

HISTORY of THE ARCHDIOCESE OF TUAM

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"The History of Ireland from the Earliest Times to the Present Day"

Volume I



The Phoenix Publishing Company Limited

61 Upper O'Connell Street, Dublin

1928

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274. 914
174

Printed in Ireland at
the calbot press
Dublin

PREFACE

THIS work was undertaken at the request of Dr. Healy, the late Archbishop of Tuam. An archdiocese which has filled so large a place in Irish history ought, he considered, have its own special History, and he was good enough to say that I had some qualifications for the task he assigned me. Whether in this matter he judged wisely or otherwise it is for the reader to say. At all events, the work was undertaken and has now been carried to completion.

It was not, however, taken in hands at once, and could not be; for I was then engaged on a larger work dealing with the general history of Ireland, and it was necessary to have the larger work finished before the smaller work could be commenced. Nor could a beginning be made with the smaller work until many years had elapsed. Even in normal times, when peace rather than war conditions prevail, it is no easy matter for a priest, burdened with heavy parochial work, to visit libraries and consult original authorities. And the original authorities were not always available, or even in existence.

Worse still, for greater part of the time during which the HISTORY OF THE ARCHDIOCESE was in progress there was turmoil and unrest and unsettled conditions; a great war outside Ireland, a rebellion within its bounds, a desperate struggle for national freedom, and then, when freedom had been won, a heartbreaking civil war. To write history in such circumstances, when chaos was around us, and the fate of one's own country was in deadly peril was specially difficult; and indeed I felt it to be so difficult that the partially

written work was often laid aside for long periods, and sometimes with no great hope of ever finishing what had been begun. The burning of the Record Office was in the highest degree unfortunate and disheartening; for I had hoped to use with some effect the many episcopal wills and other documents dealing with our local ecclesiastical history. Even with the materials at my disposal I could have produced a much larger work than this. But I had no wish to bring together a mass of undigested material and do nothing more. My wish has been to write a living narrative, with as little bias as possible, and with no desire to intrude unduly my own personal views. Let facts speak for themselves.

If I have dealt with civil as well as with ecclesiastical history it was, I felt, unavoidable. In Tuam as outside it in Ireland civil and ecclesiastical affairs are inextricably interwoven. Religion has always entered largely into the lives of our people. Our history, over many centuries, has been a hard and bitter struggle for civil and religious freedom; and an Archdiocese could not be considered outside the range of civil affairs which has been ruled, in periods wide apart, by such statesmen and ecclesiastics as Catholicus O'Duffy, Malachy O'Queely and John MacHale.

Perhaps I ought to apologise for the apparent egotism of occasionally, though rarely, referring to my own "History of Ireland" in the footnotes. It was not, however, to call attention to the work, but rather to give easy access to facts hidden in books which are rare and often unprocurable by the general reader.

It remains to record my indebtedness to many friends, both lay and clerical, who were very willing to supply local knowledge not otherwise obtainable by me. In a very few cases indeed my colleagues among the priests were not disposed to be helpful, and had not even the courtesy to answer my letter, when only a slight demand was made on their labour and time. But these cases were so few that they may be considered negligible, and, almost without exception, the priests of the Archdiocese to which all of us

belong were very ready to supply any information in their power. The list of those thus ready to give help would be a long one. I cannot, however, help mentioning specially the Right Rev. Monsignor Walsh, V.G., who was ever ready to help when it was possible for him to do so, and the Rev. John Neary, P.P., Turlough, whose almost unrivalled knowledge of the local history and topography of the Archdiocese was placed unreservedly at my disposal.

It is as difficult to have finality in history as in Irish Land Acts, and I have no expectation that in these volumes the last word has been said on the past history of the Archdiocese of Tuam. But they at least point the way, and perhaps when my time has passed some other priest of the Archdiocese will be able to enlarge and correct, where enlargement and correction may be required.

E. A. D'ALTON.

St. Mary's, Ballinrobe.

October, 1928.



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HISTORY OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF TUAM

VOLUME ONE

CHAPTER I.

PRE-CHRISTIAN TIMES.

Extent of the Archdiocese.

THE Archdiocese of Tuam consists of fifty-three parishes, and includes nearly half of the County Mayo, nearly half of the County Galway, and a small portion of the County Roscommon. The total area is about 645,000 acres. In Mayo it takes in the whole of the baronies of Burrishoole, Murrisk, Carra, Kilmaine (except the parish of Shrule), and Clannorris, a good part of the barony of Costello, and a small portion of the barony of Gallen. To this must be added the Islands of Achill, Clare, Inisturk, Inisboffin, and Inishark, the two latter being in Galway. In Galway County, on the mainland, the Archdiocese covers the whole area west of Lough Corrib and Lough Mask, except Galway City and a small portion of the adjacent territory extending towards Barna and Spiddal. Eastwards of these lakes it includes the whole of the baronies of Dunmore, Clare and Athenry, about half the barony of Ballymoe, and a still larger portion of the barony of Tiaquin. In Roscommon County it includes only about a fourth of the barony of Castlerea, and in the barony of Moycarn, the detached parish of Moore.

Surface and Soil.

There is much diversity of surface and soil. East of the lakes Corrib, Mask and Carra is a limestone plain containing the finest land in Mayo and Galway, but also containing bog and moor, with here and there depressions called turloughs, which are really small lakes; and here and there also small

ridges or eskers rising above the level plain. This plain is drained into the lakes by the Clare and Robe rivers. Westward of the lakes there is mountain and rock and heather, and in places fertile valleys enclosed by the sheltering hills. There is not a continuous mountain range of any extent or importance, but rather a tangled mass of mountain peaks. South of Westport rises the famous mountain of Croaghpatrick, 2,500 feet above the level of the sea, and further south, near Leenane, is Muilrea, rising to the still greater height of 2,700 feet. North-west of Castlebar is the low range of the Burren Mountains, near Balla is the desolate height of Spolagadan, and running in a south-westerly direction from Bohaun in the parish of Carnacon to Killery Harbour, is the irregular range of the Partry Mountains. One of its peaks, with the curious name of the Devil's Mother, is over 2,100 feet high, being surpassed, however, by the neighbouring peak of Maamtrasna. Crossing Killery Bay into Galway, the whole western district is extremely mountainous. To the north-west portion of Ballynahinch barony belong the Twelve Pins, a series of lofty, conical peaks rather than a continuous mountain range; and in Joyce Country and Moycullen baronies are also numerous, irregular mountainous ranges, none of which, however, attain at any point to the lofty altitude of the Twelve Pins. The remainder of Galway, belonging to the Archdiocese of Tuam, is, like East Mayo, flat and unbroken by any notable elevation, if we except such unimportant heights as Abbeyknockmoy, east of Tuam, or Knockma in the parish of Donaghpatrick. The small portion of Roscommon County belonging to Tuam is also flat, and destitute of either mountain range or even remarkable hill.

Islands.

Achill Island, off the Mayo coast, triangular in shape, is the largest island off the Irish coast, and covers an area of 57 square miles. The land is poor and unproductive, a mixture of mountain and rock and bog, where sterility abounds and

desolation reigns supreme. Above the lesser elevations Croaghaun and Slievemore rear their heads to a height of 2,200 feet, and near Keel are the cliffs of Minaun, fronting in rugged grandeur the Atlantic rollers forever thundering against the land. The whole coast-line, with a beauty all its own, is broken and indented, and so also is the neighbouring coast-line of the Curraun peninsula. Clare Island, more to the south, serves in part as a breakwater for Clew Bay, which is twenty miles in length, and picturesquely dotted with numerous islands. Southward still is the smaller island of Inisturk, off the Mayo coast, and off the coast of Galway are Inisboffin and Inishark and the Isles of Aran. The latter serve to shelter Galway Bay from the fury of the Atlantic, and are really a projection of the limestone formation from the neighbouring county of Clare.

The Galway coast-line in the west and south-west is indented by numerous bays and inlets, though none of these, either in extent or in beauty, can rival Clew Bay. Nor is the adjacent land so flat as that to the east of Clew Bay, nor yet so bold and precipitous as that of Achill. Like the Clew Bay coast, the Galway coast is strewn with numerous islands, some of them mere specks, and most of them uninhabited.

Lakes and Rivers.

There are several lakes. North-west of Newport is Lough Feeagh, and to the north-east Beltra Lake; further to the south Lough Cullin; while to the north-west of Castlebar are a series of connecting lakes in the direction of Islandeady. In the parish of Turlough is Derryhick Lake; in the parish of Balla, Manulla and Carramore Lakes; while in the east of the Archdiocese, north of Ballyhaunis, is Mannin Lake. In the barony of Murrisk are Lakes Finn, Doo and Cullin, picturesquely situated in the lap of the mountains adjacent to Killery. In the centre of the Archdiocese are a series of lakes, beginning with those of Carnacon and Lough Carra, and connecting with Lough Mask, which in turn is connected with Lough Corrib, the whole forming one of the most im

posing sheets of fresh water in Ireland. In the east of the County of Galway the lakes are few and unimportant; but in the west, sheltered by the towering peaks of the Twelve Pins, are a series of beautiful lakes like Lough Inagh.

There are no large rivers, either within the Archdiocese or bordering on it, if we except the lordly Shannon itself, which for a short distance touches the isolated parish of Moore. There are, however, a number of small rivers, such as the Newport and the Bunowen, falling into Clew Bay, the Erriff into Killery Bay, the Clydagh passing a little north of Castlebar into Lough Cullen, the Manulla into Lough Carra, the Robe into Lough Mask, and the Clare passing by Tuam to Lough Corrib; and from the west there are the Owenriff and the Bealanabrack falling also into Lough Corrib. In the western portion of Galway, in the beautiful valleys lying between the mountains in Ballynahinch, there are several small rivers easily and often swollen by the mountain torrents, and discharging their waters into the ocean.

Taking the Archdiocese as a whole, the land is inferior, the really good land bearing but a small proportion to that which is inferior and unproductive. For instance, in the extensive area of Iar-Connaught, most of which is in the Archdiocese of Tuam, only 25,000 acres out of 350,000 acres are set down as arable land, the remainder being rock and heather and the poorer sort of pasture land. In the islands of Achill and Inisboffin and Aran, and along the seaboard the condition of things in Iar-Connaught is repeated, and the same is true of some parishes in the inland. Here and there, however, tracts of superior land are met with. There is, for instance, some rich fattening land in Aran; and in the parishes of Hollymount and Kilmaine there is a belt of very superior pasture land.

The Earliest Inhabitants.

There is little doubt that all this district was peopled at a very early period, but when it was peopled first, and by whom, is quite impossible to determine. The Greek and

Roman writers, who knew so little of Ireland, would know absolutely nothing of that part of it west of the Shannon; and when Tacitus speaks of the coasts and harbours of Ireland being well known to foreign merchants it may be assumed that he speaks of the coasts and harbours of Leinster; and, perhaps, of Munster and Ulster, but not of Connaught. For these were the nearest to Britain, and the most accessible for foreign trade. Even if we accept the native accounts of the Partholonian Colony, we can hardly admit that they went west of the Shannon. And there is no great reason to believe that the Nemedians went further west than their supposed predecessors, though they are said to have fought in Roscommon with the Fomorians. The Firbolgs are regarded as a real people, and the tradition that they ruled the whole country for a time, and then were beaten in battle by another pagan race, and thus lost their supreme position, is constant and apparently well founded.

The Battle of Moytura.

This battle was fought in Moytura, in the parish of Cong in Mayo, and even yet traces of the contest remain in the caves and cairns and pillar-stones and sepulchral mounds strewn over the district. I give the account of the battle from O'Curry¹:—"The Firbolgs," he says, "with their seat of government at Tara, continued to rule Ireland in peace for thirty-six years, and then their supremacy was challenged by a new colony, the Tuatha-De-Dananns, who were descended from the Nemedians, and related by blood to the Firbolgs.

"The Tuatha-De-Danann, after landing on the north-east coast of Erin, had destroyed their ships and boats, and stealthily made their way into the fastnesses of Magh Rein (in the County Leitrim). Here they had raised such temporary works of defence as might save them from any sudden surprise of an enemy, and then gradually showing themselves to the Firbolg inhabitants, they pretended that they had, by

¹ "MS. Materials of Ancient Irish History," pp. 244-7.

their skill in necromancy, come into Erin on the wings of the wind.

“The King of the Firbolgs, having heard of the arrival of these strange tribes, took counsel with his wise men, and they resolved to send a large, powerful and fierce warrior of their people forward to the camp of the strangers, to make observation and ascertain as much of their history and condition as he could. The chosen warrior, whose name was Sreng, went forward on his mission to Magh Rein; but before he reached the camp the Tuatha-De-Danann sentinels had perceived him, and they immediately sent forward one of their own champions, named Breas, to meet and talk to him. Both warriors approached with great caution until they came within speaking distance of each other, when each of them planted his shield in front of him to cover his body, and viewed the other over its border with inquiring eyes. Breas was the first to break silence, and Sreng was delighted to hear himself addressed in his own language, for the old Gaedhlic was the mother-tongue of each. They drew nearer each other, and after some conversation discovered each other's lineage and remote consanguinity.

“They next examined each other's spears, swords and shields; and in this examination they discovered a very marked difference in the shape and excellence of the spears: Sreng's being armed with two heavy, thick, pointless, but sharply rounded spears; while Breas's carried two beautifully-shaped, thin, slender, long, sharp-pointed spears. Breas then proposed, on the part of the Tuatha-De-Danann, to divide the island into two parts, between the two great parties, and that they should mutually enjoy and defend it against all future invaders. They then exchanged spears for the mutual examination of both hosts; and after having entered into vows of future friendship, each returned to his people.

“Sreng returned to Tara, as we shall in future call that place, and having recounted to the King and his people the result of his mission, they took counsel, and decided on not granting the Tuatha-De-Danann a division of the country, but,

on the contrary, prepared to give them battle. In the meantime, Breas returned to his camp, and gave his people a very discouraging account of the appearance, tone and arms of the fierce men he had been sent to parley with. The Tuatha-De-Danann, having drawn no favourable augury of peace or friendship from this specimen of the Firbolg warriors and his formidable arms, abandoned their holdings, and, retiring farther to the south and west, took up a strong position on Mount Belgadan, at the west end of Magh Nia, now called Magh Tuireadh, or Moytura, and is situated near the village of Cong, in the present County of Mayo. The Firbolgs marched from Tara, with all their forces, to this plain of Moytura, and encamped at the east end of it. Nuadha, who was the King of the Tuatha-De-Danann, however, wishing to avoid hostilities if possible, opened new negotiations with King Eochaidh through the medium of his bards. The Firbolg King declined to grant any accommodation, and the poets having returned to their hosts, both the great parties prepared for battle.

“ The battle took place on Midsummer Day. The Firbolgs were defeated with great slaughter, and their King (who left the battlefield with a bodyguard of a hundred brave men, in search of water to allay his burning thirst), was followed by a party of 150 men, led by the three sons of Nemedh, who pursued him all the way to near Ballysodare. . . . Eochaidh fell as well as the three sons of Nemedh.

“ In the course of the battle the Firbolg warrior, Sreng, dealt the King of the Tuatha-De-Danann, Nuadha, a blow of his heavy sword, which clove the rim of his shield, and cut off his arm at the shoulder. Nuadha had a silver arm made for him by certain ingenious artificers attached to his court, and he has been ever since known in our history and romances as *Nuadha Airgead Leamh*, or the Silver-handed.

“ The battle of Moytura continued for four successive days, until at length the Firbolgs were diminished to 300 fighting-men, headed by their still surviving warrior chief, Sreng; and, being thus reduced to a great inequality of numbers

compared with their enemies, they held a counsel, and resolved to demand single combat of man to man, in accordance with the universally acknowledged laws of ancient chivalry. The Tuatha-De-Danann thought better, and offered Sreng terms of peace, and his choice of the five great divisions of Erin. Sreng accepted these terms, and took as his choice the present province of Connaught, which down to the time of Conn of the Hundred Battles was called by no other name than *Cuigead Sreing*—that is, Sreng's province—in which, indeed, his descendants were still recognised so late as the year 1650, according to Duald MacFirbis."

