as suffragan sees under the two archbishops.

To give practical effect to this project a national synod met at Fiadh meic Aonghusa or Rath Breasail (probably Mountrath) in 1111. Gilbert presided as Legate of the Holy See. Cellach, "comharba of St. Patrick and Primate of Ireland," Malchus, Archbishop of Cashel, Ua Dunáin of Meath, Muircheartach O'Brien, the High-King, and some fifty bishops, were present. The assembled fathers decided that Leath Mogha and Leath Cuinn should each have twelve dioceses, the northern group under Armagh, the southern group under Cashel. Civil divisions were taken into account, but not everywhere and consistently—as was indeed inevitable once the wooden rule had been made that

the dioceses should be twenty-four, no more and no less, in number. The separate existence of the Norse of Dublin was entirely ignored, for the city was included in the diocese of Glendalough.

**St. Malachy.** The movement brought to a successful conclusion. Cistercians and other medieval Orders introduced into Ireland.

So radical were these changes that it might have taken a century or more to carry them through in practice did not a man of heroic strength of character and overwhelming zeal now appear among the reformers. This was Maol Maedhóg O Mógáir, better known as St. Malachy. His father, Muirín O Mógáir (of a Cineál Eoghain family, later known as O'Doherty, if a tradition quoted by Colgan is to be trusted), had been chief professor at Armagh, and had died at Mungret in 1102. Malachy was born at Armagh in 1095, and received his early training from a holy priest named Ivar O'Hagan. His high qualities soon attracted the notice of Cellach, who ordained him to the priesthood about 1119. A year or two later he was Vicar-General of the diocese. His rule in this capacity was so vigorous that it marked the beginning of a new era. Feeling sorely the need of greater learning Malachy retired for three years to Munster, where he studied under Malchus, now Bishop of Lismore, and formed a close friendship with Cormac McCarthy, then deprived temporarily of the kingship of Desmond. His intimacy with this prince was to be of much value later in furthering the cause of reform.

Malachy's uncle, who had just become Abbot of Bangor (the most famous religious site in north-eastern Ulster), now expressed a wish to resign in his nephew's favour. The offer was acceptable, for an opportunity would thus be given of transforming the territory which looked to the monastery as its ecclesiastical capital into a regular diocese; so Malachy returned, and was consecrated Bishop of Connor by Cellach. For three years he ruled his diocese with a strength that excited amazement among contemporaries. His asceticism took the most austere form, and he was everywhere regarded as a saint. In 1127 Conchobhar Mac Lochlainn, King of the North, interfered with his work; Malachy bowed before the storm, and retired once again to Lismore. Shortly afterwards he moved on to what St. Bernard calls the "*Monasterium Ibracense*," a monastery whose site has not been identified, but it was certainly in the district over which Cormac McCarthy was now king. Thither after two years the news was borne that Cellach of Armagh was dead.

"With the authority of Patrick" the dying archbishop had commanded that Malachy should be his successor, ignoring thus the "rights" of his relatives, who regarded the see as a family possession. A long struggle ensued between Malachy and the *Uí Sinaigh*. Muirheartach O'Brien, Cormac McCarthy and Donnchadh O Cearbhaill, King of Airghialla, lent the former their aid, so that he was finally successful. By 1137 he was undisputed comharba of Patrick and Archbishop of Armagh.

He had, however, accepted the archbishopric only on condition that he should be allowed to return to Connor once the defeat of the lay usurpers had been

assured. When this had in fact been achieved he consecrated Giolla Mac Liag (Gelasius) as his successor at Armagh, and went back to his old diocese. In 1139 he set out for Rome to request palliums from the Holy See for the two Irish archbishops. On his way he called at Clairvaux, where he made the acquaintance of St. Bernard, the greatest ecclesiastic of his time, and one of the most renowned names in the whole history of the Church. A friendship, stronger than death, soon sprang up between the two saints. At Rome Malachy was well received by the reigning Pontiff, Innocent II., who made him his Legate in Ireland, a position which Gilbert had just resigned owing to advancing years. The palliums were not, for the moment, granted. It was customary, the Pope reminded him, to have formal request made for these by a national synod. Such an assembly the new Legate should convene on his return, and the palliums would be sent in due course.

Malachy's work as Legate was all in the direction of reform. In 1148 he convoked a synod at Inis Pádraig, near Skerries, where the palliums were demanded in canonical form, and Malachy, as on the previous occasion, deputed to procure them. On the way to Rome he called once more at Clairvaux. There, on October 18, 1148, after he had finished celebrating Mass, he fell ill of a fever; and there, a fortnight later, on All Souls Day, he died in the arms of St. Bernard. The virtues of the saintly Irishman made an extraordinary impression on the monks of Clairvaux; and their illustrious abbot, St. Bernard, wrote his life and preached two funeral panegyrics in his memory. Before many years had elapsed the heroic nature of his sanctity was examined and

approved by the highest authority upon earth, and he was raised to the honours of the altar by Pope Clement III. in 1199.

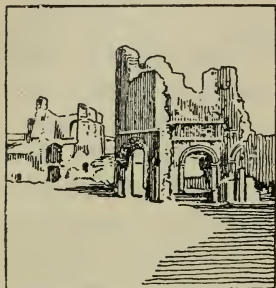
Pope Eugene III. commissioned Cardinal John Paparo to bring the palliums to Ireland, and a synod was convened at Kells in 1152 to receive them. Here the number of archbishoprics was increased to four—Dublin and Tuam being added to Armagh and Cashel—and the number of dioceses was fixed more or less permanently at twenty-eight. The old connection between Canterbury and Dublin was thus definitely severed. St. Lorcan O'Toole, the city's next archbishop, was consecrated by the Archbishop of Armagh, and tendered allegiance to him as Primate of Ireland.

Thus the Irish Church, which, after centuries of war and turmoil, had much to repair, both as regards morality and discipline, undertook itself the work of correction. All through the movement the leading part was taken by Irishmen. That their labours were successful we see from later synods, that, for instance, held at Cloenadh (Clane) in 1162, where matters of minor importance only were discussed. If more striking proof of success were needed it is offered by the Synod of Cashel, called at the request of Henry II. of England in 1172. As this king had come to Ireland "to extirpate the roots of vice from the field of the Lord," we should expect to find such vices enumerated and severe measures enacted against them. But as a matter of fact there are only eight decrees, and the faults which these condemn are of the most venial kind. The work of reform and reorganization was indeed complete in 1152; after that date nothing remained to be arranged but matters of detail.

St. Malachy, on his journey to Rome in 1139, left



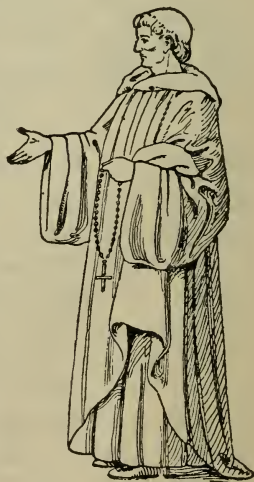
four of his disciples at Clairvaux to be trained (by St. Bernard) in the Cistercian rule. These returned



Mellifont Abbey.

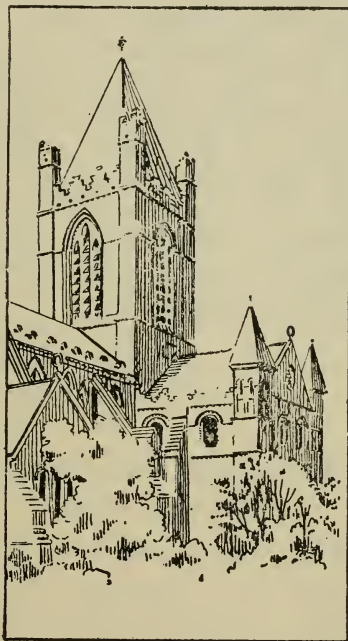
in 1142, bringing with them some of the Clairvaux brethren, and the monastery of Mellifont was founded. Giolla Críost O Conairche, afterwards Bishop of Lismore and Papal Legate, was its first abbot. Soon the Clairvaux brethren returned to their own house, and Mellifont became a purely Irish monastery. Its buildings were on a

scale hitherto quite uncommon in Ireland. The consecration of the abbey church in 1157 proved to be the most brilliant ecclesiastical ceremony ever witnessed in the country. Giolla Críost O Conairche was present as Papal Legate, with Giolla Mac Liag the Primate, and seventeen other bishops. Muirheartach Mac Lochlainn, the High-King, too, was present, with O h-Eochadha, King of Ulaidh, Tighearnán O Ruairc, King of Breifne, and his wife Derborgaill, Donnchadh O Cearbhaill, King of Airghialla, and a host of lesser nobles and commoners. As an offering for his soul to God the High-King bestowed upon the monastery 140 cattle, 60 ounces of gold and a townland near Dundalk.



Irish Cistercian Monk.  
(From Archdall's *Monasticon Hibernicum*.)

O Cearbhail and Derborgaill in their turn presented each 60 ounces of gold, whilst the latter added a chalice for the high altar and sacred vestments for nine other altars in the church. Here this remarkable lady was laid to rest when she died at a good old age in 1195.



Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin.

Mellifont remained the principal Cistercian house in Ireland up to the Reformation. Within a few years it sent out five daughters, Bective (de Beatitudine), Boyle, Mainistir-an-Aonaigh, near Croom, Baltinglass (de Valle Salutis) and Inislounaght.

The Canons Regular of St. Augustine were also

introduced into Ireland at this period. Their first house was the priory of All Hallows in Dublin, founded by Diarmuid na nGall. The Chapter of Christ Church Cathedral (built by the Norse after 1040) likewise accepted their rule owing to the influence of St. Lorcan O'Toole. Remarkable, too, was the effort made at the Synod of Brí Mac Taidhg in 1158 to reorganize the old Columban monasteries under a single Superior-General, as in the days of St. Colmcille himself. Flaithbheartach O Brolcháin (Bradley), Abbot of Derry, was now appointed to the office, with disciplinary authority over all Columban foundations. The Norman Invasion brought this experiment to an untimely end, so that monasteries of the type that for centuries had been predominant became fewer and fewer until at last they completely disappeared.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE IRISH KINGDOM OF SCOTLAND.

FROM the beginning of the eighth to the beginning of the ninth century the struggle for mastery continued between the four races then settled in what we now call Scotland—the Irish in the west; the Picts in the north and east; the Britons of Strathclyde (Renfrew, Lanark, Ayr, Dumfries, Cumberland and Westmoreland to the Derwent); and the Angles of Northumbria (Berwick, Peebles, Selkirk, Roxburgh, Northumberland, Durham and Yorkshire to the Humber). During the century mentioned the Picts under Aonghus, son of Fergus, had made much headway, but their strength was now undermined by Norse attacks all along the endless coastline, and they began to give way before the Scots.

### **Predominance of the Scots or Irish. The Union of Scotland.**

Leaving Argyll and the Islands to be occupied by the Scandinavian sea-rovers, the Scots concentrated on the districts of the interior. Under the ablest of their kings, Cinaedh Mac Ailpín (Kenneth MacAlpine), they carried their victorious banners into the almost inaccessible northern uplands, so that Pictland and Dál Riada became united under one sceptre. Cinaedh died in 858 after a reign of sixteen years. Iona was now in the hands of the Foreigners, and the primacy was transferred first to Dunkeld (850), then to Abernethy, and finally to St. Andrews (908),

whose bishop we find designated "Epscop Alban," "the Bishop of Scotland."

The manner in which the crown was inherited shows the truly Irish character of the dynasty. Cinaedh was succeeded by his brother Domhnall, who was succeeded by Cinaedh's son Constantine; then by another son, Aodh. The two last-named rulers established royal houses from which the kings were taken alternately till 957. Owing to the circumstances in which Scotie power had come into being, authority from the first was centralized. Scotland, unlike Ireland, was never organized as a group of federated states. Next in dignity to the king stood the Mór-Mhaor, "great Steward"; a title borne, as we have seen, by Domhnall of Mar, who fell fighting in Brian's army at the battle of Clontarf.

Dumbarton, the last fortress of the Britons of Strathclyde, was destroyed by Olaf and Ivar of Dublin in 870. The district then fell into Saxon hands, but was ceded by Edmund of England to Mael Choluim (Malcolm) I. in 945. Northumbria, conquered by the Norse, passed in course of time to the English monarchy, but its northern portion was lost to Mael Choluim II. in 1018, after a great battle at Carham on the Tweed. Thus a large and fertile tract of what is now England was added to Scotland, and ruled over by the Scoto-Irish dynasty. Feudal obligations were admitted by the Scottish kings for their lands in England. When the English kings, not content with this, sought to place all Scotland under vassalage, the claim was resisted in arms; nor were the English-speaking lowlands less loyal than the rest, or less devoted to the cause of Scottish independence. Gaelic place-names in almost every part of the country, and



many Gaelic family names, attest a very extensive Gaelic civilization. Even the surname "Scott," as Professor MacNeill points out, indicates that the border sept bearing that name was considered by Anglian neighbours to be of Irish origin. Gaelic, too, became the language of the nation, everywhere, it would seem, outside of Anglian territory.

Mael Choluim II. (1005-34) would have been succeeded in the normal course by the only surviving grandson of his predecessor, Cinaedh III., had not this young prince disappeared, probably a victim of foul play. Mael Choluim himself had no descendants in the male line, and he tried to secure that the succession should pass to his grandson, Donnchadh (Duncan), son of his daughter Bethoc. But Cinaedh III. had likewise left a daughter Gruach, who considered the claims of her son to the crown of Scotland equal if not superior to the claims of his rival. This lady had married as her second husband Mac Beth, Mór-Mhaor of Moray. He now took up her cause, slew Duncan, and ascended the throne himself as protector of the constitutional rights of Gruach's son. Justice is not, of course, done to this ruler in the great tragedy which bears his name. Mac Beth was by no means an unscrupulous usurper; his cause, if decided in a court of law, might have triumphed as easily as on the battlefield.

Mac Beth, in his turn, was defeated and slain by Mael Choluim Ceann-mhór, son of Duncan, who thereupon became King of Scotland as Mael Choluim III. (1058-93). After the battle of Hastings he gave shelter to Edgar, the Atheling or heir to the Saxon royal house. With the exiled prince came his mother and his sisters, Christina and Margaret. The last

named became Queen of Scotland in 1068, and her influence was henceforth predominant in the affairs of her adopted country. Of saintly life and energetic character she undertook many reforms, designed in general to secure that the customs of Catholic Christendom should replace those of Scotland where there was divergence between the two. Thus she urged very strongly that the repose of Sunday be strictly observed; that marriage be discountenanced within the degrees forbidden by Canon Law; that the Lenten fast begin on Ash Wednesday, not, as heretofore, on the following Monday. Later rulers completed this reform by increasing the number of bishoprics, and assigning to each an accurately defined territory, by the erection of cathedral chapters, and the introduction of Benedictines, Augustinians, Cistercians, Franciscans, and Dominicans from the Continent.

### **Scotland anglicized and feudalized.**

Margaret seems never to have learned Gaelic, for we find the king acting as her interpreter at important councils of the realm. Otherwise, too, her extremely English outlook is abundantly attested. From this time forward Gaelic tradition in Scotland weakens, whilst the Anglian population of the south-east secures a prominence in affairs altogether out of proportion to its numbers. The Northumbrian or Lowland Scotch dialect extends its sway, helped, no doubt, by its close resemblance to Norse, Flemish, Dutch and the spoken language of millions of North Germans. Hitherto all the princes of the Dál Riada line, descendants of Fergus mac Erca, had borne Irish or general European names, but the names of Margaret's six

sons and two daughters are purely English. Following disputes with William Rufus about vassalage Mael Choluim III. invaded Northumberland, and was slain there in battle in 1093. Margaret survived her sorrow but a single year.

Trouble arose over the succession, as the English and feudal principle of primogeniture and the Irish principle of election from a privileged group met in serious conflict. The Celtic party enjoyed a momentary success, and put Domhnall Bán, Mael Choluim's brother, on the throne ; but Domhnall ere long was overthrown by the rival party and replaced by Edgar, son of Mael Choluim and St. Margaret. Edgar began his reign by having his uncle, Domhnall, blinded ; and he proceeded to consolidate his power in ways that were far from saintly. Henceforth no Scottish king, save Mael Choluim IV., bears a Gaelic name, and it is not at all certain that this prince spoke Gaelic.

Edgar was succeeded by Alexander I., who introduced English bishops to St. Andrew's. A charter for the monastery of Scone, signed by him and his chief nobles, shows that the latter were of Gaelic stock, for the names are Aedh of Moray, Mael Isu of Strathearn, Dubhagan of Fife and Ruaidhre.

David I. (1124-53) had been educated in England amongst the Normans, and did much to establish Anglo-Norman feudalism and Anglo-Norman municipal law in the anglicized part of his kingdom. The Gaelic north and portions of the Gaelic south disliked these innovations, and maintained their own Gaelic law in the teeth of the king. David restored the ancient bishopric of Glasgow, founded five other sees, and built the great abbeys of Dunfermline, Holywood, Jedburgh, Kelso, Melrose and Dundrennan. To the

venerable Columban foundation at Deer he also granted special favours ; but his policy on the whole was unfavourable to the Gaelic tradition.

His grandson and successor, Mael Choluim IV. (the Maiden), the first of the Scottish kings whose coronation at Scone is recorded, died prematurely in 1165. During his reign some effort was made to reduce the King of the Isles to subjection.

Upon the death of Alexander III. without male descendants in 1285, the direct line of Fergus, son of Erc, came to an end. The Scottish estates, assembled at Scone, recognized Alexander's grand-daughter, Margaret of Norway, then a child of eight years, as rightful heir to the throne. Edward I., the powerful and ambitious King of England, at once began negotiations for the marriage of Margaret with his son. The proposal was favourably received in Scotland ; but it was brought to an abrupt conclusion when the " Maid of Norway " died suddenly in the Orkneys, whilst on her way to receive the crown. Edward I. then undertook the conquest of Scotland, and war continued until the English were beaten at Bannockburn in 1314. Eventually the succession passed through Marjorie, daughter of Robert Bruce, to Robert, her son by Fitzalan, High-Steward of Scotland, with whom began the long line of Stuart (Stewart) kings. Of the Irish character of the Scottish kingdom hardly a vestige thus remained after the death of Alexander III.

### **The Kingship of the Isles.**

Cinaedh Mac Ailpin lost the Hebrides and the Western Isles to the Norse, who there established an earldom and in time a kingdom. In the course

of its development this kingdom became gaelicized and closely connected with Ireland, just as the kingdom of the Scots became anglicized and alienated from the mother-country.

Sumarlidi, ruler of Argyll and the Islands, is called "king" by the Irish annalists when recording his death in 1164. From him the families of Mac Domhnaill (McDonnell, MacDonald), Mac Dubhghaill (MacDugall, McDowell, etc.), and Mac Ruaidhri (MacRory) are descended. Sometimes these kings were independent, sometimes they did homage to the Kings of Norway. Whatever rights the Norwegians possessed in the Isles were ceded formally to Alexander III. of Scotland in 1265.

In the wars which followed the MacDugalls supported Balliol, whilst the McDonnells and the MacRorys supported Bruce. After the victory of the latter at Bannockburn the McDonnell representatives were recognized as Kings of Argyll, the MacRorys as Kings of the Islands. In 1387 the head of the McDonnell family became King of the Hebrides, and at the same time, through inheritance from his mother, Earl of Ross. The forces of the monarchy were sent to crush his power, but they returned discomfited. His brother Eoin, about the year 1400, married the heiress of Biset, lord of the Antrim Glens, and thus secured great estates in Ireland.

The McDonnells were now independent princes, in reality as well as in name, and frequent expeditions were fitted out against them by the Scottish kings. As a means of procuring their destruction large stretches of the McDonnell lands were bestowed on the Campbell family, whose head was named Earl of Argyll. In 1499 the Campbell



earl, Giolla Easpuig, took the leading McDonnells captive, and handed them over to James IV. of Scotland, who had them all hanged at Edinburgh. Only one of the line, Alasdair Carrach, managed to escape. He was the father of Somhairle Buidhe, and grandfather of the Inghean Dubh, mother of Aodh Ruadh O'Donnell.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE ANGLO-NORMAN INVASION.

#### **The Normans. Henry II. The Brief "Laudabiliter." The pretext for invasion.**

WE saw in an earlier chapter (page 9) how Charles the Simple of France, unable to expel the Norse from his dominions, offered their leader Rollo (Hrolfr) a wide expanse of country round Rouen. The new colonists soon adopted the Christian religion, and with it the French tongue, French manners, and the French legal and social system. They fought with all their neighbours, and added strip after strip to their small state until men spoke of it as the important duchy of Normandy. Nor was the old roving spirit of their ancestors yet dead; it seized them once again, and carried them out of Gaul into every corner of the known world. In the eleventh century they conquered England and Sicily, the former after one victorious battle, the latter by a gradual advance from Apulia, whither they had come some generations before as avowed freebooters.

They are described by Geoffrey Malaterra, who himself witnessed their exploits, as a race cunning, vengeful, careless of inheritance where there was hope of winning a greater, eager for wealth and power, imitative and greedy. They were skilful in flattery, eloquent and absolutely lawless. Hunger, toil and cold they readily endured, whilst they loved

hunting, hawking, horseflesh and all the weapons of war. From the French they adopted feudalism, from Northern Italy architecture, from the Eastern Empire an elaborate system of state administration, based on a highly organized civil service. After the First Crusade they brought the science of warfare to a perfection which Northern Europe had not as yet known. Remarkable in a race so notoriously impatient of restraint was an excessive fondness for legal forms. In Sicily they sought the Pope's blessing for their conquests once these had been securely made. In England the Conqueror represented himself as lawful heir to the throne, compelled, to his intense grief, to use violence against unjust opponents. Indeed there seldom was a time, whether in the midst of anarchy or in enterprises that were in fact sheer rapine, when the Norman could not, by an ingenious legal pretext, give some semblance of justice to the wrong he was committing.

The Conqueror had been succeeded in England by his son William Rufus, a king no less fierce and cruel than his father. When Rufus died his elder brother Robert happened to be away in Palestine on the First Crusade, and Henry, a younger brother, availed of his absence to seize and hold the throne for himself. Henry was succeeded by his nephew Stephen, whose rule brought civil war and unheard of sufferings to the English populace. Then came Henry II., who through inheritance from his father (Geoffrey of Anjou—the Plant-à-genêt), and his mother (daughter of Henry I.), and through marriage with the heiress of Aquitaine, governed well-nigh half of France, in addition to his realm of England. To the English he was almost a foreigner, for he did not speak their tongue,

and he visited their country only at intervals of several years. He was admittedly a great statesman, perhaps the greatest of his day ; and he was always journeying through his possessions, safeguarding their boundaries and seeing that they were administered according to his orders.

Like his predecessors, William the Conqueror and Henry I., the new king contemplated adding Ireland to his dominions. If the Brief *Laudabiliter* be genuine (its genuineness has been questioned repeatedly since the seventeenth century) he had sought sanction for this step from the English born Pope, Adrian IV., as far back as 1154. Henry urged the abnormal position of the Irish Church (already rectified, if his petition was not drawn up until after the Synod of Kells in 1152); he promised "to enlarge the borders of the Church, set bounds to the progress of wickedness, reform evil manners, plant virtue and increase the Christian religion." Such exalted purposes the Pope could not but commend.

It was not, however, this Brief (supposing it to be genuine), nor Henry's own initiative, but a chance move of Norman-Welsh and Flemish adventurers that began the age-long attempt to unite the two countries under the one sceptre.

### Diarmuid Mac Murchadha. The Geraldines. Strongbow.

Energy and cruelty are given as the most striking features of Diarmuid Mac Murchadha's character. He was but twenty-two when he sacked Kildare, dragged the abbess from her cell, and subjected her to horrible indignities. His public life during the ensuing thirty

years was in keeping with this beginning. No wonder, then, that when Ruaidhre O'Connor became High-King in 1166 Diarmuid found himself without a friend in Ireland. Ruaidhre showed not the smallest desire to ruin the Leinster king, but Tighearnán O Ruairc, Ruaidhre's faithful ally, had private accounts of his own to settle with his old enemy. Diarmuid was expelled from his palace and his kingdom; humiliated and vengeful he pitched honour and patriotism to the winds and resolved to seek aid from the foreigner against his own countrymen.

A Danish trading vessel soon brought him to Bristol, a city truly of evil omen, for its riches were drawn in greater part from the lucrative traffic in slaves. Robert Fitzharding, a wealthy merchant, whom Diarmuid counted among his friends, offered him hospitality and counsel. The deposed king should travel, he thought, to France and put his case before Henry II. in person. Diarmuid followed his advice, and after much fruitless wandering discovered the elusive monarch somewhere in Aquitaine. Their business was speedily despatched. Henry accepted Diarmuid as vassal, and drew up a document empowering anyone who wished within the Plantagenet dominions to aid him in recovering his kingdom. Diarmuid returned to Fitzharding, who at once began the quest for Norman nobles likely to embark on so perilous an undertaking.

A few local lords, settled precariously on the south Welsh frontier, were the first to manifest lively interest in the scheme. Chief of these was Richard, son of Gilbert de Clare, titular to a somewhat shadowy earldom of Pembroke. Richard, later known familiarly as "Strongbow," was a man of quiet, almost timid,



disposition, and most averse to risks such as the proposed enterprise in Ireland entailed ; but his fortunes at the moment were at the lowest ebb and the bait was tempting—Diarmuid's beautiful daughter Aoife in marriage, and the succession to Leinster after Diarmuid's death. He decided to take the hazard. Support was also forthcoming from Maurice Fitzgerald, son of a Welsh princess named Nesta, and Gerald of Windsor (the first "Geraldine"), and Robert Fitzstephen, son of the same Nesta and Stephen, Constable of Cardigan. Diarmuid offered the town of Wexford and the lands adjoining as a bribe to these. The proposals were accepted ; a bargain was concluded ; and the knights promised to follow Diarmuid to Ireland as soon as they had mustered kinsfolk and hired mercenaries in sufficient force.

Diarmuid returned to Leinster in August, 1167, with a small levy of Flemings, commanded by Richard Fitzgodebert (from Roche, near Haverford, whence the family he founded took its name De Roche ; Roche). Ruaidhre O'Connor marched down the coast at once and forced them to submit ; but he left Diarmuid portion of his possessions on condition that two of his sons should be handed over as hostages. Diarmuid now sent urgent messages, with yet more generous offers, to the dilatory Norman lords. In May, 1169, a new force of these appeared, carried in three ships, under the command of Fitzstephen, Milo Fitzgerald, Meiler Fitzhenry, Hervey Montmorency, and Maurice de Prendergast (a Flemish knight). As the leaders were "Franci" or "Galli," French-speaking lords with little or no English blood in their veins, so the fighting men were almost exclusively Flemings (settled in large numbers by Henry I. on the Welsh marches), or expert

Welsh archers, hired for the occasion. This force having been defeated by Ruaidhre, Diarmuid again submitted; but the situation underwent a change soon afterwards when Maurice Fitzgerald and Raymond Le Gros arrived with reinforcements, and a still greater



Norman Knight.

Wearing mail covered with iron rings, not interlaced, reaching from the shoulders to the knees, with conical helmet extended behind to cover the nape of the neck, and in front provided with metal protector for the face. (From the Bayeux Tapestry.)

change when, on August 23, 1170, Strongbow himself arrived with two hundred knights and a thousand picked men.

Compared with the huge army which the High-King could muster the Norman army was indeed diminutive; but the fighting strength of the Norman host was altogether out of proportion to its numbers. To begin with, all the knights were clad in armour from head to foot. They carried long lances and fought from

horseback, so that it was extremely difficult for the unarmoured Irish, provided only with sword and axe, to get within striking distance of their adversaries. The archers, too, armed with the famous long bow or the very effective cross-bow, could pour a deadly hail of arrows into the Irish ranks before the opposing battalions came to close quarters. Again the fact that their army was professional was of great advantage to the Normans. Its discipline was thus well-nigh perfect; and it could hold indefinitely what it once gained. Finally, the Normans were extraordinarily well skilled in the erection of strong fortifications and castles which the Irish lacked instruments to reduce, and which they rarely found it possible to storm.

In a word, the Normans were incomparably superior to the Irish of the Invasion period in military organization. They were also superior in statecraft, and perhaps (if the Norman idea of intense centralization is to be preferred to the Irish idea of a loose federation) in their whole concept of the state. In all things else—in religion, literature, art, code of honour, standards of public and private morality, personal courage—the invaders were at best equal to the invaded. Indeed if we examine the two civilizations and take full account of the virtues and defects of each we shall find the difference between them hardly such as would justify the sacrifice of one Irish life.



Norman Archer.

(Wearing cuirass of leather or cloth covered with metal plates. From the Bayeux Tapestry.)

**First Norman Successes. Capture of Waterford and of Dublin. Death of Diarmuid Mac Murchadha. Effort to unite the country against the invaders.**

Under Strongbow's leadership the combined Norman and Leinster forces marched upon Waterford, which was heroically defended by its Norse chiefs, Ragnall and Sitric, assisted by O Phelan, King of the Déisi. At the third assault the city fell. Sitric was put to death and the citizens generally massacred without mercy. Aoife, Diarmuid's daughter and Strongbow's prize, was then sent for, and the marriage was solemnized with great pomp in the Ostman cathedral of Holy Trinity.

The victorious army now turned northwards to attack Dublin, recognized by both sides as a strategic position of the highest importance. Asculf, son of Ragnall, son of Torcall, was now its jarl or ruler. The population, as in the other towns along the coast, was mainly Norse, but the place had also something of a cosmopolitan character owing to the traders from all parts who gathered to its mart. Filled with dismay at the news of Waterford's fate, the citizens had sent an urgent call for protection to the High-King. Ruaidhre was soon on the march, with O Ruairc and a number of other princes. They camped at Clondalkin or thereabouts, and occupied the roads and passes by which the enemy was expected to approach from the south. Mac Murchadha, seeing the highways blocked, led the Norman troops and his own levies by forced marches along the eastern slopes of the Wicklow hills and arrived suddenly before the city gates. Consternation reigned within. The Archbishop, St. Lorcan O'Toole, was sent out to negotiate peace.

with full power to recognize Diarmuid's overlordship, and pay any sum required by way of indemnity ; but while the parley was in progress Milo de Cogan and a party of hot-headed followers fell on the city without orders and carried it by a surprise attack. Asculf escaped to sea with his chief followers. Dublin was promptly constituted their capital by the invaders, with De Cogan as its warden, whilst Mac Murchadha returned to Ferns and Strongbow to Waterford.

Soon Mac Murchadha was busy in Meath and Breifne, laying waste the land of his ancient foes. O'Connor made another attempt to win him over, offering generous terms, but the only terms Diarmuid would now accept included the kingship of Ireland. This insolent demand was too much even for the mild High-King, who answered by putting Mac Murchadha's sons and the other Leinster hostages to death. Matters had reached this critical stage when Diarmuid's ambitions were cut short by a power more terrible than any which man can wield. He died on May 1, 1171, in his palace at Ferns, aged 61, "without will, without penance, without the Body of Christ, without unction, as his evil deeds deserved." Though he could not have foreseen the consequence of his heinous act, and though the Plantagenet kings were in any case likely to have found a pretext for invading Ireland once their empire in France had become consolidated, yet the fact remains that Diarmuid na nGall entered criminally on a course that was to end in terrible tragedy. Hence the unparalleled disrepute attaching to his name in Irish tradition and history.

Strongbow now claimed the succession to Leinster by virtue of his marriage with Aoife and his understanding with the dead king. In Irish law no such



claim could be entertained, since kingship did not pass directly from rulers to their descendants, still less to their descendants in the female line. Henry, too, grew restive, fearing that Strongbow was becoming more powerful than befitted a subject; he therefore sent a peremptory order from Aquitaine that all his subjects in Ireland should return to England before Easter, on pain of forfeiting their lands. Raymond Le Gros was despatched at once to Aquitaine with a politic letter in which Strongbow proclaimed in the humblest terms his vassalage to the king.

St. Lorcan O'Toole had meanwhile been active organizing resistance on a national scale. The Manx were induced to enter the alliance and blockade Dublin by sea. An advance guard of the Irish army, under O Ruairc of Breifne and the Kings of Meath and Airghialla, arrived before the walls, and held the garrison, under Strongbow and De Cogan, fast within. In midsummer, 1171, Ruaidhre himself appeared before the capital with an army of 30,000 men. When the siege had lasted for two months Strongbow was in such desperate straits that he sent an embassy to Ruaidhre, offering to become his liege man and to hold Leinster as his vassal. Ruaidhre refused; but he offered Strongbow the lordship of the three towns, Dublin, Waterford and Wexford. This Strongbow thought unworthy of acceptance. He was on the point of sending to England for aid when Maurice Fitzgerald reminded him that the petition could bear but meagre fruits, since "such in truth is our lot that while we are English to the Irish, we are Irish to the English. For the one island does not detest us more than the other." The Normans had in fact no country, and if ejected now from Ireland they

had no home to which they could return. Nothing, therefore, remained to the besieged but to stake their all on a sudden sortie. To their immense surprise the venture succeeded even beyond their wildest hopes. A sally of the kind was the last thing on earth expected by the Irish army, which was thus taken unawares, thrown into disorder, routed with a loss of 1,500 men, and robbed of all its stores. Ruaidhre, through his military negligence, lost the day, and with it the crown of an independent Ireland. Equal misfortune attended the naval efforts of the Norse flotilla from Man and the Hebrides. Asculf, late ruler of Dublin, was taken prisoner and beheaded in his own hall. Strongbow was now free to hurry across the sea, there to face the difficult task of appeasing his angry overlord, Henry II., who had already arrived at Pembroke on his way to Ireland.

### **Interference of the English Crown in Irish affairs. Submission to Henry. "Grants" of Irish lands.**

Henry landed at Crook, near Waterford, on October 17, 1171, with an army of 500 knights and 4,000 archers. He reached Dublin on November 11, and wintered on the "Thing-mote," in "a royal palace, made with admirable skill after the fashion of the land." With the splendour and the luxury of Henry's court his visitors were duly impressed. All the Irish kings, save Ruaidhre O'Connor, the High-King, Mael Seachlainn Mac Lochlainn of Tír Eoghain, and Flaithbheartach O Mael Doraidh of Tír Chonaill, "gave hostages," that is to say, offered formal submission to Henry as their overlord, and were received in return under his protection. The

princes rightly expected that this would save them from further aggression on the part of the baron adventurers. Strongbow, as earl, was allowed to succeed Mac Murchadha in Leinster, but the chief towns of the province, Dublin, Wexford and Waterford, with the adjoining lands, were reserved by Henry for himself. Otherwise the Irish rulers were confirmed in their possessions. A Synod, convened by Henry, met in Cashel under the presidency of Giolla Críost, Bishop of Lismore and Papal Legate. Its decrees are of no importance, save in so far as they show that the work of reform was complete before the coming of the English King; the fact, however, that the prelates met at the request of the foreign potentate shows that they accepted the new situation. Letters, bearing date September, 1172, from Alexander III. to Henry, the Irish kings and princes, and the Irish bishops, expressed the Pope's approval of what had taken place, and his hopes that it would issue in untold good to all the parties concerned.

After Mass on Easter Sunday, April 17, 1172, Henry II. left Ireland for Normandy, whither he had been summoned by Papal Legates to explain his part in the murder of St. Thomas à Becket. Beyond leaving Hugh De Lacy as his Justiciar or Deputy, he made no provision for the effective government of the country, though styling himself now its Lord. The omission was indeed such as the Irish people could have borne with equanimity. Ominous, however, for their future was a new turn in the King's policy by which he "granted" the land of Meath "as fully as Murchadh O Mael Seachlainn or any before him had held it" to De Lacy. This was an exercise of *dominion* over territory, not sanctioned by feudal custom, and

utterly abhorrent to Irish notions. O Mael Seachlainn had been received by Henry as his vassal, and, according to the code of feudal honour, was entitled to protection as such. He was instead dispossessed. His kingdom—a million acres of the richest land in Europe—was bestowed upon another without even the pretence of legal formality. Compared with this act of injustice the depredations of the heathen Norse were nothing more than petty robberies. Its significance, too, was obvious : Ireland, though accepted in theory as a feudal vassal, was to be treated in practice as a conquered country, whose wide territories could be parcelled out without scruple to nominees of the English Crown.

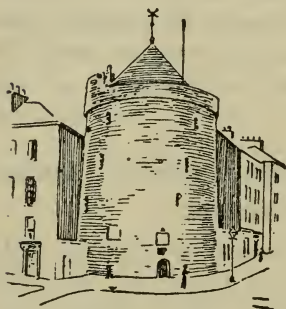
### **De Lacy's attempt to occupy the "granted" lands.**

#### **The Treaty of Windsor.**

Hugh De Lacy, man of enterprise that he was, very soon set out to conquer his kingdom. He built "mote and bretesche" fortresses (high mounds with flat tops, crowned with a wooden tower) wherever he could gain ground. Later he and his colleagues replaced these by great stone castles, nor did they hesitate to demolish churches and monasteries to find material if convenient quarries were not available. Permanent garrisons were placed in these strongholds. Finding Tighearnán O Ruairc of Breifne an obstacle to his progress, De Lacy invited him to a friendly conference at Tlachtga (the Hill of Ward), and there had him surrounded and slain—almost certainly by treachery, though he pretended that the deed was done in legitimate self-defence. Anyway Tighearnán's head was cut off and despatched to his feudal protector, Henry II., whilst his body was carried to Dublin

and hung, feet upwards, on the city walls, the first of those revolting exhibitions which the capital was to witness generation after generation for centuries. O'Farrell of Conmaicne (the modern Longford) was next killed by De Lacy, and his principality annexed. A like fate befell Murchadh Mac Murchadha in Leinster.

In the following year, 1173, Raymond Le Gros attacked Diarmuid McCarthy, King of Cork, in spite



Reginald's Tower, Waterford.

of the protection which McCarthy could claim as Henry's vassal. Alarmed by such a cynical breach of faith, Domhnall O'Brien, King of Limerick, aided by Ruaidhre O'Connor's son, fell on Strongbow's fortress at Kilkenny and dislodged its garrison. Strongbow and Montmorency marched to Cashel against O'Brien.

Learning, however, that the latter was supported by the High-King they postponed their attack and sent to Dublin for strong reinforcements. These were intercepted on the way at Thurles and cut to pieces by O'Connor and O'Brien. Waterford and Wexford now rose against Strongbow, and the citizens of the former soon had him penned up in Reginald's Tower; in this extremity he was forced to recall Le Gros, with whom he had quarrelled violently, from Wales, and to give him his sister in marriage. Under the new leadership the tide again turned in favour of the Normans.

Ruaidhre invaded Meath and destroyed De Lacy's



castle at Trim ; but his victories proved fruitless, for lack of a permanent force to hold what he had won. After three years of rather useless warfare he determined to come to terms with Henry, and in October, 1175, sent the Archbishop of Dublin (St. Lorcan O'Toole), the Archbishop of Tuam, and the Abbot of Clonfert to London to negotiate with the English King. A treaty was signed at Windsor before the end of that month. Ruaidhre was recognized as King of Connacht and overlord of the other Irish states. All the Irish kings were to pay tribute to Henry through him, and were to be deposed by him if they failed to meet their obligations. The Norman settlements were to be directly under Henry ; and the Irish on these lands were to render to the Norman barons the services they had hitherto rendered to their Irish lords. In many cases the old tenants, filled with dislike for the new conditions, had abandoned their traditional holdings and left the Norman estates derelict ; Ruaidhre consented, as a further concession, to persuade or force these tenants to return.

Thus the vague Anglo-Irish understanding of 1172 was translated into very definite terms. Peace was now assured, if only both sides would observe the treaty, as they had pledged themselves in the most solemn manner to do. Ruaidhre O'Connor, on his side, was prepared to honour his bargain, as is clear from his treatment of Domhnall O'Brien of Thomond, who was acting unjustly against his Eoghanacht rivals. O'Connor marched southwards to put a stop to the O'Brien persecution, and called on Henry's government in Dublin for aid. This was immediately forthcoming. Raymond Le Gros, with a force of cavalry and archers, hurried to O'Connor's side, and by a brilliant stroke

captured Limerick. But when after some months news arrived that Strongbow was dead Le Gros decided to abandon the city, and O'Brien re-entered it immediately. Domhnall made peace with Ruaidhre, and ruled with Limerick as his capital till his death in 1194.

### **Henry II. breaks the Treaty of Windsor. New "grants." De Courcy.**

In direct violation of the Treaty of Windsor, Henry II. made a "grant" of South Munster to the Norman adventurers, Robert Fitzstephen and Milo de Cogan; and of the kingdom of Limerick to Herbert Fitzherbert and others. When, moreover, in 1177, John De Courcy, a knight of enterprising spirit despite his enormous size, set off for Ulster on a freebooting expedition of his own, his feudal superior offered no opposition. All pretence of legal right was now abandoned. The Normans, with the general approval of the English King, were resolved to carve out principalities for themselves in Ireland; the Irish, on their side, were determined to maintain their hold on their own property. Neither party, in the event, proved strong enough to overwhelm the other; and the war dragged on with varying fortune for centuries.

Strongbow died in Dublin on June 1, 1176. Some years before his death he had sub-granted the greater portion of Leinster to his friends among the adventurers. The Irish ruling septs—the Uí Muiredhaigh (chief family O'Toole) of South Kildare; the Uí Faeláin (chief family Mac Faeláin, later O'Byrne) of North Kildare, with capital at Naas; the Uí Dunnchadha (chief family Mac Giollamocholmóg) of South Dublin, with capital

at Liamhain (Newcastle Lyons); and the Uí Cinnsealaigh (chief family Mac Murchadha)—were all dispossessed. The last-mentioned did indeed manage for a time to retain some of their estates in South Leinster under Norman overlordship. The O'Tooles and O'Byrnes retired to minor principalities in the Wicklow hills; whilst Mac Giollamocholmóg threw in his lot with the invaders and retained his territory round Liamhain. His descendants, calling themselves Fitzdermot, maintained an uncertain position as small barons for a couple of centuries.

Maurice Fitzgerald, Fitzhenry, De Bermingham and others replaced the Irish rulers in Kildare; Raymond Le Gros and Fitzdavid (likewise a Geraldine) in Carlow; Philip De Prendergast, Fitzgodebert (ancestor of the Roche family) and Montmorency in Wexford. Howth was bestowed on the first St. Lawrence. Uí Fáilghe, divided till then between O'Connor, O'Dempsey and O'Dunn, became the spoil of Robert De Bermingham.

De Lacy had meanwhile made much headway in Meath. He slew two of the O Mael Seachlainn kings and captured the great family fortress of Dún na Sciath, where so many of their ancestors had ruled as High-Kings. Sad indeed was the ending to the glories of the Southern Uí Néill, and bitter the cup which they were now called upon to drain. Their broad lands were occupied by De Lacy's vassals—Fleming, De Angulo (Nangle, Costello), Tyrrell, Petit, Nugent, De Constantin, Tuite and others—progenitors of the barons of the Pale. Much of Longford, however, remained still in the hands of O'Farrell, and the territory east of the Shannon, from the midlands to Nenagh, was held by O'Molloy, Mac Coughlan, Mac Eochagáin, O'Connor, O'Carroll and O'Kennedy.

De Courcy in the North had first directed his attack against the old kingdom of Ulaidh, over which Ruaidhre Mac Donnshléibhe now ruled as king. The Normans speedily stormed Downpatrick ; but Mac Donnshléibhe, encouraged by the Papal Legate, Cardinal Vivian (who was on his way to Dublin on legatine business), recovered almost at once, and soon returned with a great army. He suffered a second defeat ; but pulled himself together again with aid received from Mac Lochlainn of Tír Eoghain. A third defeat followed, in which the Archbishop of Armagh and the Bishop of Down were taken prisoners and large numbers of clergy slain. Mac Donnshléibhe died in 1201, and his descendants withdrew beaten to Donegal. De Courcy built castles at Down, Coleraine, Carrickfergus and Carlingford, and planted his newly conquered lands with Norman followers—Logans, Hackets, Savages, Russells and others. He married Affreca, daughter of the King of Man, coined his own money, founded and endowed abbeys, and in general lived as an independent prince, with but scant regard for his English overlord.

### **Expansion of the Anglo-Norman colony : Roches, Barretts, Fitzgeralds, Powers, Butlers.**

Early in 1177 Milo De Cogan and the English of Dublin invaded the western province at the invitation of Murchadh O'Connor, a rebellious son of Ruaidhre. They were defeated by the men of Connacht and driven back with heavy loss. Murchadh was blinded in punishment for his crime. His unhappy father soon afterwards resigned his crown and withdrew to the monastery of Cong, where he lived in religious

retirement till his death in 1199. On his feebleness as a man, his incompetence as a ruler, and the tragic consequences of his failure it would be easy to dwell; but the taunt is forgotten in the sorrow for the last of our High-Kings. The circumstances of the time into which Ruaidhre was born demanded more of him than he could give. To face the Norman crisis an Árd-Rí of the highest ability was needed, a king who would be at once a great statesman and a great soldier. It was Ruaidhri's misfortune that he was neither; it was Ireland's misfortune that he was then her foremost son.

St. Lorcan O'Toole died in 1180 at Eu in Normandy, whither he had gone to seek redress from Henry for the many wrongs of his native land. "Led," as was reported, "by zeal for his nation, he had said many things at the Lateran Council of 1179 against the King's dignity and honour," and had thereby incurred the King's displeasure. He was succeeded as archbishop by John Comyn, a monk of Evesham, who, as Giraldus Cambrensis boasts, was noted for his practical talent as a man of affairs, whereas Lorcan O'Toole was only a saint.

Robert Fitzstephen and Milo De Cogan, who had received a grant of the kingdom of Cork from Henry, came to terms with Diarmuid McCarthy. They received seven cantreds of land east and west of the city, whilst Diarmuid kept the remaining twenty-four cantreds for himself. The Normans settled Alexander and Maurice Fitzgerald and Philip De Barri as minor lords in their new territory. De Cogan was slain in 1182 by a dispossessed Irish chief, and his lands passed partly to a branch of his family, partly to the Courcys of Kinsale. Fitzstephen died in 1183, leaving as his



heir Richard De Carew. In the fourteenth century these lands passed to David Roche, Baron of Fermoy, and to David De Barri.

Robert Le Poer was granted the county of Waterford from the Suir to the Blackwater ; but of this estate he and his descendants were able to occupy no more than one-half.

Pressed by the O'Briens from the north and by the Normans from the east the Eoghanacht princes remaining in Limerick and Tipperary were driven into the mountains of the south. The O'Donovans and O Coileáins of Limerick migrated to Bandon and West Kerry ; the McCarthys, O'Sullivans and O'Donoghues of Tipperary to West Cork and central Kerry. Domhnall Mór O'Brien was master of Clare, Limerick and Tipperary before his death in 1194. He elevated the small church of St. Munchin in Limerick into a cathedral dedicated to St. Mary ; and endowed eight monasteries of the new continental orders, among them the famous foundation of Holy Cross, near Thurles, a daughter-house of Mainistir-an-Aonaigh, near Croom.

Henry II. sent his son, Prince John, then aged seventeen, to Ireland as governor in 1185. With the young prince came a fresh group of adventurers, chief among whom were Theobald Walter, his *botiller*, Bertram De Verdun and William De Burgo. There also came a troop of clerks, with countless sheepskins, on which John's " grants " of lands were to be recorded. The most important of these grants were the barony of Naas to William, son of Maurice Fitzgerald ; territory about Maynooth to his brother Gerald (first Baron Offaly) ; baronies in Louth to De Verdun ; lands in Ormond to Theobald Walter (founder of the

Butler family) and to William De Burgo (ancestor of the Burkes). Some time later De Burgo received from John a grant of part or all of Connacht. He married a daughter of Domhnall O'Brien, and in this way got manors at Kilfeacle, Carrigogunnell and elsewhere. In 1202 he was granted in addition the *tuath* of Castleconnell, where he built a castle on the imposing rock beside the Shannon.

As Lord of Ireland John granted the territory of Uí Chonaill Gabhra in Limerick to Hamo De Valognes. Hamo built a fortress at Askeaton, and introduced the Geraldines into that district as his feudatories. Thomas, son of Maurice Fitzgerald (founder of the house of Desmond), became master of Shanid; and Gerald, his brother (founder of the house of Kildare), master of Croom.

When John became King of England in 1199 he made further grants in Munster, by which the Geraldines just mentioned and the Barrys, Roches and Prendergasts of Cork were enriched, and the family of Cantitune (Condon) firmly established.

While building a castle at Durrow in 1186 Hugo De Lacy demolished the venerable monastery of St. Columcille, famed throughout so many centuries. Enraged by this act of desecration, a neighbouring youth fell suddenly upon De Lacy with an axe and cut off his head. Two sons, Walter and Hugo, both minors, succeeded to his estates. De Courcy, now Justiciar and the most important member of the colony, undertook the wardship of the boys. By a curious irony of fate Hugo De Lacy was later to intrigue against his erstwhile guardian, and to receive support from King John, who regarded De Courcy as dangerously powerful, and was anxious for his fall.

In the struggle which ensued De Courcy was beaten by the De Lacys and sent a prisoner to England, where he seems to have ended his days in obscurity.

**Machinery of Government set up in Dublin. Fate of Connacht, Leinster and Ulster. The Ostman cities. The Church.**

Between 1204-15 John built a strong castle at Dublin, and arranged to have the island administered by a central government. He crossed to Ireland himself in 1210 to curtail the power of the barons, reach settlements with the Irish kings, and give a first impulse to the machinery of government. De Braose (to whom Limerick had been granted) and the De Lacys, now in rebellion against him, were to be severely punished. In the sequel Walter De Lacy was restored to the earldom of Meath; his brother Hugo to the earldom of Ulster; but De Braose lost his grant in Limerick, and died an outlaw in France.

In Connacht a long dynastic struggle between Cathal Crobhderg ("of the Red Hand"), half-brother to Ruaidhre, and Cathal Carrach, Ruaidhre's grandson, ended in favour of the former. De Burgo and De Courcy had taken different sides in the conflict, but opposition was finally withdrawn, and Cathal Crobhderg was recognized as undisputed king, for his title was admitted by the English, and he was inaugurated according to ancient custom at Carn Fraoich.

William, the Earl Marshal, Earl of Leinster by his marriage with Strongbow's daughter, came to Ireland in 1207 and remained till 1213. As a representative of baronial rights against the King, he fought the latter's Justiciar, and, what is more, with complete success.

He erected abbeys at Tintern, Duiske and Kilkenny, and built a chartered town at New Ross. Among his vassals some well-known names occur, like D'Evreux, Fitzrobert, Porcel, Rochfort, Archdeacon, Le Gras (Grace), St. Leger, Keating and Cheevers. The earl's sons died without male issue, and Leinster was divided among the descendants of his five daughters, the Bigods, Mortimers and others.

Aedh O'Neill (1196-1230) established the supremacy of his kindred as the ruling family of Tír Eoghain. The Mac Lochlainn rivals of his house disappear after the battle of Cameirgi in 1241, when their leader, Domhnall, and ten of his *deirbhfhine* were slain. At the same time Eighneachán O'Donnell (died 1208) secured the primacy in Tír Chonaill to the O'Donnells; the earlier rulers, O Mael Doraidh and O Canannáin, lose all prominence henceforth in that region. O'Neill and O'Donnell now entered into an alliance of mutual aid, which lasted for two generations. The Dublin government was determined to seize their frontiers, but this, in the event, proved easier to propose than to execute. Gilbert De Angulo (Mac Coisdealbh—Costello) began to build a castle at Caol Uisge, near Eas-ruadh (Assaroe), in 1212, to hem in Tír Chonaill from the south; for a similar purpose lands from Derry to Carrickfergus were granted in the English King's name to Fitzroland, Lord of Galloway, and a Scotch plantation of Ulster was threatened.

Special protection was accorded by the English to the Ostmen of Dublin, Limerick and Cork, who were thus saved from feudal tyranny and enabled to survive in large numbers.

An attempt was made to fill the bishoprics and the higher offices of the Church with Anglo-Norman

prelates, and to exploit the abbeys within the occupied lands in the English interest. On the other hand, the Irish clergy were quite as determined that the sees of their country should be filled by men Irish in speech and sympathy. "The custom introduced by King John (in 1216) that no Irishman was to receive Church preferment" was abrogated by Pope Honorius III. in 1220. With this, however, the cleavage between the two parties and the two systems in the Church did not come to an end; but great as was the scandal the circumstances then prevailing were such that it could hardly have been avoided.

**The machinery of Government in Dublin overhauled.  
Growth of Geraldine power. The Conquest of  
Connacht.**

Henry III., a boy of nine, became King of England in 1216, but the government of that kingdom lay in the hands of the Justiciar, Hubert De Burgo, until 1236. During this period the powers of the Justiciar or Viceroy in Ireland were defined, and the governmental system in Dublin was reorganized. By 1261 English Justices were sent to administer English law, and sheriffs were sent to collect royal taxes in the counties then formed—Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Oriel, Waterford, Kerry, Tipperary and Connacht. It must be noted, however, that though the English pretended to rule the country occupied by their arms, the Irish within that territory, whether of high or of low degree, were not considered to possess rights under English law. Even the five chief dynasties of the Invasion period—O'Neill, O'Connor, O'Brien, O Mael Seachlainn and O Murchadha—though regarded as



entitled to plead in the Anglo-Irish courts (until the Statute of Kilkenny), were held to enjoy this as a temporary privilege only, which could be revoked without cause and at a moment's notice. In Munster the young Fitzgeralds, John and Maurice, sons of Thomas of Shanid, and Maurice, son of Gerald of Offaly, extended their dominions, building castles from Castlemaine in Kerry to Bantry in Cork. By succession to Fitzhenry's lands in Kerry, and by marriage with the heiress of Thomas Fitzanthony, John increased further the greatness of the Desmond Geraldines. But the McCarthy kings, Diarmuid of Dundrinan, Cormac and Finghin, defended their patrimony with much success against the newcomers.

Richard De Burgo was now able to utilize the services of his uncle Hubert, Justiciar of England, against Aedh O'Connor, King of Connacht. In gross violation of the guarantees given to Aedh's father, Cathal, by King John in 1215, Aedh was deprived of his kingdom in 1227. Five cantreds, comprising Roscommon and parts of Sligo and Galway, might be left in his hands if he accepted his fate calmly and "faithfully served the King"; the remaining twenty-five cantreds were adjudged to his enemy, De Burgo. In 1235 Maurice Fitzgerald, the Justiciar, gathered together the whole army of the colony, and set out for Connacht, to instal De Burgo in the name of the English King. Féidhlimidh O'Connor received support from O'Brien of Thomond, but the two met with a disastrous defeat. O'Connor, fearful now of losing everything, accepted the five cantreds, for which he agreed to pay a stipulated tribute. Nearly all the leading families of the colony shared in the booty of this campaign. Hugo De Lacy got five cantreds in Sligo, which he

immediately sublet to Maurice Fitzgerald. Maurice also accepted lands about Loch Mask in Mayo, and further possessions in South Galway, so that the Geraldines became quite suddenly a great power in Connacht. Piers De Bermingham took western Sligo. De Angulo received the barony which still bears his name (Costello) in Mayo; in the neighbourhood Stauntons, Prendergasts and De Exeters made settlements. Robert De Carew, of Cork, bestowed his share in the spoils—the barony of Tirawley—on a Cork tenant named William Barrett. Men-at-arms and camp followers, Welshmen and Flemings, crowded in the wake of their baronial masters; hence the names of Heil (Howel), Toimilin, Merrick, Walsh, Fleming, Petit, Cusack and Brown. Féidhlimidh O'Connor appealed to Henry III. for redress, and an order for his reinstatement actually reached the Justiciar, but the latter took good care to evade its provision. From this blow the O'Connors never recovered; their kingship dwindled to a petty chieftainry that extended little beyond their ancestral Síl Muireadhaigh estates in Roscommon.

Between 1234 and 1245 Walter De Lacy, Walter's brother Hugo, the last of the Marshals, and Fitzroland of Galloway passed away, all four, without leaving heirs to succeed them in the male line. Richard De Burgo, too, had died leaving his lands to three sons, still minors. A chance was thus offered the English Crown of breaking the feudal monopoly in Ireland, but the representatives of the Crown allowed the opportunity to slip. Availing of the omission, Maurice Fitzgerald, head of the Geraldines, became the most powerful noble in the country. Not content with gains in three counties of Connacht he had added to

his dominions the beautiful district round Adare in Limerick. Nothing was now wanting save permanence for his conquests, and this he contemplated achieving by the reduction of north-eastern Connacht and of the independent kingdoms of Ulster. His kinsman in the South, John Fitzthomas, received in 1259 a grant of Desmond and the Decies, and thus for practical purposes was ruler of all Kerry and of wide territories besides.

### The Position in brief after eighty years of conflict.

After eight decades of constant fighting the Anglo-Normans were thus masters of about two-thirds of the island. O'Donnell and O'Neill in the North, McCarthy and O'Brien in the South, O'Connor in Connacht, O Ruairc in Breifne, the O'Connors in Offaly, the O'Moores in Leix, Mac Giolla Pádraig in Ossory, and the O'Carrolls of Éli still ruled over Irish states. The English Crown, occupied with wars in France and Scotland, and fearful of its own deputies, who were either ambitious barons or greedy adventurers, was unable to reduce or to govern the country. Frequent as were marriages between Norman lords and Irish ladies, the former still felt themselves, and were felt in turn to be, a foreign element in the constitution of the nation. Under such circumstances neither unity nor peace was possible.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE IRISH RECOVERY.

EXPERIENCE had now taught the Irish princes that submission to the English King brought no security, and that the signature of the English to compacts was well-nigh valueless. The Crown was weak and shifty, at times cynically faithless, whilst the barons were strong and covetous. After the victory of their class over King John in 1215, when baronial privilege became the Magna Charta of the liberties of England, the predominance of the Norman lords in Ireland became still more marked. There was, it is true, a Justiciar in Dublin, head of a government that laid claim to the widest judicial and executive powers; but, as a matter of fact, the King's writ seldom ran beyond Leinster south of the Liffey and some districts north of the capital. Elsewhere the barons were practically independent, and made war on their Irish neighbours or on one another as interest or whim demanded.

#### **Growth of Irish resistance in Munster. Battle of Callan.**

**Attempted subjugation of Tír Eoghain and Tír Chonaill. Gallóglagh.**

By 1232 Kerry had become an Anglo-Irish county. During the generation that followed the strength of its Geraldine lord, John Fitzthomas, had so increased

that the fate of the Irish princes in that region seemed to be sealed. Moved by this danger and no doubt, too, by the growing feeling of national resentment against the foreigners, Finghin "of Rinn Róin" McCarthy made a hosting of the Irish of Desmond and commenced demolishing the enemy castles. Fitzthomas gathered his forces to meet this challenge. He appealed to the Anglo-Irish state for help, and the Justiciar himself, with a large body of royal troops, marched from Dublin to join him. The united army, despite superior equipment, armour and leadership, was totally overthrown at Callan, near Kenmare, on July 24, 1261. John Fitzthomas and his son met death bravely on the battlefield. Only an infant grandson of their house now survived, and the story goes that this child, too, the solitary hope of a great kindred, would have perished in a fire at the castle of Tralee were it not for the good services of a pet monkey. Hence the name, Tomás "an Ápa," by which this Geraldine leader is known to Irish history.

Milo De Cogan and Milo De Courcy attacked and killed Finghin McCarthy at Rinn Róin, on Kinsale harbour, before the year 1261 ended. A determined effort was then made by the Justiciar and Walter De Burgo to humble Finghin's successor, Cormac McCarthy, whom they encountered in 1262 high up on the slopes of Mangerton. Cormac fell, but victory lay apparently with his followers, who soon poured down from their mountain strongholds and recovered district after district of the level country from the enemy. The lands from Castlemaine Harbour to the estuary of the Bandon river came thus within their grasp. From the father of Finghin and Cormac



above-mentioned descended McCarthy Riabhach ; from their uncle, Cormac Fionn, descended the McCarthy Mór, princes who between them ruled 2,600 square miles of Cork and Kerry territory.

Feeling rightly that the Norman possessions in Connacht and Meath were insecure as long as north-western Ulster remained independent, Maurice Fitzgerald undertook the conquest of Tír Chonaill and Tír Eoghain. His assaults were directed from the southern frontier, and from the ports that opened northwards to the sea. In accordance with Norman tradition he built fortresses at Caol Uisge, Sligo, Coleraine and other places to hold what he had gained. For some ten years (to 1252) he made headway against the Ulster kings ; then came a turn of the tide in his disfavour ; followed by a period of quiet. In 1257 Godfrey O'Donnell, King of Tír Chonaill, levelled the castle of Caol Uisge, burnt the town of Sligo, defeated Fitzgerald and his English at Credran in Cairbre, and retired like Fitzgerald to die of wounds received in the battle. Domhnall Óg, a younger brother of Godfrey, succeeded to the throne of Tír Chonaill. He had been reared in the Isles of Scotland, and had taken to wife a lady of the MacSweeney family. To support O'Donnell in his wars a new force of *gallóglaigh* (foreign soldiers—mercenaries) drawn from Argyll and the Hebrides, and commanded by O'Donnell's father-in-law, Eoin MacSweeney, now appeared in Tír Chonaill. Thus began the policy of opposing to the Norman "castle of stones" an Irish "castle of bones," that is to say, a well-trained and well-equipped professional army. About a century later native-born Irish troops, called by a distinct name *buannachta*, were organized in imitation of the *gallóglaigh*. Such a system of per-

manent military forces Ireland had not known since the days of the *Fiana*. The need for a change in this direction was obvious, since a stop could be put in no other way to the success of the invaders.

### The First Irish Confederacy.

Under the year 1258 an event of the utmost importance is chronicled in the annals. Aedh O'Connor, King of Connacht, and Tadhg O'Brien, son of Conchubhar, King of Thomond, assembled their fighting men and marched to Caol Uisce on the Erne. Here they met Brian O'Neill in a conference, which ended in their recognition of the northern leader as King of Ireland. They thus restored, as far as in them lay, the Gaelic monarchy that had been suspended since the death of Ruaidhre O'Connor. By this act the authority that had set up feudal lords over Irish kings was implicitly repudiated, and the independence of the country proclaimed.

Next year Aedh O'Connor married a daughter of Dubhgall, chief of the McDonnells, and received as part of her dowry eight score gallóglaigh from the Isles. This was to become for him, as in the instance already referred to for O'Donnell, the nucleus of a permanent fighting force. Since the coming of the Normans, feuds between rival claimants to the kingship of Irish states had become incomparably more frequent. To meet this evil the practice of *tanistry*<sup>1</sup> now became common in a number of princely houses. Excellent as was the innovation it succeeded only partially in eliminating the unfortunate disputes about succession.

<sup>1</sup>See companion book, *Ireland from the Earliest Times to A.D. 800*, p. 167.

In May, 1260, O'Neill and O'Connor marched to Downpatrick, capital of the English earldom in the North, to put their power to the test against the intruders. Thomond and Tír Chonaill were not represented in the array, Tadhg O'Brien having died the year before, and O'Donnell evidently hesitating to send levies. The colonists summoned their forces together in haste to meet this danger. A desperate battle ensued, in which the mailed horsemen and archers of the settlers ultimately carried the day. Brian himself fell in the struggle, whence he has ever since been known as Brian Catha an Dúin, "Brian of the battle of Down." Fifteen prominent members of the O Catháin family were killed, and eight of the Connacht chiefs, though Aedh O'Connor managed to escape. Thus the first effort to restore the High-Kingship ended in utter failure.

Three years later, in 1263, the Irish princes offered to accept King Hakon of Norway as King of Ireland if he helped them to drive out the English. Hakon, however, died on his way to Ireland, if the entry in the *Annals of Ulster* be correct. By his death an obstacle was removed to the expansion of McDonnell power in the Isles, so that the Irish connections of that family are henceforth of some importance.