O'Curry adds that the antiquity of the tract from which his account was taken was certainly not less than 1,400 years old, and that the story was told with singular truthfulness of description, and without any desire to ascribe to any individual incredible deeds. He admits that there is a good deal of Druidism introduced: "but that the position and conduct of the poets during the battle and in the midst of it, the origin of the name of Moytura, or the plain of pillars or columns, the origin, names and use of so many of the pillar-stones, of the mounds and of the huge graves, vulgarly called crom-lechs, with which the plain is still covered, are all matters of such interest and importance in the reading of our ancient history and in the investigation of our antiquarian monumental remains, that I am bold to assert that I believe there is not in all Europe a trace of equal historical value yet lying in manuscript, considering its undoubted antiquity and authenticity."²

The implied reproach still holds good, nearly seventy years after O'Curry's time, and under a native Government professing great zeal for Irish history and antiquities. Money is being spent lavishly in imparting a mere smattering of the Irish language, but nothing is being done to publish works which would be a real contribution to Irish learning, and add materially to the sum of our historical knowledge.

But while the antiquity and authenticity of the tract may

² "MS. Materials," p. 247.

be conceded, it must also be noticed that some of the incidents described are less suited for a historical tract than for a bardic tale. Later ages, for instance, have classed the Tuatha-De-Dananns among the fairies of pagan Ireland, sometimes interfering in human affairs, but more usually living in their fairy palaces in the recesses of the green hills: and if they were fairies, and nothing more, they could not have fought at Moytura as men. And again the story of Nuadha and his silver hand is manifestly fictitious. It may, however, be admitted—indeed, it must be admitted—that a great battle was fought at Moytura in very ancient times, and that the Firbolgs were there defeated. If it be added that they were subsequently specially powerful in Connaught, while the Milesians were supreme masters of the whole country, we have the state of Connaught and of Ireland at the beginning of authentic history. The Firbolgs would thus be one of the first waves of colonization, driven westward by subsequent Milesian waves, the result being that in Connaught there was a mingling of Firbolg and Milesian blood.

Various Tribes.

It is difficult, however, to say what was the distribution of the various tribes which made up this composite race. The Firbolgs are usually assigned to the Aran Islands, but had settlements also on the mainland. The baronies of Burris-hoole and Murrisk formed together the ancient territory of Umhall, and in the fifth century of the Christian era belonged to the descendants of Conall Oirbsen, son of Brian, King of Connaught, who was a brother of Nial of the Nine Hostages.³ These descendants of Conall, when surnames were introduced, became the O'Malleys, so that the O'Malley territory was the ancient territory of Umhall, called by the English the "Owles." The Conmaicne occupied the barony of Dunmore in Galway, called Conmaicne Chinel Dubhain, and the barony of Ballynahinch, called Conmaicne Mara, or the

³ This Conall Oirbsen was also the ancestor of the O'Flaherties and the O'Connors (O'Flaherty's "Ogygia," Part III.).

Maritime Conmaicne; and in Mayo the barony of Kilmaine, called Conmaicne Cuile Toladh. At one time the Conmaicne held the whole territory west of Lough Corrib; but a tribe from Munster, the Dealbhna, had dispossessed them of portion of their possessions, confining them to Ballynahinch alone.⁴

At a later date an Anglo-Norman family, the Joyces, settled in the barony of Ross. These Conmaicne were descended from Conmhnae, illegitimate son of Fergus, ex-King of Ulster, and Maebh, the famous Queen of Connaught in the first century. They were, therefore, powerful in Connaught long before the descendants of Conall Oirbsen had grown great in Umhall.

The descendants of another illegitimate son of Fergus and Maebh were the Ciarraidhe. In pagan times they were settled in Munster; but in early Christian times they migrated to Connaught, where they occupied the barony of Clanmorris, and that part of the barony of Costello which belongs to the Archdiocese of Tuam.⁵ In the east of the barony of Carra were the descendants of Fiachra, brother of Niall of the Nine Hostages. In the west of Carra was the province of Partry—a name which still survives, though the modern parish is not so extensive as the ancient territory which bore the name. There were, in fact, in ancient times three Partrys: that of Odbha or Ballyovey, another name for the modern parish, Partry; Partry of the Lake, which included Cong; and Partry of the Mountains, extending to Croaghpatrick.⁶

In Galway, the barony of Clare was possessed by the O'Brien Seola, descended from Brian, brother of Niall of the Nine Hostages. After surnames came into use, these became known as the O'Flaherties, and in the twelfth century these latter were driven across the Corrib by the De Burgos, who had become masters east of the lake.

Like the other provinces, Connaught lived under the clan system of government. The most powerful chief, the provin-

⁴ "Book of Rights," p. 100.

⁵ *Ibid.* pp. 100-101. Note.

⁶ O'Flaherty's "Ogygia," Part III.; "Tribes and Customs of Hy Fiachrach."

cial king, who dwelt at Cruachan in Roscommon, received tribute from the lesser chiefs, and in return bound himself to protect them. The chieftain of Umhall, for instance, paid a yearly tribute of 100 cows, 100 hogs, and 100 mantles; the Conmaicne paid double the number of cows and mantles, but only 80 hogs; the Ciarraidhe, 200 cows, 60 hogs, and 60 mantles; the Dealbhna, 150 hogs and 150 cows; while the Ui Briuin—the O’Flaherties and O’Connors of a later date—were not bound to pay any tribute. They were of the same blood as the provincial kings, and as such were regarded as free tribes.⁷

On his side, as a pledge of his protection, the provincial king, dwelling at Cruachan, gave the chief of Umhall five swords, five ships, and five coats of mail; to the chief of the Dealbhna five drinking-horns; to the chief of the Conmaicne, ten drinking-horns, ten studs, two rings, and two chess-boards; to the chief of Partry, three swords, three drinking-horns, three tunics, and three studs; and to the chief of the Ui Briuin, five studs, five swords, ten bondmen, ten chess-boards, and “ten crooked drinking-horns.”⁸

Each of these chiefs, dwelling in his dun, or lios, dispensed a rude hospitality, and in each clan there was a brehon, a bard, a harper, a physician, a brughaidh, or public hospitaller. And in pagan times there was a druid, for the ancient inhabitants believed in druidism, which taught the immortality and transmigration of souls, inculcated the worship of the sun, moon and stars, and taught that special reverence should be shown to mountains, rivers and wells. West of the Shannon, it is reasonable to expect that roads were bad, and bridges few, that the buildings—of timber or undressed stone—were at least as primitive as in the other provinces, and that, except the Ogham writing which would be used for inscriptions on stone, there was probably no writing. And if there were no writing there would be no learned men.

⁷ “Book of Rights.”

⁸ *Ibid.*

CHAPTER II.

THE INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY.

St. Patrick.

DURING the fifth century there is no event in the history of Connaught, or even of Ireland, which rivals in importance the introduction of Christianity, and in effecting this mighty change from paganism there is no figure looms so large as St. Patrick. And yet to such an extent does the dust of time settle down on men's lives and actions that later ages have been puzzled, and many conflicting views have been put forth about the place of St. Patrick's birth, as well as about the schools at which he was educated, and the year in which he died.

Even his existence has been called in question. There is not, however, the slightest reason for holding that he did not live, and none for holding that he did not live and labour in Ireland, for he is still, and has been through so many centuries, revered as her great national apostle. And the weight of evidence goes to show that he was born at Dumbarton in Scotland in 372, was captured by Niall of the Nine Hostages, and brought by him to Ireland as a slave in 388; that as a slave he lived for six years in Antrim with a pagan chief named Milcho; that he then escaped from his captivity and went back to his own country, whence he went to Gaul and Italy, studying for the priesthood, after which he was ordained and consecrated bishop at Rome; that in 432 he was sent to Ireland by the reigning Pope Celestine, and there laboured as an apostle till his death in 493.

It is not true to say that all Ireland was pagan in 432, when St. Patrick came as bishop and apostle. On the contrary, there were some Christians, for Palladius, a bishop and a Briton, had been sent in the previous year by the Pope to "the Scots believing in Christ." These Christians, however, were scattered and few, mostly on the coast, persons whom commercial intercourse had brought to some extent in contact with the Christians of Britain and Gaul. The country was really a pagan land, and it required all the energy and zeal of one so richly endowed as St. Patrick was, all his faith and patience and courage, to combat and to overthrow the forces of paganism. One of his latest biographers, Dr. Healy, has traced St. Patrick's progress through the land with infinite patience and care, and from him we learn that the apostle landed at Wicklow, then proceeded to the north-east of Ulster, whence he turned south to Tara, and there confronted the Ardri and his Druids, and finally, after much opposition from these latter, and much success, in spite of their opposition, he destroyed the idol of Crom Cruach in the plain of Magh Sleacht in Leitrim, and then crossed the Shannon.¹ His crossing of the Shannon would be about 439 or 442. West of the great river, as well as east of it, he met with opposition and with success. He was the leader of a little peripatetic missionary community. He had bishops with him, and priests and a psalm-singer, and a sacristan to look after the vestments and vessels required in the sacred service of the altar, a bell-ringer to call men to prayer, a smith to make the bells necessary for himself as well as for others, other smiths to make chalices and croziers, scribes to copy the ritual and missals used; and there was his charioteer. At the head of this community he crossed mountains and bogs, passing from tribe to tribe over a country with roads that must have been little more than well-worn paths. That he was a man of God appeared from the earnestness of his preaching, the purity of his life, the apostolic charity and

¹ "Tripartite Life of St. Patrick"; Dr. Healy's "The Life and Writings of St. Patrick."

zeal animating himself and his community, still more by the miracles he wrought when his faith was assailed, his life endangered, or his scheming opponents to be overwhelmed. But St. Patrick, while acting under divine guidance and sustained by a divine power, neglected no human aid. He first addressed himself to the chiefs, knowing that the mass of the people are little better than a flock of sheep who will follow their leader, and then, when the chief had become a Christian, the people would be sure to abandon paganism. Needing native ministers who could speak to the people in their own tongue, he selected from the newly-converted, as priests and bishops, the brehons and bards, the poets and historians, who were the most learned men in the tribes, and would, therefore, more easily command the respect of the people. He took care to disturb existing institutions as little as possible. The sept and clan, the brehon and bard remained; the pagan idols gave way to the Christian church with its altar and cross, the pagan well became the holy well of the Christians; and if the pagan laws were revised under St. Patrick's supervision, it was not to abolish the structure of legal institutions, or even to change them, but to purge the law of paganism, and bring it into harmony with the gospel of Christ.

St. Patrick in Connaught.

On both sides of the Shannon druidism was his most formidable foe. The Druids had enormous influence over the minds of men. They had got great privileges, and they knew well that these would disappear with the triumph of Christianity. Therefore they put forth all their strength against the Christian missionaries; they poisoned the people's minds, and not infrequently they incited them to murder. But St. Patrick succeeded in spite of them, and long before he entered Connaught he had defeated the Druids, and firmly planted Christianity among tribes from which it was destined not to disappear.

It was not his first visit to Connaught. After spending six years of his youth in working as a slave in Antrim, a vision

which he took to be the voice of an angel sent by God directed him to leave his pagan master, Milcho, and to go to the sea, a distance of 200 miles, and there he would find a ship ready to sail which would bring him back to his own country and kin. This place so indicated at which St. Patrick safely arrived, and from which he sailed, is believed to have been Killala Bay in the north of Mayo; and it was from Focluth Wood, on the shores of Killala Bay, that in after years St. Patrick was invited to come to preach the gospel.²

He was then in Britain with his relatives, and had not yet felt the call to be a Christian missionary. But one night, as he relates it himself, "I saw a man, whose name was Victoricus, coming as if from Ireland with letters innumerable, and he handed one of these to me, and I read the heading of the letter, which contained these words: 'The Voice of the Irish,' and as I read the beginning of the letter methought I heard in my mind the voice of those who were near the Wood of Focluth, which is by the Western Sea, and it was thus they cried out: 'We beseech thee, holy youth, come and once more walk among us.'"³ This vision it was which finally determined the vocation of St. Patrick, and brought him in due time to preach Christianity in Mayo.

The most powerful of the western chiefs at that date was Amhalgaidh (Awley), descended through Eochy Moyvane, King of Connaught, from the Ardri, Tuathal Teachmar, in whose time the hated Boru tribute was imposed on Leinster. By his two wives Eochy Moyvane had several sons, among them Brian, who became King of Connaught, and the ancestor of the O'Connors, Niall of the Nine Hostages, the famous Ardri, who carried away St. Patrick from Scotland to Ireland, and Fiachra, who was the father of Dathi, another Ardri. Another son of Fiachra was Earc Culbuidhe, the chief of Carra in Mayo, and Amhalgaidh, to whom Earc paid tribute. Fiachra had become King of Connaught on the death of his brother Brian (the ancestors of the O'Connors),

² "Tripartite," II, 364—St. Patrick's Confession.

³ Healy, p. 65.

and Amhalgaidh became king on the death of his father, and, as such, was in St. Patrick's day the greatest of the Connaught chiefs.*

Before visiting this powerful chief in his royal dun in Mayo, St. Patrick had other districts in Connaught to visit, and other clansmen than those of Amhalgaidh to evangelize. He passed through the plain of Magh Ai in North Roscommon, where he founded the church of Elphin, then passed to Cruachan, the seat of a royal palace, where he converted the two daughters of Laoghaire, the Ard-Ri, both of whom were being fostered at the royal palace. St. Patrick also converted the six sons of Brian, King of Connaught. Then he preached in other districts of Roscommon and Sligo, and finally entered the modern Archdiocese of Tuam, somewhere near Aughamore.

His Work in the Archdiocese.

The route he took through the Archdiocese has been accurately traced, and with great patience, by Dr. Healy. From Aughamore he passed to Ballyhaunis, thence to Kiltullagh, in Roscommon, whence he passed through Kiltevnan to Dunmore, in Galway, and from Dunmore to Kilbannon, near Tuam. From Kilbannon he passed on to Killower and Donaghpatrick, thence by Shrute to Kilmaine, whence he turned westward to Cross and Maam, returning to Kilmaine. He is next found in the barony of Carra, which lies a little north of the river Robe, and immediately north of Lough Mask, and here St. Patrick turned west, between Lough Mask and Lough Carra, by Triangle to Aughagower. From this latter place he ascended the steep hill, or, rather, mountain, of Croaghpatrick, called in the "Tripartite," Cruachan Aigle; and it is thought that St. Patrick having descended from the mountain to Murrisk, visited Cahir Island in Clew Bay. Near Murrisk, also, he founded a church in the plain of Umhall. This latter became the name of the modern barony, as it was the ancient territory of the O'Malleys. This

* "Tribes and Customs of Hy-Fiachrach," pp. 343-5.

done, St. Patrick began to retrace his steps, and on his eastern journey through Aughagower and Triangle and Ballintubber he evangelized the modern parishes of Partry, or Ballyovey, Ballintubber, Ballyheane, and Manulla and Balla, at which point he turned north-east to Kiltimagh, and is thus lost to the Archdiocese of Tuam.

During all this time travelling from district to district and from tribe to tribe, St. Patrick spent several laborious and eventful years. In the far west, as well as east, of the Shannon the work of planting the Christian faith was being well done, and the paschal fire, which the Druid at Tara first saw lighted on the Hill of Slane, was not destined to be extinguished.

In the district round Aughamore St. Patrick was in the land of the Ciarraidhe, dwelling near the Lake of the Sloe Bushes, this lake being Lake Mannin, and the Ciarraidhe being a tribe which traced their descent from Ciar, the son of Fergus Mac Roigh and Maebh, Queen of Connaught. The land was marshy and sterile, but the people must have been not unkindly, and St. Patrick succeeded in converting many, if not all, and founded among them a church, a little to the north of Mannin Lake. Over this church he placed his disciple, Soarnach. A little south, about two miles from Ballyhaunis, he formed another religious centre, and built a church which came to be called Senchill, or the old church. Near this was a well, which was probably venerated by the pagans, and now became sanctified by St. Patrick, and to this day the townland is called Holywell.⁵

In the modern parish of Kiltullagh, also, St. Patrick succeeded in making converts, and there, "in the desert of Hy Enda," a daughter of Enda, and grand-daughter of Brian, son of Fiachra, received from him the nun's cloak, being thus probably the first nun in the territory included in the present Archdiocese of Tuam. Having placed Lomman, his disciple, in charge of the new church at Kiltulla, St. Patrick hastened to Dunmore, where he was in the country of the Conmaicne.

⁵ Healy, pp. 219-20.
(D 704)

Still confining his efforts to this tribe, he founded a church at Kilbannon, in which he placed, as superior, his follower, Benen. From this circumstance the place received the name of Kilbannon, or the church of Benen, a name which it still bears. This Benen was not that young and attractive disciple who was St. Patrick's champion when the Druids were fought and vanquished at Tara, but rather a native of the district, and belonging to the family of the Conmaicne chiefs. For this reason he was able to get from his relatives a grant of land on which to build his church, and thus he made Kilbannon a far more important religious centre than either Kiltulla or Dunmore.⁶

St. Patrick was now in the modern county of Galway. After Kilbannon he is next heard of at Killower, which is in the modern parish of Headford. It appears that he left one of his books there, and the people, treasuring the sacred relic, gave the new church founded by St. Patrick the name of Killower, or the Church of the Book. The district west of Headford being thus provided for, St. Patrick proceeded to Donaghpatrick, where a church was also founded, and over this he placed Folartus a bishop. By the village of Shrule the apostle again entered Mayo, leaving Galway behind him, and at Kilmaine, some distance south of the present little village, and in the parish of that name, he founded the church of Kilmaine Beg. He also founded a church north of Kilmaine, at Kilquire. Dr. Healy thinks that another church in the same parish—Kilmaine More—was of a later date.⁷ What more he did in this particular district is not known for certain, but there was a tradition in after times that he did not stay long in Kilmaine, but that from Kilmaine as a centre he evangelized the country round Cong and the Neale, and had the courage to make his way even to Maam, where his further progress westward was barred by rocks and hills and heather, and impassable ways.

Returning to Kilmaine and Kilquire he laboured in Magh

⁶ Healy, p. 221; "Tripartite," I, p. 109.

⁷ Healy, pp. 222-3.

Foimsen, the level district eastward of Ballinrobe. There he met with serious opposition, for one of the two ruling chiefs, Derglan by name, not only refused to listen and be converted, but, perhaps urged on by the Druids, he sent his servant to put St. Patrick to death. This chief's brother, however, whose name was Luchta, was so much better disposed that he thwarted the wicked designs of Derglan, and saved the apostle's life. In consequence, St. Patrick cursed Derglan, assuring him at the same time that his offspring would be few. Luchta, on the other hand, received St. Patrick's blessing, and an assurance from him that there would be bishops and priests of his race. Then after leaving Conan somewhere near Robeen, and Lughnat at Tober Lughna in the same parish, St. Patrick passed on to Carra of the lakes and hazel bushes, and there he laboured till a church was founded near Triangle, and the Well of Stringle was sanctified by the Christians.⁸ At Aughagower, also, St. Patrick founded a church, placing over it Senach a bishop, whose meekness he commended so much that he called him *Agnus Dei*, or the Lamb of God. It appears that Senach had been a married man, and had a son named Oengus, and a daughter named Mathona. The latter became a nun. The former was promised length of days by St. Patrick, and this was according to the prayer of the young man's father. For Senach in his humility had asked for himself that he would not fall into sin after his ordination, and that the place would not take its name from him, while for his son, Oengus, he asked length of days.

The Saint on Croaghpatrick.

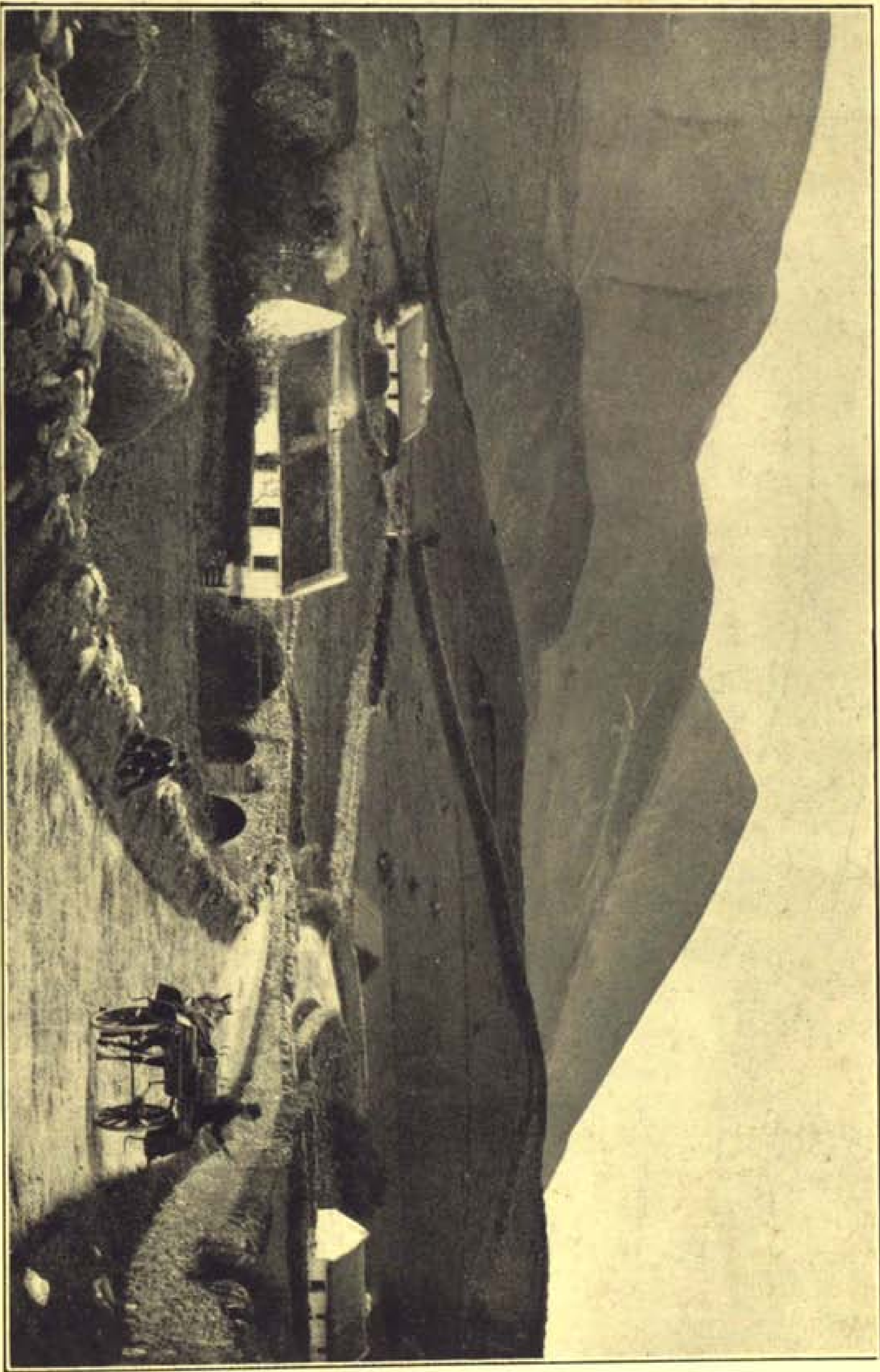
Feeling the need at this point for rest and solitude, St. Patrick then ascended the rugged mountain of Cruachan Aigle, since then called Croaghpatrick. A man of prayer and piety, he wanted to walk in the footsteps of his Divine Master, and as that Master in this world had fasted for forty days, so did St. Patrick on the desolate mountain which, in

⁸ "Tripartite," I, p. 113.

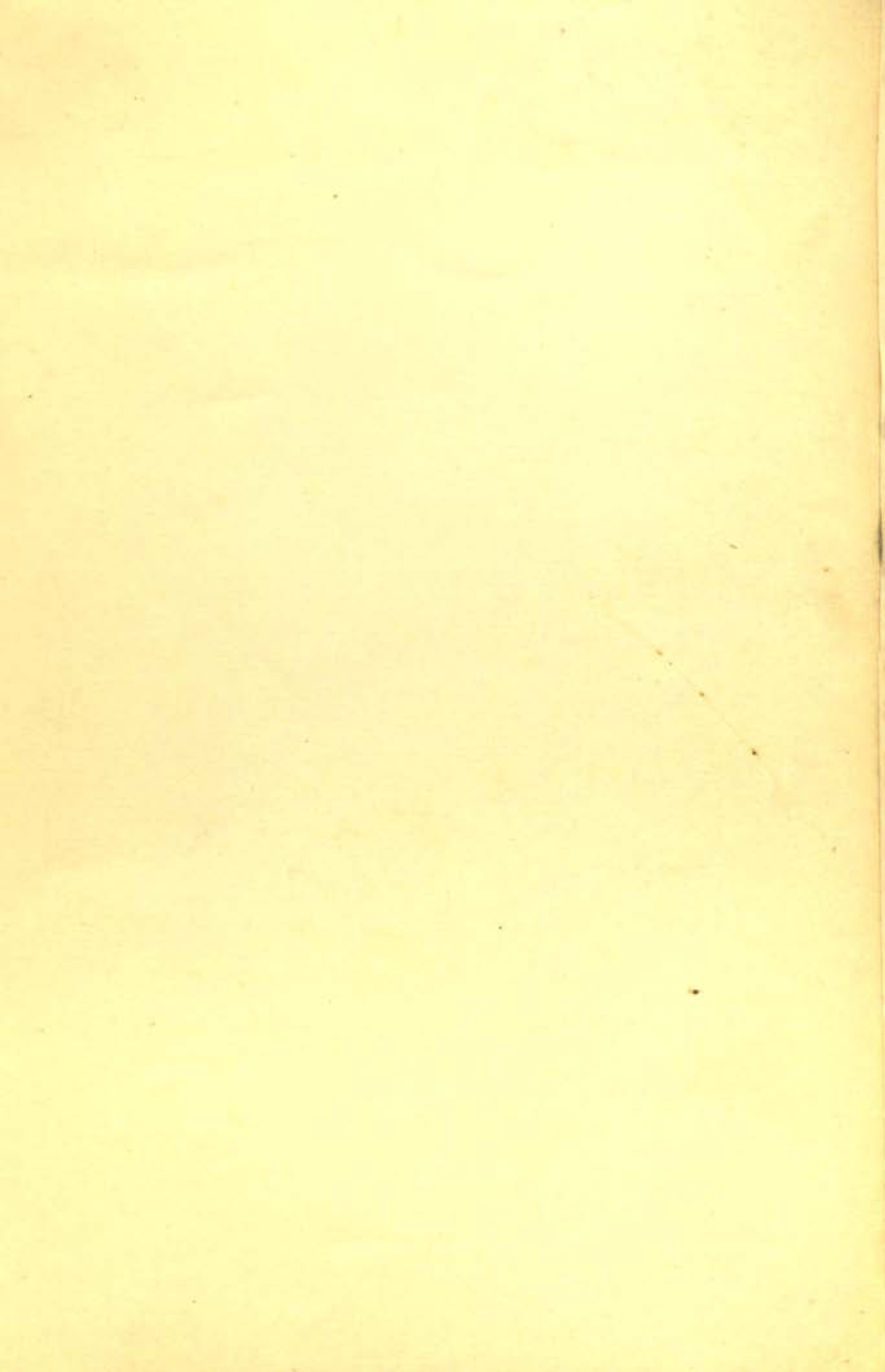
all its rugged grandeur, looks out on the waters of Clew Bay. In prayer and fasting and mortification his days and nights were spent. Nor was he without his temptations, even as Christ Himself was tempted by the devil after His long fast in the desert. For demons came in the shape of black birds circling round the hill, and thus grievously annoyed the strong man on the summit. They were overcome, however, by his prayers, and then an angel was sent to comfort the apostle. St. Patrick had many requests to make of him. He asked—if the “Tripartite” is to be believed—that as many souls would be rescued through his prayers from the fires of purgatory as would fill up the whole plain seaward as far as he could see; and not content with this, St. Patrick asked for as many as would fill the whole territory around as far as he could see, both land and sea. When this petition also was granted, he asked that through his prayers twelve persons should be saved every Saturday from going to hell, even to the end of the world. He then asked that, in addition, seven should be saved every Thursday, and this also was granted. Still asking, he obtained also a request that, in order to save her from witnessing the horror preceding the General Judgment, Ireland would, seven years beforehand, be overwhelmed by the waters of the sea. He asked also, and obtained the request that the Saxon should never rule over Ireland. Finally, he asked that, on the last day, he himself should be associated with the Son of God to adjudge the men of Erin. Then, after getting all these requests, he left the top of the mountain and descended into the plain below.⁹

To expect us to believe all that is recorded as having taken place on the mountain is to tax our credulity too much. What appears certain is that St. Patrick fasted and prayed on the summit of Cruachan Aigle, and that he then descended into the valley; but the fertile imagination of some later writer is, no doubt, responsible for the addition of the various petitions and the consequent concessions. For, though St. Patrick watched and prayed for the men of Erin, and we may

⁹ “Tripartite,” I, pp. 115-121.



VIEW OF CROAGHPATRICK.



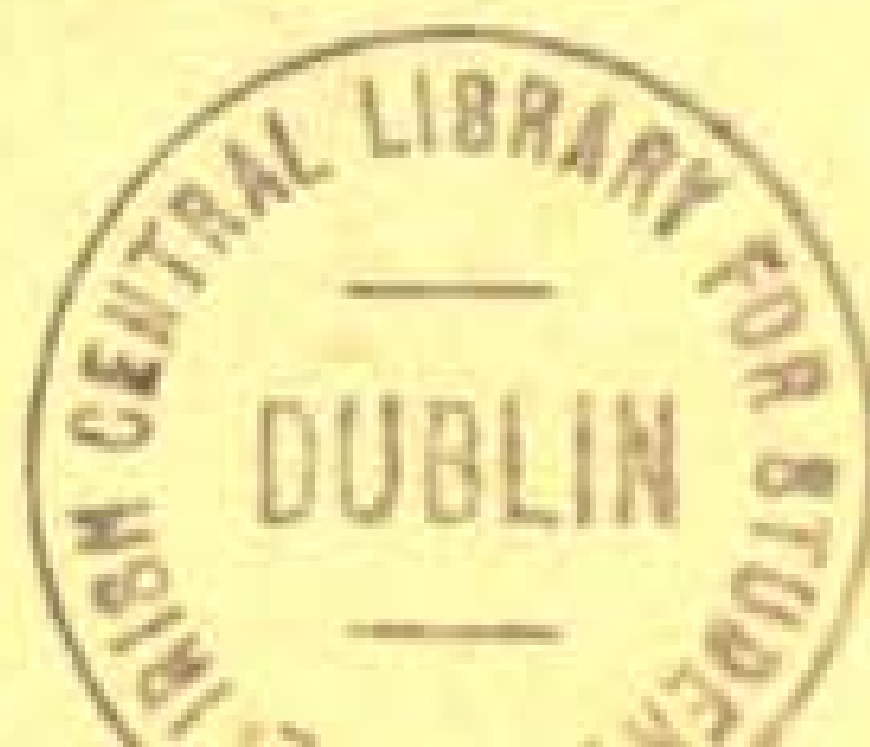
well believe watched over their descendants through the troubled centuries when their faith was so sorely tried, he did not ask and obtain that the Saxon should never rule in Ireland, seeing that they did rule, and are ruling in it still.¹⁰

About the same time it is recorded in the "Annals of Ulster" that it was in the very year of the accession of Pope Leo, that is in 441, St. Patrick's mission was approved at Rome. The meaning of this entry would seem to be that St. Patrick heard of the accession of the new Pope, that he sent his homage through one of his disciples, and that in return he received the Pope's blessing on the work that he was doing and had done.