### **Revival of the Earldom of Ulster. The attack upon Thomond.**

Henry III. bestowed the Lordship of Ireland on his son Edward, then a boy of fifteen, in 1254. Ten years later the Prince made a "grant" of the vacant earldom of Ulster to Walter De Burgo. Maurice Fitzgerald, jealous of this favour, made war on De

Burgo, and when the Justiciar, or King's representative, intervened, seized his august person and held him prisoner for a time. Meanwhile Aedh O'Connor and Domhnall Óg O'Donnell, with united armies, attacked the Norman castles in Sligo and Mayo, whilst Aedh O'Neill assumed the title "King of the Irish of Ireland." The new Justiciar, d'Ufford, joined forces with De Burgo (1270), and marched across Roscommon to Carrick-on-Shannon, only to suffer disastrous defeat at the hands of Aedh O'Connor and Toirdealbhach O'Brien at the fort called Ath-an-Chip. De Burgo and the Justiciar made good their escape, but the former died the following year, and of chagrin, if a rumour current at the time can be trusted.

Early in the thirteenth century the O'Briens had abandoned Limerick, and built a strong castle at Cluain-rámh-fhoda (Clonroad) near Ennis as the chief seat of the family. They were constantly harried by the adventurers, whose violence they knew how to return with interest. After the death of Conchobhar na Siudaine in 1268 the succession was disputed between his son, Brian Ruadh, and his grandson, Toirdealbhach who had the support of the minor chiefs—MacNamara, O'Dea, O'Quinn, MacMahon—as well as of De Burgo. A long and bitter struggle followed, during the course of which Brian called a needy knight of good birth, one Thomas De Clare, to his aid from Cork, offering him in recompense the land from Ardsollus to Limerick. De Clare had already received from Edward I. a "grant" of the whole kingdom of Thomond, and set off gladly to answer O'Brien's call. The two were defeated by Toirdealbhach and his supporters in a battle near Moygressan. Among the slain in that hard-fought encounter was Patrick Fitzmaurice, a



brother of De Clare's wife. Angered almost to madness by her brother's loss, the lady induced her husband to violate in the basest manner the sacred ties that bound him to his ally, and to put Brian to a barbarous death. Brian's followers resented this so fiercely that De Clare feared for his life even within the strong walls of his castle, and surrounded that fortress with a double ditch. The Norman died in 1286; his son Thomas was slain in 1287; but the conflict continued between Richard De Clare and the sons of Toirdealbhach. It was decided in final fashion at the battle of Dysert O'Dea in 1318, when De Clare was hacked to pieces and his army destroyed. Bunratty was stormed; De Clare's wife and followers fled to England; his only son Thomas died in 1321; and Thomond was free from Englishry until the degenerate O'Briens, as Tudor earls, introduced them once more into their lands.

Thus the struggle ends at this stage without any definite result. The colonists had proved capable of holding their own in Leinster and Meath. In Connacht, Ulster and Munster their power was shaken but not shattered. On the other hand, their hopes of a general conquest were now fading, if not already completely gone.

**English Power at its greatest. Richard De Burgo, the Red Earl of Ulster. Geraldines and Butlers. The colonial government strengthened and the first colonial Parliaments called.**

Richard De Burgo, known as the Red Earl, came of age in 1280, and succeeded to immense territories in Connacht, Ulster and Munster. In Connacht, where



the O'Connor inheritance had now dwindled to three cantreds, De Burgo held sway over twenty-five, and his castles dominated the Corrib, Loch Derg and the northern frontier. In Ulster he aimed at extending his lordship over the whole coast, from Carlingford to Inis Eoghain. This he had actually succeeded in doing by 1311. In Munster he owned wide districts of East Limerick and North Tipperary, with Castleconnell as his central stronghold. Across the Shannon in Thomond he supported the victorious party of Toirdealbhach O'Brien against the De Clares and Brian Ruadh. Courageous, persuasive and crafty, speaking Irish as his native tongue, he fought for his own hand with consummate skill. "No English King or Viceroy could tell of this dissembling and imposing man whether he was an English baron or an Irish chief."

Scarcely less powerful than De Burgo was John Fitzthomas Fitzgerald of Kildare, who succeeded Gerald, Baron of Offaly, as head of the Leinster Geraldines in 1287. Manors in Adare, Croom and Pallasgreen in Limerick became his by inheritance, as also the family lands in Ulster and Connacht. The last mentioned he was later to transfer to De Burgo for compensation in Leinster and Munster; and he was to die first Earl of Kildare.

Maurice Fitzgerald of Lixnaw and Gilbert Fitzgerald, son of John "of Callann" (ancestor of the White Knights and of the Limerick Fitzgibbons), held the wide lands of Desmond together until Thomas "an Ápa" came of age in 1282. The young noble's lordship included the major portion of Kerry, much of Cork, much of Waterford, cantreds at Shanid and Glenogra, and manors at Newcastle, Killeedy and

elsewhere in Limerick. His son Maurice was to die first Earl of Desmond.

In Tipperary the Butlers were as firmly rooted as were the Fitzgeralds in Kildare or Kerry. They were likewise chiefs of Ossory, though professing nominal allegiance to an absentee overlord, and they were daily adding to their possessions the lands of non-resident or of extinct families.

The reign of Edward I. was marked in England by the triumph of the Crown over the feudal barons. Edward showed a feeble desire to carry through the same policy in Ireland, but when his viceroys failed to assert themselves against baronial opposition, he remained inactive, and when they proceeded with vigour he too often repaired what they had destroyed. In 1276 "the community of the Irish" appealed to him for English liberties, that is to say, for the recognition of their rights in English law, but the Anglo-Irish lords, who found the profits of war greater than the profits of peace, looked with disfavour on the demand, and Edward was too weak or too lukewarm to ignore their objections.

Amid Justiciars who laboured to organize the central government and to curtail feudal liberties, the most important were John De Sanford, Archbishop of Dublin, and Sir John Wogan, who ruled from 1295 to 1312. The latter especially strove to enlarge the shireland—that portion of the country from which the King received revenue, and where he settled cases at law through his justices. Wogan summoned to Dublin in 1295 and 1297 the first representative Parliaments of the colony. In these assemblies the Irish princes were not represented, and an anti-Irish spirit pervaded the decrees. Wogan's chief purpose

in convening these gatherings was to reconcile the Anglo-Norman lords to King Edward, and to induce them to help him with men and material in his Scottish wars. His policy in this respect was successful. De Burgo, Fitzthomas, Butler, and no doubt many others, participated in Edward's attempt to extinguish the national life of Scotland. This period, 1296–1306, may be regarded as the high-water mark of English power in Ireland. Soon afterwards the tide again turned. Wogan was defeated by the Irish of Wicklow at Glenmalure in 1308, and—more significant still—by a rebellious baron, Robert De Verdun, in 1312.

### **The Second National Confederacy.**

From 1286 onwards the Red Earl had acted as real King of Connacht, and had driven the O'Connors into complete obscurity. He had also interfered in the affairs of Ulster, and forced a king of his own choosing on Tír Eoghain in place of Domhnall O'Neill, son of Brian "Catha an Dúin." Domhnall, however, overcame his rival time and again, and from 1295 to his death remained chief of his house. An effort of the O'Donnells to expand at the expense of the O'Neills had been checked at the battle of Disert-dá-chríoch, near Dungannon, in 1281. Thanks to the goodwill of the Red Earl the attempt could now be renewed, and Fermanagh, under the Maguires, became subject to Tír Chonaill.

Meanwhile the resources of the colony were being squandered in the losing war against the Scots. The weakness which inevitably followed gradually made itself felt. Dissensions, too, reigned worse than ever

in the colonists' camp. From the days of Prince John, when hordes of dissolute favourites, "talkers, boasters, enormous swearers," were introduced into the country, the old settlers, "English by blood," had looked on new arrivals, "English by birth," with profound dislike. Equally unpopular were the absentees who from time to time returned to claim great estates. Thus when Roger Mortimer landed in 1308 to enjoy a vast heritage in Leix, Meath and Leinster, he was met by the established lords of his own allegiance with open hostility.

Even in Leinster this change for the better in the circumstances of Gaelic Ireland was soon joyfully realized. The Mac Murchadhas, vassals for long to the Bigods, lords of Carlow, were regarded as lawful claimants to the kingship of the province by the Kinsellas, the Mac Dáibhi Mhóirs, the O'Nolans of Forth, the O'Ryan of Idrone, the O'Byrnes, O'Tooles and others. O'Connor Fáilghe, O'Dempsey, O'Dunn and O'More, neighbouring princes, were likewise ready to accept them as overlords. In the great midland plain O Mael Seachlainn and O'Connor were quietly recovering their lost possessions. Not only the McCarthys and the O'Briens, but a host of minor chiefs, were improving their position in the South. MacMahon was rising to prominence in Oriel, O Ruairc and O'Reilly in Breifne, Maguinness in eastern Ulster. Acts of treachery, of which Irishmen were the victims, added to the bitterness of feeling against the Anglo-Normans. In 1282 "Muircheartach Mac Murchadha and his brother Art were slain by the Foreigners" at Arklow, after they had received a safe conduct from the Crown. Again, in 1305, four of the Mac Murchadhas were feloniously slain at Ferns though



they had entered the town under a safe conduct from the Justiciar. In the same year Piers De Bermingham, Baron of Tethmoy in Offaly, invited the O'Connors to spend the feast of Holy Trinity with him in his castle of Carrick in Carbery. During the feast the O'Connor Fáilghe, his two brothers, and twenty-nine of their retinue were set upon and cruelly murdered. For this act De Bermingham received a rich gift of money from the Council in Dublin, sitting under the presidency of Wogan, and with the Red Earl present among the members.

Bannockburn was fought and won on June 24, 1314. Robert Bruce at once got into touch with the Irish princes, who were planning a national league for the expulsion of the English. On May 25, 1315, Edward Bruce landed on the Antrim coast, accompanied by the Earl of Moray and other Scottish nobles, and by the Scoto-Gaelic chieftains MacDugall and MacRory. Under Bruce were 6,000 men. Domhnall O'Neill, O Catháin, and the eastern Ulster rulers hurried to join forces with him, and Dundalk soon fell before their attack. The Red Earl now marched from Connacht to put a stop to Bruce's victorious course, but he was utterly defeated at Connor in Antrim, in September, 1315. Meath was next invaded. Here the two Lacys, Walter and Hugo, joined Bruce; also O Mael Seachlainn and other Irish chiefs, with no less than seventy of the Norman gentry. Combined they defeated Roger Mortimer at Kells. Kildare was then invaded, and the royal forces under Butler and John Fitzthomas were overthrown near Ardscull. Domhnall O'Neill renounced his claim to the throne of Ireland, and on May Day, 1316, Edward Bruce was crowned High-King at Cnoc Maeldúin, near Dundalk.



In Leinster the O'Byrnes and the O'Tooles, with the Harolds and the Archbolds (representing the hibernicized Norse of South Dublin) attacked the English along the coastline from Arklow to Bray. To encourage the barons in their loyalty, Edward II. made Edmund Butler Earl of Carrick, and John Fitzthomas Earl of Kildare.

Meanwhile a struggle was being waged among the O'Connors for the kingship of Connacht, relatively insignificant as was the power for which that title now stood. The contest ended in March, 1316, with the victory of Féidhlimidh, who renounced allegiance to the Red Earl, and declared that he would expel every foreigner from the West. To lend substance to this threat he could count on support from O'Brien, O Ruairc, O Mael Seachlainn and O'Kelly of Uí Máine. Marshalled on the other side were the English of Connacht under William Liath De Burgo and Richard De Bermingham. On August 10, 1316, the opposing forces met near Athenry, and fought the livelong day before the issue was decided. The English finally emerged triumphant, thanks to archery and horse. Féidhlimidh and O'Kelly fell in the front line, with fifty-six other chiefs beside them. Amid rank and file the losses were proportionately heavy. De Burgo was thus rendered secure in the lordship of Connacht, and could set up a tame O'Connor as "king."

Robert Bruce having arrived from Scotland to lend aid to his brother, the two invaded the midlands in 1317. Their ravages, combined with a recurrence of poor harvests, soon brought about famine, pestilence and extreme suffering. It was not long until they appeared before the walls of Dublin, which they hoped would surrender without resistance, for they lacked

the siege-machinery necessary to reduce it. The resolute vigour of the citizens made this hope vain ; whereupon the Bruces departed for the South, through Callan, Limerick, Castleconnell, Cashel, Kells and Ossory, devastating as they went Butler and Fitzgerald lands.

In April, 1317, a " great multitude of soldiers, both horse and foot," arrived at Youghal from England, under the command of Roger Mortimer, who had been sent with the title of Lord Lieutenant to take over complete control. Joining with Thomas, the new Earl of Kildare, he marched to the midlands. Bruce, weaker in numbers, fell back towards the North. Mortimer reduced the Irish of Wicklow ; then he proceeded to the Shannon, where he secured the submission of O'Connor on terms very favourable to the latter.

Early in 1318 came the defeat of the De Clares, already referred to, in Thomond. Mortimer was recalled to England in May. John De Bermingham took his place as commander, and led a colonial army to Dundalk against Bruce. Without waiting for reinforcements which his brother, King Robert, had promised to convey, Bruce insisted on engaging Bermingham's far superior force. The battle, on which the fate of Ireland depended, was fought at the Hill of Fochairt, near Dundalk, on October 14, 1318. While Bruce survived the issue was doubtful, but he was challenged after some time by John Maupas, a citizen of Drogheda, and the two fell mortally wounded. Bruce's head was sent as a gory trophy to Edward of England.

With this defeat the second Irish confederacy came to an unhappy end. The annalists, unable as contem-

poraries to see these events in their true perspective, and writing in a devastated land under the shadow of cruel failure, describe the Bruce campaign in bitter terms. Much, however, had been achieved. In a *Remonstrance* addressed at this time to Pope John XXII. by Domhnall O'Neill in the name of the Irish princes, the Gaelic population of Ireland, acting as one body for the first time since the invasion, repudiates the Plantagenet lordship, and asserts the right of the Irish nation to determine its own sovereignty. Nor was any further effort made to conquer the country. Despite the chance victory at Fochairt, the superiority of the Anglo-Normans in arms and diplomacy was, indeed, definitely gone. The stone castles of the Irish equalled theirs in size and in solidity; whilst the professional troops—gallóglaigh and buannachda—were so good that the barons are found henceforth competing for them eagerly and fighting out their many feuds with their aid.

**Ireland covered with small Towns. Church difficulties.**  
**Destruction of the great Schools. The abortive**  
**Anglo-Irish University.**

When the Normans entered Ireland town life was beginning to develop to an unprecedented degree in Western Europe. The newcomers gave enthusiastic support to this movement, and built towns wherever they could get a foothold. According to the feudal system these settlements were given charters, or documents conferring various rights, by kings, bishops, or local lords; and they were allowed extensive privileges. Dublin, Waterford, Limerick, Cork and Galway were granted by the English "the liberties

of Bristol," the fullest form of civic independence which the English Constitution recognized. Smaller towns, like Drogheda, Kells, Kilkenny, Carlow and Mungret, enjoyed a more restricted autonomy, according to what was known as the "customs of Breteuil." Callan, New Ross, Carrick-on-Suir, Nenagh and Thurles were among the Earl of Ormond's towns. The Geraldines



Costumes of Mayors of Dublin, Waterford, Cork, and Limerick.

*(Left to right.)*

The Mayor of Limerick wears red hose, red shoes, and a dark blue tunic and cap; the three others are in red robes with blue overcape or gown. The belts are adorned with gilt plates.

founded Tralee, Kilmallock and Glenogra; the Berminghams, Athenry. Only in Thomond and in the North (from Sligo to Coleraine) was the erection of towns neglected. Norse, Flemish, Welsh and Saxon elements seem to have predominated in these settlements, but the Irish had some representation in them almost from the beginning. Thus in Galway a leading family bore the name of Kirwan; in Limerick the Meaghs were prominent; in Cork, the Meads, Ronaynes, and Murroughs.



Still the tradition of the towns was consistently English and plebeian.

In the Irish Church at this period Gaelic and Norman clergy tended to go their separate ways. This was encouraged by the Irish princes and by the baronial lords, but it was rightly censured as anti-Christian by the superiors of the Cistercian and of other religious Orders, and at times by the Holy See.

To the schools of Irish art the invasion brought irreparable disaster. "All the art impulses," writes Professor Macalister, "all the skill whose manifestations we have been studying in the previous chapters, are snuffed out like the flame of a candle. Illumination is wholly absent; sculpture is stiff and formal; metal-work, what little there is left of it, is pitifully feeble; architecture distinguished by occasional freakishness, but there is no notable work." Literature, too, was orphaned wherever Irish lordship was destroyed. Thus in Leinster bardic poetry is wanting from the coming of Strongbow to the rise of Art Mór Mac Murchadha, for whose inauguration an Ode was written about 1376.

Similarly the Norman Invasion brought ruin to every one of the great schools. "The foreigners pillaged thirty houses of the chief members of the community of Armagh" in 1184. Next spring, during the holy season of Lent, Philip de Worcester, the King's Justiciar, quartered his army on the town, and wrung from the clergy a heavy tribute. Again in 1189, De Courcy plundered and wrecked the city. This time there was no recovery. Nor did a kindlier fate await Clonmacnois and the other famous schools which for six centuries had done the land such honour. The Anglo-Normans placed nothing in their stead; not a



single school of note can be set to the credit of their rule in Ireland. They did, it is true, attempt to found a university in 1310 (as we shall see more in detail in a later chapter), but the effort ended in failure. There was thus no centre of higher studies, so that the Anglo-Irish could not secure high cultivation of mind and perfect refinement of manners within their own colony.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### GRADUAL ASSIMILATION OF THE NORMANS.

BRUCE'S campaign, if it did not drive the English out of Ireland, at least weakened their organization, and the Irish began to advance steadily in every portion of the country. The English kings, preoccupied with French and Scottish wars, gave the colonists little help. Thus there was nothing left for them to do (if they wished to stay in Ireland) but to come to terms with their neighbours, in other words, to adopt Irish civilization, and accept the place to which they were always welcomed in the ranks of the Irish people. This, in fact, is what they did. Long before the Tudor era the lower strata among the colonists had become completely assimilated. The great lords, too, transformed themselves in time into Irish princes, but with this difference, that they never lost consciousness of their traditional position as English barons, that they never renounced allegiance to the English Crown, but, on the contrary, served its interests with fidelity until it was strong enough to undertake the policy of reconquest. Thus, by a cruel irony of fate, they were nourishing a flame that would one day burst forth into a conflagration and claim themselves among its first victims.

### Ormond ; De Burgo ; the Geraldines.

Richard De Burgo, the Red Earl, died in 1326, leaving his grandson, William Donn, a boy of fourteen,

heir to his great estates. The "Brown Earl," as he was called, marked his entry into public life by vigorous action against his own cousins. When one of these, Walter, son of William Liath and Fionnghuala O'Brien, thought to oust the O'Connors from their remnant of the kingship of Connacht, the Earl interfered, took Walter prisoner, and starved him to death in his castle of Northburgh in Inis Eoghain. Now Walter's sister was the wife of Richard Mandeville, and she instigated the members of her husband's family to wreak vengeance on the Earl. This they duly did at the ford of Carrickfergus in June, 1333. The poor youth when murdered was but twenty-one years old.

His wife, Maud of Lancaster, a cousin of the reigning English king, retired to her own country, taking with her the Earl's infant daughter, heiress to the De Burge possessions. When the child reached the age of nine she was betrothed to Lionel, Duke of Clarence, who thus became, by English Law, Earl of Ulster and of Connacht.

Whatever jurists and courts of law might decide about the heritage, there were two sons of William Liath, William (Uileóg—Ulick) and Edmund (called *Albanach* because of his many years' residence in Scotland), cousins of the dead Earl, who determined that the broad lands of Connacht should not fall to an absentee, royal or otherwise. Edmund landed at Umhall from Scotland in 1335. He married Sadhbh O'Malley, came to an agreement with the Irish of Mayo, and seized that portion of the De Burgo territory. Irish in speech and dress and manners, and ruling according to Irish law, there was little to distinguish him henceforth from an Irish prince of Gaelic stock.

His rule was firmly established long before his death in 1375, and was transmitted by him to his descendants—the great family of Mac Liaim Iochtar. His brother Ulick seized the plains of Galway, and founded there the family of Mac Liaim Uachtar, Lords of Clanrickarde. A third kinsman, Edmund *nafeasóige*, seized the De Burgo lands in Limerick and Tipperary, and became ancestor of the Burkes of Castleconnell. Thus the De Burgos were the first of the noble Norman families “to give up their foreignness for a pure mind, their harshness for good manners, their stubbornness for sweet mildness, and their perverseness for hospitality.” They, at least, could soon claim that they were *Hibernicis ipsis Hiberniores*—more Irish than the Irish themselves. In Elizabeth’s time they were regarded as of Irish descent, and, under James I., Sir John Davies, no mean judge, could say of them that “there were more able men of the name of Burke than of any name whatsoever in Europe.”

Maurice, son of the first Earl, became fourth Earl of Kildare in 1331, and lived to 1390. His kinsman, Maurice, was created Earl of Desmond in 1329. Supported by the junior branches of the family—the Knights of Kerry, Glin and the Decies, and the Fitzgibbons of Kilmallock—his power was unchallenged in Kerry, Cork, Limerick and Waterford. James Butler was made Earl of Ormond in 1328. In addition to his Irish lands he had huge estates in ten English counties, a fact which perhaps goes far to explain his deep and unfailing attachment to the English cause.

Feuds were constantly going on between the Anglo-Irish lords. Le Poer of Waterford added to his long list of offences against the Earl of Desmond by calling the latter a “rhymer.” The English of Oriel attacked

and slew De Bermingham, Earl of Louth, and thus extinguished the earldom. All the Norman-Irish combined as one man against the English officials, sent over to re-anglicize and re-feudalize the country; as also against the absentees, whose return they feared above anything else in the world. When Sir John Morice, a mere knight, was appointed Deputy in 1341, Kildare and Desmond refused to attend his Parliament, and called a rival assembly of their own at Kilkenny. Desmond again refused to attend in 1345, when the new Viceroy, d'Ufford, called a Parliament in Dublin. Kildare was arrested and Desmond outlawed, but the storm soon passed, leaving the Geraldine chiefs as strong as before. It is important to notice, however, that this movement was directed against English officialdom only, not against the English Crown. Desmond's "sympathies were with native culture, not with native independence," whilst Kildare, like Ormond, represented the English King in Ireland for many years.

### **Remarkable Gaelic recovery in every part of Ireland.**

**The Statutes of Kilkenny, designed to maintain English civilization in a small portion of the country.**

While the De Burgos were founding an Irish lordship in Connacht the Gaelic princes were everywhere regaining much of their former possessions. In 1327 Domhnall, son of Art Mac Murchadha, was inaugurated King of Leinster, the first to assume the title since Diarmuid of evil fame. Domhnall, with his subject chiefs, began the reconquest of the Leinster lowlands. Under his leadership, too, the O'Connors Fáilghe and



the O'Mores of Leix extended their sway once more over long-lost territories. Thus in 1342 Giolla Iasachta O'More "expelled nearly all the English from their lands by force, for in one evening he burned eight castles of the Englishry, and destroyed the noble castle of Dunamase, belonging to Roger Mortimer." From the woods and moors of the midlands the O Mael Seachlainns, the O'Molloys, the Mac Eochagáins and others attacked the Westmeath settlements. O'Farrell, lord originally of a tiny district in Leitrim, again invaded and annexed all Longford. Tadhg O'Carroll "who expelled from Éli the nations of the Brets, Milbornes and other English," fell in battle in 1346. Nenagh, the original centre of Butler power, and with it the lands along the Shannon to Killaloe, were regained by the O'Kennedys, who again became Kings of Ormond.

So in the West an Irish revival followed the Norman-Irish revival under the Burkes. Domhnall O'Connor occupied Cairbre and Sligo, and founded the lordship of O'Connor Sligo. Ballymote fell to McDonagh; the Red Earl's fortress at Northburgh in Inis Eoghain to the O'Dohertys. O'Donnell of Tír Chonaill claimed, and as a rule exercised, suzerain rights over all North Connacht.

After the death of the Brown Earl a branch of the O'Neills, descended from Aedh Buidhe, King of Tír Eoghain (1260-83), conquered the lands east of the Bann, and founded there the lordship of Clann Aedha Bhuidhe (Clannaboy), with Castlereagh as the principal stronghold. This lordship was ultimately to extend from the sea to Loch Neagh, and from the Antrim Glens to Strangford Loch. A few of the English families in Ulster survived, such as Fitzugolin or

MacQuillan of the Route, the Whites of Dufferin, Biset or MacEoin in Antrim, the Savages and Russells in Down.

In the South Diarmuid McCarthy allowed the colonists no rest, despite the fact that his mother was a Fitzmaurice, and his wife a daughter of David Roche. From him the Muskerry branch of the McCarthys trace their descent.

In March, 1361, Edward III. of England announced that "because our land of Ireland . . . is now subjected to such devastation and destruction that, unless God avert and succour the same, it will be plunged soon into total ruin; we have therefore, for the salvation of the said land, ordained that Lionel, our very dear son, shall proceed thither with all despatch and with a great army." Lionel waged war in Leinster and Munster with limited success. His wife, Elizabeth De Burgo, daughter of the Brown Earl, died during his stay in Dublin. In her memory he established a lectureship in theology attached to St. Patrick's Cathedral, and left a grant to the clergy to ensure the offering of Mass daily for her soul.

Lionel convoked a Parliament of the colony at Kilkenny in 1366, where statutes were passed designed to bring the "degenerate English" of the country back to a sense of their duty, and to maintain English civilization in at least some portion of Ireland. The preamble to the statutes reads: "Whereas at the conquest of the land of Ireland and for a long time afterwards, the English of the said land used the English language, mode of riding and apparel, and were governed, both they and their subjects, called betaghs, according to English law . . . but many English of the said land, forsaking the English language,

manners, mode of riding, laws and usages, live and govern themselves according to the manners, fashions and usages of the Irish enemies, and also have made divers marriages and alliances between themselves and the Irish enemies aforesaid, whereby the said land and the liege people thereof, the English language, the allegiance due to our Lord the King and the English laws, are put into subjection and decayed, and the Irish enemies are exalted and raised up, contrary to reason," therefore it hath seemed good to enact the following statutes: For the future, then, the English are not to make alliances by marriage, gossipred and fosterage with the Irish, nor use Irish law, nor favour minstrels, rhymers or storytellers. They shall use English speech and have English surnames, under penalty of attainder. They are not to give ecclesiastical benefices to Irishmen, nor receive them into their monasteries. They are to forsake hurling, the Irish national pastime, and "apply and accustom themselves to draw bows, throw lances, and other gentlemanlike games."

The "land of peace" or "English" land, to which alone these statutes applied, was reckoned as the counties and liberties of Louth, Meath, Trim, Dublin, Carlow, Kildare, Kilkenny, Wexford, Waterford and Tipperary. Within this "obedient" land the Irish were to be forced into English speech and ways; for the rest of Ireland the colonial Parliament did not even pretend to legislate.

The statutes were never obeyed. Lionel's successor in the viceroyalty, Gerald, third Earl of Desmond, "excelled all the English and many of the Irish in knowledge of the Irish language, poetry and history." He was known as Gerald the Poet, because of his many

compositions in Irish verse. In 1388 he was granted leave to have his son James fostered by Conchobhar O'Brien, brother to the King of Thomond. Irish civilization, supreme without the "obedient shires," made headway constantly within them. Thus the statutes were from the beginning a dead letter; they served, however, as a headline for future legislators and governors intent on destroying Gaelic life and culture, not only in a part, but in the whole of Ireland.

**Further decline of English power. The "Black Rents."  
Art Mac Murchadha "Caemhánach."**

How great had been the Irish recovery is shown by the victory of Brian O'Brien, King of Thomond, over the powerful Earl of Desmond, at Mainistir-an-Aonaigh, near Croom, in 1370. The Earl was taken captive and held a prisoner till ransomed by the King's Lieutenant in Dublin. Desmond's army "was cut off with incredible slaughter." Two years later the Earl of Kildare, acting as head of the English Government in Ireland, agreed to pay Donnchadh Mac Murchadha twenty marks annually as a reward for "the safe keeping of the royal roads between Carlow and Kilkenny"; in reality the *dubh-chíos*, "black-rent," was paid in the hope that Mac Murchadha might be induced by it to forego unwelcome attentions to the capital. At a "Great Council" (to which were summoned 16 prelates, 16 abbots and priors, 3 earls, 39 barons, representatives of 6 counties and 15 liberties, and the mayors or sovereigns of 10 towns), held at Kilkenny in 1374, Milo Sweteman, Archbishop of Armagh, led the opposition to the Viceroy's demand for a subsidy. The central government in Dublin



was thus all but impotent. Murchadh “na Raith-nighe” O’Brien, chief of the Ara branch of the family, later called Mac Uí Bhriain, was bought off when he threatened an invasion of the Pale in 1377.



Costumes in Ireland, *circa* 1380.

Two substantial burgesses soberly clad, and between them a gentleman of rank and a bishop. The gentleman's garb is of dark sage-green material, embroidered with white lilies, red sprigs and gold scrolls. He has a gold-studded belt and vermillion hood held on the right shoulder by a large plated clasp.

Art Mac Murchadha, whose father had died in prison under Lionel, was inaugurated King of Leinster in 1375. Eoghan Mac Craith, scion of a celebrated bardic family, wrote an ode in honour of the occasion, a proof that Gaelic culture was reviving even in Leinster. From 1377 onwards the Government in Dublin secured Art's goodwill by the payment of a high annual fee.

Irish princes and Norman-Irish barons now shared between them the lordship of the country. Where the princes recovered lands they planted them with their own followers and drove the colonial settlers



off. Hence the lower nobility and tenantry of Norman blood were destroyed where they did not save themselves by throwing in their lot completely with their Irish neighbours. More and more the "middle nation," called by the Irish "Sean-Ghaill," "the old foreigners," by the English "degenerate English," became Irish in language, in habit and in sympathy. Marriage alliances played an important part in furthering this movement. Thus Joan, eldest daughter of the Earl of Kildare, married the head of the McCarthys; Elizabeth, his second daughter, married Art Mac Murchadha, King of Leinster; whilst Joan, daughter of the Earl of Ormond, married Tadhg O'Carroll, head of the O'Carrolls of Éli. The Norman-French civilization of the colony steadily decayed and Irish civilization took its place. Medicine, law, poetry, history and literature were again diligently cultivated.

### **The two Expeditions of Richard II. Both end in failure.**

To restore the prestige of England and to promote, by a brilliant military campaign, his candidature for the Imperial Crown, Richard II. determined to come to Ireland in person. He arrived at Waterford in October, 1394, with 34,000 men, an overwhelming army for that period. His plan was to conquer Leinster, reconstitute that province as a purely English settlement, add to it the lands from the Liffey north to the Ulster hills, then come to terms with the rebellious English (Burkes, Butlers, Geraldines, Barretts, Powers, Berminghams, Roches, Daltons, Dillons, etc.), and finally chastise the enemy Irish chiefs. Unhappily for Richard, Art Mac Murchadha was as interested as

himself in the fate of Leinster, and was determined that it should not depart from Irish hands without a struggle. He burnt New Ross and opposed the passage of the army, so that the King had to cut his way, with difficulty and with heavy loss, to Dublin.

During the next few months Richard received formal homage as overlord from the Irish princes, from Niall O'Neill and the chiefs of his *oireacht* (Magennis, O'Hanlon, MacMahon, O Catháin, Mac Giolla Muire, McDonnell and the gallóglach general McCabe); from O'Brien and his *oireacht* (MacNamara, MacMahon, O'Connor, O'Loughlin, O'Hehir and O'Dea); from O'Connor Donn and his *oireacht* (O'Hara, O'Gara, O'Madden, MacDermott, O Ruairc, O'Kelly and O'Dowd); also from the princes of Meath, O Mael Seachlainn, O'Molloy and others; from O'Carroll of Éli and the O'Kennedys and O'Dwyers of Tipperary; from McCarthy, King of Desmond, and the Burkes and Berminghams of Connacht. All these, as a reward for their submission, received full recognition of their position, and titles for their lands that were valid in English law.

Art Mac Murchadha, too, submitted with his *oireacht* (O'Byrne, O'Toole, O'Connor, O'More, O'Nolan, O'Ryan, O Murchadha, O'Dempsey, O'Dunn, etc.), but on him terms of a peculiar kind were imposed. He was to abandon Leinster and sally forth to "conquer other lands occupied by rebels against the King." Such conquests he and his successors might hold by hereditary right. That these terms were meant to be taken seriously we can hardly imagine. All the princes, save one, submitted, and ceased thereby to be in technical language "the King's enemies." The solitary exception was O'Donnell; but we may be

quite certain that Art never entertained the absurd idea of invading Tír Chonaill. However the terms be explained, Art is found shortly afterwards, not only lord of Leinster, but reminding the Castle authorities in Dublin that his "black rent" is in arrear, and that the Government will rue the consequences if he is thwarted in his claim to the barony of Norragh, the property of his Norman wife (only daughter and heir of Robert Le Veel or Calfe), which he was prevented from occupying by one of the Kilkenny statutes.

Richard left Dublin in May, 1395, leaving Roger Mortimer, Earl of March, and recognized heir to the throne of England, to take his place as viceroy. The Four Masters record that an attempt was made to trap Art in Dublin, but that he made good his escape "by the strength of his hand and bravery." Mortimer marched

against him in 1398, only to fall in a petty encounter at Kells, near Callan, in Ossory. His death tempted the house of Lancaster to usurp the throne of England, and thus brought upon that country the Wars of the Roses, with the untold suffering and misery that for the thirty years followed in their wake.

Enraged beyond control by this disaster, Richard



Art Mac Murchadha

Charging, with long dart poised in hand, down the hills near Arklow at the head of his troops for a parley with the emissaries of Richard II. (From a picture in a book written by a French gentleman serving in Richard's army, who describes the Irish king as galloping down the mountain "so hard that never hare, deer, sheep, or any other animal ran with such speed.")

returned to Ireland in 1399, determined to let his hand fall heavily on its rebellious people. He marched from Kilkenny against Art Mac Murchadha, who refused either to give battle or to submit. Two parleys ended without an agreement. Art harassed the enemy army whenever opportunity offered, and cleared the country before it of supplies, so that it was in danger of perishing through lack of food. After a painful and fruitless march back through Leinster to Waterford, Richard learned that Henry of Lancaster had invaded his kingdom. He returned at once to England, there to be captured, deposed and slain. Henceforth the English Crown was impotent in Ireland; but it kept up the pretence of government by maintaining a viceroy and high officials (Lord Chancellor, Treasurer, Master of the Rolls, Justices of the King's Bench, etc.) in Dublin, and by holding miniature sessions of Parliament at long intervals.

**Ireland a country of Principalities and Lordships, all Gaelic in culture, and all, in practice, independent. Irish Territories. The Pale.**

Just as in England the English of Chaucer superseded Norman-French about 1360, so in Ireland the Irish language became the speech of the whole country (outside of the towns and a few rural areas) about the same time. The great Norman nobles continued to use French, traditional in their houses; but now as a secondary language only. Gerald, third Earl of Desmond, as already stated, was a poet of merit in the Irish tongue.

In Connacht the O'Connors and the Burkes divided the province between them. The former family had



split in 1385 into two main divisions, one led by Toirdealbhach Ruadh, the other by Toirdealbhach Óg (also called Toirdealbhach Donn), both in the seventh generation of descent from Cathal Crobhderg, brother of Ruaidhre, the last High-King. From these descended the families of O'Connor Ruadh and O'Connor Donn. Another brother of Ruaidhre, Brian of Luighne, was ancestor of O'Connor Sligo. Neither tanistry among the Irish nor primogeniture among the Norman-Irish prevented wars of succession, which broke out regularly, just as in former times. As the combatants were professional troops such wars interfered less than might be expected with the normal life of the people.

Changes from Norman to Irish surnames were now of common occurrence. Many of the Burkes became Mac Pilibin, Mac Meiler and Mac Hubert ; the D'Exeters became Mac Jordans ; the Berminghams, Mac Pheorais ; the De Angulos or Nangles, Mac Costellos ; the Stauntons, Mac Evillys ; the Fitzsimons of Westmeath, Mac Rudderys. So elsewhere Barry became MacAdam ; Biset, Mac Eoin ; Mortimer, Mac Namara ; Dowdall, O'Dowd ; Savage, MacSweeney ; Fitzursule, Mac Mahon, and so on.

Art Mac Murchadha was supreme in Leinster after Richard's departure. The English paid his Black Rent and acknowledged his right to the barony of Norragh, of which, any way, they were unable to deprive him. He captured Enniscorthy castle and the strong town of Castledermot, and regained northern Wexford from the forces of Ormonde. His friends, the O'Connors Fáilghe, Murchadh and his son Calbhach, were equally successful against the English of Meath and Kildare. Another ally, however, Tadhg O'Carroll of Éli, was defeated by Ormond and the Deputy Lescrop at Callan



in 1407, and lost his life in the battle. Art Mac Murchadha died early in 1418, after some years of comparative peace. It has been pointed out to his credit that during a reign of forty years he never lost a battle, and never drew his sword against his own countrymen. His victories, too, were of advantage to the whole nation, for, with an enemy so capable at their very gates, the English of Dublin could undertake no expeditions of importance elsewhere.

Art's successor, Donnchadh, was taken prisoner soon after his inauguration, and spent seven years in the Tower of London before he was released on terms. In 1428 he is found receiving Black Rent, not only the sum paid to his father, but an addition to it on his own account. When he died in 1431 his nephew, Domhnall Riabhach, succeeded, and reigned till 1476. Ladies of the house married into the families of the O'Neills of Tyrone and the Butlers of Ormond, so that the Mac Murchadhas were recognized as holding a leading place among Irish dynasties. They ruled from Enniscorthy castle, and styled themselves proudly "Kings of Leinster."

In 1423 O'Neill, O'Donnell and "all the Gael of Ulster" marched against the English settlements in Meath and Louth, and placed Dundalk under tribute. Eoghan O'Neill returned in 1430, and was recognized as overlord, not only by O'Farrell, O'Connor Fáilghe, O'Molloy and other princes of the midlands, but by the De Lacys, Plunketts and Herberts of Westmeath. Eoghan was inaugurated King of Tír Eoghain at Tealach Óg in 1434, after a decisive victory over his rival. Two years later he and O'Donnell were checked by the Lord Lieutenant when levying their Black Rent upon Dundalk. After a long and vigorous

reign Eoghan O'Neill made way in 1455 for his son Henry, who was inaugurated at Tealach Óg according to the ancient ritual. Some time later he was "confirmed and instituted" by the Primate at Armagh. Henry ruled with distinction for thirty-four years till his resignation in 1489. His son Conn married Eleanor, daughter of the Earl of Kildare, thus uniting in bonds of closest intimacy the two greatest houses, Gael and Norman, in Ireland.

After bitter dynastic quarrels, Aedh Ruadh O'Donnell succeeded to the throne of Tír Chonaill in 1461 and ruled to 1505. A statesman as well as a soldier, he maintained the independent tradition of his family against the O'Neills, and established the O'Donnell supremacy firmly over Fermanagh and North Connacht.

Toirdealbhach O'Connor, who died in 1464, is regarded as the last King of Connacht. From that time forward the O'Connor Ruadh and the O'Connor Donn held their estates, but lost almost wholly their former political significance. All power in the West thus passed into the hands of the Burkes. These fought among themselves for the leadership of the province. William of Clanrickarde, the Upper MacWilliam, defeated his rival, the Lower MacWilliam, at Magh-Cronn in 1467. O'Connor Sligo lived as a resident chief in the town from which he took his name, but owed allegiance (evaded, it must be said, whenever possible) to the O'Donnells.

In Munster Conchobhar O'Brien ruled Thomond to his death in 1426. He was succeeded by his nephews, of whom the greatest was Tadhg, inaugurated in 1458. Conchobhar had fostered James Fitzgerald, who was destined in time to succeed to the earldom of Desmond. When the young Earl took over control of his immense

estates he gave a district in Limerick to his foster-brother, Brian O'Brien, son of Conchobhar. These lands were known later as Pobal Bhriain (Pubblebrien), and had as their centre the castle of Carrig O gConaill (Carrigogunnell). Tadhg O'Brien must have had reason to dislike this arrangement, for he invaded Limerick in 1466 and overran the county. Dying soon afterwards of fever, his successors were unable to hold his conquests; but they kept the city under tribute for a century.

Further south the McCarthys (McCarthy Mór rather than King of Desmond since about 1400) held firmly to their possessions, though they paid head rent to the Earl of Desmond.

When the Statutes of Kilkenny were enacted in 1366 the "land of peace," or the Pale, embraced at least ten counties. During the century that followed this area steadily dwindled. No laws for its defence could check "the flight to England or into the towns of the labourers who could not endure a land of war, of priests who would not dwell among a Gaelic-speaking people, of the freeholders whose places the lords preferred to fill with Irish tenants." Finally, at a Parliament summoned by Poynings to Drogheda in 1494, it was ordered that a double ditch or wall six feet in height should be erected round what English territory still remained. The ditch ran from the sea at Merrion by Booterstown, Tallaght, Saggart, Newcastle Lyons, Ballymore Eustace, Clane, Clongowes Wood, Kilcock, Trim, Athboy, Mullagh to Ardee, and thence to the sea at Dundalk. This strip of territory, some fifty miles long by thirty miles broad, was reduced still further after 1494. To destroy English domination in this last remnant of Irish soil would indeed

have been an easy task ; but that the Irish never dreamed of doing, for the genius of their race lay in assimilating, not in exterminating.

**Dissensions between Colonial officials and the three great Earls. The Geraldines reach the zenith of their power.**

Engaged in a losing war against France abroad, then in a civil war at home, the English monarchy was compelled to look on and let Ireland go its own way during the fifteenth century. True it is that viceroys were sent to Dublin, two of them princes of the rival dynastic factions, two others military leaders of great ability, but these lacked support in men and money and in consequence made little headway. The English hold on Ireland was therefore very loose, but it was never entirely relaxed. At the Council of Constance in 1415 England won precedence over France on the plea that "Europe was of old divided into four empires or *regna*, that of Rome, that of Constantinople, that of Ireland and that of Spain ; but as that of Ireland had been by Adrian's Bull transferred to England, it is manifest that the King of England and his kingdom are among the more eminent and ancient kings and kingdoms of Europe, which prerogative the kingdom of France is not said to obtain." Weak indeed as was the Crown during the century, its claim to overlordship was not questioned. The great barons admitted the claim as an axiom ; the Irish princes did not reject it as long as it left them untrammelled in the government of their own territories. Thus neither Irish nor Norman-Irish (Gaelic now in language and manners and largely in blood)



troubled to expel the English when expulsion would have been easy. What their hopes or fears for the future were we cannot now determine; but into the speculations of Gael or Norman the dread foreboding certainly did not enter that a day would come when the English, grown strong, would ruthlessly destroy them both.

As the struggles between the earls and the English viceroys, on the one hand, and the earls among themselves on the other, are of no permanent interest to Irishmen they may be dismissed in a few brief sentences. James, foster-son of Conchobhar O'Brien, ousted his brother Thomas from the earldom of Desmond in 1413 and ruled till 1432. He was supported by Ormond; and aided in his turn that nobleman in his feud with Talbot, later Earl of Shrewsbury. But in truth the feud between Butler and Talbot was such that Desmond could not afford to maintain an attitude of detachment, for the question at issue was the advancement of England and Englishmen at the expense of the colonists. By the middle of the century the Irish earls had won. "The First Families henceforth ruled Ireland, made the parliament their court of registration, divided offices of state among them . . . and took into their hands all the prerogatives of the absentee monarchy."

James, Earl of Desmond, died at Newcastle West in 1462, and was buried at Tralee. Thomas, his son, succeeded. The young Earl and his kinsman of Kildare were now warm supporters of the Yorkists; whilst the Butlers adhered to the Lancastrian cause. Desmond defeated the Butlers in a bloody battle at Pilltown, near Carrick-on-Suir, soon after his succession to the earldom. As part of the ransom for Edmund



MacRichard Butler, captured in this encounter, two Irish MS. compilations—the *Book of Carrick* and some form of the *Psalter of Cashel*—were handed over to the Fitzgeralds. The Earl of Ormond, who died in 1478, and his successor, who died in 1515, spent most of their time in England, so that the leadership of the family in Ireland passed to a minor branch. Desmond and Kildare were thus left in undisputed control of the colony. Lest this should not be enough Desmond enjoyed for many years additional prestige as viceroy.

An Englishman named Sir John Tibetot (or Tiptoft) came to Ireland as Lieutenant in 1467. Before him and a Parliament which he assembled at Drogheda the Earls of Kildare and Desmond were summoned, that they might clear themselves of various charges that had been levelled against them. Tibetot determined to make this the occasion for a striking exhibition of English power, and launched a frontal attack on the two greatest of Irish noblemen. Using the colonial Parliament, which must have been well packed to prove so pliable an instrument in his hands, he introduced a Bill against them, on February 4, 1468, for “horrible treasons and felonies, as well in alliance, fosterage and alterage with the Irish enemies of the King, as in giving to them horses, harness and arms.” Coign (Irish, *coimhe*—maintenance) and livery (exacting from tenants food for man and horse and quartering for troops) likewise figured prominently among the charges. The act was passed without demur, and Desmond was seized by Tibetot and summarily executed before he could take flight or appeal. Kildare escaped to England, where he stayed till absolved from attainder by the same Parliament later in the year. James, the new Earl of Desmond,

carried fire and sword through the English settlements in Meath, and was but mildly appeased when Tibetot was beheaded by the Lancastrians. James likewise bound himself by oath never to attend a Parliament or Council of the Realm, and never again to enter a walled town that owed allegiance to the English King.

### **The Supremacy of Kildare.**

Kildare succeeded as Justiciar, and from this time forward was virtual ruler of the country. At his death in 1477 he was succeeded by his son, Gearóid Mór, "the great Earl." Gerald's sister married Conn O'Neill, and his daughters married McCarthy Riabhach, O'Carroll of Éli and Maghnus O'Donnell (later King of Tír Chonaill). Thus he had the closest connection with the leading Irish families; whilst he was at the same time supported by all the Norman-Irish of the country, save the Butlers. With such resources at his command he was strong enough to resist the effort of Edward IV. to dismiss him from office in 1478. Keating, Prior of Kilmainham, took it upon himself to exclude the King's nominee from Dublin Castle. Kildare called a Parliament at Naas to confirm his own high-handed action. Edward IV. reinstated him as Deputy in 1482, and he ruled undisturbed till the fall of the House of York.

When the new era began in England with the accession of Henry Tudor as Henry VII. in 1485, Kildare's appointment as Deputy was renewed. He married his sister Margaret to the Butlers, now high in royal favour, and there was peace between the two earldoms until 1492. Evidently unconvinced of the

stability of the Tudor throne, he supported the impostor representatives of the Yorkist cause, Lambert Simnel and Perkin Warbeck, against King Henry VII. Each time he was forgiven. The Tudor ruler's suspicions and fears had, however, been aroused, and he sent across a new Deputy, Sir Edward Poynings, in 1494, with a troop of Englishmen to fill all the important offices of government. Kildare was arrested and despatched to the Tower. By an enactment, later known as *Poynings Law*, the wide powers of the colonial Parliament were withdrawn; henceforth the King in Council, and his Deputy and Council in Ireland, would decide what bills were to be placed before Parliament in the latter country. At this time and long afterwards the colonists were quite content thus to curtail their legislative powers, as a measure of defence against the arbitrary rule of Deputies. The Statutes of Kilkenny were renewed, save those affecting the Irish language, which was now commonly spoken even within the Pale. War cries, like "Crom abú," "Shanid abú," "Lámh láidir abú," "Buitléir abú," were forbidden under heavy penalties.

Kildare was restored to the Deputyship in 1496, and given a free hand in Ireland until his death. He interfered in a dynastic quarrel of the O'Neills in 1498, when he introduced artillery into the North for the first time. A year later he gave his son to Aedh Ruadh O'Donnell to foster. Against MacWilliam Burke of Clanrickarde, who had married his daughter and treated her with disrespect and cruelty, he fought a great battle in 1504. To his hosting on that occasion came O'Neill, O'Donnell, O'Connor Ruadh, McDermott of Moylurg, O'Reilly, O'Farrell, O'Kelly, MacWilliam Burke of Mayo, O'Connor Fáilge and the barons of

the Pale. With Clanrickarde stood O'Brien of Thomond, O'Carroll of Éli and the chiefs of Ormond. The armies met at Cnoc Tuadh, near Galway, where the Clanrickarde-O'Brien combination was overcome after a desperate resistance.

With such forces as he had mustered at Cnoc Tuadh the Great Earl might easily have overthrown English power in Ireland; but to contemplate such a step a purely Irish outlook would have been necessary, and that was something which the Geraldines never possessed. However independent of English authority they might show themselves in act, they were always assiduous in professing obedience to the English Crown. Little did they think that this allegiance, voluntarily maintained when it could have been cast off without an effort, would bring, within two generations, death to themselves and disaster to their adopted country.

## CHAPTER IX.

### TUDOR AGGRESSION.

#### I.—TO THE DEATH OF QUEEN MARY TUDOR.

#### Fall of the House of Kildare. Gearóid Óg. Silken Thomas. The “Geraldine League.”

WHEN Gearóid Mór died in September, 1513, of a wound received in an encounter with the O'Mores, his son, Gearóid Óg, succeeded as ninth earl. Henry VIII. appointed the new earl Lord Deputy, for he did not feel strong enough as yet to manage Ireland without the aid of its greatest noble. Owing, however, to the intrigues of Wolsey, who hated the house of Kildare and was resolved to bring about its downfall, Gearóid soon found himself in serious difficulties. Summoned to England to give an account of his stewardship, with more than a hint that he could be steward no longer, he married a near relative of the King, and was able to return safely in 1523. His



Gearóid Óg (9th Earl of Kildare).  
(From a painting at Carton.)



brother-in-law, Piers Butler, now Earl of Ormond, was also striving to depose Kildare from his exalted place in Irish affairs. Again in 1526 he was called to London and imprisoned in the Tower. At his trial before Henry's Council he made a spirited defence against Wolsey, hurling many a pointed shaft, barbed



Arms, Armour, and Dress in Ireland, A.D. 1521.

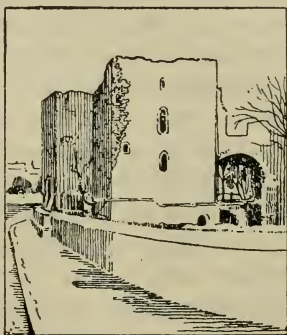
(From a drawing by Albrecht Dürer.)

with wit and sarcasm, against the person of the distinguished churchman. The latter was so incensed that he sent an order for Kildare's execution, but this was too much for the King, who countermanded the order, sent the Earl back to Ireland, and soon afterwards re-appointed him Deputy.

Called to London to answer further charges in 1533, he named his son Thomas Deputy in his stead. Thomas was then but twenty-one years old, and known chiefly for his love of fine raiment, which had won for him the

name of "Silken Thomas." The Earl was not long absent when a report spread—circulated, many think, by the enemies of his house—that he had been seized and executed. Without delaying to test the truth of the rumour or to consider the consequences of his intended act, Thomas threw off allegiance to Henry. He rode to St. Mary's Abbey, where the Council sat, and flung the Sword of State upon the table. "This Sword of State is yours, not mine," he said. "I received it with an oath and have used it to your benefit. I should offend mine honour if I turned the same to your annoyance . . . I am none of Henry's Deputy; I am his foe. I have more mind to conquer than to govern, to meet him in the field than to serve him in office." Thereupon he left the Council chamber and proceeded to organize his forces against English power. With the O'Connors of

Offaly and the O'Carrolls of Éli he swept the Pale from end to end. Archbishop Alen, his father's deadly foe, tried to escape from Dublin, but was caught at the Liffey mouth and killed by Thomas's followers; whether accidentally or by design it is impossible to say. Thomas, of course, had to bear the responsibility for this crime, and was excommunicated by the Vicars-General of the archdiocese. In these circumstances it is hardly surprising that his appeal to the Pope (whose authority Henry VIII. had now flouted) and to the Emperor Charles V. (uncle of Queen Catherine) for



Maynooth Castle.

aid should fall on unresponsive ears. Decisive in the war that followed was the fall of Maynooth, which might have held out even against the heavy artillery of the day had it not been betrayed by Thomas's foster-brother, Christopher Parese. After its surrender nothing but guerilla warfare remained feasible, and this was valueless in achieving permanent results. Thomas at length surrendered to his kinsman, Lord Leonard Grey, on the promise of personal safety, but this promise Grey was afterwards bribed to conceal. Grey, too, treacherously arrested Thomas's five uncles at a banquet and sent them to the Tower, where they died on the block together in February, 1537. Five months later Thomas left his cell for the last time to meet a similar fate.

As the Earl had long since died in prison there was now left of the great house of Kildare but two children, one of these already in Henry's custody, the other, Gerald, a boy of ten, still at large. To save this boy's life the whole of Ireland united in what has been called the "Geraldine League," with a success to be traced more in detail in the course of the present chapter.

### **Henry VIII. renounces allegiance to the Holy See. Effort to implicate Ireland.**

In 1521, Henry VIII. had entered the lists against Luther, and published a tract which won for him from Pope Leo X. the title "Defender of the Faith." Later, however, he grew tired of his wife, Catherine of Aragon, and sought to replace her as queen by a lady of his court, Anne Boleyn. With this end in view he represented to the Holy See that he was

troubled in conscience about his marriage with Catherine, and that he was anxious to have its validity re-examined. The case was tried in the usual way before ecclesiastical judges in England and Rome; and these, after mature consideration, pronounced a judicial verdict in favour of validity. Such a marriage no power on earth can dissolve, so the King was ordered to restore Catherine to her rights as his lawful spouse. But Henry was by this time a slave to his wilful passions, and, instead of obeying the Pope's command, prepared to dispute it, and to decide, on his own authority as a civil ruler, what were to be his obligations under the moral law. An "Act of Supremacy," declaring Henry supreme head of the Church of England, was passed through the English Parliament in 1534. Those who denied the King this title were to be regarded as traitors and punished as such with loss of property and life. Wolsey, whose advocacy of Henry's cause in the divorce question had ended in failure, and who was an object of dislike to Anne Boleyn, was dismissed, degraded and saved from the block only because he died on the way. Henceforth the King was surrounded by men who would go to any lengths to carry out his wishes. Chief of these in England were Thomas Cromwell, formerly servant to Wolsey, but now the King's First Minister, and Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, a man of ability but of uncertain principles and of little moral strength.

To the see of Dublin, left vacant by the death of Archbishop Alen, Henry appointed (in 1536) an Englishman named George Browne. The new prelate was an ex-friar of the Augustinian Order, who had distinguished himself by unqualified devotion to the King's interests during the divorce proceedings, and



who had afterwards rendered service to Cromwell in getting the royal supremacy acknowledged by the religious houses. His views on matters of doctrine, as far as he can be said to have had any views distinct from those of his masters, were influenced by the continental "reformers." He fawned on superiors, bullied inferiors, quarrelled with his colleagues, spied on the high government officials in Dublin, grasped at money whenever it came within his reach, married even before the civil power took it upon itself to regard the marriage of priests as lawful, alienated to his children the property of his see, and in general was despised by all who knew him. Such was the man to whom the "reformation" of the Church in Ireland was entrusted.

A Parliament held at Dublin in 1536 passed the "Act of Supremacy" and eight other measures for "the King's advantage," though not without opposition on the part of the proctors (representatives of the lower clergy: two from each diocese). Henry VIII. was thus given, as far as it lay in the power of Parliament to give, complete control over ecclesiastical affairs in Ireland; yet it is clear that the great majority of those who voted for the measure meant that it should be reconciled, in some vague way, with recognition of the Pope as the ultimate spiritual authority. Other Acts, such as that for the suppression of monasteries, met with more determined resistance from the spiritual lords (bishops, abbots and priors) as well as from the proctors, and were not carried until the latter, by a stroke of legal chicanery, were deprived of their legislative functions and expelled as usurpers from the assembly.

Henry's radical intentions were further emphasized



by a new Bill, introduced and carried on November 1, 1537. Faculties and dispensations in matters purely ecclesiastical were now declared to belong solely to the King. An oath was to be exacted from all clerics before ordination, from all students before their admission to degrees, and from various officials before entering on their offices, that they should "utterly renounce, refuse, relinquish and forsake the Bishop of Rome and his authority, power and jurisdiction." Whatever may be said of the "Act of Supremacy," this revised Act marks definitely the parting of the ways. He who took the oath attached to it put himself thereby outside the pale of the Catholic Church.

**Progress of the Reformation in Ireland to the death of Henry VIII. The Bishops and Clergy. The secular Princes. The People.**

Archbishop Browne of Dublin, and Bishop Staples of Meath (like Browne an Englishman), were at this period the only zealous supporters of the King's supremacy in Dublin. But Staples quarrelled with Browne's teaching on the private interpretation of Holy Scripture, and preached against him with vigour at St. Audoen's. Browne replied with still greater vigour two Sundays later at Christ Church, so that, instead of a reform party of two, there were really two reform parties of one. A number of the clergy in Dublin subscribed to the oath, but even these refused to preach the royal supremacy to the people, and Browne complains bitterly to Cromwell, in January, 1538, that "neither by gentle exhortation, nor evangelical instruction, neither by oaths of them

solemnly taken, nor yet by threats of sharp correction, can I persuade or induce any, either religious or secular, since my coming over once to preach the Word of God or the just title of our most illustrious prince." This holds, too, he says, of the priests who, before his coming, were notorious for their long sermons. Browne tried to expunge the Pope's name from the Canon of the Mass, but his orders to this effect, when not carried out by his own servants, were ignored. He burnt the "Bachall Íosa," one of the most venerated relics of the early Irish Church, as an object of superstition, and stripped his cathedral of its images. In letters to England he denounced the Deputy, Lord Leonard Grey, in unmeasured terms, because of his loyalty to Catholic practices. Amongst other crimes of which the Deputy had been guilty was the showing of respect to the ancient statue of Our Lady at Trim. During a visit, in August, 1538, to that famous place of pilgrimage, Grey had assisted at three or four Masses, kneeling devoutly in the sanctuary.

The following year, 1539, brought Browne much consolation. With Staples of Meath, Rawson, Prior of the Hospitallers at Kilmainham, Alen, Brabazon and Aylmer, officials of the Council, he undertook a journey to "the four shires above the Barrow," Carlow, Wexford, Waterford and Tipperary. While Browne and his spiritual colleagues preached, Alen and his lay colleagues held the assizes, so that evangelizing and hanging went on simultaneously. The bishops of Munster obeyed Browne's summons to meet him at Clonmel, and there, on January 18, 1539, two archbishops (Cashel and Tuam) and eight bishops subscribed to the Oath of Supremacy. By

this act they became schismatics and heretics. Shortly afterwards we find Pope Paul III. appointing new bishops to some of their sees, a proof that he regarded those who took the oath as outside the Catholic fold. Cromer, Archbishop of Armagh, also conformed, and a distinguished Scotch theologian named Wauchop was appointed by the Pope to administer the archdiocese.

As early as 1536 five monasteries (Bective, Tintern, Dunbrody, Baltinglass and Duiske) had been suppressed. Next year others were added, and in 1539 an Act for the general suppression of religious houses was carried. Grey, the Lord Deputy, and his Council strongly recommended that six abbeyes should be spared, among them St. Mary's Abbey, beside the capital, the College of Canons, attached to Christ Church, and the abbey of Grace Dieu near Lusk, the most famous convent school of the Pale. This request was not granted. All monasteries were therefore suppressed, save such as for the moment lay beyond the reach of the English arm.

In 1541 the bishops appointed by the Pope were called on by the Government to surrender their Bulls and receive Briefs of appointment from the King instead. At the same time they were proffered a new and more drastic form of oath, in which the supreme spiritual jurisdiction of the King was set forth in unequivocal terms. To take this oath, as a certain number of the bishops did, was equivalent to apostasy. Similarly the bishops appointed by Henry without authorization from the Pope had to subscribe to the Oath of Supremacy and renounce the jurisdiction of the Holy See. Placed in a desperate situation those who conformed tried to salve their

consciences with the aid of some subtle distinction ; viewed, however, in the perspective of history, their action admits of no defence. By taking the Oath of Supremacy they ceased to be Catholics.

However weak some of the bishops may have shown themselves in the effort to save their unhappy dioceses from material ruin, the clergy and people everywhere remained steadfast. No change had as yet been made in doctrine, save on the one issue of papal jurisdiction. Henry's purpose in closing the monasteries was simply to secure the proceeds of the plunder for his treasury. Against Protestant innovations from the Continent, such as the marriage of priests, he set his face with the greatest sternness. Thus the clergy and people of Ireland had but to ignore the new doctrine of royal supremacy, separate themselves from the false pastors who accepted it, apply to Rome directly for faculties and dispensations, and continue, in secret—if sheriffs and justices made it impossible in public—in the full exercise of their Catholic faith as formerly.

### Henry VIII. calls himself “ King ” of Ireland.

During the medieval period Irish political theory regarded the Pope as first Lord of Ireland, and the King of England as Ireland's secondary lord, through grant from the Pope and in subjection to him. This, of course, did not harmonize with Henry's claim to absolute supremacy in our island. He therefore took steps to enact, at a Parliament held in Dublin, in June, 1541, that “ His Highness and his heirs forever shall have the style and honour of King of Ireland, and it shall be deemed high treason to impeach this title or to oppose the royal authority.”



### Attitude of the Irish Lords and Princes towards Henry's supremacy, political and ecclesiastical.

Some of the Irish lords and princes were present at this Parliament and concurred in its decrees, which were explained to them in Irish by the Earl of Ormond. The Earl of Desmond, Lord Barry, Lord Roche, MacGiolla Pádraig of Ossory, O'Reilly of Breifne and others assisted in person ; whilst O'Brien of Thomond was represented by a bishop and a learned theologian. When Henry's new title and his supremacy over the Church were later proclaimed throughout the country, a number of the Irish princes signified their acceptance by indenture. Among these were O'Neill, O'Donnell, O'Connor Fáilghe, O'Dunn, O'More, O'Ruaire, MacMahon, McDonnell, MacWilliam Burke, O'Callaghan, Barry Óg and Barry Ruadh. In extenuation of their conduct the princes might have pleaded the example of two archbishops and twelve bishops who are given by the Deputy Sentleger, in an official report to Henry VIII., as having assented to the Act in its final passage through the Upper House.<sup>1</sup>

The princes and lords may not have taken their submission and their oath very seriously, but the fact remains that they did make submission and did take the oath rather than imperil their lives and lordships.

<sup>1</sup> Sentleger does not further specify who the archbishops and bishops were. If his report be trustworthy the archbishops would almost certainly be Browne of Dublin (appointed by the King) and Bodkin of Tuam (transferred by the King from Kilmacduagh), whilst the bishops would include the titularies to the sees of Ferns, Kildare, Cork and Ardagh (all royal appointments), with Staples of Meath, who had ostentatiously repudiated his obedience to the Holy See. Thus the number of genuine Catholic prelates who succumbed to inducements and accepted Henry's supremacy was relatively small.



Nor did they hesitate on occasion to protect heretical bishops and to profit by the spoliation of monasteries<sup>1</sup>; but we do not hear that they attempted anything resembling a crusade against the old faith, though we may suspect that they would have gone even that distance had they had the least hope of inducing the people to follow them. As a matter of fact, however, the proclamation of Henry's supremacy does not seem to have made a deep impression on the country. The event is one of which the Irish annals do not preserve the faintest record.

Thus at the death of Henry VIII. in 1547 the only active supporters of the break with Rome were the two bishops, Browne and Staples, and a few Dublin officials—like the bishops, English-born. What the Irish people thought of Henry's "reformation" we learn from the Four Masters, who describe it as "a new heresy and a new error in England, through pride, vain-glory, avarice and lust."

### **Protestant Doctrines introduced under Edward VI. Rejected by the people.**

With the accession of Edward VI. the Protestant party under Somerset obtained control of the government in England, and next year sent a nominee named Bellingham as Deputy to Ireland. In the same year, 1548, a *Book of Reformation*, newly arrived from England, and displaying as its chief feature derogatory treatment of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, was prescribed by the Deputy for use in the churches,

<sup>1</sup> Thus James, fourteenth Earl of Desmond, with some others, ejected the religious from their houses in Cork, Kerry and Limerick, and were rewarded with a portion of the spoils.