His Journey Eastward.

After his descent from the mountain, St. Patrick remained for some time at Aughagower, after which he resumed his missionary work. This time his progress was eastward, for he had gone to the extreme west. His charioteer, Totmael, died at the foot of Croaghpatrick, and was buried at Murrisk, and it is not unlikely that on this occasion he sailed across to Cahir Island, not far from the mainland. But however this may be, he turned his face towards the east. There was at one time an ancient road, called St. Patrick's Causeway, and by this he came on his return journey, the direction being almost due east and west from Aughagower to Triangle, and thence to Ballintubber. This was the region called Corca-teimne. Not as a rapid traveller was his progress, but as a minister of the gospel to districts he had already evangelized, making them centres from which he became acquainted with tribes and districts hitherto pagan. At Ballintubber there was a well called Sini in pagan times, which, under St. Patrick, assumed the character of a holy well, and as such gave a name to the parish, for Ballintubber means the village or townland of the well. And near this well, hallowed by association with St. Patrick and his work, there grew up in after times a famous Augustinian establishment. Another

¹⁰ Healy, pp. 230-4.



St. Patrick's well was at Toughty, within the demesne of Tower Hill, and near-by was erected a church. Yet another church was erected at Drum. This was a little to the north-west, and was another stage in St. Patrick's journey eastward. He then moved by Gweestion and Loona to Balla, and eastward still to the neighbourhood of Kiltimagh, which is not in Tuam, but in Achonry.¹¹

But meantime St. Patrick had visited Manulla, and there he found the well Slan, or the Healer, in the plain of Findmaighe. The pagan inhabitants around had worshipped it as a god, and offered sacrifices in its honour. And they believed that a certain dead prophet among them dwelt under the square stone covering the well, because he adored water and feared fire, and thus was enabled to keep his bones cool. St. Patrick ridiculed the superstition, and rolling aside the stone which covered the well, he showed that only water was beneath, and that no prophet dwelt there, and no prophet's bones were kept cool. The exposure had its effect in dissipating pagan ignorance, and some at least of the inhabitants were converted to Christianity. And for these St. Patrick built a church, and placed over it his disciple, Cainnech.¹²

So far good work had been done in the southern portion of the Archdiocese of Tuam. There yet remained part of the south-east of the Archdiocese, and tracts also in the centre; and there remained that extensive district, mountainous, heather-clad and barren, called Iar-Connaught. The conversion of these districts was reserved for other men and for a later age.

¹¹ Healy, pp. 237-40.

¹² *Ibid.* p. 123.

CHAPTER III.

EARLY CHRISTIAN TIMES.

St. Patrick's Successors.

It is difficult to trace with accuracy the development and growth of the early Christian Church established in the West under St. Patrick. It may be assumed, however, that his disciple, St. Lugnach, laboured with zeal on the shores of Mannin Lake, increasing the number of Christians among the Ciarraidhe, and that those who dwelt near the old church and the holy well in the vicinity of Ballyhaunis had their faith strengthened and their numbers increased. Lomman, too, no doubt, continued the work of preaching the gospel at Kiltulla, and Kilbannon and Donaghpatrick and Kilmaine Beg and Kilquire continued to be centres of missionary activity. And it may be assumed that Senach's zeal was fruitful of good round Aughagower, and the zeal of Cainneach fruitful round Manulla, and that the rugged summit of Cruachan Aigle was even then visited by pilgrims who loved to trace the footsteps of St. Patrick, and imitate his austerities.

In these times we must to a large extent necessarily rely on conjecture, but we need not be surprised to hear that Benignus laboured in these western districts which St. Patrick was unable to visit ("Hy Fiachrach," Introduction, p. 4), and very likely went far beyond the district of Kilbannon to preach to unconverted pagans, and to confirm and strengthen the lately converted Christians. And there is some reason also to think that a nephew of St. Patrick, perhaps after the great

apostle himself had died, or it may be even in his lifetime, laboured on the small and rather desolate island of Inchagoill, situated in Lough Corrib, and midway between Cong and Oughterard. This was Lugnat, the son of Restitutus, a Lombard, and of Liemania, the sister of St. Patrick. It is not stated anywhere that either Restitutus or Liemania was ever in Ireland. Their son, however, would come as a disciple and fellow-worker of his uncle, St. Patrick, and being, no doubt, inclined to a solitary and contemplative life, wended his way to his island retreat. As a Lombard he was rightly called a foreigner; as a solitary and holy man he might well be called devout: and the island called after him got the name, which it has ever since borne, the island of the Devout Foreigner. It has still some remains of ancient buildings, well worthy of antiquarian study. There are, for instance, the remains of a very small and very rude stone church. Its greatest external length is but 35 feet and a-half; the nave is but 17 feet 8 inches in length, and 13 feet and a-half in breadth; and the chancel is but 9 feet square. The doorway, which is 6 feet high, inclines towards the top, and is 2 feet wide at the bottom, though only 1 foot and 9 inches at the top. This is the smallest of the early Christian stone churches which we have.

More interesting, however, than the church itself—at least if we are seeking to establish a connection between the place and the age of St. Patrick—is an upright stone of dark limestone, 4 feet high, on which the following inscription is deeply cut: “Lie Lugnaedon Mac Limenuch,” which means, the stone of Lugnaedon, son of Limenuch. The only early Irish ecclesiastic of this name is the nephew of St. Patrick, and the son of the daughter of Calpurnius, Liemania by name. There is nothing else remarkable about this little island, now mostly wooded, excepting, indeed, another small church, much more modern in its style of architecture than that attributed to the age of St. Patrick.¹

¹ Petrie's “Round Towers,” pp. 163-7.

The Aran Islands.

Larger a great deal in extent, and much more famous in the early ecclesiastical history of Ireland, are the Isles of Aran. They are three in number—Inishmore, Inishmaan, and Inishere. Long before Ireland became Christian they were inhabited. For the tradition is that the majority of the Firbolgs, after their disastrous overthrow at Moytura, preferring freedom even amid rocks and waves and desolation, to subjection under the Dananns, retired to the Aran Islands. Thrown across the entrance to Galway Bay, like a breakwater against the incoming waves of the Atlantic, their dwelling-place was not one to excite the cupidity of their conquerors, or invite invasion or attack at their hands. Yet the Firbolgs did not feel secure, for tradition has it that they were assailed by Conall Cearnach and his Ulstermen; and if not they were attacked by the Dalcassians of Munster. Both accounts have been given. To protect themselves from their assailants, whether these came from Ulster or Munster, the Firbolgs built at Inishmore the forts of Dun Angus and Dun Conacht, in Inishmaan, Dun Conchobar, or Connor's Fort, and on the island of Inishere another fort of lesser note and strength, the name of which has not survived.

The most remarkable of these structures was Dun Angus, placed on the very edge of the cliffs, which rise out of the sea full 300 feet, making it in an age long before cannon was known absolutely unassailable from the sea. On the land side there were three encircling stone ramparts, the inner one being 18 feet high, and 8 feet thick. The second and third of these surrounding walls were not less massive, and, in addition, in front of the second wall was an outer defence, consisting of large sharp stones set upright, and close together, so that an enemy passing the outer wall found his path effectively barred, and would be very seriously damaged before reaching the second wall. And when the second wall was reached, and even passed, the defenders might retreat to the space behind the inner wall, which had but one entrance, behind which a small party would easily hurl back a much

larger force. These stone forts, the work of patience and valour, still stand in great part uninjured, still exciting the wonder of the traveller, and still flinging back, as if in contempt, the ceaseless attacks of time and tide.

St. Enda.

In the fifth century the Isles of Aran came for the first time in touch with Christianity. Previous to this date they had been captured by pirates from Corcomroe, and from them had passed into the hands of Aengus, King of Cashel. He was a Christian, the husband of Darenia, daughter of the Prince of Oriel in Ulster. Darenia's sister was Fanchea, one of the best known of the early Irish saints, who followed in the footsteps and imitated the virtues of St. Bridget. And the brother of Darenia and Fanchea was St. Enda of Aran. In his early years, however, Enda was no saint, but rather a warlike chief who led his clansmen to battle like other chiefs of his day, and, indeed, so loved war and bloodshed that he shocked his sister Fanchea, then head and foundress of a nunnery on the shores of Lough Erne. Seeking to wean her brother from war and worldly ways, and to turn his attention to a religious life, she remonstrated with him for shedding so much blood, and was answered that the principality of Oriel must be defended by its chief. Further, he asked his sister for the hand of a noble maiden then in her convent. It is said that through the prayers of St. Fanchea the young girl died suddenly, and Enda was in consequence so struck with horror and disgust of worldly things that he renounced his chieftaincy and became a monk. As such he founded a monastery at Killeavy, in Louth, and subsequently he visited Britain and Rome. At the latter place he was ordained priest, and soon returned to Ireland, taking the advice of his sister not to go to Ulster, but rather to the Aran Isles, off the shores of Connaught.²

These islands he received as a grant from his brother-in-law, the King of Munster, who invited him instead to found

² O'Hanlon's "Lives of the Irish Saints," I, pp. 1-9.

a monastery near Cashel. But Enda, like so many other Irishmen of the sixth century, wanted a lonely and retired spot, where he could live in solitude and practise austerities. Nor could he have selected a more suitable place for the purpose he had in view than these same Aran Isles. In the twentieth century, as well as in the sixth, the soil is light, the herbage is scant, the crops often fail, and nothing can be said to be abundant but rocks and water and fish, and the storms that sweep across the islands from the sea. It was not comfort, still less luxury, but rather hardships and privations that St. Enda sought; and others anxious to share his penances and his vigils followed him across the ocean, and lived in Aran under his rule. Living in bee-hive cells, they fasted and prayed, sleeping by night on the bare floor, and by day fishing in the sea, or cultivating little patches of land among the rocks. The few pagans on the islands, attracted by the sanctity and virtues of St. Enda and his companions, soon turned to Christianity from pagan ways, and Aran became a centre of Christian holiness to which even abbots and saints from other monasteries came to learn. St. Kieran of Clonmacnoise, St. Brendan of Clonfert, St. Finian of Moville, St. Jarlath of Tuam, St. Kevin of Glendalough, and probably St. Columba himself, were among the many notable men who thus crossed the sea to learn wisdom and holiness at St. Enda's feet. In a short time no less than 150 monks lived under his rule; and Aran, filled with holy men and governed by a master in holiness, became Aran of the Saints.

St. Enda died in 540, and was buried, it is said, in the church of Killeany, in the island of Arranmore. And it is further said that nearby were the graves of 127 men who had lived the lives and died the death of saints in Aran.³

St. Brendan.

St. Enda belongs to the Second Order of Irish Saints, which flourished from the middle to the end of the sixth century. The First Order consisted chiefly of bishops. The Third

³ O'Hanlon, III, pp. 913-21.

Order were anchorets. But the Second Order (about 300 in number) "had different rites for celebrating and different rules of living; and they shunned the society of women, and excluded them from their monasteries." To this order belonged St. Brendan, the friend of St. Enda, and equally famous as St. Enda himself. It is not necessary to accept the various stories that in succeeding centuries gathered round his name. For if so we should believe that he wandered over the Atlantic, in the middle of which he found a delightful island, where the breezes were laden with celestial odours, where flowers of every hue grew in abundance, where the climate was everything that could satisfy the heart of man, and where the only inhabitant was an Angel of the Lord who commanded this wandering Irishman to return to the land of his birth. Nor is it necessary, nor even advisable, to believe that St. Brendan landed in America, and thus anticipated the discovery of Columbus by more than 900 years. The plain facts seem to be that St. Brendan was born in Kerry about the year 500; that he was fond of travel and change, and daring on the sea; and that, launching his boat from his native Kerry, he visited the islands along the coast, went as far as Wales, and even to Iona, where he visited his old friend, St. Columba. He also crossed the Shannon, and founded a school and monastery at Clonfert. On the Blasquet Islands off Kerry he also founded a monastery, to which many came as his disciples, and lived under his rule. At Ardfert he founded a monastic institution, which afterwards developed into the episcopal see of Ardfert. Near Ennis he built another monastery. But Clonfert, higher up on the Shannon, and founded about 560, was the greatest of all these. It grew to be a bishop's see, as it is still; it was a famous monastery, with hundreds of monks living in community under St. Brendan's rule; and it was a well-known school, in which in the next century lived Cumman, one of the greatest scholars of his time.

It was previous to his founding of Clonfert that St. Brendan visited St. Enda at Aran. And, like Enda, he also

sought for solitude and mortification in another island retreat; for about 550 he visited the island of Inchiquin in Lough Corrib, and there established a monastery. Though the largest island in Lough Corrib, Inchiquin contained little more than 200 acres. Its position is north and south, and not more than half-a-mile from the shore. It is not specially fertile, and in St. Brendan's time it can hardly have been other than lonely and desolate and bare. Such, however, was the ardent spirit of sacrifice of St. Brendan, that a solitary retreat of this character suited him well; and there he practised austerities and attracted followers. And when he died in 577, another holy man, St. Meldun, took charge of the monastery which St. Brendan had founded, and kept up the same level of sanctity and sacrifice in this little island of the lake. St. Meldun was abbot in 580, and lived probably to the end of the century; and it was from him, rather than from St. Brendan, the island took its name. For Inchiquin is the island of the descendants of Conn, and Meldun was a descendant of Conn of the Hundred Battles.⁴

Meantime, St. Brendan had retired from Inchiquin, and founded Clonfert, and afterwards wandered to the island of Inisglory, off the coast of Erris in Mayo, where he established a monastic retreat, and where his name is still perpetuated, and his memory revered.⁵

He also established in connection with Inchiquin a convent for women, over which he placed his sister, Brigia. This convent was situated at Annaghdown on the shores of Lough Corrib; and there in extreme old age he ended his days in the year 577.⁶

On the shores of Lough Corrib, also, St. Collan lived and laboured in the sixth century. His residence was in Horse Island (or Eochinis), and there he was, on one occasion at least, visited by St. Enda from Aran.⁷ The place is now

⁴ Wilde's "Lough Corrib," pp. 125-6; O'Hanlon's "Lives," II, pp. 332-3; O'Flaherty's "Iar-Connaught," p. 22.

⁵ Healy's "St. Patrick," pp. 219-20.

⁶ O'Hanlon, V, pp. 308-445.

⁷ *Ibid.* IV, p. 494.

called Enagh Kulain, and only in this imperfect way is the saint's name perpetuated.⁸

About the same time a sister of St. Enda, by name Cairrecha, was at the head of a community of nuns in the parish of Moore. This was in the Hy-Many country, her convent being at Cloonburren, opposite Clonmacnoise. The date of her death is given as 577, the year in which St. Brendan died at Annaghdown.⁹ The site of St. Cairrecha's convent is marked at present by a large earthen mound, conspicuous for miles around, though this is rather vague and uncertain tradition than authentic history.

St. Jarlath of Tuam.

More intimately connected with the history of the Archdiocese of Tuam than St. Brendan, though not so famous a man, was St. Jarlath. He came of a good family, his father being Loga, chief of the Conmaicne of Dunmore. He received his early education at the school of Kilbannon, and is said to have been the pupil of Benignus himself. But he probably belonged to a later period; for Benignus died long before the close of the fifth century, even before St. Patrick, while St. Jarlath is counted among the Second Order of Irish Saints, the members of which flourished from 550 to 600. He might, however, be said to have been a pupil of Benignus, in the sense of being brought up in the School of Benignus, a school in which the friends and disciples of Benignus taught, and in which his memory must have been specially revered. His education finished, he was ordained priest, and being ambitious, like so many others of his contemporaries, of founding a monastery, he did so at Cluainfois (now Cloonfush). Situated on the Clare river, a little to the north of the present town of Tuam, and in rich pasture land, the monastery soon acquired fame and attracted pupils though not to the same extent as Aran or Clonmacnoise. St. Brendan, who visited so many places in Connaught, was there, and was

⁸ O'Flaherty's "Iar-Connaught," pp. 23-4.