We hear of its adoption by Staples only, whose reward was, as a friend informed him, "more curses than ye have hairs of your head," and who came near to losing his life at the hands of his infuriated flock. In 1549 appeared the *First Book of Common Prayer*, which definitely abolished the Mass; and in 1552 the *Second Book of Common Prayer*, which admitted but two sacraments, Baptism and the Blessed Eucharist, and denied the Real Presence in the latter. Protestantism of the most extreme type was thus the order of the day. Dowdall, the King's Primate, resigned his see and went into voluntary exile. Wauchop, the Papal Primate, arrived in Tír Chonaill in 1551, but O'Neill and O'Donnell were more anxious to show loyalty to the English than to show honour to the Pope through his archbishop, and the blind prelate had soon to leave for Paris, where he died within the year. About this time the church of Clonmacnois—the most revered name in the annals of Irish monasticism—was plundered by the English: "they took away the bells, destroyed the images and altars, not sparing the church books, nor the window glass." In spite of violence, however, the country remained steadfast in the old faith. Bellingham was an able general, but the opposition to his "reforms" was so intense and widespread that no ability on his part could procure their adoption. All that had been achieved up to Edward's death in 1553 was the maintenance of the King's supremacy, the appointment of the King's nominees—some of them married men—as bishops to Irish sees, and the introduction of the liturgy in English, with a suggestion that it should be translated into Irish. The "reform" in Ireland was thus a decided failure.

Whatever traces of religious change remained were

obliterated by Queen Mary soon after her accession ; save that she left the property of the suppressed abbeys in the hands of its lay possessors. Bale of Ossory, the most violent of the "reform" bishops, escaped with difficulty from his diocesans and found refuge beyond the sea. Browne was deposed, and retired to his own country, where he died in obscurity. His place was filled by another Englishman, Hugh Corren, who had been chaplain to the Queen. Dowdall again became Primate, but this time as a Catholic bishop, with papal approval. Mary's severity in England had no counterpart in Ireland, since there were no Irish Protestants to persecute. Thus the issue became once again purely political. Mary's Catholicism did not make her a whit more lenient towards those whom she regarded as her rebellious subjects ; nor did it make these a whit more obedient to an authority which in their heart of hearts they persisted in regarding as usurped.

### **Effort to secure an alliance with France, and with French aid to throw off the English yoke.**

We have seen how, about 1520, the new Tudor movement for a complete conquest of Ireland was begun, and soon brought well on the way to success by the destruction of the great Kildare earldom. English military organization, both at home and in Dublin, was now so superior to anything which our people could oppose to it that the Irish princes had to reconsider their position. The ablest among them came to believe that foreign assistance would be necessary before national unity could be achieved, and an army fitted out capable of meeting the forces of

the aggressor. Thus we find James, eleventh Earl of Desmond, allying himself with France in 1523, and endeavouring to do likewise with the Emperor Charles V. in 1529. To the credit of the Geraldine it must be said that his object in these alliances was a free and independent Ireland. For reasons of general European policy, into which it would be out of place to enter, the first alliance came to nothing, while negotiations for the second were cut short by Desmond's death.

After the execution of Silken Thomas and his uncles the English expended every ounce of skill and energy in endeavours to get the boy Gerald, the last representative of the Kildare family, into their possession. No less determined was the effort of the Irish to save his life. He was sent first to Thomond, then to Desmond, next to the McCarthy country, later back again through Thomond to the Clanrickardes, then to the Burkes of Mayo, from them to Tír Chonaill, and finally to the Continent, where he was befriended by the Emperor Charles V., Francis I. of France, the Prince Bishop of Liège, the Pope, and many others. Henry was highly mortified at the failure of his agents to secure the person of the sickly boy, and put the late Deputy, Lord Leonard Grey, to death on the plea that he had connived at his escape. The kind reception everywhere extended to young Gerald shows the friendly feeling towards Irishmen which the continental peoples entertained. When the boy's education in Italy was complete he was brought back to the French court, and kept there for use against the English in Ireland should an opportunity present itself.

An expeditionary force of 15,000 was collected at



Brest in 1544, ready to be sent at a moment's notice to Ireland, but a sudden change in the European situation led to the enterprise being postponed. Francis I. decided to marry Gerald Fitzgerald to Mary, the young Queen of Scots, but Francis died in 1547, and Henry II., his successor, reversed his father's policy, decreeing that Mary's husband should be his own son, heir to the French throne. After numberless disappointments Gerald at last grew weary, submitted to the English, who restored him to part of his estates and to his titles. He returned to Ireland in 1554 "amid great rejoicings," and lived henceforth as a loyal servant of the Tudors, adjusting his sails, with much dexterity, to the varying winds that blew.

### Negotiations with France renewed.

With the accession of Henry II. the House of Guise became all-powerful in France, and the Catholic League, under its direction, became a great force in Europe. About this time, too, the bishops of the Church, convened by the Holy See, met at Trent in the opening sessions of a memorable Council, whose purpose was to consider measures of genuine reform. A new Order, the Society of Jesus, destined to render priceless services to the Church, had likewise been founded by Ignatius of Loyola. The Catholic world was waking slowly to a consciousness of its strength; and Ireland, as a Catholic nation, exposed to the violence of a Protestant aggressor, might look with confidence henceforth for its sympathy and its aid.

Dr. Wauchop, at first Administrator but later Archbishop of Armagh, Cormac O'Connor, son of the prince



of Uí Fáilghe, and George Paris, a dispossessed gentleman of the Pale, ably represented Irish interests at the French court. Conn Bacach O'Neill was in the conspiracy, despite his earlier acknowledgment of English supremacy, and his acceptance of the title "Earl of Tyrone" from Henry VIII. In 1549 O'Neill and O'Donnell took an oath of fealty to the French King, and agreed to support with their full strength the forces he hoped to despatch for the expulsion of the English from Ireland. An expedition was soon fitted out in France, and was expected to reach Ireland in the course of 1550. Conn O'Neill was meanwhile bribed to betray the plot to the English, who made feverish preparations to maintain their hold on the country. At last the fleet of 160 sail slipped anchor at Brest and arrived within sight of the Irish coast, only to encounter a terrible storm in which sixteen of the greatest ships were wrecked, and the remainder driven headlong into the northern seas. Had this fleet met with better fortune, English dominion in Ireland might have been destroyed within a few weeks.

During 1550 the Irish envoys in Paris, reinforced now by the Scots, did their utmost to secure the sending of another strong force to Ireland. Henry II., however, was hard to convince, for he hoped to gain by diplomacy from a weak England all that his troops could gain by war. Thus he let favourable opportunities for intervention slip by, one after another, until he found himself at last so situated that he had to sue for peace with England. This check he regarded as temporary, and he protested that he would come to the help of Ireland as soon as he could do so with effect.

**Further Franco-Irish negotiations. Treachery of George Paris. Anglo-French Agreement in which Ireland figures.**

Mary of Guise, the French-born Regent of Scotland, now gave enthusiastic support to the movement for a French expedition to Ireland. Negotiations were hampered by the treachery of George Paris, who was ready to regain favour with the English by betraying the deepest secrets, but was arrested and imprisoned in Scotland just in the nick of time. Important despatches, too, fell into the hands of the imperial governor of the Netherlands, who communicated their contents to the English as a move in the diplomatic game against France. Matters at this stage took a new and entirely unexpected turn. Edward VI. was obviously destined for an early grave, and Northumberland was intriguing to exclude Mary Tudor from the succession, in favour of Lady Jane Grey, who was betrothed to his son. Knowing that he could not carry through his plans without the aid of a foreign power, he entered into negotiations with France. Finally an agreement was arrived at by which France was to give Northumberland military assistance when Edward died, and was to receive Ireland as a reward. But Northumberland reckoned without his host. English popular opinion supported Mary, who showed herself in this crisis a lady of high courage and rare determination. Thus a fortnight after Edward's death, ere the French had time to mobilize a force of any strength, Mary was seated firmly on the throne, and Northumberland was a hunted fugitive, with nothing in prospect but the block. French agents again negotiated directly with Irish princes ; but no expedition was sent, and

the solitary good result of Franco-Irish friendship was a growing sense of unity within the country.

### **Aggressive Policy of Queen Mary Tudor.**

#### **The first Plantation.**

In the ecclesiastical sphere Queen Mary has to her credit the restoration of Catholic worship in Ireland; but in the domain of secular affairs her rule compares unfavourably even with that of her father. Henry would have exterminated the Irish nation with an easy conscience, but he hesitated to embark on a policy that would certainly be costly and quite possibly ineffective. Thus he strove, on the whole, to be conciliatory, and, he earns a grain of praise from the annalists, as the best of a bad company. Mary did not scruple to hazard extermination on a limited scale. Sentleger, a man of humane dispositions, was recalled in 1556, and Fitzwalter (afterwards Earl of Sussex), a vigorous military leader, sent in his stead. Fitzwalter had orders to expel the O'Connors and the O'Mores—and with them, of course, the rest of the inhabitants—from all save a small portion of Leix and Offaly. English settlers were to be imported and planted in the confiscated territory. In compliment to Mary and her husband, Philip of Spain, the newly settled districts were to be shired under the names of King's County and Queen's County. Similarly a strong fort to be built in Leix was to be called Maryborough, whilst the fortress of Daingean in Offaly was to be re-christened Philipstown. It need hardly be said that the Irish made a desperate effort to save their property, and fought fiercely against Fitzwalter and his planters. War of the most repulsive kind



Irish Chieftain of Tudor times in full dress, with armed Kerne and Horse-boy.

The chief wears a leathern-quilted jack, or coat of mail, beneath a capacious mantle, and a leathern helmet chequered with bars of iron. He is armed with a large broadsword. (From John Derrick's *Image of Irelande*, 1581.)

continued in these regions for half a century. Finally the leading O'Mores, with their more distinguished supporters, less than three hundred persons in all, were transplanted to Kerry. Most of the O'Connor chiefs had perished in the conflict, but a few retained some portions of their former principality. The plantation, saved thus after a hard fight from destruction, "prosperously continued" until the days of Cromwell, when it was further strengthened by the infusion of new English blood to replace those of the settlers who had become Catholics.



## CHAPTER X.

### TUDOR AGGRESSION.

#### II.—TO THE DEATH OF QUEEN ELIZABETH.

**The Rise of Shane O'Neill. He purposes to make himself undisputed King of Ulster. He is inaugurated "O'Neill."**

ON his submission to Henry VIII. in 1543, Conn Bacach O'Neill was created Earl of Tyrone, with remainder to his son Matthew (named Baron of Dunganon), whose mother was a woman of low estate at Dundalk. The English had cause to regret this arrangement, which ignored the claims of Shane, Conn's eldest legitimate son, the rightful heir to the earldom, even according to their own law.

By the time he reached manhood Shane was remarkable for his brilliant parts and for his exceptionally arrogant spirit, a trait that won for him the nickname *Seán an Díomais* (Shane the Haughty) from his own people, and caused Lord Deputy Sidney to declare, "I believe that Lucifer was never puffed up with pride and ambition more than O'Neill is." From the Deputy's remark we may judge that Shane was disliked by the English as a very formidable obstacle to their schemes. This in sober truth he was; for he used his superior wits to checkmate them at every turn, and he was unscrupulous, like themselves, in his choice of means.



Shane never made any secret of his purpose, which was to succeed his father as prince of Tír Eoghain, and to extend his sway over all the North. "My ancestors were kings of Ulster; and Ulster is mine, and shall be mine," is a pithy statement of his programme. Lord Deputy Crofts



Shane O'Neill.

(From a portrait in the possession of the late Francis Joseph Bigger, Irish antiquary.)

brought an army against him in 1551, and twice in 1552, but could accomplish nothing, and his successor, Cusack, a year later, was equally unsuccessful. For a long spell after this the English left him undisturbed, and Shane was able to give undivided attention to the establishment of his kingdom. The O'Neills of Clann Aodha Buidhe, the O'Donnells of Tír Chonaill, and the McDonnells of Antrim, who would all suffer loss of prestige if Shane's aims were realized, naturally opposed his advance, and Shane's first task was to reduce them to submission. His opening campaign against the O'Donnells ended in a severe reverse. The men of Tír Chonaill, who were altogether too weak to withstand his forces in the field, watched their opportunity and fell on his camp while the army was asleep. The result was an utter route of the O'Neill troops. Shane himself barely escaped with his life, and he lost his beautiful black horse, "Young Eagle," whose worth in money was estimated at a fabulous sum.

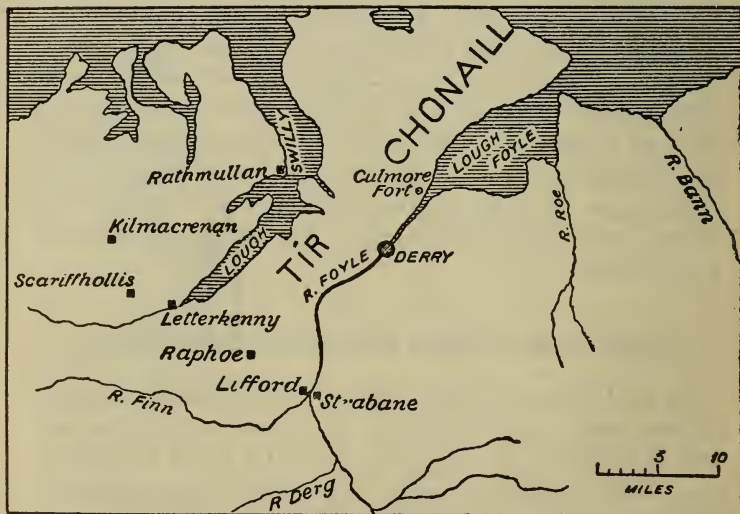
Next year, 1558, Matthew, Baron of Dungannon,

was slain in combat by some of Shane's followers. A year later the aged Conn O'Neill was borne to the grave, and Shane was inaugurated "O'Neill," according to ancient ceremonial, at Tealach Óg. When Sidney, the Deputy, objected to this, Shane requested to know on what grounds. His right to succeed to Conn as earl was as indisputable as his right to the title of "O'Neill." To this argument Sidney could make no reply; nor could Elizabeth, to whom Shane wrote bland letters in Latin, praising himself as the most obedient of subjects, and promising to spend the last drop of his blood in her service. Elizabeth pretended to be impressed, but all the while she was secretly pushing on military preparations against him; whilst Shane, with equal insincerity, was intriguing secretly with Spain.

### **League under English leadership against Shane.**

In 1561 the new Deputy, Sussex, acting on Elizabeth's orders, made tempting offers to O'Donnell, McDonnell and O'Reilly in the hope of attaching them to himself in a league against Shane. The offers were accepted, and an attack on a grand scale was planned, with the Earl of Kildare co-operating on the English side. Having heard of the conspiracy in good time, Shane swooped down upon Breifne and disabled O'Reilly; then fell upon Tír Chonaill and carried off O'Donnell and his wife. The league was thereby ended, and Sussex was compelled to have recourse to parleys. But Shane refused to attend a conference, alleging as his reason that the English offer of a safe conduct was worthless. A long list of atrocious attempts, by poison and assassination, on his own life and on those

of other princes is given in support of this charge. Sussex could now do nothing save try conclusions with Shane once again on the battlefield; and this time with only his own resources. He tried, but had decidedly the worst of the encounter. A month later Shane wrote a charmingly courteous letter to Sussex,



Part of the O'Donnell lands intimately connected with the history of Shane O'Neill and the history of Red Hugh.

asking for his sister in marriage. The irate Deputy replied with another plot for his assassination, but this miscarried, like previous plots of the same kind.

With a humour that was sometimes very broad, Shane pretended that all his campaigns were "in the Queen's service," and that he was exceedingly anxious to visit his "sovereign lady" in London, if guaranteed safety and provided with English money (for the Irish

currency was debased and was not accepted beyond the Irish Sea). What his purpose was in undertaking such a journey we can but guess. Perhaps he hoped to secure an agreement which would acknowledge his supremacy in Ulster, or at least leave him a free hand in that province. At any rate, matters were satisfactorily arranged, and Shane, with his retinue of gallóglagh arrived in London early in 1562. He realized as well as any man that he was taking his life in both hands by appearing thus among his enemies, but he was bold by instinct and training, and felt confident that he could talk his way through. So, in fact, it happened. Elizabeth succumbed to his soft speech and to his charming ways, and when her plans were further upset by the slaying of Brian, eldest son of the Baron of Dungannon, she allowed him to return unharmed.

In the autumn of 1563 a treaty was signed at Benburb, in which Shane was recognized as "O'Neill" and as ruler of Ulster. But the treaty was a mere pretence. Shane had warned John of Desmond "that the English have no other eye but only to subdue both English and Irish of Ireland, and I and you especially," and he was negotiating for help with France, Spain and the Queen of Scots. Sussex, on his side, made two attempts to capture Shane by treachery, and, when these failed, sent him a gift of poisoned wine which brought him and his household to the very door of death.

**Shane proceeds with the consolidation of Ulster. His defeat and tragic Death.**

Free for the moment from English interference, Shane turned his attention once more to the O'Donnells

and the Antrim Scots. He defeated O'Donnell's army and captured its leader Conn, son of Calbhach, the reigning prince. Soon afterwards he routed the McDonnells in a fierce encounter at Gleanntaisi, in their own territory. The family was at this time led by four brothers, James, Aonghus, Somhairle Buidhe and Alasdair Óg, of whom all but the last took part in the battle. Aonghus was slain; James and Somhairle Buidhe taken prisoners; but the former died shortly afterwards of his wounds. Shane penned a letter to Elizabeth, inviting her to rejoice since all Antrim was reduced now to her obedience; then he marched hot foot to the West, and exacted tribute as King of Ulster from Clanrickarde.

Sidney, again Deputy, attacked Shane in 1565 without result. Next he incited the O'Donnells, led now by Aodh, brother of Calbhach, to renew their ancient quarrel with O'Neill. In the winter of 1566 these invaded Tír Eoghain and retired with booty. Shane crossed the Swilly in the spring of 1567 with a large army to retaliate. The O'Donnells defended themselves with the courage of desperation, and finally carried the day. Shane barely escaped; and, according to the Four Masters, was so moved by his defeat that his mind lost its native strength and balance. Such, indeed, may have been the case, for it is hard to imagine how, if fully sane, he could have trusted himself to the mercies of the McDonnells, whose family he had treated so ruthlessly. This, however, is the course which Shane decided to adopt, having released Somhairle Buide, who had been his prisoner for two years. The McDonnells received him with apparent friendliness, but the fires were smouldering, not extinct, and at a banquet in their camp at Cushendun, a dispute



arose, in the course of which O'Neill was slain. His body was dug up by the English governor at Castlefergus, who had the head cut off and despatched to Dublin, where it was exhibited on the Castle battlements.

So died Shane O'Neill at the early age of thirty-five. Though his private character was not without blemish, and his principles as a diplomat—like those of his enemies—were low, yet he stands forth as a man of kindly disposition and of high culture, a distinguished ruler and an able general. Towards his fellow-countrymen of the North he was undoubtedly harsh, but his severity was deliberate and to his mind justified, for his object was a strong Ulster, the obstacles to which could only be removed by superior force.

### **The Desmond Confederacy. James Fitzmaurice Fitzgerald.**

Since 1558 Gerald, sixteenth Earl of Desmond, had been head of the Munster Geraldines. He always professed loyalty to Elizabeth, save in matters of religion, but this reservation was resented, and brought upon the Earl's head suspicion and active dislike. He had the misfortune, too, to be at deadly feud with the house of Ormond, whose Earl ("Black Tom") was a special favourite with the English Queen. The quarrel gave the Tudor ruler and her Council a welcome opportunity of interfering in Desmond's affairs. In 1562 he was called to London and imprisoned in the Lord Treasurer's house, but was released the following year on conditions, and allowed to return home early in 1564. A conflict with Ormond at Affane led to his re-arrest by the Deputy in 1565, and his return to

London as a prisoner, but the anti-Ormond faction secured his acquittal. Again in 1567 he was seized, along with his brother John, by the Lord Deputy Sidney (who had been goaded to this step by many a bitter letter from Elizabeth), and sent across to London to undergo imprisonment in the Tower. After their trial in 1568, when Desmond threw himself at the Queen's feet and surrendered his vast estates into her hands, they were sent back to their dungeons, where they were exposed to cold and hunger, and at times so poor that they lacked money to buy shoes.

Elizabeth, whose personal interest in religion was of the most meagre kind, became a Protestant from policy once she had succeeded to the throne. The jurisdiction of the Pope in matters spiritual was again renounced, the *Book of Common Prayer* re-introduced, the Mass abolished, and aid rendered to French, Flemish and Scottish Reformers. Attendance at Protestant worship on Sundays and holydays was enjoined under penalty of fine. The Oath of Supremacy was prescribed for all about to enter on any office, civil or ecclesiastical. A Parliament held at Dublin in 1560 ratified these Acts for Ireland, despite opposition from the Earl of Desmond and others; but little effort was made to enforce a law that was notoriously unpopular among the people. Toleration, however, ceased in 1569, when Elizabeth was excommunicated by Pope Pius V. Henceforth the whole machinery of the state was set in motion to destroy the Catholic faith and make Protestantism—in act as well as in legal theory—the religion of the Irish nation.

To protect their rights, spiritual and temporal, a confederacy of Irishmen was formed under the leadership of Desmond's cousin, James Fitzmaurice



Battle between Irish and English in Elizabeth's reign.

English horsemen in the forefront are pursuing Irish cavalry, who are hurling back their spears to defend themselves. Some, unhorsed, are using their two-edged swords. In the background the Irish foot are retreating before the arquebuses of the English. The Irish piper has been thrown. The sketch is taken from Derrick's *Image of Ireland*—an unfriendly source—which, nevertheless, represents the Irish military equipment substantially as it was—a system which differed from that of England, but had its own features and efficiency.

Fitzgerald. Soon Irish soldiers were sweeping across Munster to the cry of "Pápa abú"; but the movement was ill-organized on the military side and degenerated into a series of raids. Ormond hastened across from England, and succeeded in detaching his brother Edmund from the League, promising that the bogus claims of Sir Peter Carew (an English adventurer of the most shameless type) to Edmund's lands should be ridiculed by the authorities. The McCarthys, O'Briens and Burkes in turn submitted; O'Neill in the North was inactive; and finally only Fitzmaurice himself was left in the field. His power, however, was still such that the unruly province of Munster was constituted a special administrative area by the English, Sir John Perrott, a reputed son of Henry VIII., being selected as its first President. Fitzmaurice held out till February, 1573, when he made peace with Perrott at Kilmallock on reasonable terms. Next year the Earl of Desmond made a humiliating submission, agreeing, amongst other things, to maintain all bishops, ministers, and preachers of the new creed in Ireland, and was released from detention with his brother.

### **Negotiations with Philip II. of Spain and with the Pope for help.**

Meanwhile the Archbishop of Cashel, Maurice Fitzgibbon, had been sent to Spain as envoy by the Irish princes, who empowered him to offer the crown of Ireland to anyone whom Philip might select, subject to the approval of the Holy See. "In this manner they hope to continue in their wonted and unceasing obedience and attachment to the Roman Pontiff, as well as in the unity of their Holy Mother, the Catholic



Church of Christ, and in their ancient friendship and alliance with the Royal House of Spain, to which nation the entire nobility of this nation originally belonged.” The document bearing the Irish offer purports to have been signed by the four archbishops and eight of the bishops of Ireland, by the Earls of Desmond, Kildare, Clanrickarde, Thomond, and Tyrone, by O'Donnell, O'Ruairc, O'Kelly, O'Connor Donn, O'Connor Ruadh, O'Connor Sligo, O'Connor Fáilghe, O'Carroll, O'Madden, O'Sullivan Bearra, O'Sullivan Mór, O Mael Seachlainn, McCarthy Mór, McCarthy Riabhach, MacWilliam Burke, MacGiolla Pádraig, Mac Murchadha, and others. Never before were Irish and Anglo-Irish so united in an effort to free their common country from the common foe.

With a dilatoriness that has become almost proverbial, Philip II. kept turning over in his slow mind the answer he should make to the Irish proposal. He treated the envoy with the honours usually paid to the ambassadors of foreign sovereigns, but he taxed his patience to breaking point by his inaction. The problem which Philip had to solve was certainly not easy, for whilst anxious to help the Catholic cause in Ireland, a friendly policy towards Elizabeth, as matters then stood, promised greater benefits to Philip's country. Affairs were further complicated by the arrival at the Spanish court of Thomas Stukely, soon to be known as the “Duke of Ireland.” This unprincipled adventurer was an Englishman by birth and education. For two years he had been one of the most notorious of English buccaneers ; he had betrayed French secrets, talked treason with the Spanish Ambassador in London, squandered his wife's large inheritance in riotous living, turned Protestant to please Elizabeth, and coined money to pay his debts. Bankrupt in honour



and fortune, he crossed to Ireland in 1565, and found a welcome from the Deputy, Sidney, an impecunious knight like himself. Unfortunately for Stukely's advancement, the money which Elizabeth had invested in his piracies had been lost through his negligence, and she now angrily thwarted every effort of her ministers to find him a lucrative position. In fact a day arrived when Stukely found himself behind prison bars in Dublin Castle. Here he made the acquaintance of Father David Wolfe, a native of Limerick and a member of the Jesuit Order, who in 1560 had been appointed Papal Nuncio in Ireland. Father Wolfe formed a high opinion of Stukely's character and confided to him information of which that worthy was afterwards able to make use. Despairing of a return to Elizabeth's good graces Stukely not only turned Catholic and Irish patriot, but set off, when released, for Philip's court, where, with characteristic effrontery, he posed as an Anglo-Irish noble. Soon he had wormed his way to Philip's favour, and for practical purposes superseded the Archbishop as Irish representative. Some years elapsed before the good churchman, who had endured the greatest hardships in the service of his country, regained Philip's confidence. He died in Portugal about 1578, on the eve of an expedition for which he had so long vainly negotiated.

Meanwhile Father Wolfe had escaped from the Castle, after a cruel confinement of just five years. His release was effected in so masterly a fashion that it is supposed to have been planned by Stukely. The Nuncio left Ireland in September, 1573, taking with him for education abroad, Fitzmaurice's eldest son, then a boy of twelve. At Lisbon Father Wolfe became intimate with the Spanish Ambassador, Don Juan

de Borgia, and wrote at his request a detailed description of Ireland, which the Ambassador undertook to lay before his sovereign. This valuable treatise, bearing date 1574, throws much light on the civil and ecclesiastical affairs of the country, as viewed from the Irish standpoint. Its practical purpose was to encourage Philip II. to help Ireland against Elizabeth. Don Juan of Austria was suggested as an acceptable king. Experts had expressed the opinion that an expedition of about four thousand men would suffice to wrest the land from the English, but Father Wolfe insists that at least treble that number be sent, under a Captain-General who should be a duke or great prince—generous, kind and affable, for that is the type of leader whom the Irish respect and love. Later in the year Father Wolfe was enabled to put these views personally before the King. Whilst at Madrid he received sympathy and support from Dr. Nicholas Saunder, an Englishman educated at Winchester and Oxford, destined to join in the first Spanish expedition, and from Father Patrick O'Hely, an Irish Franciscan, destined soon to be Bishop of Mayo and to die on the scaffold at Kilmallock.

**James Fitzmaurice Fitzgerald in Rome. A Force equipped for service in Ireland. Its fate.**

Soon after Desmond's submission to the English James Fitzmaurice left Ireland to seek for help among Ireland's friends abroad. In due course (February, 1577) he reached Rome, where he found Stukely, who had fought with credit under Don Juan of Austria at Lepanto, held in some estimation at the Papal court. A small force of about 1,000 men was organized for service in Ireland, and, without the

least hesitation, put under Stukely's command. Fitzmaurice's patience had given way many months before and he had fitted out at Lisbon a miniature expedition of his own. Having despatched Father Wolfe and Dr. O'Ryan, Bishop of Killaloe, to Madrid, to help on the Irish cause with the King, he took with him Dr. O'Hely and started for Ireland, in a small Breton vessel, with arms, ammunition and men. After a month of useless struggle with wind and waves the boat was driven back on the Spanish coast. To crown their misfortunes the master suddenly disappeared with the ship and all their property. Fitzmaurice hastened overland to Brittany in the hope of recovering what he had lost, and was at St. Malo when Stukely set sail from Cività Vecchia with his troops in the summer of 1568. When news of Fitzmaurice's mishap reached the Papal commander at the Portuguese port of Cascares it discouraged him profoundly. Whilst in this melancholy mood he was tempted to a complete change of plan, and, true adventurer that he was, readily succumbed. With the approval of the Roman authorities, he threw in his lot with the young king, Sebastian, who was on the point of starting on a campaign against the Moors. It need only be added that Stukely's hopes of plunder and glory were belied, for on September 1, 1578, on the disastrous field of Alcázar Quivir, the Christian army was annihilated. Stukely as well as Sebastian were numbered with the slain.

Fitzmaurice was sorely mortified but not daunted by this betrayal, for he was resolved to go to Ireland "with sword and cloak," if he could find no other provisions. Having gathered together a small force, hardly a hundred strong, for the most part Basques and Italians, he set sail for Ireland, with the Bishop

of Killaloe, Dr. Saunder, and Matthew de Oviedo (an enthusiastic Spanish Franciscan Friar, afterwards Archbishop of Dublin) and after a favourable voyage reached Smerwick, where he established himself on the old peninsular fort called Dún-an-Oir. As everything depended upon common action he issued a proclamation to "the prelates, princes, lords, estates, citizens and people of Ireland," asking them "to agree and join together" against Elizabeth, for if only they would unite "it is certain that there is no power in this realm able to withstand our forces." Passionate as was the appeal, it fell upon deaf ears. Desmond, with sombre memories of the Tower, patched hose and broken shoes, chose the safer course and sent news of Fitzmaurice's arrival to Drury. Next he marched with his forces to Dún-an-Oir, but retired without molesting the invaders. These left the fortress and proceeded to the wood of Claonghlais (Cleanglass or Clonlish in southern county Limerick, near Charleville) where they deployed and awaited developments. Fitzmaurice himself, with a small detachment, separated from the main body with the intention of visiting the Abbey of Holycross, but he was challenged by the Burkes of Clanwilliam at Barrington's Bridge, on the Mulcair, near Limerick. In the encounter which ensued the high-minded James Fitzmaurice met his death. His place as leader of the movement for liberation was taken by John of Desmond.

**The Earl of Desmond forced to take the field. Movement in Wicklow under Lord Baltinglass. Massacres.**

When Gerald, Earl of Desmond, returned from the Tower in 1573 his chief desire in life was "to keep his



head and his lands secure." But the English were greedy for his estates, and it availed him nothing to protest or even to prove his loyalty. When his brother John attacked and defeated, near Druimcoillecaoile (Drumcollogher), a detachment sent by the President of Munster, Drury, who in one year had hanged 400 persons "by justice and martial law," the Earl gave no support; nor did he reply when Drury's successor, Malby, marched through his own territory, burning and slaughtering. He remained inactive even when Malby, with contemptible malice, smashed to pieces the Geraldine monuments in the Franciscan church at Askeaton (where the Earl at the time was in residence) and burnt the monastery and town. Finally, in November, 1579, he was proclaimed traitor on the slenderest of pretexts and compelled to defend himself.