⁹ O'Hanlon, II, pp. 443-4.

the close friend of St. Jarlath, and so also was St. Colman of Cloyne.

It was St. Brendan who predicted that St. Jarlath would not end his days at Cloonfush, though St. Jarlath then expected that in the monastery which he founded his mortal remains would rest. "Thy resurrection," said St. Brendan, speaking with the voice of a prophet, "shall not be where thou hast lived." "Where, then?" asked Jarlath. "Sit in thy waggon," answered Brendan, "as thou art old and feeble, and wherever the waggon wheel breaks down, there shall be the place of thy resurrection, and for that of many others on the day of judgment." St. Jarlath recognised the utterance of St. Brendan as in the nature of a divine command, and in spite of the infirmities of age and of his attachment to Cloonfush, he mounted his chariot and went forth, not knowing where his new home would be. Passing by Tuam, the wheel of his chariot broke, and St. Jarlath, obedient to the prophecy of St. Brendan, founded a monastery at Tuam, and returned no more to Cloonfush. At Tuam he continued to live, and at Tuam he died, somewhere about the middle of the sixth century. He was thus a contemporary of St. Brendan and St. Colman, and of St. Enda of Aran. Like these, he was a holy man, loving solitude, practising austerities, praying and preaching, and setting example to many disciples, who followed the rule of him who was first abbot and bishop of Tuam.¹⁰

His feast is on the 6th of June, and no doubt on that day he died. The piety of succeeding ages raised a church to contain his remains. It was called the Church of the Shrine, the shrine containing the remains of St. Jarlath, and the street in which the church stood was called Shrine Street. It is now Bishop Street. In the ninth century the church was plundered by the Danes, who had no respect for the bones of a saint, but who coveted the "rare piece of antique workmanship, beautifully carved in solid gold," in which the remains

¹⁰ Lives of the Saints from "The Book of Lismore."

of St. Jarlath reposed. In later times the church itself disappeared.¹¹

St. Jarlath's Successors.

With the seventh century a new set of Christian leaders appeared, to carry on with equal energy and zeal the work of St. Jarlath and St. Enda. The chief of these were St. Fechin of Cong, St. Cuana of Kilcuana, St. Mochua of Balla, St. Fursey of Killursa, and Saints Rioch and Colman of Inisboffin. About St. Kennanach there is great uncertainty. He is the patron of the present parish of Ballinakill. Near the hill of Cartron, two miles north of Cleggan, lie the ruins of an ancient church dedicated to his memory, and but a small distance from the church is St. Kennanach's well. It is impossible to fix the date of his coming to Ballinakill. The tradition was that he came at a very early period, even long before the advent of St. Fechin. He appears to have made many converts, else a well would not be sacred to his memory, a church would not bear his name, nor would he have become patron of the whole parish. But if he made many converts and many friends in this isolated region, he made enemies, too. For a certain local chief, clinging to his pagan errors as obstinately as Milcho, and as criminally inclined as the Druids, laid violent hands on the Christian missionary, and had him put to death. He was beheaded near the village of Cleggan, and on the spot where he suffered, his followers piled up a heap of stones; and this rude monument is still pointed out as the monument of St. Kennanach.¹²

This saint and martyr had also laboured in Inishmaan, one of the Aran islands. He was then called Gregory, and as such is commemorated in Gregory's Sound, which divides Inishmaan from Inishmore.¹³ If this be so—and we must necessarily grope our way in such matters by the feeble and uncertain light of tradition—he would certainly not have

¹¹ O'Hanlon, VI, pp. 202-10.

¹² O'Flaherty's "Iar-Connaught," pp. 118-19.

¹³ "Iar-Connaught," p. 80.

laboured in Aran before the sixth century, after the good seed had been sown by St. Enda. In one relic of the past in Inishmaan his memory is revered, but not as St. Gregory. This is Tempul Kennanach, a very ancient little stone church. Its internal dimensions were not more than $16\frac{1}{2}$ feet by $12\frac{1}{2}$ feet. It was built of stones of enormous size, one of which is 18 feet in length, and extends the entire breadth of one of the gables. The whole building gives evidence of great age, and is contemporary with the very earliest of the stone churches of Ireland.¹⁴

St. Briga of Annaghdown was a sister of St. Brendan, and lived in her convent at Annaghdown, and probably belongs to the sixth century, and would, therefore, be contemporary with St. Kennanach of Aran and Ballinakill. But her influence on the conversion of the province would be little, and if it be recorded that she lived at Annaghdown, was a sister of St. Brendan, and has her memory still revered on the shores of Lough Corrib, it will be enough, for there is really nothing more to record.¹⁵

St. Cuana.

To the same district of Annaghdown and to the same age belongs St. Cuana. He was of a noble Munster family, a brother to St. Carthage, in whose famous monastery at Lismore his education was obtained. As Enda went to Aran, and Brendan to Annaghdown and Clonfert, Cuana also went and founded a monastery at Kilcuana, by the shores of Lough Corrib, in the present parish of Annaghdown. The year of his birth is given as 590; the year of his death as 650. He would thus belong to the generation which followed that of St. Brendan, and was merely following where St. Brendan led. He had to the full St. Brendan's religious zeal, and such was the fame of his sanctity that crowds came from all parts to his monastery at Kilcuana. Desirous of having a spiritual alliance with him, his visitors induced him to form

¹⁴ Brash's "Ecclesiastical Architecture," p. 16.

¹⁵ O'Hanlon, I, p. 96.

with them a confraternity, the members of which bound themselves by mutual obligation to prayer and good works. It is said that at the conference at which this confraternity was formed no less than 1,746 holy men assembled, a number far greater than might be expected in Aran, even in its palmiest days.

Round Cuana's life many pious legends gathered. One of these has reference to the conference in question. In the midst of the deliberations a bell was seen in the air. The marvellous event was explained by Cuana as meaning that the bell was St. Fursey's, and sent as his representative, he himself being unable to be present. If we are to credit another legend, St. Cuana and eight of his disciples were once carried on a stone over the lake; and afterwards Cuana brought the stone to his cell, and for seven Lents remained on it as on a bed, practising austerities. If these miraculous events be believed there can be no difficulty in believing also that St. Cuana performed many miracles, healing the sick and giving sight to the blind; and it is easy to credit the story that the wild animals were tamed by him, and that on one occasion a wild deer came quietly up to him, threw herself on her knees, and licked his feet and hands.¹⁶

St. Cuana was also an author, and is put down by Ware among the Irish writers of the seventh century as having written the *Annals of Cuana*.

St. Fursey.

Keeping still to the district round Annaghdown, we must give a prominent place to St. Fursey. Indeed we must assign him a much more prominent place than we can assign to St. Cuana, for his fame went far beyond the fields washed by the waters of the Corrib. His grandfather was a prince of South Munster, and a brother of St. Brendan; his father was Fintan, who, as a soldier of fortune, for a time found employment at the court of the Chief of North Connaught. He there fell in love with and married Gelges, the chief's

¹⁶ O'Hanlon's "Lives," II, pp. 281-9; Wilde's "Lough Corrib," pp. 78-82.

daughter, and so enraged was the young woman's father that Fintan and his wife were sent into exile. In these circumstances Fintan sought and obtained an asylum with his uncle, St. Brendan, on the island of Inchiquin, and it was there that Fursey, the child of Fintan and Gelges, was born. This would be towards the sixth century, when St. Brendan was old, and it was in Brendan's monastery at Inchiquin, and under Brendan's successor, Meldun, that Fursey's education was received. He grew up a holy and a learned man, and in time founded a monastery on the neighbouring mainland, a place still called after him by the name of Killursa. Like Columbanus and Columba he was not destined to end his days in his native land, for he crossed the sea and settled in East Anglia. He was accompanied by his brothers, St. Foillan and St. Ultan, and with them founded a monastery at Burghcastle, which, like Killursa in Ireland, became a centre of missionary activity. But Fursey would go still farther afield, and about 640 crossed over to Gaul, and accompanied by some friends from Ireland he laboured along the banks of the Somme and Seine, the Oise, the Marne, and the Meuse. His name became specially identified with monastic establishments at Perrone on the Somme, and Lagny on the Marne. He died about 650 at Mezerolles in Picardy, in the territory of Duke Haymon, whose son he had raised from death to life. Other miracles he performed were the restoration of sight to the blind, and the casting out of evil spirits; and he died with the reputation of one high in favour with God, leaving many of his disciples and countrymen to carry on the work on which through life he was engaged."

Fursey was remembered longest and best because of his visions. These occurred during his earlier years in Ireland, and while he laboured in East Anglia, though we do not read of such visions in connection with his missionary career in Gaul. Apparently passing over any such visions during

¹⁷ Miss Stokes, "Three Months in the Forests of France," pp. 81-116.

Furse's early years in Ireland, Bede tells us what happened in East Anglia.¹⁸

"While Sigebert still governed the kingdom," he says, "there came out of Ireland a holy man called Fursey . . . remarkable for singular virtues. . . . On coming into the province of the East Saxons, he was honourably received by the aforesaid king, and performing his usual employment of preaching the Gospel . . . converting many unbelievers to Christ. . . .

"Here he fell into some infirmity of body, and was thought worthy to see a vision of God, in which he was admonished diligently to proceed in the ministry of the work which he had undertaken . . . ; inasmuch as his end was certain, but the hour of it would be uncertain. . . . Being confirmed by this vision, he applied himself with all speed to build a monastery on the ground which had been given to him by King Sigebert. . . .

"There, falling sick . . . he fell into a trance, and quitting his body from the evening till the cock crew, he was found worthy to behold the choir of angels, and to hear the praises which are sung in heaven. . . . Being restored to his body at that time, and again taken from it three days later, he not only saw the greater joys of the blessed, but also extraordinary combats of evil spirits, who by frequent accusations wickedly endeavoured to obstruct his journey to heaven; but the angels protecting him, all their endeavour was in vain. . . .

"When he had been lifted up on high, he was ordered by the angels that conducted him to look back upon the world. Upon which, casting his eyes downward, he saw, as it were, a dark and obscure valley underneath him. He also saw four fires in the air, not far distant from each other. Then, asking the angels what fires were these, he was told they were the fires which would enkindle and consume the world. One of them was falsehood, when we do not fulfil that which we promised in baptism, to renounce the devil and all his works.

¹⁸ Bede's "Ecclesiastical History," pp. 138-142.

The next was covetousness, when we prefer the riches of the world to the love of heavenly things. The third was discord, when we make no difficulty to offend the minds of our neighbours. The fourth was iniquity, when we look upon it as no crime to rob and defraud the weak. These fires, increasing by degrees, extended so as to meet one another, and being joined, became an immense flame. When it drew near, fearing for himself, he said to the angel, 'Lord, behold the fire draws near me.' The angel answered, 'That which you did not kindle shall not burn you; for though this appears to be a terrible and great fire, yet it tries every man according to the merits of his works.' . . .

"Then he saw one of the three angels, who had been his conductors throughout both visions, go before and divide the flame of fire, whilst the other two, flying about on both sides, defended him from the danger of that fire. He also saw devils flying through the fire. . . . Then followed accusations of the wicked spirits against him, the defence of the good angels in his favour, and a more extended view of the heavenly troops, as also of holy men of his own nation, who, as he had long since been informed, had been deservedly advanced to the degree of priesthood, from whom he heard many things that might be salutary to himself. . . . When they had ended their discourse, and returned to heaven with the angelic spirits, the three angels remained with the blessed Fursey . . . who were to bring him back to his body. And when they approached the immense fire, the angel divided the flame, as he had done before, but when the man of God came to the passage so opened amidst the flame, the unclean spirits, laying hold of one of those whom they tormented in the fire, threw him at him, and, touching his shoulder and jaw, burned them. He knew the man, and called to mind that he had received his garment when he died; and the angel, immediately laying hold, threw him back into the fire, and the malignant enemy said, 'Do not reject him . . . for, as you accepted the goods of him who was a sinner, so you must partake of his punishment.' The angel reply-

ing, said, 'He did not receive the same through avarice, but in order to save his soul.' . . .

"Being afterwards restored to his body, throughout the whole course of his life he bore the mark of the fire which he had felt in his soul, visible to all men on his shoulder and jaw; and the flesh publicly showed in a wonderful manner what the soul had suffered in private. . . . As far as the matter of his visions, he would only relate them to those who, from holy zeal, wished to learn the same. An ancient brother of our monastery is still living, who is wont to declare that a very sincere and religious man told him that he had seen Fursey himself in the province of the East Angles, and heard these visions from his mouth, adding, that though it was most sharp winter weather, and the man was sitting in a thin garment when he related it, yet he sweated as if it had been in the heat of summer, either through excessive fear, or spiritual consolation."¹⁹

St. Fechin.

Another saint prominently identified with the Archdiocese of Tuam, and who, like Cuana and Fursey, laboured in the seventh century was St. Fechin. He was a native of Sligo, and highly born; for while his mother was of the royal race of Munster, his father could trace his descent to Conn of the Hundred Battles. Of his early years we know little, except that he was educated under St. Nathy, the patron of Achonry diocese, and probably also at the famous monastic school of Clooneenagh. Then becoming a priest, he settled in the monastery of Ballysodare in Sligo, and there he was admonished by an angel to go to a certain island off the west coast of Galway. Obeying the call as from God, he took with him some zealous disciples, and started on his journey. His route lay through the narrow strip of land which separates Lough Corrib from Lough Mask, and at Cong Fechin remained for a time and founded a monastery. We do not know how long he remained there; but that he was there is

¹⁹ Lanigan, II, pp. 448-62.

certain, for his memory is still revered in Cong, and the place became known in after times as Conga Fechin. He was probably the abbot of the monastery, as he was its founder. But though he must have had a share in its government for a time, and an interest in its destiny, he was obeying a divine call, and hastened on to that western isle indicated in his dream. This was Omev, in the present parish of Clifden.

The story of his coming and of his stay there is told by Colgan. "On a certain night," he says, "the holy man, being then in the monastery of Eas dara (Ballysodare), was by an angel admonished in his sleep, that it was the divine will that he should go to a certain island of the ocean, which is called Omev, situated in the western district of Connaught. St. Fechin obeys the admonition of the angel, and with the intention of gaining many souls to Christ, and increasing the monastic institute, he, accompanied by some disciples, sought the island just mentioned, where he proposed to dwell and build a church. But the inhabitants endeavoured by all means to exclude him; whence at night they several times cast into the sea the spades, axes, iron tools and other instruments which his monks used in the work of building; but as often as they were thus cast, so often, being cast on shore, they were found by the monks in the morning. But when the man of God and his monks, thus meeting with the opposition of the people, persisted in continual labour, watchings and fasts, and the people, hardened in malice, denied them all nourishment, at length two of the brethren, exhausted through want, died. But St. Fechin, having poured forth for his servants a prayer to the Lord, merited that they should be recalled to life. And when rumours of the occurrence had reached the ears of the King, Guaire, the son of Colman, he took care that sufficient nourishment should be brought to St. Fechin. He added also his royal phial, which to this day is called Cruach Fechin. Afterwards all the islanders were baptized by St. Fechin, and they consigned themselves and their island to the service of St. Fechin and his successors."

The man of God founded another monastery in a neighbouring island called Ardoilean. In this island, Colgan adds, St. Fechin was held in great veneration as the patron of the church and island, and his monastery became a parish church of the Archdiocese of Tuam.²⁰

Omey is still inhabited, as it was in St. Fechin's day, but it affords only a miserable subsistence to its inhabitants. Its soil is poor, its surface is exposed to the storms which sweep in from the sea, it has not the shelter of a single tree, and when distress comes along the western seaboard it always visits Omey.