The campaign was conducted on the English side with appalling cruelty, especially in County Limerick, from Askeaton to Newcastle West. The sickening details may be omitted. Neither women nor children, neither the blind nor the aged nor the decrepit were spared. Pelham, the Lord Deputy, showed mercy to no man who did not come with bloody hands, having slain somebody more important than himself. The Geraldines, on their side, while avoiding direct contact with the enemy, inflicted considerable damage on his forces, but their movement lacked unity and central direction of plan. Thus opportunities were let slip from which important advantages might have been drawn. Such an opportunity was the revolt of James Eustace, Viscount Baltinglass, who found the tyranny of the Dublin government and the increased severity against Catholicism more than he could endure. John of Desmond and Dr. Saunder visited his camp and



addressed words of encouragement to his men. With the aid of Fiach MacHugh O'Byrne he annihilated, at Glenmalure, an English army sent against him by Grey of Wilton, who had been appointed Deputy in September, 1580. After this victory the whole of Leinster might easily have been aroused against the enemy but, obvious as was the need for widespread and concerted action, Desmond made no effort to secure it. He had, it is true, hurried to Smerwick to meet the 800 Spaniards, Italians and Irish who (again accompanied by Fray Matthew de Oviedo) had landed and entrenched themselves at Dún-an-Óir. The commander of this expedition was Bastiano di San Joseppi, an Italian, and a soldier of the poorest quality. Desmond and his staff insisted that the fort must be abandoned and the forces taken inland, but this advice San Joseppi obstinately refused to follow. Fray Matthew, in disgust, left the expedition and retired with the Earl to the interior of the country, but was soon afterwards despatched to Spain to plead with the King for reinforcements. Meanwhile Ormond had arrived at the coast but refrained from attacking the invaders, both because the English fleet had not yet made itself visible and because his own troops had been handled severely by Desmond on the march southwards. The Lord Deputy, however, eager to wipe out the disgrace of Glenmalure, proceeded to Smerwick with a strong army, and in the first week of November, 1580, laid siege to the fort. Assistance was rendered by the fleet, which by this time had made its appearance. After the bombardment had lasted for a day, San Joseppi lost courage, parleyed, and finally surrendered the fortress on the understanding that the lives of the garrison should be spared. How this undertaking was

kept Grey relates in the frankest terms to Elizabeth: "I sent straight certain gentlemen to see their weapons and armours laid down and to guard the munitions and victual then left from spoil; then I put in certain bands who straight fell to execution." The bodies were thrown into the sea. Spenser and Sir Walter Raleigh were present at this massacre; and Elizabeth wrote a letter of thanks to the Lord Deputy for his loyal and effective services.

Instances of similar treatment had by this time become unpleasantly familiar in Ireland. In 1574 Walter Devereux, Earl of Essex, was invited by Sir Brian O'Neill, with whom he was then on peaceful and friendly terms, to a family party and banquet. While the meal was in progress Essex had the house surrounded, and his host and hostess, with 200 of their followers, "men, women, youths, and maidens," murdered in cold blood.

In July of the following year the same Essex, during a period of truce, ordered a treacherous assault on the island of Rathlin, where the McDonnells had placed their old and wounded, their women and their children, for safety. One and all these poor defenceless creatures were hurled into the sea. The head of the McDonnell house, Somhairle Buidhe, had the horrible experience of looking on from the Antrim coast while this crime was being perpetrated. Small wonder that "he was like to run mad with sorrow."

Two years later, in 1577, the English authorities invited a number of Irish leaders, O'Connors, O'Mores, O'Carrolls and others to a friendly conference at the Rath of Mullaghmast, five miles from Athy. While the discussion was in progress they were set upon by bands of English soldiers and massacred to a man.

### Collapse of the Desmond movement. Tragic Death of the Earl.

Dr. Saunder died of dysentery in the wood of Claonghlais in February, 1581, having been assisted in his last moments by the Bishop of Killaloe. All through that year the Geraldines were active, especially in the Butler country along the Suir, but they had some narrow escapes and the outlook for their future looked bleak. In January, 1582, John of Desmond was slain by an Irish soldier in the service of Captain Zouch. "When he was mortally wounded," reports the Spanish Ambassador in London to his king, "the English asked him if he was sorry for what he had done against the Queen, whereupon he said with his last words that his only sorrow was that he had not life granted him to do a great deal more against her in defence of the holy Catholic faith. His death caused great rejoicings here, as they considered him a man of energy, who ruled his brother and the insurgents." Meanwhile the sufferings of the people in the South became of a character which no words can describe. From Cashel to the uttermost point of Kerry, say the Four Masters, the lowing of a cow or the voice of a ploughman was scarce to be heard. Ormond claimed to have killed 5,000 men in a few months; but the number that fell by the sword was insignificant compared with the thousands who died of famine or of the diseases which hunger engenders. Spenser, though a friend and adviser of Grey, admits that the Deputy was called "a bloody man who regarded none the life of Her Majesty's subjects no more than dogs, but had wasted and consumed all, so that she had nothing almost left but to reign in their ashes." He relates

likewise that the survivors in Munster were unable to walk, but crawled out of woods and glens ; “ to a plot of watercress or shamrocks they flocked as to a feast.”

By 1583 Desmond was a fugitive with only a tiny group of followers, for even his stoutest supporters, like the Seneschal of Imokilly and the Condons, had made terms with the enemy. His courage was still high though his resources were quite exhausted, and he would listen to no suggestion of surrender. By day he lay concealed as best he might, by night he travelled on to some safer hiding place. In November of that year he was betrayed by his own foster-brother, Eoghan O'Moriarty, who not long before had sworn to Ormond, at Castlemaine, that he would kill the Earl on the first occasion that offered. When the soldiers entered the miserable hovel where the Earl lay, they found him sickly and feeble, tired and weary of the world that had brought him so much disappointment and misery.

Acting on an order from Domhnall O'Moriarty, one Daniel Kelly, a soldier who had served in England, cut off his head and received the reward therefor from the English Government. The head was sent to Ormond, and despatched by him to Elizabeth, who commanded it to be exposed on London Bridge. Desmond was but 45 years old when he met his death, but his health had never been robust, and had remained consistently feeble since the affray at Affane, where he was badly wounded. Contemporaries had thus come to regard him as a very aged man. Against his fair fame nothing serious can be urged, though pages of virulent abuse might be quoted from English sources, whilst the Four Masters, writing from the purely Gaelic standpoint, treat his character with scant sympathy. He temporized perhaps, in more than one trying crisis,



beyond what honour and conscience would allow, but on the whole he remained true to faith and fatherland and he sacrificed in the end, like so many others of his noble family, his life and his fortunes for both. On his career, so cruelly rich in sorrow, Ireland has no need to look back with shame.

His only son, James, was reared under careful surveillance in England and not allowed to return until the prestige of his birth was calculated to prove useful in winning the retainers of his father from their loyalty to the "Sugán" Earl. The welcome extended to him at Kilmallock was enthusiastic, even tumultuous, but when he repaired on the following Sunday to service in the Protestant Church admiration was turned into derision. The unhappy youth was thereupon withdrawn to England where he sank after a few years into an unhonoured grave. Kelly, who slew his father, was executed later for highway robbery; whilst O'Moriarty was hanged on a gibbet before his own door by the Lord of Lixnaw.

### **The Plantation of Munster.**

Desmond's broad lands, reckoned at some 574,628 acres, were declared forfeit to the Crown following an Act of Attainder passed in 1586 by a Parliament sitting in Dublin. In this assembly, be it noted to their discredit, the nobles and gentlemen of Ireland, both of Gaelic and of Anglo-Norman descent, were well represented. Proclamations were issued in England declaring that splendid opportunities were now offered to young men of good birth ready to enrich themselves with Irish estates. The land was divided into plots of 12,000, 10,000, 8,000, 6,000 and 4,000 acres, on which approved



English settlers were to be planted, according to a well-conceived plan. Thus every holder of a 12,000 acre plot was to retain 1,500 acres for his own use, and colonize the remainder with eighty-six English families. No resistance was expected, now that the land was devastated and desolate, and the House of Desmond exterminated. The few Irish, who half survived,



Irishmen and Irishwomen in the time of Queen Elizabeth.

(From the Addisonian MS. in the British Museum.)

would, it was hoped, obligingly disappear. Spenser's plan was to make ceaseless war on these in winter, when the leafless trees would afford them no hiding-place and the sodden ground no bed, when the sharp blast and the biting air would rack their naked bodies and make them long for delivery through death. Yet, strange to say, the Plantation failed. The Undertakers (as the planters were called) could guarantee

to bring across English farmers, but the farmers refused to come; and of those who took the risk many regretted their rashness and returned. Little by little the Irish were restored to their old lands, but by arrangement with the undertakers, who thus became the first of the landlord class. An enquiry made in 1592 showed that only 245 English families then

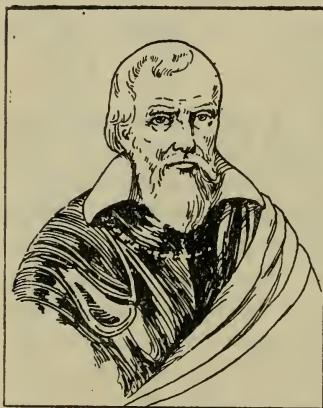
remained in Munster. Many of these did not survive the great national movement under the two Hughs. Many of the remainder became Catholics, married Irish wives, adopted Irish speech and manners, and in Cromwell's time were in no way distinct from the purely Gaelic population.

**Resistance renewed on a National scale. Hugh O'Neill and Red Hugh O'Donnell, the Eagles of the North.**

Elizabeth's policy, like that of her Tudor predecessors, was to destroy the traditional Gaelic life of Ireland, and reduce the country to uniformity with England in law, religion, language, customs and all things else. There seemed now to be no insuperable obstacle to the realization of this aim. The great Anglo-Irish nobles were no more ; the Irish princes were weak, and were made ever weaker by the simple expedient of providing them with rivals from amid their own kinsfolk. Even the danger of an over-powerful Deputy was removed when Presidents were appointed to administer the provinces. In the execution of her designs the Queen was served with excellent instruments—hardy buccaneers, courageous and enduring, strong in the field, cunning in the Council chamber, merciless to the fallen foe. Extermination and confiscation were weapons which they could handle with skill and with effect.

Yet it was just at this moment, when the absolute supremacy of England seemed to be assured, that a challenge was hurled against it from the most unexpected quarter. Hugh O'Neill, second son of Matthew of Dungannon, had been carried off to London after

his father and his elder brother had been slain. He was educated carefully in Sidney's house, and in due course produced in Ulster—a polished English gentleman—to maintain English interests against the Gaelic-minded members of the O'Neill family. Impossible as it may appear, he soon won his way to the hearts of his own people, whilst retaining (with intervals of suspicion)



*O'Neill*

Hugh O'Neill.

the good opinion of the Government in Dublin. In 1585 his claim to the Earldom of Tyrone was admitted. With Toirdealbhach Luineach, then "O'Neill," he was on friendly terms, and when the latter resigned, in 1593, Hugh was elected as his successor without a dissentient voice. He was then about fifty years old, and universally esteemed as the ablest man in Ireland. Brave, far-seeing, conciliatory, reserved, he was to renounce

security and ease at the call of his country and people and become a more formidable protagonist of Irish national rights than England had encountered since the days of the invasion.

Inseparably connected with Hugh O'Neill in the grateful memory of the race is Aodh Ruadh (Red Hugh) O'Donnell. His father was Hugh, first Earl of Tyrconnell, who had accepted an English title, but had rejected English interference in the govern-

ment of his territory. Red Hugh's mother was the Inghean Dubh, a McDonnell of the Isles, "the head of advice and counsel to the Cinél Chonaill," who though "much praised for her womanly qualities, had the heart of a hero and the soul of a soldier." The mere fact that he had such a mother was enough to render the boy suspect, so the English sought to secure him as a hostage, but the Inghean Dubh made certain that he should not be placed within their power. An elaborate plan to kidnap the boy was then conceived by Lord Deputy Perrott. He had a ship bearing cheap wines sail for the North in September, 1587. The vessel soon arrived at Rathmullen Harbour in Loch Swilly, and proceeded to do a brisk trade with the dwellers along the coast. Red Hugh, then a boy of fifteen, was being fostered in the neighbourhood by the MacSweeneys, and was invited to come aboard to a small social gathering, where some choice wines would be sampled. Suspecting no evil the youth accepted the invitation, and rowed out to the ship with a few attendants. Once on board he was taken into custody, disarmed and conveyed to Dublin, to languish in the Castle behind prison bars. Elizabeth refused to listen to any suggestion for his release. After three years Hugh managed to escape, but was recaptured through the half-feebleness, half-treachery of the O'Toole, Lord of Powerscourt. This time he was put in irons. On Christmas Eve, 1591, he made another bid for liberty, availing of a file, which somehow had come into his possession, to cut through his bonds, as well as those of Henry and Art O'Neill, captive sons of Shane. The three escaped to the Dublin mountains, where for two nights they lay without food or shelter in the snow. When help,

sent by Fiach MacHugh O'Byrne, at last arrived, the youths were all but dead. Efforts to restore Art O'Neill were of no avail; but Hugh and Henry recovered and were carried to Fiach's castle at Ballinacor.

As soon as Hugh was able to sit upon a horse he was conveyed north to Ballyshannon, under a strong guard of the "rebels" of Leinster. Another twelve months passed before he was out of the doctors' hands; he arose then slightly lame, but "a lion in strength and might of determination and command, of a countenance so alluring that he fascinated all who might behold him." Though he had not yet reached the full age of manhood, he was inaugurated "O'Donnell" amid great rejoicings, and entered into an alliance with Hugh O'Neill.

### Preparations for the coming struggle.

Hugh O'Neill waited with consummate patience for the proper time to strike. The English might have entertained some suspicions of his loyalty, but these could hardly have been grave, for his conduct might in all cases be described as studiously correct. When vessels of the ill-fated Armada were wrecked on the Irish coast in 1588,<sup>1</sup> and the Spaniards who escaped

<sup>1</sup> Some twenty or more ships of the great Spanish fleet were wrecked on the coasts of Ulster and Connacht. The English authorities, who had foreseen and prepared for such catastrophes, executed as many of the survivors as fell into their hands. Bingham, Governor of Connacht, reported that 2,000 Spaniards had been drowned between Loch Foyle and Dingle within a period of thirteen days, whilst 3,000 others had been put to death. What of the rumour (circulated by the English soon after these events, and repeated as an ascertained fact by subsequent writers), that the Irish of the day, nobles and common people alike, availed of the awful calamity to plunder and murder the traditional friends of their race and country? Outrages



were kindly received and sheltered by the people, Hugh held ostentatiously aloof. But all the while he was training his army for the approaching conflict, replacing their obsolete weapons with muskets, and drilling them in the most up-to-date way. Finally the plan of campaign was discussed with Red Hugh, and overtures made by the two princes to the nobles of the other provinces. At the moment the country was peaceful. Munster had not yet recovered fully from the horrors of the Desmond wars. In Leinster Fiach MacHugh and his lieutenants were not alarmingly active. Connacht, however, was in a very disturbed state owing to the efforts of Perrott and Bingham to impose on the people a land settlement on English lines, known as the "Composition of Connacht."

certainly occurred, for brutal men were not lacking in a country harassed by famine and incessant wars. The passionate Inghean Dubh induced her husband, O'Donnell, to offer a large batch of Spanish prisoners to the Government as a last bribe for the release of her son, Red Hugh. A hundred men from a wrecked vessel were massacred on Clare Island, possibly without just cause. O'Donnell and O'Doherty were accused of murders in Tír Chonaill, but the allegation has not been proved. A number (by no means all) of the refugees were handed over to the Governor of Connacht by O'Flaherty and others in West Galway, but only after threat of torture and traiters' deaths. On the other hand, examples of humane and kindly treatment abound. The Burkes of Mayo, O'Ruairc, MacClancy, Con O'Donnell, MacSweeney, Toirdealbhach O'Neill of Strabane, O'Catháin's people and Somhairle Buidhe McDonnell are all mentioned as benefactors of the castaways. According to the Deputy there were many hundreds of these in the North "dispersed in poor estate into divers parts, and yet so favoured and succoured by the country people that it will be hard to hunt them out." In the highly-coloured narrative of his sufferings forwarded to Philip II. by Captain Cuéllar, a supercilious Castilian aristocrat who happened to be among the survivors, the Captain shows how he escaped the English and made his way from Sligo to Dunluce and thence to Scotland through the aid of various Irish friends. In a word, the general treatment of the Spaniards by our countrymen was marked by kindness and a hospitality that in the circumstances was often heroic.

### Beginning of Hostilities. Irish successes. Battle of the Yellow Ford.

O'Neill's preparations were as yet hardly complete when a chance skirmish led to the outbreak of hostilities. Maguire of Fermanagh and O'Donnell had been in conflict with the Deputy, and in 1595 were in danger of being overwhelmed, had not Cormac O'Neill, Hugh's brother, come to their aid. The three united routed the Deputy at a ford on the Erne, since called Béal Átha na mBrioscadh—"Ford of the Biscuits," from the great quantities of provisions abandoned by the English in their flight. Seeing that he was certain to be mentioned as an accomplice in this attack, Hugh rode down with great coolness to Dublin, and asked for proof that Cormac had been acting with his knowledge and approval. No proof could be offered, and O'Neill was allowed to return unharmed. Elizabeth, furious at the news that so favourable an opportunity of taking him prisoner had been lost, ordered his instant "punishment." There was no use in dissembling further, and Hugh O'Neill took the field as the champion of an independent Catholic Ireland.

Against him, under Norris and Mountjoy were seasoned troops, trained in Flanders, where they had met and defeated the best armies of France and Spain. Yet in the first encounter of importance at Clontibret on the Erne, the English under Norris were checked by O'Neill and had to retreat. The castle at Monaghan then fell, and almost all the chiefs of Connacht joined the confederacy. Elizabeth now tried negotiations, but the discussions ended in failure; next she tried to break up the league, but the con-

federates declined to treat with her singly. They had made an urgent appeal to Spain for help, and had received rich promises in return; but the expedition was postponed time after time in the orthodox Spanish fashion.

Norris and Bingham were now recalled and replaced by a new Deputy, Lord Borough, and a new President of Connacht, Sir Conyers Clifford. In 1597 these planned to attack the North simultaneously from three sides. Clifford was to advance from Connacht over the Curlews; Barnewall from the midlands through Tyrone; and Borough, with the main army, through Newry and Armagh. But O'Donnell, O'Ruairc and Maguire defeated Clifford and drove him back to Boyle; O'Connor Fáilghe and Walter Tyrrell annihilated Barnewall's force near Mullingar, at a place since called Tyrrell's Pass; whilst O'Neill defeated and slew Borough and the Earl of Kildare at Drom Fliuch on the Blackwater before they could reach Dungannon. Negotiations followed, but merely as a cloak for military activities. Elizabeth gathered another army; whilst the confederates roused Leinster and tried to get the Spaniards to exert themselves.

In 1598 O'Neill opened his campaign by besieging Portmore, a fortress of importance on the Blackwater. An army of 4,500 foot and 600 horse under Marshal Bagenal was sent to relieve the fortress by Ormond, now Lord Deputy. The marshal was particularly anxious for an engagement, owing to a private grudge against O'Neill, who had eloped some years previously with his sister. Protected by armour and well supplied with guns and artillery—advantages which the Irish did not possess—it was thought that nothing could stop the victorious advance of the English troops.

When, however, the armies met at Béal-an-Átha-Buidhe (the Yellow Ford) on the Blackwater, two miles from Armagh, on August 14, 1598, O'Neill's superior generalship carried the day. Bagenal himself lay among the fallen, and the remnants of his army



Part of Ulster prominent in the war of liberation led by the two Hughs.

fled, disorganized and dispirited, back to the Pale. Since the days of Strongbow the English in Ireland had suffered no such defeat.

The effect of this victory on the whole country was electrical. O'Connor Fáilghe, Owny O'More, Tyrrell and the O'Byrnes overran Leinster. Connacht declared for the confederates, all save the Earl of Clanrickarde, who had been brought up by Elizabeth in England, and chose now to support the enemies of his country. He was severely handled, in consequence, by O'Donnell.

In Munster, the "anatomies of death," as Spenser had called them twenty years before, rallied to the national standard under McCarthy, O'Sullivan, O'Brien, the younger Geraldines, the Roches, Burkes and many of the Butlers. Scant mercy was shown to the planters, only such of whom escaped as made their way to the towns. But the autumn season, of vital interest to the agricultural freeholders who formed the main body of O'Neill's army, prevented him from following up his victory as he would have wished.

### **The movement for National liberation at its height. Discomfiture of Essex.**

Elizabeth was now faced with the intolerable prospect of seeing the Irish people masters of their own country and owners of their own homes. To retrieve her losses and destroy the confederacy she built up a new army 19,000 strong. Reinforcements were to be sent over every two months. The command was given to her chief favourite, Robert, Earl of Essex, son of that Walter Devereux who had been guilty of the Ulster massacres. Under the new commander were a goodly number of England's best captains, "the flower of our army," tried on many a hard-fought field. Essex had strict instructions to concentrate on the North and bring "the arch-traitor Tyrone" to subjection. But friends in Dublin were persuaded that the campaign had better begin in Munster, and Essex followed their advice. Thus in April, 1599, he sallied south to Limerick, with 7,000 men well armed and not impeded by excessive baggage and supplies. Owny O'More attacked his rearguard near Maryborough, at a place called "Bearna na gCleitidhe"



(Pass of the Plumes), from the many helmet plumes lost there by the discomfited English. At Croom he was defeated by the confederates—Geraldines, McCarthys, Burkes and others. All along the route there was continued skirmishing which had a bad effect on the nerves of his army. By June Essex was back in Dublin, with diminished numbers, and nothing whatever gained. Elizabeth's anger found expression in letters of bitter reproach, but she sent him reinforcements and renewed orders that he should attack O'Neill. Essex arranged to do this in August. It was planned that Sir Conyers Clifford, an able soldier, should raise the siege of Collooney Castle (held by one of the O'Connors in the English interest) and attack O'Donnell. When Clifford tried to give effect to this part of the programme he was met by Red Hugh O'Donnell, with MacDermott and Brian Og O Ruairc (on the Irish side despite his Oxford training), and his force destroyed. Clifford himself fell with 1,400 of his men; and the refractory O'Connor made his peace with Red Hugh.

Unbalanced by the defeat of his lieutenant, Essex lost all desire to confront O'Neill, so that when the two armies met near Louth and O'Neill suggested a parley the English commander was not averse to the idea. They met at a ford, and "talked a half an hour with none to overhear them." Next morning seven high officers from each army came together and arranged a truce of six weeks, to be renewed, if needful, for periods of the same length. O'Neill had signified to Essex the conditions on which he was willing to make peace—absolute freedom of religion, abandonment of the policy of plantation, government

of the country by Irishmen, etc. In a word, he was ready to recognize English sovereignty provided Irishmen were left untrammelled to govern the country according to their own wishes. The document containing these terms fell into the hands of an implacable enemy of Essex, Sir Robert Cecil, who re-drafted the conditions in language that was highly provocative, and passed on this manuscript to Elizabeth. Little wonder that the Queen thought the proposals insolent, eminently reasonable though they were. Essex lost royal favour, and, after a crazy revolt, his head.

**Desperate effort of the English to retrieve their position. Mountjoy and Carew.**

So far the English had been not merely beaten but humiliated, and Hugh O'Neill knew that, with the pertinacity of their race, they would marshal their great resources and make a desperate bid to win back what they had lost. Ireland's only hope lay obviously in a united front, so in November, 1599, Hugh appealed to the towns, and, early in 1600, he made a circuit of Munster and Leinster. His reception everywhere showed that he was regarded by the nation as virtual High-King. Already James Fitzthomas Fitzgerald (the *sugán* or "hay rope" earl of English writers) had accepted from his hands the title "Earl of Desmond." Realizing, however, the difficulties of the situation, Hugh had appealed for help to Spain, the greatest of the Catholic powers, through Cornelius O'Ryan, Bishop of Killaloe, and had offered the crown of Ireland to a Spanish prince. Military success the movement could not secure without heavy guns, and

these could only be procured from a continental sympathizer.

Mountjoy, the new Viceroy, decided to concentrate on Ulster. Dowcra, one of his lieutenants, was despatched by sea to Culmore, on Loch Foyle, where he landed and fortified a position. Later he moved further along the coast and seized Derry. When the harvest ripened Dowcra sallied forth with a picked band and destroyed all that his arm could reach. Carew, the new President of Munster, adopted the same policy in the South. Cattle, wherever they appeared, were slain, and houses everywhere burnt, so that famine and misery were soon universal. Garrisons stationed in convenient centres put this policy into execution over the widest areas of territory. If general hunger did not suffice to detach the princes from the confederacy, then quarrels were to be promoted within their families, and assassins hired to remove those whom diplomacy had failed to ensnare.

The effects of so ruthless a policy were soon apparent. John Fitzthomas, Earl of Desmond, was captured by treachery and died in the Tower. A few weeks later Finghin McCarthy Mór met the same fate. Owny O'More was killed in a petty skirmish. By the end of 1601 only O'Neill, O'Donnell and Walter Tyrrell still managed to hold their own. The position of these became yet more difficult when Niall Garbh O'Donnell, Red Hugh's cousin, was won over by Dowcra and attached himself to the English side. Hugh, however, returned from Connacht, expelled Niall and the English from position after position, and looked like driving them finally into the sea when, in September, 1601, news was borne north that a Spanish fleet had arrived at Kinsale.

### The Disaster at Kinsale.

Contrary to O'Neill's instructions the small army sent by Philip III. had landed in the south. In numbers it hardly reached 4,000, and its best artillery had been lost through mismanagement, for it had been placed on board vessels that in the event proved utterly unseaworthy. Worse than all else, perhaps, was the choice of commander. Don Juan del Águila was a man of but little courage and of very mediocre parts. As his force was incapable of much else he just held Kinsale, and sent messengers to O'Neill and O'Donnell to come and join him. This they chivalrously prepared to do, though again and again they had declared that if an army landed in Munster it must be in a position to maintain itself without special help from its Irish allies. By November Mountjoy and Carew, with the Earls of Thomond and Clanrickarde, had completed their lines and settled down to a formal siege of the town. Red Hugh waited only to arrange for the defence of his native territory; then he set forth for the south, evaded Carew's forces, and after a lightning march along the mountains arrived before Kinsale on November 23. A fortnight later he was joined by O'Neill. From the military point of view the position was now remarkable: the Spaniards were shut in by the English fleet in the harbour and by Mountjoy's troops, whilst Mountjoy, in his turn, was enclosed between the Spaniards and O'Neill.

It need hardly be said that the Spaniards fought well, while the fighting lasted; but Don Juan grew tired of the siege, and urgently entreated O'Neill and O'Donnell to undertake a general assault on the English lines. O'Neill disapproved of this plan, but was overborne by O'Donnell. A surprise attack was

decided on for the night of December 23. In some manner, which has not yet been explained—probably through the treachery of the citizens—the English were informed of the Irish project, and enabled to take all possible steps to meet it. Their task was rendered easier by the fact that the guides lost their way in the intense darkness, so that day was already breaking when O'Neill's divisions, spent and weary, appeared before the English positions. Late as was the hour O'Donnell's forces had not yet arrived. O'Neill gave the order to retire; but Mountjoy, noticing his predicament, brought companies of horse to the attack. These forced the Irish ranks, which fell back on the men of Tír Chonaill, just then coming up, and all was confusion. The retreat degenerated into a rout, which ended only at Innishannon.

Though the number slain was small the moral effect of this mishap was the greatest imaginable. O'Donnell pleaded that the Irish army should return and renew the blockade, but he was outvoted, and for three days and nights neither slept nor ate. At a final council of war it was decided that Red Hugh should go to Spain for further help; that Hugh O'Neill should return to Ulster; and that Walter Tyrrell should stay with O'Sullivan Bearra in Munster, and make what headway he could against Mountjoy.

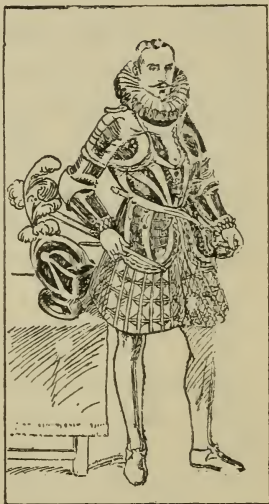
### **End of the Campaign. Siege of Dunboy Castle.**

#### **Retreat of O'Sullivan Bearra.**

Del Águila soon made terms with Mountjoy, and sailed back to Spain with men, arms and money. The town and the various castles entrusted to his keeping were handed over by him to the English.



As for Red Hugh O'Donnell, he arrived safely at the Spanish court, but was poisoned next year at Simancas by James Blake, a prominent citizen of Galway, acting as an English agent. MacGeoghegan, who commanded the garrison of 143 in O'Sullivan's castle at Dunboy, defended that stronghold with heroic constancy through a memorable siege. When the walls had been torn by artillery and only a few of his men survived, the castle was taken by storm; MacGeoghegan himself was slain as he was on the point of putting a torch to the powder magazine. O'Sullivan and his followers (about a thousand in number), now homeless fugitives, held out in their native district until the winter cold made their position intolerable. They then decided to march through hostile lands to O Ruairc's castle in Leitrim, where they were assured of welcome and shelter. Their awful sufferings on the way are described by Philip O'Sullivan, in an account which yet survives, and which still makes sorrowful and humiliating reading, for their enemies on the way were McCarthys, Barrys, O'Kellys, Burkes and others of their loyalist Catholic countrymen.



O'Sullivan Bearra.

### The Treaty of Mellifont.

Resistance was maintained in the North for yet a little while, but it was obvious now to O'Neill and

O'Donnell that ultimate success was out of the question. Reluctantly, therefore, they decided to submit. O'Neill and Mountjoy met at Mellifont in the spring of 1603 to arrange conditions. A treaty of peace was signed on March 30, when Elizabeth was already dead, though O'Neill was as yet ignorant of the fact. The northern leader remained Earl of Tyrone, with ownership of the Tyrone lands, and free exercise of the Catholic religion. All this he agreed to hold by English tenure, under the provisions of English law. Ruaidhre O'Donnell, brother of Red Hugh, became Earl of Tyrconnell on the same terms. O'Neill and O'Donnell later crossed to London, where the treaty was confirmed by King James I.

### **The Flight of the Earls.**

Prudent and patient as was his wont, Hugh O'Neill settled down to make the best of what position the Treaty of Mellifont had left him. The English, however, greedy for his lands, had him surrounded by spies who made his life intolerably burdensome. He was harassed with constant lawsuits, and delated regularly to the Council in Dublin for alleged conspiracies and plots. In May, 1607, O'Donnell and Maguire, his friends in the leadership of Ulster, were accused by St. Lawrence of Howth of a plot to seize Dublin Castle, and murder the Lord Deputy. No evidence was adduced in support of the charge, but the feeling was prevalent in the North that the safety of all was threatened. Added to this was the increasing severity against Catholics. During the early part of Elizabeth's reign there had been little active persecution, but fifteen at least were martyred within

the decade 1570-80, and some eighty others between 1580 and 1603, whilst many endured lesser penalties than death with heroic fortitude. The more active policy was resumed by James I., who in one of his first proclamations announced that he had no intention of showing tolerance in matters of religion. Jesuits and seminary priests were ordered to quit the country forthwith. Whatever the promises given or the obligations undertaken Ireland was therefore in practice to be transformed into an English and Protestant state.

Hugh O'Neill sadly concluded that there was no longer a nook in his own land where his declining years could find rest. On September 9, 1607, he visited his friend, Sir Garrett Moore, at Mellifont, and at his departure was noticed to weep abundantly, taking leave of every child and servant of the house in turn. A ship lay at anchor in Loch Swilly, ready to bear him into exile, whither Ruaidhre O'Donnell, with other relatives and friends to the number of ninety-nine, had agreed to accompany him. On September 14, 1607, the little band took a long last look at the brown hills of Tír Chonaill and saw the shores of Ireland disappear for ever from their view. Their destination was Spain, but contrary winds drove them in upon the French coast, and they were glad to land in safety at Le Havre. The English Ambassador demanded their extradition, but this was refused, though the exiles were asked not to prolong their stay in France. They crossed, accordingly, into the Spanish Netherlands, and were received with honours befitting their station at Brussels and Louvain. Thence they were despatched to Rome, where Pope Paul V. treated them as royal princes, and did all a loving father could



With the departure of the great Hugh Ireland was left leaderless and stricken as seldom before in her long history. "Woe to the heart that meditated; woe to the mind that conceived; woe to the council that decided on the project of their setting out on that voyage," cry the Four Masters, voicing in pitiful accents the anguish of the nation. The day of spoliation was now at hand. "Plantation followed plantation, oppression followed oppression, vindictiveness was the precursor to vindictiveness; and, as a consequence risings ushered in risings, until the whole of a beautiful country became a living wound."

But the end was not yet.



## CHAPTER XI.

### LEARNING IN MEDIEVAL IRELAND.

THE Anglo-Norman Invasion, as we have seen, brought destruction to the great monastic schools, but the tradition of learning was so powerful that it survived the loss. Genealogies were compiled, homilies, sermons and other forms of religious literature composed, history recorded in prose and verse, as during the earlier centuries. It must, however, be said that authors now tend to keep increasingly to the beaten track, and that the period, on the whole, is one of distinct decline. "There is great technical skill exhibited, but little robust originality ; great cleverness of execution, but little boldness of conception." Yet for so much as was achieved we have reason to be grateful. Had the invaders succeeded in bringing Celtic civilization to an end, as for long they threatened to do, it is not at all certain that they would have replaced its literature by something equally admirable, for their inactivity in the fields of science and scholarship was very marked.