But Ardoilean was a more inhospitable place, and much more difficult to reach. It has no sheltered haven, and when the small boat has traversed the six miles which separate it from the mainland it is difficult to climb with safety the scarred cliffs that frown upon the waves below. And when the traveller lands in safety he sees a surface of eighty acres, bleak and barren and desolate, the last place which would seem suitable as a residence for man. Yet it suited Fechin and his monks, for such was the spirit of the time. These holy men sought only for solitude and silence and desolation, where prayers could be said and austerities practised amid the howling of the tempests and the storms. On such an island St. Fechin's followers must have been few, for its resources could not supply the wants of many, even though they were anchorets, and content with an anchoret's fare. They built, however, a rude church, its interior only twelve feet by ten, its height but ten feet. The door was two feet wide, and four and a-half feet high, the only window but one foot high and half-a-foot wide, the whole building without mortar or cement, and with no ornament except some rude sculptured crosses. This little church is surrounded by a wall, and close at hand is a small artificial lake, the waters of which turned a mill. There were also several clochan or

²⁰ "Iar-Connaught," pp. 279-80.

stone cells, beehive in shape, and serving, no doubt, as the houses of the monks who lived under St. Fechin's rule.²¹

After St. Fechin had freed both Omey and Ardoilean from paganism he returned to the mainland, probably visited Cong, and finally established a monastery at Fore, in Westmeath, where he died of the plague in 664. His work was carried on along the western seaboard by St. Flannan, who afterwards became the patron saint of Killaloe. He is also the patron of the parish of Ballindoon, which, with St. Fechin's island of Omey, makes up the modern parish of Clifden.

St. Flannan was ordained priest about 640, and died at the end of the seventh century, and was thus to some extent a contemporary of St. Fechin.²²

St. MacDara.

In the neighbouring parish of Errisanna, St. Kieran of Clonmacnoise must have laboured (probably having gone there from Aran when visiting St. Enda of Aran), for his memory is venerated by the inhabitants, and a church is dedicated to his memory. But the patron saint of the parish is MacDara. He is called Sionach MacDara, Sionach being supposed to be the saint's personal name, and MacDara his father's name. Where that father lived, what was his position, when his son was born, and where educated, are all matters of uncertainty. What seems certain is that he was a holy man who laboured chiefly in the little island that bears his name, and on the neighbouring mainland, and probably also he lived in the time of St. Fechin. For the little stone church of St. MacDara on the island is extremely old. Built without mortar or cement, with stones of great size, and only fifteen feet by eleven feet in its interior, it has walls three feet thick. Near it is an oval stone-house of the same rude style of architecture, with walls seven feet thick, evidently the resi-

²¹ Petrie's "Round Towers," pp. 420-3; Brash's "Ecclesiastical Architecture," pp. 150-1.

²² "Iar-Connaught," p. 109; Knox, p. 92; Lanigan, III, pp. 147-9.

dence of the saint; and near this is a stone altar surmounted with a cross.

St. MacDara must have led a life of great holiness in these remote regions. His feast is still kept by the natives on the 28th of September. For centuries no vessel passed the island without lowering her sails in respect to his memory; his holy well and rude altar were visited by pilgrims from far and near; and even yet the natives call their male children Mac Dara. The boatman thinks that if he calls his boat the Mac Dara she will ride safely on the waves; and until the middle of the seventeenth century a rude statue of the saint was a sacred object, by swearing on which contracts were solemnly confirmed. This practice, however, became such an abuse that the statue was buried in the earth by Malachy O'Queely, then Archbishop of Tuam. But though the statue has disappeared, an old church, a holy well, and an oval-shaped dwelling still remain to perpetuate the name of St. MacDara.²³

On the northern side of Clifden St. Leo was venerated at Inishark; and at Cahir Island, near Inishark, are the remains of a church called Tempul na Naomh, the church of the saints.²⁴

St. Colman of Inisboffin.

Much larger than either of these islands is Inisboffin, which is associated with the name of St. Colman. The date and place of his birth are uncertain, but he was certainly Irish, and probably a Connaughtman. He was born in the early part of the seventh century, and was educated at Iona. From that monastery his fellow-countryman had gone to convert Northumbria, and to become abbot and bishop of Lindisfarne, and when Aidan's successor, Finan, died in 661, Colman became abbot and bishop. The paschal dispute was then agitated in Northumbria. Labouring side by side were the successors of St. Augustine, with their Roman traditions and Roman practices, and the Scots or Irish who came from

²³ O'Hanlon, IX, pp. 621-4; "Iar-Connaught," pp. 97-102.

²⁴ "Iar-Connaught," pp. 116-17.

Iona, and, refusing to follow the Alexandrian cycle, still clung to the antiquated method of computing Easter followed by St. Columba. To compose these differences and establish uniformity a synod was held at Whitby in 665. King Oswy was on the side of Colman, and on the other side was Wilfrid, afterwards Archbishop of York. The latter's arguments were so convincing that Oswy was converted, and the Synod followed where he led. But Colman would not submit, thinking that if he abandoned the ancient system he would be throwing aspersions on the memory of St. Columba. He therefore resigned the See of Lindisfarne, and taking with him the bones of his predecessor, Aidan, and accompanied by three monks, Irish and Saxon, who shared his views, he went back to Ireland.

The place he selected was the desolate island of Inisboffin. The name of the island is derived from a weird legend, according to which a white cow came forth from an enchanted lake, and grazed from time to time on the scanty pasture around. Hence the name—Inis-bo-fin, the Island of the White Cow. It was a suitable place for an anchoret to dwell—bleak, desolate and lone—the sea-laden breezes sweeping over it, the waves lashing its sides, the soil too poor to afford man sufficient nourishment, which must necessarily be sought in the surrounding sea.

The Saxon and Irish monks soon quarrelled; for, while the former sowed and reaped on the island, the Irish crossed to the mainland and stayed there during the summer and autumn, and then returned to Inisboffin, where, during the winter, they ate what others had sown and saved. St. Colman was so displeased with his own countrymen that he left Inisboffin, took with him the Saxons who had followed him from Lindisfarne, and having acquired a piece of land on the plains of Mayo, two miles from Balla, established a monastery there.

The subsequent ecclesiastical history of Inisboffin is unimportant. There is a holy well sacred to the memory of St. Flannan, who must have visited the island and laboured there—perhaps in the time of St. Fechin; and in the town-

land of Knock are the remains of St. Colman's ancient church, and that is all.

But Mayo became a great monastic establishment. St. Colman himself died there in 674, and after him came the celebrated man, St. Gerald, the son of a Saxon prince, who, like Colman, was abbot and bishop of Mayo. Adamnan visited him from Iona, and it is said that Alfred the Great sent his son to be educated at Mayo. And of Mayo was specially true what Bede writes: "Many of the nobility," he says, "and of the lower ranks of the English nation were there (in Ireland) who, forsaking their native island, retired thither, either for the sake of divine studies or of a more continent life; and some of them at once devoted themselves to a monastic life; others chose rather to apply themselves to study, going about from one monastic cell to another. The Irish willingly received them all, and took care to supply them with food, and also to furnish them with books to read, and gave them their teaching gratis." If this were true of other monasteries it was surely true of St. Colman's foundation, which owed its origin to one who had laboured long among the Saxons, who was accompanied to Mayo by Saxon monks, and who was succeeded by the Saxon-born St. Gerald. Hence was Mayo so much frequented by monks from across the Channel, and hence it came to be called Mayo of the Saxons.²⁵

St. Mochua.

Balla, as a religious centre, owed its fame to St. Mochua, or Cronan, for he is known by both names. He was a native of Ulster, and a student of Bangor, and was born about the end of the sixth century. After leaving Bangor he went to Fore, after which he passed into the Hy-Many country in Connaught, and finally settled in Balla. A holy man, who performed many miracles, he was greatly venerated by the

²⁵ O'Hanlon, VIII, pp. 110-20; Lanigan, III, pp. 59-60, 75-79; Bede, pp. 154-163; Healy, pp. 526-39.

people. He had some skill in building, and it is said that it was he built the mill at St. Fechin's monastery at Fore. At Balla he built a church, and surrounded the church and holy well beside it with a wall. Hence the name Balla, that is, the wall surrounding church and well. It is not likely that Balla was pagan when first visited by St. Mochua. But St. Mochua organised the church in the district, with Balla as its centre, though he does not appear to have erected a monastery. His successor, however, acquired considerable possessions, and the termon lands of Balla in later ages were nearly equal in extent to the present parish of Balla. St. Mochua died in 637.²⁶

The Close of the Seventh Century.

These, then, were the men who won from paganism the territory now included in the present Archdiocese of Tuam. St. Patrick himself and his immediate disciples worked at Aughamore and Kilbannon, at Donaghpatrick and Kilmaine and Aughagower. The shores and islands of Lough Corrib were sanctified by the prayers and labours of St. Brendan and St. Cuana, St. Meldun and St. Fursey. Aran was made Christian by St. Enda. The wind-swept island of St. MacDara and the neighbouring mainland are sacred to the memory of St. MacDara. Fechin lived and laboured on the islands of Omey and Ardoilean. St. Flannan was active round Clifden; and St. Colman in Inisboffin. While inland St. Fechin vanquished paganism at Cong; St. Mochua built his church at Balla; and St. Colman, on the plains of Mayo, erected a great monastery which brought students from across the sea. Before the close of the seventh century even the pagans at Omey had renounced their paganism, and they are said to have been among the last in Ireland to embrace Christianity. Like the other provinces, Connaught had its saints and monasteries. Nor was there, as far as we can judge, any trace of heresy or schism, if we except the regret-

²⁶ O'Hanlon, III, pp. 1017-21; Petrie's "Round Towers," pp. 449-50; "Hy-Fiachrach," pp. 197-8; "Four Masters," at 637.

table difference about the time of celebrating Easter, which is specially associated with the life and acts of St. Colman.

In the eighth century the cross had finally taken the place of the pagan idol; nor was there, as the century neared its close, any expectation that the supremacy of the cross would be challenged by hordes of pagans from the Baltic, who, in their zeal for plunder and paganism, visited and robbed even the remote islands of the West.

CHAPTER IV.

DURING THE DANISH WARS.

Civil Affairs.

FOR a considerable period before the opening of the seventh century, and for a considerable period after that date, prominent events in the history of Connaught are few. In the sixth century the "Annals of the Four Masters" records that in 504 the Ardri won the battle of the Curlews against the King of Connaught, Duach Gallach, the ancestor of the O'Connors and the O'Rorkes. In 526 the same Ardri again defeated the Connaught men. In 537 Eoghan Bel, the King of Connaught, was defeated by the then reigning Ardri; and in 549 the Ardris, who ruled jointly, namely, Fergus and Domhnall, defeated Ailell, King of Connaught, at Cuil Conaire, in the present barony of Carra, in the County of Mayo. We have further, at 554, a record of the important fact that it was a Connaught prince who, in part at least, was the cause of Tara having been blighted with the curses of St. Columba. For this prince had been a hostage at Tara, and having grievously offended the Ardri, Diarmuid, was put to death; and this in spite of the fact that his safety had been guaranteed by St. Columba.¹

These events show that in the sixth century power in Connaught must have been centred in the hands of powerful and ambitious chiefs. Otherwise the province could not have provoked these several attacks; nor could it have offered any serious resistance when the assailant was the High-King of

¹ "Four Masters."

Erin. In the seventh century, indeed at the year 649, it is also recorded that Connaught was again arrayed in battle against the Ardri, and that it suffered defeat. After that date, for the long period of two centuries, the annalists are mute.

The descendants of Duach Galach were competitors for the position which he held, and as no one was able to assert a pre-eminence and establish his authority over the whole province, no one was able to face the Ardri in battle. Of the quarrels which these chiefs engaged in we know nothing, nor, indeed, of these chiefs themselves, if we except Guaire Aidhne, who lived in the seventh century, and who was famous for his hospitality. And the "Annals of Clonmacnoise" also inform us that in 754 there was a battle at Breaffy, near Castlebar, between the Hy-Fiachra chiefs and the O'Briens, in which three of the O'Kelly chiefs of Hy-Many were slain.

Missionary Work.

If we turn to the ecclesiastical history of the province during the same period, important events are equally meagre. It is of interest to know that, in 658, Cummian Fada, the great abbot and scholar who ruled at Clonfert, died; that, nearly twenty years later, St. Colman of Inisboffin died; that at 711 is recorded the death of Baetan, Bishop of Inisboffin. At 750 is put down the death of one of Baetan's successors, Fianguilach, though he is described as Abbot rather than as Bishop of Inisboffin; at 768 is recorded the death of Aedhan, Bishop of Mayo; at 773 the death of Sithmaith, Abbess of Cloonburren, in the parish of Moore; at 776 the death of Nuada Ua Bolcain, Abbot of Tuam; and at 777 the death of Feardornach of Tuam. It is also of interest to note that, at 704, Ceallach, grandson of the King of Connaught, died after having taken holy orders; and that at 777 Artghal, son of another King of Connaught, took the pilgrim's staff, and facing dangers which in these days must have been great,

sought an asylum in the monastery of Iona, where he died in 786.

In the various religious centres, no doubt, piety and learning could be found. Fechin's successors carried on Fechin's work in and around Cong, as did Mochua's successors in Balla, and St. Patrick's at Aughagower. The shores and islands of Lough Corrib had their faith guarded and preserved by the successors of Cuana and Brendan and Furse. And if we do not read for centuries of the death of a Bishop of Mayo after Aedhan, nor of an Abbot of Tuam after Fear-domnach, it was not that they had not zealous successors, but that the names of these successors have not survived.

Danish Depredations.

Then came the Danes. Fired by the fiercest pagan fanaticism, and holding the Christian religion and its ministers in abhorrence, they everywhere attacked the churches and monasteries; and murdered monks and ruined churches and monasteries marked their line of march. At first it was only the monasteries and churches on the east coast which they attacked, for these were the most accessible, and afforded the richest booty. But in a few years even the western shores and islands were visited; and in 812 it is recorded by the "Four Masters" that the Danes plundered Inishmurry, off the coast of Sligo, and penetrated inland to Roscommon. About the same time they desolated Iar-Connaught, and, no doubt, the islands and shores sanctified by the labours of Fechin and MacDara suffered at their hands. Other districts more richly endowed, and other monasteries then attracted their greed; but in 835, when Turgesius was endeavouring to conquer the whole island, Connaught was not forgotten; and in that year we meet with the entry, "Cluan-mor-Medhog was burned on Christmas night by the foreigner, and a great number was slain by them, and many prisoners were carried off. . . . All the country of Connaught was also desolated by them." This latter is the entry which we find put down in the "Annals of Clonmacnoise" in this fashion: "The

Danes in this year harried and spoiled all the province of Connaught and confines thereof outrageously." Again we have in the "Four Masters" the following entry at 837: "A battle was gained by the Gentiles over the Connaughtmen."

The death of Turgesius was a relief to Connaught, as it was to Ireland, but it did not free the province from Danish attacks, and in 866 we read the following: "Flann, son of Conaing, lord of Breagh, collected the men of Breagh and Leinster, and the foreigners to Cill-na-n-Daighre—five thousand was the number of his forces—against the King, Aedh Finnliath. Aedh had only one thousand, together with Conchobhar, son of Tadhg Mor, King of Connaught. The battle was eagerly and earnestly fought between them, and the victory was at length gained by dint of wounding and fighting, over the men of Breagh, the Leinster men and the foreigners; and a great number of the foreigners were slain in the battle." The meaning of all this is that the Connaught King, having suffered much from the Danes, sent his army across the Shannon under the command of his son, and that the Connaughtmen fought with the Ardri, and inflicted upon the Danes and their allies a serious defeat.

For the next century important events west of the Shannon are few. We may, however, assume that the Danes still visited the churches and monasteries along the coast, as well as those in the islands of Lough Corrib, and perhaps also the churches of Tuam and Mayo and Balla. And it is reasonable to assume also that the evil example of plunder and devastation which they set was sometimes followed by turbulent native chiefs. How often such events happened we do not know. But we do know that even so good a man as Malachy II., in 984, "plundered Connaught, destroyed its islands, killed its chieftains, and reduced Magh-Aei to ashes." And when islands were desolated, and chiefs killed, we may be assured that the religious establishments did not escape being despoiled. A few years later, in 992, Malachy again entered Connaught, and carried off a large

prey of cattle. In retaliation, no doubt, the Connaughtmen aided Brian Boru, and the Connaught King refused to come to the assistance of Malachy in 1002, when Brian deposed him from the position of Ard-Ri.

Domestic Turmoil.

At this date the troubles of a disputed succession left Connaught in turmoil. The sovereignty, in fact, alternated for a time between the O'Rorkes and O'Connors.² O'Rorke deposed O'Connor in 960, and assumed the sovereignty himself; but in 968 O'Connor recovered his position, and in 1010 O'Rorke again was able to dethrone his rival, only to give way again to the O'Connors in 1030. Meantime, Cathal O'Connor, who built a stone bridge over the Shannon, and the sepulchral chapel of the O'Connors at Clonmacnoise, after a reign of twenty-eight years, entered the monastery of Clonmacnoise, and died there in 1010. His daughter was married to Brian Boru, but he did not aid Brian at Clontarf, though Tadhg O'Kelly of Hy-Many did. As the century advanced, the O'Rorkes and the O'Connors continued their quarrels. Hugh O'Connor of the Broken Spear had in 1054 certainly established his superiority; he even plundered Thomond, as he did again in 1059. But this powerful chief who, in 1066, punished O'Rorke and O'Kelly because they had attacked Clonmacnoise, was himself assailed by O'Rorke in the following year, and at Oranmore, near Galway, was defeated and slain. Then for twenty-one years an O'Rorke chief ruled Connaught.³

St. Gormghael.

In the midst of these dynastic wars, which kept Connaught in turmoil, one event occurred in the ecclesiastical history of the province which was thought worthy of being recorded by the "Four Masters." This was the death of Gormghael of Ardoilean, who is described as "chief anm-chara of Ireland,"

² "The O'Connors of Connaught," p. 30.

³ *Ibid.*

that is, chief soul friend. Like Enda, five centuries earlier, he loved solitude and mortification, and sought out even a more desolate retreat. Bare and barren, like Aran, Ardoilean was much smaller in extent, and afforded less shelter from the sea-laden storms that swept over its surface. Yet there were monks here probably since the day of St. Fechin. They were there certainly in the eleventh century, and were addressed in a poem written by Corcran, a famous anchorite, who died in 1040 at Lismore. Renowned for his piety and wisdom, he was trusted and respected by all, and after the death of Malachy, in 1022, Corcran and Conn O'Loughlin were for a short time invested with the sovereignty of Ireland. The poem which Corcran addressed to the monks of Ardoilean (for Corcran was not only an anchorite, but a poet) was on the relics and virtues of their Abbot, Gormghael. Where Gormghael was born and educated, and how long he lived on this holy island, we do not know; but his death is put down at 1018, and as the entry occurs in the national annals, he must have had a national reputation for piety and wisdom. To his lone retreat in the midst of the billows men were attracted from afar: the chief weary of war, the sinner anxious for repentance, the holy man aspiring to perfection. And in the island abbot they saw an ascetic, living in his little oval-shaped stone cell, fasting and praying incessantly, and surrounded by a little community of ascetic men, who looked up to him as their master.

Gormghael's feast is on the fifth of August. Corcran declares that he rests in the island, and with him also rest many holy men who lived under his rule, or perhaps died before his time; so that Ardoilean, like Aran, is holy ground.⁴

Turlogh O'Connor.

For a long period after Gormghael's death the contest for pre-eminence in Connaught was maintained between the O'Connors and O'Rorkes; but before the century closed the supreme position was held by the O'Connors, and was never

⁴ O'Hanlon, VIII, pp. 72-5.

afterwards reached by the O'Rorkes. In 1092, the ruling O'Connor prince was assailed by a turbulent and powerful vassal, O'Flaherty, who took O'Connor prisoner, and put out his eyes. Disqualified from reigning because of his blindness, the dethroned prince retired to Clonmacnoise, and died there after a retreat of twenty-six years. His son, Domhnall, was his successor, but for some reason he was, in 1106, deposed by Murtagh O'Brien, King of Munster, who gave the place thus vacated to Domhnall's younger brother, Turlogh O'Connor.

Turlogh was then but eighteen years old, but soon showed a wisdom in governing and a capacity for war beyond his years. He first punished the Conmaicne, a Connaught tribe who had risen in revolt against his authority; then he plundered Fermanagh, forming an alliance with Murtagh O'Brien against the great Ulster chief, O'Loughlin. In 1115 he felt strong enough to enter O'Brien's own territory of Thomond, which he plundered as far as Limerick.

He was not a man who was scrupulous as to the means he employed to gain success, and had no hesitation in fostering dissension among other chiefs so as to weaken their capacity for resistance, and render them an easy prey to his attacks. He was willing, too, to shift easily from side to side, to ally himself with O'Rorke against Meath, or with Meath against Leinster; or, again, with Leinster against Munster. Nor was he satisfied with the first place west of the Shannon, where, indeed, there was no one to seriously question his right to pre-eminence. He wanted to rival the greatness of Brian Boru, and took special pleasure in inflicting humiliation and defeat upon the descendants of Brian. For he repeatedly wasted Thomond, and, dividing Munster, he revived the ancient kingdom of Desmond. He also exacted submission from Leinster, and, in 1126, installed his son, Conor, as King of Dublin. But though in Munster and Leinster, as well as in Connaught, he had attained to the first position among the chiefs, and at his death, in 1156, was certainly the most powerful of all the Irish princes, he never was successful in

subjugating the Ulster chief, O'Loughlin, and was, therefore, never recognised as Ardri of Ireland.⁵

Tuam an Archdiocese.

During Turlogh's time diocesan episcopacy was established in the Irish Church, and Tuam became an Archdiocese. Hitherto the monastery was the centre of missionary activity. The people of the surrounding district heard Mass in its church, and were instructed there; when grave illness afflicted them, the priest issued from the monastery gates to prepare them for eternity; and when death came, the priest from the monastery went forth to conduct the burial service, and pray for the departed soul. The steps by which parishes came to be formed are not easily traced, for the development of the Irish Church from monastic conditions was gradual and slow. The head of a monastery was an abbot, and usually a bishop, and in the greater monasteries the jurisdiction of the abbot-bishop would coincide with the extent of territory subject to the ruling chief. This extent of territory contracted or expanded as the chief was victorious or suffered defeat, and hence we may assume that the bishop's jurisdiction extended over a territory of changing limits. There would also be the lesser monasteries, where perhaps the abbot was a bishop, or it may be a mere abbot owing allegiance to the abbot-bishop of the greater monastery. And as population increased with the advance of time, it would be found most convenient to have smaller churches with a small community, or perhaps but a single priest living among the people, and attending to their spiritual wants. In some such way as this did the evolution of the Church in Ireland take place since the days when it was purely a monastic church.

Long before the opening of the twelfth century the inconvenience and confusion of having bishops without sees must have been felt; and, no doubt, if the ecclesiastical history of these early centuries were fully known it would be found that efforts had been made to establish diocesan episcopacy. Early

⁵ "Four Masters" and "Annals of Loch Ce."

in the twelfth century, at all events, such efforts were made, and at the Synod of Rathbreasail, in 1118, it was decreed that, exclusive of Dublin, which was left subject to Canterbury, there should be twenty-four dioceses in Ireland. Of these, five were recognised as belonging to Connaught, namely, Tuam, Cong, Clonfert, Killala, and Ardcarne.⁶ There is here no mention of Mayo, where a bishop resided, who at that date and long afterwards exercised episcopal jurisdiction over a territory of which Mayo was the centre and the ecclesiastical capital. Nor is there mention of Annaghdown, where the successor of St. Brendan dwelt in his monastery on the shores of Lough Corrib, and from there exercised episcopal jurisdiction over a territory which generally corresponded with the territory ruled by the O'Flaherties.

The fact seems to have been that the national Synod of Rathbreasail merely determined the number of dioceses which Connaught ought to have, five being considered its due proportion relatively to the other provinces. The places named were mentioned as suitable episcopal centres, but this arrangement was neither mandatory nor final. It was left to the Connaught bishops to choose other episcopal centres if they thought better, and this in fact they did. Cong was regarded by them as more suitably the residence of an abbot, and was made subject to Tuam; and Ardcarne gave way to Roscommon, and ultimately both it and Roscommon were absorbed by Elphin.

At the Synod of Kells, in 1152, at which Paparo, the Papal Legate, presided, no less than eight dioceses were allotted to Connaught—Tuam, Mayo, Killala, Roscommon, Clonfert, Achonry, Clonmacnoise, and Kilmacduagh.⁷ Mayo was selected because it had long been connected with the great monastery founded by St. Colman, and sanctified by St. Gerald, and because it was a convenient centre for the Carra tribes. Killala owed its selection to its connection with St. Muredach, whose successor would naturally have jurisdiction

⁶ Lanigan, IV, pp. 42-3.

⁷ *Ibid.* IV, p. 146.

over Northern Hy-Fiachrach. Ardcarne and Roscommon could not maintain supremacy over Elphin, associated, as it was, with the hallowed memory of St. Asicus.

As showing the connection between tribal pre-eminence and episcopal jurisdiction, it is well to note that Clonfert corresponded with the territory ruled by the O'Kellys; and, in fact, the Bishop of Clonfert was sometimes called the Bishop of Hy-Many (Ware's "Bishops"). It is for a similar reason Kilmacduagh corresponded in extent with Southern Hy-Fiachrach, and Annaghdown with O'Flaherty's territory (Ware's "Bishops").

A Bishop of Clonmacnoise was present at the Synod of Kells. Though his diocese at Clonmacnoise was east of the Shannon, it was counted among the Connaught Sees, and to the Connaught province it was assigned. But Armagh claimed it in the twelfth century, and after an angry controversy it was taken from Tuam, and made a diocese of the Ulster province.⁸

Tuam is always included in the enumeration of the dioceses of Connaught, and sometimes the Bishop of Tuam is put down as Bishop of Connaught, meaning that his was the premier place. And when the Synod of Kells decreed that there should be four ecclesiastical provinces, each under an archbishop, there was no doubt as to which of the western dioceses should be an Archbishop's See. For Tuam was formally recognised as the metropolitan centre, and Cardinal Paparo formally delivered the pallium to the ruling Archbishop of Tuam.⁹

Work of Turlogh O'Connor.

Part of this pre-eminence, no doubt, arose from the association of Tuam with the memory of so great a saint as St. Jarlath; but much more was owing to the O'Connor princes, and especially to Turlogh O'Connor. Though O'Flaherty was never able to contest with success the right of the

⁸ Ware's "Bishops."

⁹ Lanigan, IV, p. 146.

O'Connors to be supreme in Connaught, they were nevertheless powerful and turbulent, and sometimes it became necessary for the ruling chief among the O'Connors to use force against O'Flaherty. In 1051, for instance, Hugh O'Connor of the Broken Spear was compelled to depose the ruling O'Flaherty chief, and in 1061 he was again compelled to attack O'Flaherty, who then resided in West Connaught. This last time he cut off O'Flaherty's head, and carried the ghastly trophy to the chief seat of the O'Connors at Rathcroghan. So powerful, indeed, were the O'Flaherties, and so turbulent, that it became necessary to build a stronghold near their territory, the more easily to keep them under close observation, and the more easily to subdue them when they rebelled. For this reason Hugh O'Connor of the Broken Spear himself went to reside at West Connaught in 1051 ("Four Masters"); nor could he have selected a better place than Tuam. It was "a suitable place for watching the O'Flaherties."¹⁰

Not far distant from Tuam the O'Connors erected a strong castle at Dunmore; and henceforth the O'Connor chiefs, while not deserting the old royal residence at Rathcroghan, made Tuam their chief residence. Henceforth also the enemies of the O'Connors made Tuam and Dunmore special objects of attack; and when the Dalcassians entered Connaught, in 1135, they burned Dunmore, and forcibly entered the church at Tuam.¹¹ This was in retaliation for Turlogh O'Connor's devastation of Thomond, and for his desecration of the church of Lismore; and it gave special offence to Turlogh who regarded Tuam as the chief church of the wide extent of territory which he ruled.

Turlogh was not, as so many of the Irish chiefs of his day were, a mere plunderer, ambitious only of devastating his enemy's territory. He was anxious for success in war, but he was equally anxious for the victories associated with peace; nor did any Irish king, except Brian Boru, do so much

¹⁰ Knox's "Tuam," p. 77.

¹¹ "Annals of Clonmacnoise"; Lanigan, IV, p. 98.

for religion and learning. And not even Brian Boru did so much for art. He built stone bridges over the Shannon, at Athlone and Shannon Harbour, and over the Suck at Ballinasloe. He built strong castles at Galway, Ballinasloe and Collooney, and he set up a mint at Clonmacnoise. His son was Abbot of Roscommon, and this abbey must, therefore, have enjoyed much of his favour. Clonmacnoise, however, was a much more important religious centre of ecclesiastical life, and Turlogh built a belfry there in 1120. And when he and O'Mellaghlin of Meath, who had long been at war, agreed to sheath their swords, and a treaty of peace was made between them, it was solemnly ratified before the high altar of Clonmacnoise.¹² This did not prevent O'Mellaghlin from violating the treaty, and in consequence he was arrested and lodged in prison in Turlogh's strong castle of Dunmore. Nor was O'Mellaghlin released till a synod was held of the province of Connaught, presided over by Muiredach O'Duffy, Bishop of Tuam, and a petition of the bishops and clergy of Connaught was presented to Turlogh in 1144.

Tuam Cathedral and Cong Abbey.

Meantime, the Abbey of Cong, which had been burned, was rebuilt by the Canons Regular of St. Augustine, who then ruled over the church established by St. Fechin. And Turlogh, about the same date (probably in 1140) had also rebuilt the Cathedral which had, in 1134, been desecrated and burned by the Dalcassians. These two works, the Cathedral of Tuam and the Abbey of Cong, both rebuilt about 1140, and built under the rule and with the assistance of Turlogh O'Connor, deserve special notice. Time has dealt harshly with the Tuam Cathedral, for nothing now remains of it but its chancel and chancel arch. These, however, are sufficient to point out how splendid the original building was, and to show that it was not only a larger but a more splendid structure than Cormac's Church at Cashel.

This chancel is a square of twenty-six feet in external mea-

¹² Lanigan, IV, pp. 98-9.

surement, and the walls are four feet in thickness. The great feature of the chancel is its triumphal arch, now erroneously supposed to be a doorway, which is, perhaps, the most magnificent specimen of its kind remaining in Ireland. It is composed externally of six semi-circular concentric arches, of which the outer is twenty feet six inches in width at its base, and nineteen feet five inches in height; and the inner fifteen feet eight inches in width, and sixteen feet high. The ornamentation on these arches is varied and rich, showing Irish Romanesque architecture at its best.¹³

We know from the "Four Masters" that in 1114 the ecclesiastical establishments at Cong, as well as those of Kilbannon, were burned; and in the years that followed, perhaps about 1125 or 1130, the Abbey of Cong was built. This was, of course, when Turlogh O'Connor ruled Connaught, when Maurice O'Duffy was chief bishop in Connaught, and when O'Roddy was herenach or steward of the property held by the Augustinian Canons at Cong.¹⁴ Chiefly owing to the care of the modern owner, Lord Ardilaun, the ruins of the ancient Abbey are still in a good state of preservation, and much more of the ancient building remains than in the case of the Tuam Cathedral. The chancel walls are entire, and part of the nave, though the northern wall of the latter is gone. The dimensions of the nave were no less than 140 feet in length, so that the church was a large one. And the doorways and windows are rich in ornament, all being semi-circular, and in the case of the doorways, consisting of several concentric arches. It was within the shadow of the venerable pile at Cong that Muiredach O'Duffy was buried in 1150; and it was in the same hallowed ground that several members of the royal house of O'Connor found a last resting-place.¹⁵ The church was but a small portion of the monastic buildings, for there were many of these Augustinian Canons living together in community in Cong, and the buildings were large,

¹³ Petrie's "Ancient Ecclesiastical Architecture," pp. 317-18.