#### **The Bards. Prominent Bardic Families. Bardic Schools.**

After the coming of the Normans the term *file* is superseded, gradually and almost imperceptibly, by the term *bárd*, applied earlier to an artist of inferior standing. The bard continued to receive the elaborate

*file* training, extending over many years. In the traditional manner, too, he was generally attached to some princely house, whose greatness it was his duty to eulogize. Distinguished representatives of the bardic order were the families of O Dálaigh, O h-Uiginn, Mac an Bháird, Mac Aodhagáin, Mac Bruidheadha, Mac Daire and Mac Craith.

No early account of a bardic school survives, but there is a late description which probably holds good of the whole period during which the bardic institution flourished. From this we learn that the course opened about Michaelmas and ended on the Feast of the Annunciation, March 25. The college usually consisted of a long low group of whitewashed buildings, warmly thatched, and situated cosily in some secluded hollow or glen. Rooms were, of set purpose, kept windowless and dark, so that all distractions, even the most commonplace, might be excluded. New students were examined by ollamhs and lecturers, and assigned to various grades according to their capacity. Pupils whose knowledge was as yet elementary were placed in the lowest classes, where they were instructed in the technicalities of verse and set some simple exercises in the use of the classic metres. Such as had already made progress were placed under the care of higher teachers. Those whose studies were far advanced were directed by the chief ollamh himself, who called them into his presence each morning after breakfast, appointed a subject for the day, and then set them off to their dark rooms to compose. At supper hour a servant came round with candles and pens, and each student wrote down the results of his day's labours. The poems were then handed in to the professors, supper was served, and

the youths amused themselves till bed-time. Provisions sufficient for the college seem to have been provided by the neighbouring husbandmen. On Sundays and holydays work was suspended, and the students betook themselves to the houses of the countryside, where they were admitted as honoured guests into the family circle.

### Celebrated Bards.

To the thirteenth century belong Muireadhach Albanach O Dálaigh (c. 1214-40) and Donnchadh Mór O Dálaigh (died 1244). The former wrote on religious as well as on secular topics, and is said to be ancestor of the Macvurrichs, bards to the McDonnells of the Isles. Donnchadh Mór is styled by the Four Masters "a poet who never was and never shall be surpassed." Almost all his poems deal with religious subjects; quite a number, indeed, are in praise of the Blessed Virgin. He was buried in the abbey of Boyle, Co. Roscommon, of which holy house he is believed to have been abbot; but the tradition to this effect is not very trustworthy. Seán O Dubhagáin (died 1372) wrote in poetic form a long work of research on the septs of northern Ireland. He died leaving the work unfinished, but a younger contemporary, Giolla na Naomh O h-Uidhrinn, took it up where he left off and brought it to completion. Tadhg Mór O h-Uiginn (died 1318) and Tadhg Óg O h-Uiginn (died 1448) were writers who enjoyed great popularity.

Towards the end of the sixteenth century a collection of some sixty or seventy poems by the leading bards of Ireland—MacCraiths, O'Coffeys, O'Higginses, Mac Eochaidhs, O'Husseys, O Mael Conaires and others

—was made for the O'Byrnes of Dublin and Wicklow, and is still known as the *Book of the O'Byrnes*.

Just at this time the fatal consequences of ill-success in the struggle with the English were beginning to be felt, and many of the princely houses were no longer able to maintain the hereditary grandeur of their estate. Their poverty was indeed such that they could not now afford hospitality even on a modest scale. To break their spirits further by reminding them forcibly of their evil plight, Mountjoy and Carew hired Aonghus O Dálaigh, a poet of quick wit and ready tongue, to journey round the country as a satirist. Aonghus harped mercilessly on the poverty of the O'Callaghans, the gloom of MacGillicuddy, the bad wine of the O'Sullivans, the feebleness of the O'Reillys, the vicious instincts of the Fitzgibbons, and so on. As might be expected the career of the satirist was short and stormy; he was assassinated in the house of O Meagher of Uí Chairin by a servant who could not bear to hear his master so vilely abused.



Irish Bard and Harper.

(From Derricke's *Image of Irelande*, 1581.)

### History and Traditional Lore.

“No people on the face of the globe have ever been more keenly interested in the past of their native

country than the Irish," according to a leading authority on Irish literature, the late Professor E. C. Quiggin of Cambridge. Legendary stories of pre-historic Ireland are recounted in the *Leabhar Gabhála* ("Book of Invasion"). The *Cogadh Gaedheal re Gallaibh* ("War of the Gael against the Foreigners") describes the battles of the Norse period, until the final collapse of Viking power at Clontarf. The history of Munster, from the landing of the Normans to the middle of the fourteenth century, is contained in the *Caithréim Toirdealbhaigh* ("Victorious Career of Toirdealbhach O'Brien") written by John Mac Ruaidhre Mac Craith about 1459. There also survive a life of Red Hugh O'Donnell, written by Lughaidh O'Clery; a contemporary account of the Flight of the Earls, from the pen of Tadhg O Cianáin, who accompanied the party on their sad journey; but above all a history of Ireland (*Forus Feasa ar Éirinn*), compiled by Father Geoffrey Keating (c. 1570-1646) from sources that in part have since perished. Valuable, too, in the last-mentioned work is the polished and stately prose, which still serves as a model for writers in the native language.

More important than the scattered pieces of connected narrative just mentioned are the Annals, the primary source from which the history of the country is derived. The earliest collection of this kind, the *Annals of Tighearnach*, compiled partly in Irish, partly in Latin, at Clonmacnois, and continued down to 1178, bear the name of Tighearnach O Braein, Airchinneach of that monastery (died 1088), though Tighearnach played but a casual and minor role in its composition. Next come the *Annals of Innisfallen* (an island in the Lower Lake of Killarney), written about 1215. Very complete



and trustworthy, and of extreme value for the period which we have been considering, are the *Annals of Ulster*, compiled on Upper Loch Erne by Cathal Maguire (died 1498), and continued by two later writers down to 1604. The *Annals of Loch Cé* (near Boyle in Roscommon), copied in 1588, the *Annals of Connacht*, the *Chronicon Scotorum*, the *Annals of Boyle* and the *Annals of Clonmacnois* are also valuable for our early history. In a category by itself must be placed the great work known as the *Annals of the Four Masters*, compiled in the Franciscan monastery of Donegal, between 1632 and 1636, by Michael, Conaire and Cucoigchríche O'Clery, and Fearfeasa O Maol Conaire. The expenses were defrayed by Fergal O Gara, the patriotic prince of Cúl O bhFinn (Coolavin) in Sligo. Michael O'Clery (1575-1643), the greatest of the four, was a Franciscan lay-brother, who gave a fruitful life of glorious service to God and country. With untiring zeal and industry he traversed the four provinces, gathering manuscripts and making records of the ancient civilization whose day had ended at Kinsale. To him the motherland owes a debt that can never be repaid.

### Medicine.

Medical treatises are preserved in manuscripts dating from the thirteenth to the eighteenth centuries. For the most part they are translations from old authorities in Latin, with an inevitable commentary, and many additions based on personal experience. Most of these manuscripts were no doubt written by the O'Lees (from *liaigh*, a doctor), the O'Hickeys (from *icídhe*, a healer), the O'Shiels, O'Cassidys, and others, in

whose families the practice of medicine was hereditary. Little or nothing of this leech literature has so far found its way into print.

### Law.

The chief tracts on this subject were published in five volumes (with faulty text and bad translation) from 1852 onwards; but several other tracts still remain unedited. The most famous law professors of medieval Ireland seem to have been the O Duibhdábhoireann (O'Davorens), of Burren, Co. Clare. "Giolla na Naomh O Duibhdábhoireann, ollamh of Corcumudruadh in Brehon law" towards the middle of the fourteenth century, is the first of the family to find mention in the annals. Sometime about 1500 the O'Davorens established a great school at Cathair mac Neachtain in Burren, and maintained it with distinction until the days of Cromwell. In the ancient stone fort or *cathair* the ruins of five houses, part of the school buildings, may still be seen. A genealogical poem in praise of the O'Davorens was written by the celebrated Tadhg Mac Daire, who ruled over wide estates (as hereditary Bard of Thomond) from his castle at Dunogan. Tadhg was cruelly murdered by a Cromwellian soldier; his family, like that of the O'Davorens, was overwhelmed by the misfortunes which then fell thick and fast upon the Gaelic race, and sank into poverty and obscurity.

### Other Schools.

It may be taken for granted that many colleges like that of Cathair mac Neachtain existed in the medieval

period, but the subject has not as yet been adequately investigated. Owing to the general endowment of learning and the principle of family succession in various professions, the intellectual side of Gaelic culture was maintained even in the fiercest crises of the conflict with the Normans. Thus we find anti-quaries like the O'Clerys and the Mac Fimbis carrying on their work without interruption from generation to generation. The O'Clerys claimed descent from King Guaire the Hospitable of Connacht, and belonged originally to Uí Fiachrach Aidhne, a district corresponding to the modern diocese of Kilmacduagh. In 1382 one of them married the daughter of O Sgingin (ollamh to the O'Donnells, and last male representative of his line), and at O Sgingin's death succeeded to his position. From him the O'Clerys of Tír Chonaill are descended. Other members of the family migrated to Tirawley, to Breifne and to Kilkenny where one of them, as we have seen, copied a portion of the Psalter of Cashel for MacRichard Butler in 1452. The Mac Fimbis belonged to Lecan, in Tír Fiachrach on the Moy.

### Political recovery of the Irish a great benefit to Learning.

For the recovery of the Irish race the learned especially had reason to feel grateful. In 1351, William O'Kelly of Uí Máine, having regained his ancestral territory, gave a Christmas feast to the men of letters and men of art of his nation—"to the seven orders of poets, to the jurists, the historians, musicians, craftsmen; jugglers also and jesters." A temporary city was constructed, with wide avenues of timber houses.

Wonderful was the rejoicing at that gathering, marking as it did the dawn of a better era, when art and learning might once more be cultivated in affluence.

In 1387, Niall Óg O'Neill built a hostel for the scholars of all Ireland at Emhain Macha. Again, in 1433, Margaret, daughter of O'Carroll of Eli and wife of O'Connor Fáilghe, prepared two great festivals for the learned of Ireland. These, to the number of 2,700, journeyed from every portion of the country to partake of her hospitality. How princely was the entertainment the guests themselves testified in compositions that are still extant. Zeal for learning was, indeed, a traditional trait in Irish character, and it is hard to imagine the relief with which the return to peace was welcomed when schools had long suffered from the crushing burdens of war.

### Town Schools.

Of education in the towns we hear but little in the mediæval period; but when we come to the sixteenth century three schools of note are mentioned. One of these was founded and directed by Peter White at Kilkenny. White, a native of Waterford and a graduate of Oxford, seems to have had the highest gifts as a pedagogue, and his school was famous throughout the South for the excellent quality of its teaching. Needless to say, it was conducted on strictly Catholic lines, and thus attracted unfavourable attention from Elizabeth's ministers, who, about 1565, sent an order for its suppression. The order was disregarded, but the school from that time forward must have been conducted under difficulties, and with loss of its earlier splendour.

Galway, too, had its school of classical and of Irish

learning, founded by Alexander Lynch in 1566. Here Alexander's son John, writer of a celebrated defence of his country against the slanders of Giraldus Cambrensis; Dubhaltach Mac Firis, the antiquary; Ruaidhre O'Flaherty, the historian; Patrick Darcy, the distinguished lawyer; Dr. Kirwan, Bishop of Killala; Peter Ffrench; Edmund De Burgo and many others received their early training. Royal Commissioners visited Galway in 1615, and found the school well patronized, not only by pupils from Irish Ireland, but also by pupils from the Pale. The sequel may be related in the Commissioner's own words: "We had daily proof during our continuance in that city how well his scholars profited under him, by verses and orations which they presented us. We sent for that schoolmaster before us and seriously advised him to conform to the religion established; and not prevailing with our advices we enjoined him to forbear teaching." Heavy penalties were threatened if Alexander Lynch dared to disobey this order.

In 1589 we hear of a grammar school at Limerick with a hundred and three score scholars, conspicuous for their good manners, and able to construe from Latin into English. Soon afterwards a number of the most prominent families of the neighbourhood—the O'Briens of Carrigogunnell, the O'Mulryans of Owney, and the Burkes of Cahirconlish—withdrew their sons, lest they should be seized by the English and retained as hostages.

Various schemes for the erection of free schools in which Irish boys would be trained to live as "dewtifull and reformed subjectes" were suggested by the Tudors, but there was one insuperable obstacle to their success. They were conceived in a Protestant



spirit, whilst the faith of their children was a treasure which Irish parents resolutely refused to jeopardise. Thus we hear of a learned Protestant grammar master (an Englishman) in Waterford in 1585, supported vigorously by the secular arm, yet unable to hold his own against a poorly-qualified Catholic teacher in the town. "For these aforesaid causes," he reports, "I think good to give over the place and betake me to my own country, where I hope to live with a quiet conscience; for here I can have no comfort, because there is not one professor of the Gospel to be found among them: no, not one."

During the medieval period English education was given to "the woman-kind of the whole Englishry of this land" at the Abbey of Grace-Dieu near Lusk; and to the "man-kind" at St. Mary's Abbey, Dublin, at the Canons' School connected with Christ Church Cathedral, and in three other monasteries. All these were suppressed and schools to replace them were not established before the end of the century.

### **Lack of University education. Irish students in England.**

No attempt to provide themselves with a centre of higher learning was made by the Normans until 1311, when Pope Clement V. empowered the Archbishop of Dublin to found a University within the city. Some lecturers were appointed in 1320; then the University seems to have entered on a prolonged holiday, for nothing more is heard of it until 1496. A chance reference in that year shows it still, as in the years following its establishment, struggling along on the borderland of existence. Soon after

this the feeble spark of life must have been completely extinguished, for Browne, the first "reformed" archbishop, is found in the middle of the next century planning a university for Dublin as if the idea had never occurred to anybody's mind before.

Equally hapless was the effort of Thomas, fifth Earl of Desmond, to supply the colony with such an institution. Owing to his influence a Bill was passed in 1465, decreeing that "there shall be a university at Drogheda, where may be made bachelors, masters and doctors in all sciences and faculties, as at Oxford." Beyond this stage the project never advanced. A year earlier, however, in 1464, the Earl, on his own account, had founded a college at Youghal, with a Warden, eight Fellows and eight Chanters. This continued to live and thrive until appropriated by greedy fortune-hunters at the fall of the House of Desmond.

Cut off by language and upbringing from the traditional world of Gaelic learning and lacking an educational centre of their own, the colonists had no choice but to repair to Oxford and Cambridge for their higher studies. Here, however, they were regarded with suspicion as citizens of a "rebel" country. Many laws were passed during the fifteenth century excluding the native Irish from the benefits of university education in England. Thus in 1422 it was enacted that "Irish scholars shall only be entered into Oxford and Cambridge by letters under seal of the Lieutenant or Justiciar of Ireland brought to the Chancellor of England; otherwise they shall be treated as rebels." Nice distinctions between "Irish" and "Anglo-Irish" were more than the English could make. and the colonists found themselves, as they

bitterly complained, aliens in their "mother country." Little wonder that they became more and more Irish in sentiment as the century went by.

### **Plans for a new University in Dublin. Foundation of Trinity College.**

In the closing years of Henry's reign the Cathedral of St. Patrick was suppressed, and its revenues in lands and goods declared forfeit to the Crown. The Dean and Canons were induced to give their consent—at least more easily—to this act of spoliation because of a half promise that the cathedral was to be transformed, not destroyed, that in fact its funds and buildings were to be utilized as the nucleus of a new university which would be named the "University of St. Patrick." Browne, the King's archbishop, gave enthusiastic support to this proposal, urging that in course of time the students trained in the new university would return to their native districts, and by teaching and example bring their neighbours to a knowledge of the King's excellence and to obedience to the King's laws. But for one reason or another the plan was then let drop.

A couple of decades later Sir Henry Sidney reports to Queen Elizabeth that a number of principal gentlemen have their sons in Louvain, Douai, Rome and other Catholic centres, where her Majesty was rather hated than honoured. In 1579 we hear again of such "runagates," who, "under pretence of study in the universities beyond the seas, do return freight with superstition and treason." To deprive the Irish of excuses for going abroad, it was suggested that a university be established in the midlands, at

Clonfert or some equally suitable place beside the Shannon. But this project likewise came to naught. Yet again in 1583 a further plan for the reformation of Ireland was discussed. Amongst the suggestions then made was one for the foundation of universities at Limerick and Armagh, and a second for the execution of "all brehons, bards, rhymers, friars, monks, Jesuits, pardoners, nuns and such like" after summary trial by courtmartial.

Finally the site of the Abbey of All Hallows in Dublin was granted to the Government authorities by the Mayor and Corporation (on whom the grounds had been bestowed by Henry VIII. at the suppression). The site was to serve for a college "whereby knowledge and civility might be increased for the instruction of our people" in that realm, and these be prevented from resorting to Italy, France, Spain and other foreign universities, "where they may have been affected with Popery and other ill qualities, and so become evil subjects." In 1592 Trinity College was duly founded upon this site, after the pattern of Trinity College, Cambridge. Only Protestants were allowed to teach in the new university, and it was proposed "to send out yearly a competent number of scholars well fitted for the ministry," who would win the people from the Catholic faith and bring them to "a more loyal and civil temper of subjection." Thus the avowed aim of "the Queen's foundation of the University of Dublin" was to wean the upper classes (and in time the whole people) from Popery and from love of an independent fatherland. Trinity College failed in its main purpose, for it found in the Irish people, unalterably attached to faith and nationhood, something yet more pertinacious and

determined than itself. In other respects, however, its career was to justify the fondest hopes of its founders, since according to a recent historian, Mr. Bagwell, "it has been the most successful English institution in Ireland" and "has continually borne the fairest fruit."



## CHAPTER XII.

### INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE IN MEDIEVAL IRELAND.

UNTIL the late medieval period, Ireland, like the rest of Europe, produced well nigh all that was needed for the maintenance of her own people. A number of industries had thus of necessity to be fostered—agriculture and fisheries, to supply food; spinning and weaving, to supply woollen and linen cloth for garments; tanning, to supply leather for sandals and shoes. Nor could handicraft in iron, copper and bronze be overlooked if homes were to be provided with utensils and ornaments, farms with agricultural implements, soldiers with spears, swords, axes, armour and shields. Chariots, cars, boats and ships had likewise to be constructed for the transport of travellers and merchandise by land and water.

#### **Internal and External Trade. The great Fairs.**

Exchange of goods by barter took place regularly at the assemblies, though the purpose for which these had been instituted was primarily religious and political. Some twelve of the greater gatherings enjoyed nationwide celebrity. Such were the Aonach Carmáin, held on Lá Lughnasa (August 1st) every three years, under the presidency of the King of Leinster, probably at the foot of Dún Ailinne on the Curragh of Kildare. The Aonach Tailteann (Teltown in Meath) likewise took place every three years under the presidency

of the High-King. It will be remembered that Ruaidhre O'Connor celebrated this festival with great splendour in 1169, just before the coming of the Normans. Little did he or any of his attendant kings and princes suspect during those days of rejoicing that the famous gathering was being held for the last time. The Aonach Muirtheimhne seems to have been celebrated at Tráigh Bhaile mhic Bhuain, where the town of Dundalk now touches the strand. In South Leinster was held the Aonach Ailbhe, in the plain called Mágh Ailbhe, between the Barrow and the Wicklow Mountains. Munster had two gatherings, the Aonach Cuile (also called Aonach Clochair, Aonach Beag, Aonach Cairbre), held, it is thought, at Mainistir-an-Aonaigh, near Croom, in Limerick; and the Aonach Oirmhumhan (earlier Aonach Teite), held at Nenagh (An t-Aonach), in Tipperary. At Lann Eala (Lynally, near Tullamore) was celebrated the Aonach Cholmáin, originally, it would seem, a great assembly of the men of Munster, but later a local gathering of the Feara Ceall, under the presidency of O Maolmhuidh (O'Molloy). At Tlachtga (Hill of Ward, near Athboy in Meath), Uisneach (in Westmeath), Cruacha (Rathcroghan in Roscommon), Eamhain Macha (near Armagh), Carn Amhalgaidh (near Killala in Mayo), Tulach na Dála (near Tuam), and Brugh na Bóinne (New Grange on the Boyne), similar assemblies were celebrated. Some of these survived as commercial gatherings or "fairs" after they had lost their significance from every other standpoint.

Surplus produce would be disposed of at such *aonachs* to foreign buyers in exchange for silks and satins, cloth of gold and embroideries, wine and spices. Trade relationship of this kind with outside lands

is attested in the first century of our era, and frequently afterwards, though we have no accurate knowledge of its extent.

### Effect of the Norse Settlements.

The Norse were assimilated in time into the Irish body politic, whilst retaining their trading stations along the coast from Larne in Antrim to Smerwick in Kerry. Their native element continued to be the sea. Irish products were thus carried to foreign markets much more extensively than had hitherto been the case. When the Normans began their invasion they found brisk business in progress in all the harbours, according to the testimony of Giraldus Cambrensis. From the sad complaint of the Irish hierarchy of the period we know that English slaves stood high on our list of imports ; this evil, the bishops thought, was of itself sufficient to merit invasion as a penalty.

### Growth of Towns.

Soon after the coming of the Normans the Norse towns—Dublin, Waterford, Wexford, Cork and Limerick—had fallen into their hands. By means of these and of other towns soon added to their number, it was hoped to maintain strongholds of English influence throughout the whole country. Thus the first object of the newcomers in building such settlements was to consolidate their own power. Dublin, for instance, was to be a fortress in which English speech only would be heard, English dress and manners alone tolerated. It was to be an island

of English civilization in an encompassing sea of Irish life, and an outpost for further conquest. And as with Dublin so with the rest. In the first charters it was provided that the citizens should be exclusively English ; it was even expected that they should abstain from trading with the "Irish enemy." Subject to this condition they were granted full municipal self-government, with power to elect their own magistrates and officials, hold their own law-courts and regulate their own trade.

As might be expected, the proviso was not long observed. The colonists might share their masters' dislike for the people of the land, but they were forced to buy and sell with them, under pain of seeing themselves and their families reduced to starvation and ruin. Thus all measures designed to cut the merchants off from their Irish clients were doomed to futility from the first. In course of time good relations were established between town and country, and Irish names were added to the burgess roll, despite express statutes to the contrary. In Cork, for instance, such names as O'Hynes, Meagh, Murrough, O'Reilly and Creagh appear among the mayors. Galway, too, when it decreed "that no man of this town shall hoste or receive into their houses at Christmas, Easter and no feast else, any of the Burkes, MacWilliams, Kellys, nor no sept else ; and that neither O nor Mac should strut and swagger through the streets," was thinking rather of quarrelsome lords at the head of freebooting troops of horse than of the peaceful population of the neighbourhood. Against the former it implored divine protection in a celebrated invocation inscribed over the west gate : "From the ferocious O'Flaherties, O Lord deliver us" ; the latter it admitted to the

civic franchises, as we know from the fact that one, at least, of its leading families (the Kirwans) was of Gaelic stock. The remaining "great tribes"—Athy, Blake, Bodkin, Browne, D'Arcy, Ffont, Ffrench, Joyce, Martin, Morris and Skerrett—were of English or Anglo-Norman descent. Irish names, such as O'Donnell, McDonnell, O'Connor, O'Neill and O'Donovan also appear on the city records, whilst intermarriage between the burgesses and the O'Flaherties, O'Malleys and others was not uncommon. Indeed in many of the towns, such as Cashel, Kells, Cloyne, Trim, Kilkenny and Kildare, the population must have been largely Irish from the beginning.

### **Textile and other Industries.**

Advance in the woollen and linen industries is shown by the circumstance that from the thirteenth century onwards they begin to find a market all over the Continent. Irish linen is found on sale at Winchester in 1272, and a few years later is sold with woollen serges at Bruges and Antwerp in Flanders. In the fourteenth century Irish serge called "sayas" was popular at Florence, the classic home of elegance at this period. We hear of Irish woollens, too, in the Netherlands, in France and in the German states along the Rhine. A century later these industries show no sign of decay, whilst wool in its pure state is exported in large quantities to Holland and other countries. Goblets and ornaments of superior workmanship in gold, timber for casks, marble for building purposes, and finely wrought leather were likewise produced for foreign as well as for home markets.



## Guilds.

The various industries within the towns were regulated by craft guilds, whose object was to retain absolute control of the different branches of the industry in their own hands. Only such were allowed to enter a craft as had been accepted by its guild directors, and had fulfilled the rigid conditions laid down for apprenticeship. Foreigners and strangers were thus excluded from competition with the citizens, except in cases where the citizens themselves had given their consent. That this did not lead to cheaper living we can easily believe; on the other hand, it was to the advantage of the consumer that the market should be controlled by associations able to prevent fraud and to secure that the goods offered for sale should be of the highest quality.

Of the Dublin guilds the records that have survived are relatively abundant, at least for the fifteenth century. It is interesting to note that they were organized on a definitely religious basis, with chaplains and private chapels or with special rights within the greater churches. Thus we hear of the guild of Barber-Surgeons in Dublin empowered by royal charter in 1466 "to have a common seal and a chantry of one or more priests for the celebration of the divine offices every day for ever in the church (the chapel of St. Mary Magdalen in the Hospital of St. John at Kilmainham), for the souls of the king, the founders, brethren and sisters, and for their souls after death, etc." The guild of carpenters, millers, masons and heliers (slaters) worshipped in the Lady Chapel of Thomas Court Abbey; the guild of tailors in the church of St. John the Baptist, Fishamble

Street ; and so on. These guilds were composed of women as well as of men ; they assisted brethren in poverty and distress ; settled quarrels among themselves by arbitration ; and regulated the affairs of their own trade to the exclusion of "intruders." Beside them were the more purely religious guilds, something like our modern confraternities or sodalities, but active as corporate bodies in the public life of the city, and organized on an elaborate scale with mediæval splendour. The religious pageants and mystery plays, so popular at the period, were arranged and staged for the most part by guild members.

### **Coinage ; Banking.**

One of the earliest acts of the Anglo-Norman invaders was to set up mints in the chief towns. In 1210 King John ordered that money similar to that of England should be coined for Ireland, and have equal value with the English currency. Complaints, however, were common that the money minted in Ireland was of inferior quality and that the circumstance told heavily against Irish commerce. Italians found regular employment as tax-collectors and mint-officials, and drove a lucrative trade in banking until about 1340. Thus we hear of a certain Toresian, member of the Florentine banking firm of Friscobaldi, who was keeper of the Exchange in Dublin in the last quarter of the thirteenth century. Other members of the firm held the dues in Youghal, Cork, Waterford and Dublin in 1284. The Mozzi and the Bettieli were Florentine firms that traded constantly with Ireland, whilst the Gherardini, the Spini and the Bardi had occasional dealings with our country. In 1291 the Deputy

Treasurer in Dublin had a quarrel with the Ricardi and appropriated a sum of their money that would be reckoned now at some £50,000.

The activities of the Ricardi as money-lenders are also on record. Peter De Bermingham of Athenry was on their books in 1291 for a considerable debt. Not long afterwards the Dean and Chapter of Limerick and the Abbot of Uaithne (Abington, near Limerick) were in difficulties and sought consolation at the same fount. Similarly the Prior of Ath Asail, Co. Tipperary, in 1309. For causes that have not yet been fully explained, many of the money-lending firms had gone bankrupt by 1345.

### Foreign Trade.

Giraldus Cambrensis attests an extensive trade with Southern France in wine, hide and furs before 1183. The growth of chartered towns, many improvements in the art of navigation, and the introduction of coined money as the normal method of payment helped this movement forward. Rising little by little in the thirteenth century foreign trade becomes important in the fourteenth century, thrives in the fifteenth century and begins to decline only towards the end of the Tudor wars.

Chief among the articles of export were leather, raw wool and woollen cloth. Sawn timber was sent to the English builders and shipyards, whilst wooden towers, destined for military use, were exported to Wales and France. Grain, too, was shipped in large quantities to England, Scotland and France. Butter, cheese, tallow and honey likewise found a place on vessels sailing for foreign ports.

Two overland traffic routes carried Irish goods to the inland cities of the Continent: one by Bordeaux and Southern France to Italy; the other by Bruges and the Flemish towns to the Rhineland, and thence again to the south. So intimate was the acquaintance of Italian mariners and merchants with Ireland that the names of most of our ports and some of our inland towns (notably Limerick and New Ross) are distinctly marked on Venetian maps of the fourteenth century. From these maps, too, we learn that Galway and Kinsale did not achieve prominence as centres of trade until the following century.

In 1233 and from then onwards we find the towns paying dues on wine, spices, pepper, almonds, raisins, figs, wheat, oats, pease, onions, flour, tallow, cheese, honey, butter, fish, furs, wool, hides (including skins of squirrel, marten, badger, mountain cat, deer, wolves, foxes), salt, alum, woad, pitch, soap, coal, lead, cauldrons, cloth, linen, silk, gold embroidery, canvas and cordwain leather. Of these the chief imports were salt, coal, silks, spices, metals; but, above all, wine. Amhlaibh "Gascúnach" O h-Eidirsceóil (O'Driscoll), who fell in battle at Tralee in 1233, is said to have received his nickname, "the Gascon," because of his training in the vineyards of that French province. From him the Gascoynes of Cork were believed to derive their descent. In 1296 ships bearing supplies from Ireland to Gascony were compelled to swear that they would not approach the coasts of either France or Brittany. The supplies mentioned were probably of corn, which Dublin, Limerick, Waterford, New Ross and Drogheda are recorded to have exported to Gascony in that year. Half a century later Gascon merchants in

Dublin are found sending white wine to Youghal. Waterford seems to have had the largest share in this huge trade, but all the principal ports participated in it to a greater or less degree.

### The War on Irish Trade.

From the beginning of the Gaelic Revival in 1399 to the death of the Great Earl of Kildare in 1513, the course of prosperous trade in Ireland was seldom threatened. A new era opened when the land was invaded by sharpwitted speculators, whose only object was to exploit Irish wealth for their own benefit. Ireland was rich, "a fertile land truly if there be any in Europe," and had a thriving continental trade. England was over-populated, and so had numbers of younger sons for whom suitable provision could not be made. What more natural than that parents, and the younger sons themselves, hardy and enterprising, should turn to Ireland as the land whose wealth and commerce could be made to solve a pressing problem? Settlers accordingly hurried across, ready to apply violence without scruple in the pursuit of riches, whilst the Government lent a hand, and partook itself, where possible, of the plunder. War was thus declared upon Irish trade by sea and land.

Adventurers in pirate vessels hung around the coasts and seized whatever they could of French and Spanish merchandise. Under Elizabeth the fleet increased enormously in size, and the greatest of English sea-captains—Grenville, Courtenay, Raleigh, Frobisher and others—assisted in the work of destruction. The



Spanish trade in wine was stricken by a crushing impost, doubled where the wine was not carried in "subjects' vessels," so that in the unlikely event of the trade surviving it would be useless to native shipping. Two years later, in 1571, the export of linen and woollen cloth was forbidden, except by special permission. Irish cloth was thus to be excluded from the Flemish markets, Irish shipping still more cruelly crippled, and Irish wool carried in its raw state to England, to provide employment there for English spinners and weavers. To add to the troubles caused by these measures the currency was debased, and the cost of living rose by leaps and bounds until the rich in the towns were impoverished and the poor reduced to hunger and want. Irish princes, like Shane O'Neill, wishing to go to London, had to borrow English money from the Deputy, since the base coin current in Ireland would not be accepted at the other side of the Irish sea. In a word a determined campaign was opened by means of hired or tolerated buccaneers, by statutes and by open violence, to suppress Irish manufactures at home and destroy Irish commerce abroad. Such was the treatment meted out by the Government in Dublin to its own "subjects." As Mrs. Stopford Green tersely remarks: "Ireland in its relations to England bore in fact the miseries both of an alien state and a subject people. So far as trade went, she was treated as an independent and hostile power whose wealth had to be destroyed. But if she attempted in the last resort to protect her interests by appeal to arms her people were reckoned English subjects, liable to the terrible penalties of 'rebellion,' and exempted from any protection of the laws of war."

### Ruin of the Towns.

Through all vicissitudes of fortune, from the Anglo-Norman Invasion to the accession of Elizabeth, the Irish towns had remained fairly steady in their loyalty to the English connection. Yet they found themselves in the end left deliberately in the lurch. English interests now demanded that Irish trade should be destroyed, and if the towns suffered ruin in the process, so much the worse for the towns. So strong were the forces arrayed against them that calamity could not be staved off ; but they fought with hardihood and bravery, first for their traditional liberties, then for national freedom, finally for life. Few of the towns but still bear traces of the conflict and of its unhappy issue, which left them in an impoverishment without parallel in Europe. Galway was among the first to be threatened with disaster. By 1576 fifty families had left the town and sought other means of livelihood in Mac William Uachtar's country. Occupied by English or Scotch soldiers, despoiled by successive Presidents of Connacht, forbidden to engage in commerce, the town was driven into sullen, if not active, revolt. In an equally evil plight was the noble city of Limerick, which by 1582 could be described as the poorest of the realm. Cork, after the Desmond wars, was reduced to one street. Even Waterford, never since the invasion "distained with the smallest spot or dusked with the least freckle of treason" felt so indignant at the treatment received that it "reverted from good obedience." So with all the other towns. Matters became still worse when the laws against the Catholic faith were enforced, and citizens, high and low, were thrown into prison or penalized with ruinous fines because they would

not attend the heretical services which their souls abhorred. The course of the struggle it is not ours to follow; but we may note that it continued "till of the flourishing markets and fair towns of the Irish nothing was left but a starving village, a dim tradition, a crumbling wall, or the name of a silent meadow, while the ports lay empty and the rivers and lakes deserted."



## CHRONOLOGY.

- A.D. 795.—First appearance of Norse off Irish coast.  
 840.—Norse attempt to make permanent settlements.  
 841.—Foundation of Dublin.  
 845.—John Scotus Eriugena appears at court of Charles the Bald.  
 866.—Defeat of Norse, after which no settlement held north of Dublin.  
 908.—Battle of Bealach Mughna. Collapse of Eoghanacht power in Munster.  
 914.—Foundation of Waterford.  
 915-20.—Foundation of Limerick.  
 941.—Circuit of Ireland by Muircheartach na gCocall gCroiceann. Birth of Brian Bórumha.  
 967.—Battle of Sulchóid.  
 997.—Mael Seachlainn II. and Brian agree to divide Ireland between them.  
 999.—Battle of Gleann Máma.  
 1002.—Brian Bórumha High-King.  
 1014 (Good Friday, April 23).—Battle of Clontarf.  
 1022.—Death of Mael Seachlainn II.  
 1072.—Death of Diarmuid Mac Maoil na mBó.  
 1073-86.—Supremacy of Toirdealbhach O'Brien.  
 1090-1120.—Muircheartach O'Brien and Domhnall Mac Lochlainn rivals for High-Kingship.  
 1095.—Birth of St. Malachy.  
 c. 1100.—Scottish monarchy ceases to be Gaelic.  
 1106.—Leabhar na h-Uidhre in part written.  
 1111.—Synod of Rath Breasail.  
 1150.—Cormac's chapel built at Cashel.  
 1137.—St. Malachy Archbishop of Armagh.  
 1139.—First visit of St. Malachy to Clairvaux and Rome.  
 1148.—Death of St. Malachy.  
 1152.—Synod of Kells. Toirdealbhach O'Connor High-King.  
 1157.—Muircheartach Mac Lochlainn High-King. Consecration of abbey church at Mellifont.  
 1166.—Ruaidhre O'Connor High-King. Cathedral of Clonfert built.



- 1167.—Synod of Tlachtga. Aonach Tailteann celebrated for last time in Gaelic Ireland.
- 1169.—Norman invasion begins. The Geraldines.
- 1170.—Arrival of Strongbow. Fall of Waterford and of Dublin.
- 1171.—Death of Diarmuid Mac Murchadha. Failure of Ruaidhre O'Connor to recapture Dublin. Henry II. lands in Ireland.
- 1175.—Treaty of Windsor.
- 1180.—Death of St. Lorcan O'Toole.
- 1189.—Destruction of School of Armagh.
- 1199.—Death of Ruaidhre O'Connor, last of the High-Kings.
- c. 1200-1300.—Towns built in great numbers.
- 1204-15.—Dublin Castle built. Expansion of Anglo-Norman colony. Growth of Geraldine power in Leinster and Munster.
- 1235.—Norman conquest of Connacht.
- c. 1250.—“Gallóglaigh” introduced into Ireland.
- 1258.—First Irish Confederacy.
- 1259.—John Fitzthomas Fitzgerald becomes Lord of Desmond.
- 1260.—Battle of Downpatrick.
- 1261.—Battle of Callann; beginning of Irish recovery.
- 1264.—Walter De Burgo created Earl of Ulster.
- 1280.—Richard De Burgo, the Red Earl, comes of age.
- 1287.—John Fitzthomas Fitzgerald head of Leinster Geraldines.
- 1295.—First representative Parliament of English colony called at Dublin.
- 1314.—Battle of Bannockburn.
- 1315.—Second National Confederacy. Edward Bruce lands in Ireland.
- 1316.—Edward Bruce crowned King of Ireland. Battle of Athenry. Earldom of Kildare.
- 1318.—Battle of Fochairt, near Dundalk. Edward Bruce slain.
- 1326.—Death of Red Earl of Ulster.
- 1327-50.—Mac Murchadhas recover power in Leinster. General Gaelic recovery all over Ireland.
- 1328.—Earldom of Ormond created.
- 1329.—Earldom of Desmond created.
- 1333.—Murder of Brown Earl of Ulster. De Burgos gaelicized. Lordships of Mac William Uachtar and Mac William Iochtar founded in Connacht.
- 1366.—The Statutes of Kilkenny.
- 1380.—“Black Rents” levied on Government and colonists. Supremacy of Art Mac Murchadha “Caemhánach” in Leinster.
- 1394.—First expedition of Richard II.

- 1399.—Second expedition of Richard II.
- 1418.—Death of Art Mac Murchadha.
- c. 1450.—Ireland a land of principalities and lordships. Geraldines and Butlers very powerful.
- 1464.—Death of Toirdealbhach O'Connor, last King of Connacht. Henceforth O'Connor Ruadh, O'Connor Donn, O'Connor Sligo.
- 1468.—Earl of Desmond executed by Lord Deputy.
- 1477.—Gearóid Mór, the eighth or "great" Earl of Kildare.
- 1494.—Double ditch round Pale. "Poynings Law"—Powers of colonial Parliament restricted.
- 1504.—Battle of Cnoc Tuadh.
- 1513.—Gearóid Óg, ninth Earl of Kildare.
- c. 1520.—Beginning of Tudor policy of reconquest.
- 1523.—James of Desmond allied with France.
- 1533.—Silken Thomas renounces allegiance to England.
- 1537.—Execution of Silken Thomas and his uncles.
- 1534.—Henry VIII. in rebellion against Holy See.
- 1536.—"Act of Supremacy" passed in Dublin. Suppression of monasteries begins.
- 1541.—Henry VIII. "King" of Ireland.
- 1548.—Effort to introduce Protestant doctrine into Ireland.
- 1549.—O'Neill and O'Donnell take oath of fealty to French king. French help promised.
- 1551.—Shane O'Neill predominant in Ulster.
- 1557.—Queen Mary Tudor begins plantation policy in Leix and Offaly.
- 1558.—Shane inaugurated "O'Neill."
- 1561.—English league against Shane fails.
- 1562.—Shane visits Elizabeth's court.
- 1567.—Shane defeated by the O'Donnells and slain by the McDonnells. Earl of Desmond imprisoned for second time in Tower of London.
- 1569.—Violent repression of Catholic faith.
- 1569-72.—Desmond Confederacy under James Fitzmaurice Fitzgerald. Negotiations with Philip II. of Spain for help.
- 1577.—Massacre of Mullaghmast.
- 1578.—James Fitzmaurice Fitzgerald slain.
- 1579.—Earl of Desmond forced to take the field. Massacre of Spaniards at Dún-an-Óir.
- 1583.—Desmond betrayed and slain. Plantation of Munster.
- 1585.—Hugh O'Neill Earl of Tyrone.
- 1587.—Treacherous capture of Red Hugh O'Donnell.

- 1591.—Escape of Red Hugh O'Donnell from Dublin Castle.  
1592.—Foundation of Trinity College.  
1593.—Hugh O'Neill elected "O'Neill."  
1595.—O'Neill and O'Donnell raise standard of independence.  
1598.—Battle of Yellow Ford.  
1599.—Failure of Essex.  
1600.—Triumphal circuit of Ireland by Hugh O'Neill. Ruthless policy of Mountjoy and Carew.  
1601.—Small Spanish force arrives in Kinsale. O'Neill and O'Donnell come to support.  
1601.—December 23-4, Battle of Kinsale.  
1602.—Siege of Dunboy. Retreat of O'Sullivan Bearra.  
1603.—Treaty of Mellifont.  
1607.—September 14, Flight of the Earls.

## MAPS

## MAP 1.

Norse attacks, begun in A.D. 795, retained their character as piratical raids until about A.D. 840. Some permanent settlements were then made, including that at Dublin. All their strongholds in the northern half of Ireland were captured and destroyed by the High-King, Aedh Finnliath, in A.D. 866; nor were they ever rebuilt. Waterford was founded by the Norse in A.D. 914; Limerick by the Danes some five years later. Save for a few square miles of territory round these cities and round Dublin no Irish lands remained under Norse dominion. Wexford was held as a peaceful trading station. Names like Strangford, Carlingford, Skerries, Lambay, Howth, Arklow, Helwick, Smerwick, show their activity along the coast, where they established marts, and exchanged goods with the Gaelic populace. Their effort to secure political supremacy over the island was crushed by King Brian Bórumha, at Clontarf, in A.D. 1014.



## (1.) NORSE ATTACKS A.D. 795-1014.



**MAP 2.**

All these are mentioned in the annals, between the battle of Clontarf and the coming of the Normans. Lectors (implying schools) are referred to in connection with eighteen monasteries in the eleventh, and eight monasteries in the twelfth century. The names of a few Cistercian monasteries, like Mellifont, founded between A.D. 1142 and the coming of the Normans, are added.

## (2.) EARLY IRISH MONASTERIES SURVIVING ABOUT A.D. 1100.



## MAP 3.

The sees here given are taken from a list discovered by Mr. E. J. Gwynn in a MS. at Montpellier, and studied by Dr. H. J. Lawlor (P.R.I.A., Vol. XXXVI., Sect. C, No. 3). Dr. Lawlor concludes that the exemplar from which the list was transcribed was written at Clairvaux some ten or fifteen years after the Synod of Kells, from Cardinal Paparo's own manuscript of the acts of the Synod. Kells, Duleek, Inis Cathaigh, Mayo and Ardmore (here given as doubtful) all existed as separate bishoprics for some time. There is no mention of Roscrea outside of this document. It is probable that Mungret claimed (in the sequel, fruitlessly) to be the centre of a diocese, in preference to Limerick which, as a Danish foundation, had no ancient ecclesiastical tradition.





## MAP 4.

This map is based on that drawn by Mr. R. Dunlop for the "Historical Atlas of Modern Europe," published at Oxford in 1902. The ecclesiastical history of this period is very obscure. "It must be explained," remarks Mr. Dunlop, "that from time to time great changes occurred in regard to the boundaries, and even to the very existence of certain dioceses. How uncertain our knowledge of these times must necessarily be, the most cursory glance at Ware's *Lists of Bishops* will suffice to demonstrate." Future investigation may thus make it necessary to modify the divisions here indicated.

(4.) THE DIOCESES OF IRELAND ABOUT A.D. 1500.



**MAP 5.**

This map, showing the present ecclesiastical divisions of the country, has been added for purposes of comparison with the two preceding.

## (5.) THE DIOCESES OF IRELAND AS THEY NOW STAND;



## MAP 6.

It was not until A.D. 1241 that the predominance of the O'Neills as the ruling family of Tír Eoghain was finally secured. Until that time the Mac Lochlainns were their rivals. Similarly, the O'Donnells did not become the leading family of Tír Chonaill until about A.D. 1200. O'Neill, O'Connor, O'Brien, O'Mael Seachlainn and Mac Murchadha were regarded as the five great families of the Invasion period, and afterwards enjoyed special consideration as such. It was not until after the Invasion that all the leading families of the Eoghanacht of Cashel, pressed then by the Normans as well as by the O'Briens, settled definitely amid their tributary states in Kerry and Cork. O'Neill settlements east of Loch Neagh date from the fourteenth century.



(6.) THE RULING FAMILIES OF IRELAND ABOUT A.D. 1160.



## MAP 7.

## RELIGIOUS FOUNDATIONS.

*Cistercians*.—Abbeys at Mellifont, Bective, Baltinglass, Mainistir-an-Aonaigh, Athlone, Shrule, Abbeydorney, Boyle, Newry, Dublin (St. Mary's), Monkstown, Dunbrody, Fermoy, Jerpoint, Inis (Co. Down), Abbeyleix, Abbeyfeale, Holycross, Abington (Uaithne), Corcumroe, Tracton, Duiske (Graiguenamanagh), Knockmoy, etc.

*Canons Regular of St. Augustine*.—Dublin : Abbey of St. Thomas : priory of All Saints (where Trinity College now stands) ; priory of Holy Trinity (Christ Church) : priory of St. Patrick's Purgatory. Other foundations at Naas, Conall (Kildare), Ferns, Enniscorthy, Kilkenny, Kells, Trim, Navan, Louth, Derry, Waterford, Cork, Limerick, Rathkeale, Athassel, Nenagh, Tuam, Aughrim, Eanach Dúin, Ballintobber, etc.

*Premonstratensians*.—Abbeys and priories, including Holy Trinity at Tuam, Holy Trinity on Lough Cé, Atmoy (Sligo), Woodburn, near Carrickfergus ; Loch Sewdy (Westmeath).

*Knights of St. John of Jerusalem*.—Dublin (priory of St. John at Kilmainham, founded by Strongbow). Preceptories at Crook and Kilbarry (Waterford), Aine (Limerick), Clonaule (Tipperary), the Ards (Down), etc.

*Trinitarians*.—Hospital and priory of St. John, outside the New Gate, Dublin. Priories at Kells, Dundalk, Down, Drogheda, Kilkenny-West (Westmeath), Ardee, Newtown (near Trim), Athy, adare, Castledermot, etc.

*Franciscans*.—Houses at Armagh, Ardfert, Baile Átha Leathan (Templemore), Athlone, Clare-Galway, Buttevant, Cavan, Carrickfergus, Cashel, Castledermot, Mainistir Oiris, Clane, Lusmagh, Clonmel, Clonraven (near Ennis), Cork, Downpatrick, Drogheda, Dundalk, Dublin, Ennis, Galway, Kilconnel, Kildare, Kilkenny, Killeigh, Limerick, Multyfarnham, Nenagh, New Ross, Roscommon, etc. After A.D. 1331 : Askeaton, Kilshane, Carrickbeg, Muckcross, Stradbally, Meelick, Teach Sacsan (Clare), Quin. After 1450 : Adare, Abbeyleix, Castlelyons, Donegal, Galbally, Moyne.

*Dominicans*.—Houses at Dublin (St. Saviour's), Drogheda, Kilkenny, Limerick, Cork, Athenry, Cashel, Tralee, Newtown (Down), Coleraine, Sligo, Kildare, Roscommon, Trim, Arklow, Ross (Kilkenny), Youghal, Lorrha, Derry, Kilmallock, Cavan, Carlingford, Naas, Castlelyons, Aghaboe, Longford, Portumna, Ballindown (Sligo), Urlare (Mayo), Tulsk, Borrischoole, Galway, Clonmel, etc.

*Carmelites*.—Houses at Dublin (Aungier St.), Thurles, Drogheda, Ardee, Leighlinbridge, Kildare, Loughrea, Kinsale, Cloncurry, Knocktopher, Kilcormac, Galway, Cork, etc.

The *Hermits of St. Augustine* (Crow Street, Dublin, etc.), *Benedictines* (a few priories), and *Canonesses of St. Augustine* (Grâce-Dieu, etc.), were likewise represented.

From the *Appendix Monastica* to the *Hibernia Dominicana* of P. Fr. Thomas De Burgo, O.P., published in "Cologne" (Kilkenny), 1762 ; but list of Franciscan houses from *Materials for the History of the Franciscan Province of Ireland*, by E. B. Fitzmaurice, O.F.M., and A. G. Little, Manchester, 1920.



## MAP 8.

A landmark in the growth of Norman power is the conquest of Connacht, achieved by a combined effort of the colony, in A.D. 1235. By A.D. 1260 two-thirds of the country lay in their hands. Maurice Fitzgerald, head of the Geraldines, was the strongest noble in the country, and his kinsman in Desmond was not very far behind him in resources. Two generations later the great earldoms of Kildare and Desmond had been formed. Hardly less powerful than the Fitzgeralds were the Butlers, Earls of Ormond; and over all, for a short spell, stood the De Burgos, in the person of the Red Earl. But the Irish had also improved their position and, after the seemingly disastrous Bruce campaign, advanced steadily in every portion of the country. Norman hope of a complete conquest was abandoned, especially after the collapse of the De Burgo earldom in Ulster. English rule in Ireland grew more and more precarious, and the area controlled by the English authorities in Dublin steadily dwindled. By A.D. 1500 the Normans of the West had become assimilated to their Irish neighbours. Similarly, the minor Norman lords of the other provinces; but the great barons (though Gaelic in language, manners, and largely in blood) never ceased to profess loyal devotion to the English Crown. From A.D. 1470 to A.D. 1520 the Earls of Kildare were virtual rulers of the country.



(8.) THE RULING FAMILIES OF IRELAND ABOUT A.D. 1500.

[Those of Norman or of English descent are underlined.]

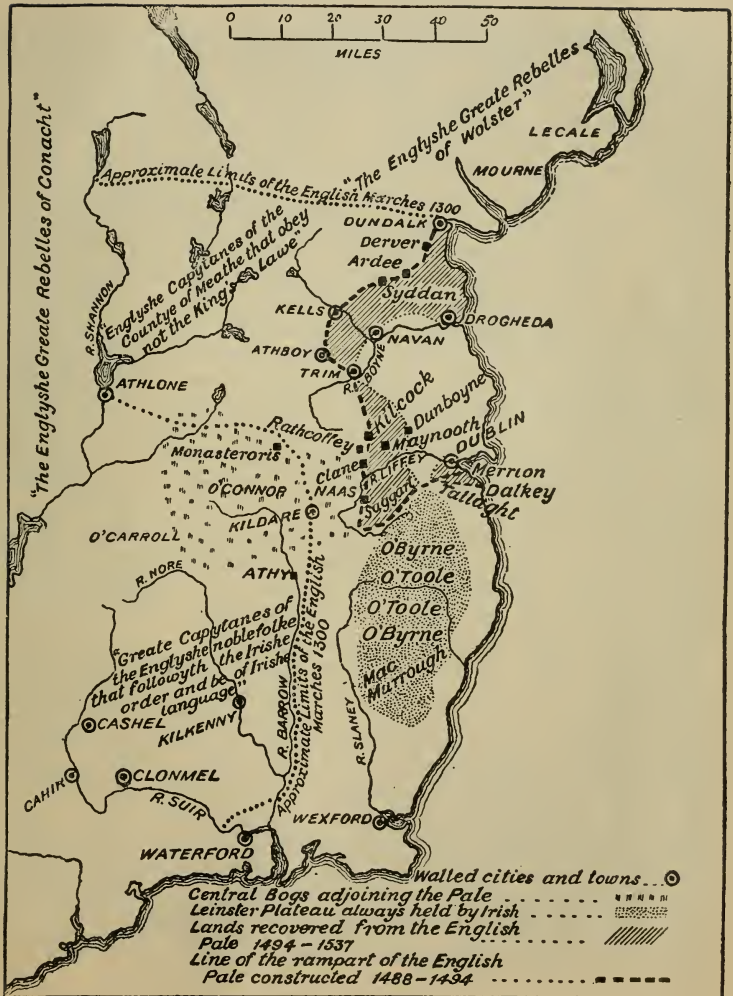




## MAP 9.

Showing the progressive shrinkage of the lands effectively controlled by the English in Leinster. The "Pale" itself, or physical boundary, was "a double ditch of six feet high above the ground, at the side which meareth next into Irishmen." Its object was to make it more difficult for Irish raiders to drive herds of cattle off the English lands.

## (9.) THE PALE.



MAP 10.  
CONFISCATIONS.

Henry VIII. confiscated the lands of the Earl of Kildare and his supporters, but he did not dispossess the Irish occupiers of these lands. O'Connor, prince of Offaly, had been a close ally of Silken Thomas; and O'More, prince of Leix, his neighbour, lived in traditional enmity with the English of the Pale. The project of expelling these princes and settling their territories with men of English blood was formed under Edward VI. and carried into effect under Queen Mary. Being Irish, and therefore alien enemies, the O'Connors and O'Mores were held to have no rights that could be recognized as valid in English law. The district ruled by O'Dunn (modern barony of Tinnahinch) was not confiscated; that ruled by O'Dempsey (baronies of Portnahinch and Upper Philipstown) was sequestered, but the ordinance remained a dead letter. The rest of Offaly (ruled directly by O'Connor), as well as Leix and Slievemargy, was divided among English and Irish grantees; among the latter, however, only under conditions which it would in practice be impossible to observe. It need hardly be said that the dispossessed families resisted. Eighteen separate risings took place in these regions between A.D. 1556 and the death of Elizabeth.

After the death of Shane O'Neill his lands, and those of the Irish who had supported him, were confiscated by Elizabeth. Some grants were made, first to a certain Smith, then to Walter Devereux, Earl of Essex; but the attempted colonization, after appalling atrocities, ended in the death or ruin of the grantees.

After the fall of the house of Desmond in A.D. 1583, the estates of the family in Kerry, Cork, Limerick and western Waterford—some 577,000 acres in all—were declared forfeit to the Crown. Over fifty great proprietors, English and Protestant, were to be created, and each was to settle a specified number of English families on his property. For details see text. In the event, however, only 202,000 acres were actually confiscated; nor did the "Undertakers" bring over as many English families as had been stipulated, so that Irish tenants had to be secured to fill the gaps. Many of the "Undertakers," such as the Brownes of Killarney, the Spensers of Cork, the Fittons of Any and the Walshes of Uaithne were Catholics in 1641.

(10.) THE FIRST CONFISCATIONS AND PLANTATIONS, UNDER QUEEN MARY  
AND QUEEN ELIZABETH.

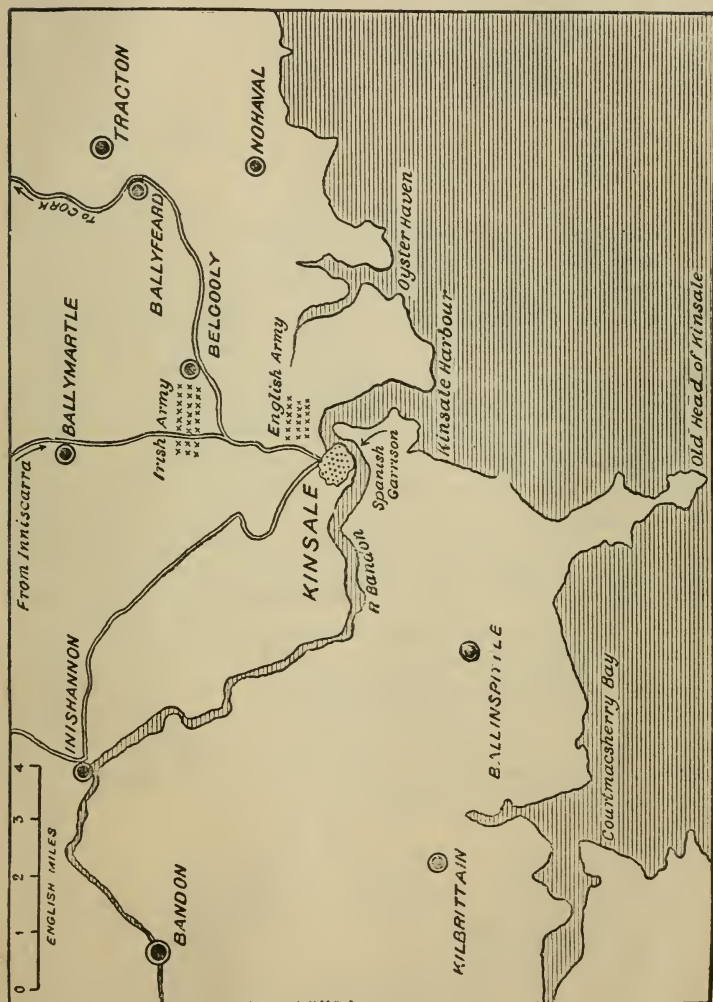


## MAP 11.

As the English fleet held the harbour, the Spaniards were enclosed between it and Mountjoy's forces; whilst the latter were enclosed between the Spaniards and O'Neill's troops.



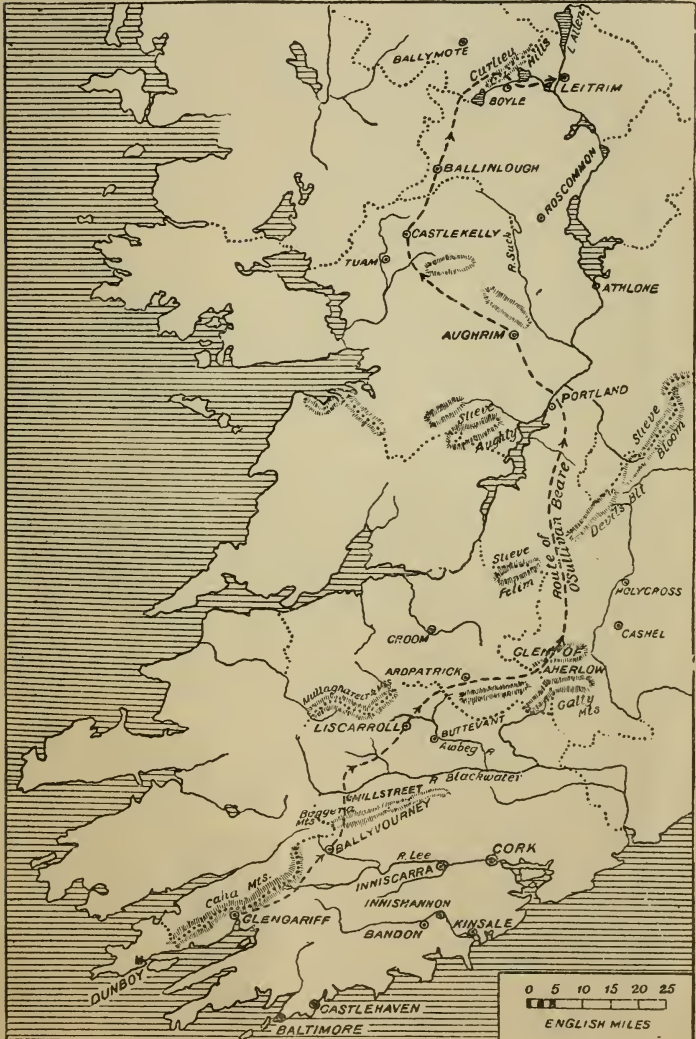
(11.) THE POSITION AT KINSALE IN DECEMBER, A.D. 1601.



## MAP 12.

After the disaster at Kinsale O'Sullivan Bearra held out for a while in his hereditary territory, assisted by various members of the McCarthy, O'Sullivan, O'Driscoll, and McSweeney families, as well as by O'Connor Kerry, Fitzmaurice of Lixnaw, the Knights of Glin and Kerry, and some hired troops from Connacht. When news arrived of Red Hugh's death, most of these helpers lost courage and deserted O'Sullivan, who was forthwith driven from Glengariff by the royalist forces. His soldiers numbered a little over 400, of whom but thirteen were cavalry, and the rest of his followers—women, children, and sutlers—numbered nearly 700. The march took place in the depths of winter, whilst "the roads were beset with enemies, and a large sum of money was promised to whoever would slay him." At almost every point along the route the little company was attacked by countrymen, now loyalist, as well as by English garrisons and mercenaries. What they suffered, too, from cold and hunger is almost beyond belief. Finally, after fourteen days, "they reached Leitrim fort about eleven o'clock, being then reduced to thirty-five, of whom eighteen were armed, sixteen were sutlers, and one was a woman. Some followed in twos and threes. O'Ruairc received O'Sullivan with most honourable hospitality, giving directions to have his sick cared, and all necessaries to be supplied."

(12.) FLIGHT OF O'SULLIVAN BEARRA FROM GLENGARIFF TO O'RUAIK'S CASTLE AT LEITRIM. DECEMBER 31, 1602—JANUARY 13, 1603.



## MAP 13.

The *Leabhar na gCeart* (Book of Rights) in its present form was compiled about A.D. 900, probably by the King-Bishop of Munster, Cormac mac Cuileannáin, for inclusion in the *Psalter of Cashel*. It seems to have been modified about a century later by Brian Bórumha, in the interests of his claim to the Kingship of Ireland. The writers take the seven over-kings in turn, beginning with Cashel, and recite for each a poem in which the payments to which he is entitled from his tributary states are set forth. A second poem recites the gifts (*tuarasdal*) which the petty rulers of all subject states, free and tributary, accept from their over-king in token of allegiance. A prose summary of its contents is prefixed, as a general rule, to each poem.

Eight dynasties in *Munster* claimed descent from the legendary King of Cashel, Ailill Olom, and therefore ranked as free. These were Cashel, Glennamain, Raithliu, Loch Léin, Uí Fidgente, Áine, Ossory, and Dál Chais.

The tributary states were twelve—Muscraige, Uaithne, Ara, In Sechtmad, Orbraige, Dáirine, Corcu Duibne, Ciarraige, Corcumruad, and Corcu Baiscinn, Na Désí, Fir Maige Féne.

The free states of *Connacht*, ruled by descendants of Brión and Fiachra, brothers of Niall of the Nine Hostages, are not clearly indicated. Tributary states number eight—Umall, Gregraike, Conmaicne, Ciarraige, Luigni, Corcu peoples in N. Galway, Dealbna, Uí Máine.

The free states of *Ailech* were eight, five in modern Donegal; in addition Mag Itha, Tealach Og, Fir Craoibe. Tributary states numbered nine, two of them not identified. The others are Tuath Rátha, Fir Lurg, Uí Fiachrach, Uí Mic Caerthainn, Cianachta, Tuatha Tuirt.

The overkingdom of *Airgialla* comprising Armañh, Monaghan, parts of Louth, Fermanagh, and Tyrone, had ceased to be when the *Book of Rights* was compiled. These lands had passed to Ailech, probably after the battle of Leth Camm in A.D. 827.

The over-kingdom of *Ulaid* (Down, Antrim, and part of Louth) embraced three chief kingdoms—Ulaid, Dál Araide, and Dál Riada—which again were divided into ten petty states. These are not distinguished from one another as free and tributary, though there were unfree and tributary classes within them.

In the overkingdom of *Meath* only two states, Tara and Brega, are mentioned as free. States that take gifts are Mág Locha, Loeguire, Ardgall, Coille Echach, Fir Tulach, Tethbia, Cuircne, Uí Beccon, Coille Fallamain, and Dealbna. The tributary divisions are not identical with these states.

In the overkingdom of *Leinster* eight dynasts were regarded as descendants of the original over-king and, consequently, free from tribute. These were the rulers of the Uí Faeláin, Uí Enechglaiss, Uí Feilmeda, Uí Muiredaig, Uí Cennselaig, Uí Dróna, Uí Bairrche, and Uí Fáilge. Tributary states were the Norse of Dublin, Cualu, the Fortuatha, Fotharta, Lagin Des Gabair and Loígis.

Cows, oxen, hogs, sheep, and mantles were the commonest forms of tribute.

Steeds, hounds, ships, coats of mail, swords, drinking-horns, rings and tunics appear among the "gifts."









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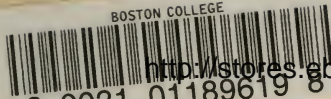


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