¹⁴ Healy's "Schools and Scholars," p. 558.

¹⁵ Wilde's "Lough Corrib," pp. 171-8.

and the Abbey grounds extensive. Nor could anything be more picturesque than the situation of this splendid pile, splendid even in its ruins, standing on the very edge of Lough Corrib.

In the little village of Cong, and within a short distance of the ruined Abbey, there is an ancient stone cross, worn and old, and with an inscription in the Irish language asking for a prayer for Niahall O'Duffy and Gillibhard O'Duffy, who in their day were Abbots of Cong.¹⁶ There was also, and in connection with the Abbey, a shrine of wood, made originally, it was said, to contain a tooth of St. Patrick, and hence called Fiachal Padraig, or St. Patrick's tooth. The wood was covered with gold and silver plates, highly ornamented—a number of crystals and stones having been inserted, and a number of figures of ecclesiastics having been wrought on the precious metals. After many vicissitudes the shrine fell into the hands of the last Abbot of Cong, Abbot Prendergast, who died in 1829, and from him it passed into the hands of a Mrs. Blake, of Blake Hill, near Cong, and finally into the hands of Dr. Stokes, from whom it passed to the National Museum at Dublin, where it can still be seen.¹⁷

The Cross of Cong.

But of all the relics of ancient days connected with Cong and its history the most celebrated is the well-known Cross of Cong. It was made in 1123 to contain a small portion of the true Cross brought from Rome to Turlogh O'Connor, and brought, as Dr. Healy with great probability surmises, by one of the Irish bishops who attended the General Council of Lateran. It was made at Roscommon—at least such is the statement made in the "Annals of Innisfallen"; but it may well be that it was made at Clonmacnoise, and thence brought to Roscommon. Or, if made at Roscommon, it was made by one who had learned the metal-worker's art at Clonmacnoise. It was made under the direction of Turlogh

¹⁶ Wilde, p. 185.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 191-2.

O'Connor, in the time of Domhnall O'Duffy, who is styled "Bishop of Connaught," and it was made by MacEgan.

"It is undoubtedly one of the finest specimens of metal-work, enamel, niello, and jewellery of its age in the western world." It stands thirty inches high, and the breadth of the arms is nineteen inches. It consists of an oaken cross, covered with plates of bronze and silver, washed in many places with a thick layer of gold, and having interspersed golden filigree work of most minute character around its front centre. All the front and back plates are elaborately carved with that intertwined pattern which is specially characteristic of Irish ornamentation on stone and metal, vellum and nitrous composition. The outer corners of each compartment were originally studded with precious stones, glass, or figured enamel paste, in white and dark-blue colours. Supported upon a raised boss, decorated with niello in the centre, there is a large polished crystal, under which was placed originally the relic sent from Rome to Turlogh O'Connor. From its appearance it was called the *Bachall Buidh*, or the Yellow Staff.¹⁸ Around its sides there are a series of Latin and Irish inscriptions, both in the Irish characters. The letters are punched into the silver plate apparently by dies or types, and so deeply that the metal plates beneath are indented with almost equal sharpness; and this enables us to read uninterruptedly, even where the external plate has been injured. The foot of the cross springs from a highly decorated dog's head, which rises out of a globe, the ornamentation of which in detail is a marvel of the workmanship of its own or any other period. Beneath that ball is a decorated socket, into which was inserted the staff or pole with which the cross was carried.

The inscriptions tell the history of this magnificent relic, the time and purpose for which it was made, and recounts the names of those in any way concerned in its formation. The Latin inscription is "*Hac Cruce Crux tegitur qua passus conditor Orbis*"—"In this Cross is preserved the Cross on

¹⁸ "Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy," IV, p. 572.

which the Creator of the world suffered." Some of the Irish inscriptions are defective; but sufficient remains to furnish us with the following information: "A prayer for Muiredach O'Dubhthaig, the Senior of Erin." Another portion of the inscription is: "A prayer for Domhnall MacFlannacan O'Dubhthaig, Bishop of Connaught, and Coarb of Saints Colman and Chiaran, under whose superintendence this Shrine was made." Another inscription is: "A prayer for Turlogh O'Connor, for the King of Erin, for whom this gressa (shrine) was made." The fourth and last inscription is, says Dr. Petrie, not the least important, as it shows that the work was of native workmanship. It is: "A prayer for Maelissa Mac Brathan O'Echan, who made this shrine."

The Cross, originally, no doubt, intended for Roscommon, where O'Duffy was Abbot, was afterwards transferred to Tuam Cathedral, whence it was brought to Cong, probably by Roderick O'Connor. During the penal times it disappeared from Cong, and was recovered in the nineteenth century. It was in the early years of the century in the hands of Abbot Prendergast, who was the last Abbot of Cong. Sir William Wilde, who had a house in the neighbourhood, remembers having seen it in his boyish days in an old cupboard in the Abbot's room; and he remembers that it used to be placed on the altar of the Catholic church in Cong on the festivals of Christmas and Easter. After the Abbot's death it was purchased by Professor McCullagh, and by him presented to the Royal Irish Academy.¹⁹

The O'Duffys.

The O'Duffys, of whom two are commemorated on this famous shrine, belonged to a remarkable family. Belonging originally to Leinster, they crossed the Shannon, and in the eleventh and twelfth centuries they had acquired distinction in Connaught, especially in ecclesiastical affairs. Flanagan

¹⁹ Wilde's "Lough Corrib," pp. 192-6.

Ruadh O'Duffy, who died in 1097, was Abbot of Roscommon, after having been professor in the monastic school of Tuam. Domhnall O'Duffy, whose death took place in 1137, is called Coarb or Successor of St. Kieran of Clonmacnoise, and must have been, therefore, the Abbot of that famous monastery. He was subsequently Bishop of Elphin, and by the "Four Masters" is styled High-Bishop of Connaught, and, doubtless, says Dr. Healy, "because he was the most distinguished prelate of his time, for as yet there was no metropolitan See of Tuam."²⁰ He died at Clonfert, and was buried there, and is described as "the head of the wisdom and hospitality of the whole province."

Muiredach O'Duffy, perhaps the brother of the last-named, and certainly a member of the same family, was also called High-Bishop of Connaught; and when he died in 1150 he was mourned as "the chief senior of all Ireland in wisdom, in chastity, in the bestowal of jewels and food."²¹ During his time there was, in 1143, a Synod of the whole province, one of its acts being to petition Turlogh O'Connor for the release of his son Roderick. The young prince had committed some serious offence, and so gravely incurred his father's displeasure that he was thrown into prison.²²

There is also mention made of Bishop Flanagan O'Duffy, who died in 1168; of Maurice O'Duffy, who was Abbot of Boyle, and died in 1174; and there was a little later, Catholicus O'Duffy, who belongs to the reign of Roderick O'Connor.²³

The Priory of St. John the Baptist.

This famous family were evidently the friends and advisers of Turlogh O'Connor in all that he did for religion and for art. It was in the time of Muiredach O'Duffy that—in 1140

²⁰ "Four Masters"; "Annals of Loch Ce"; Healy's "Ancient Schools and Scholars," p. 548.

²¹ "Four Masters."

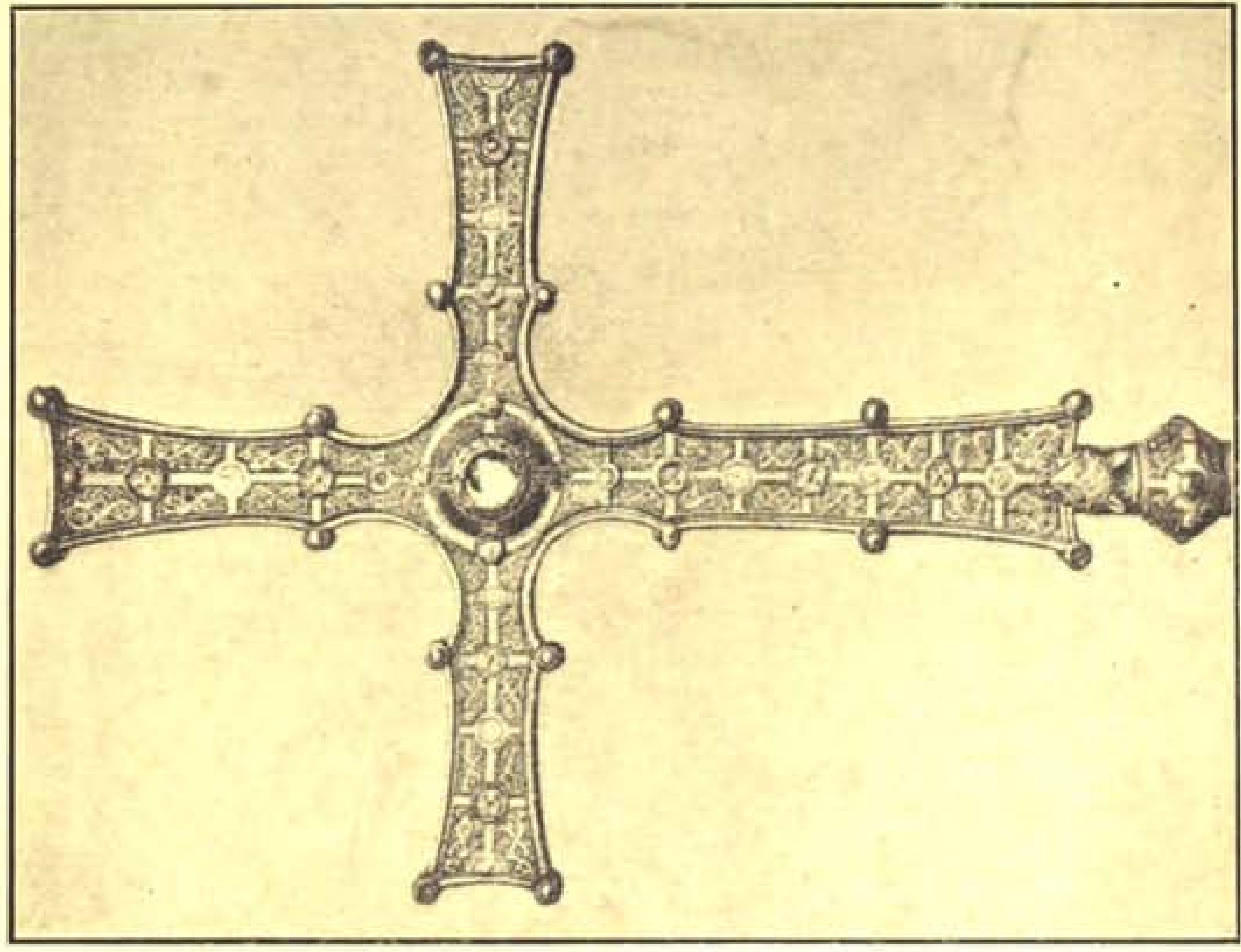
²² Lanigan, Vol. IV.

²³ Healy, pp. 548-9.

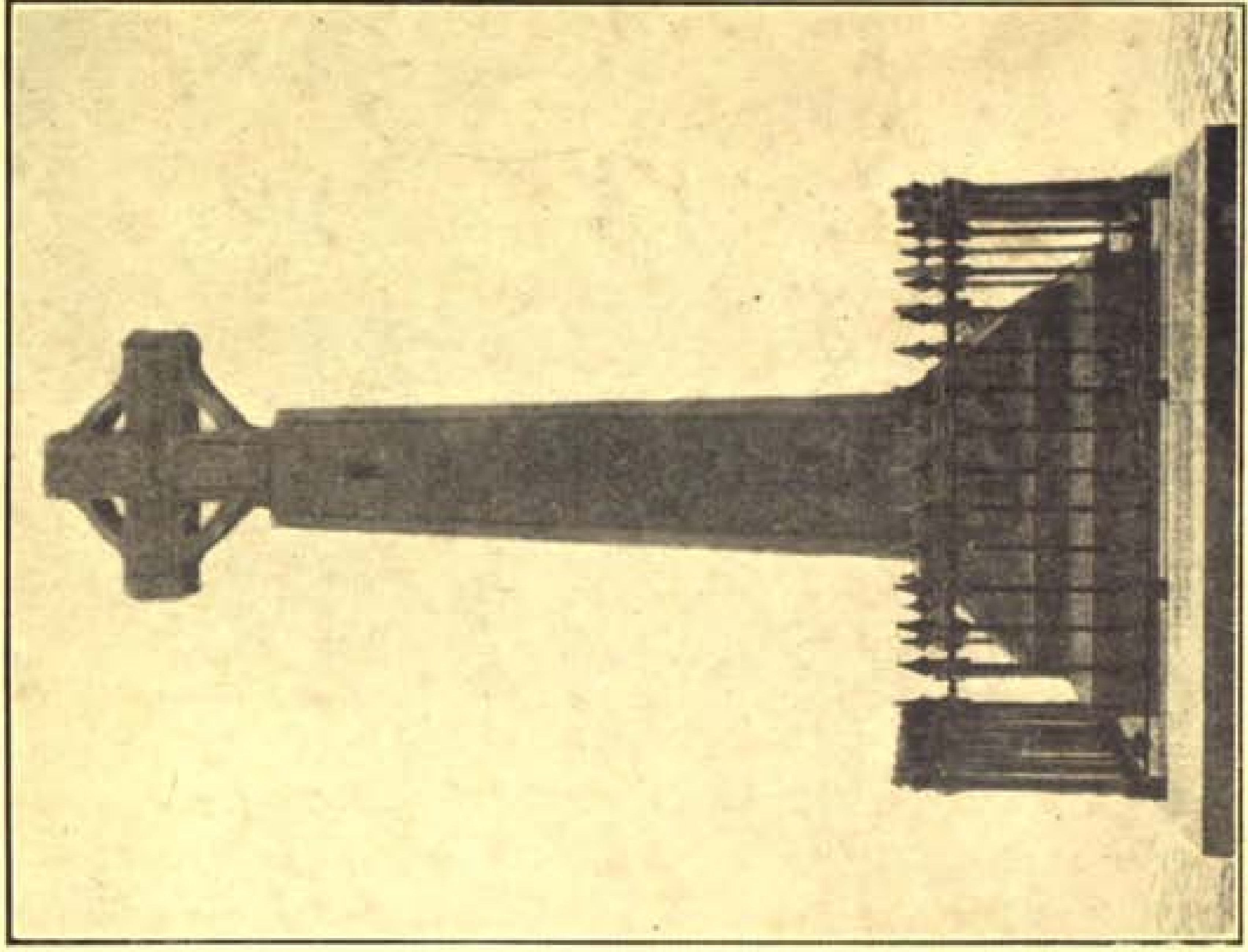
—the Priory of St. John the Baptist was built in Tuam. Founded in the eleventh century, and for the purpose of aiding pilgrims to the holy places in Jerusalem, the Order had at Jerusalem itself a convent, church and hospital, and did much to relieve suffering and distress. Other hospitals were founded outside Jerusalem, and received from wealthy men many donations in money and lands, so that before the twelfth century dawned the "Brothers of the Hospital of St. John the Baptist" were a wealthy association of pious men, with branches in many lands. The Order was composed of laymen and priests, and of the laymen many were of noble birth. Both laymen and priests were bound by a common rule, took vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, abstained from flesh meat on Wednesdays and Fridays, and from Septuagesima Sunday to Easter, incurred severe punishment even for venial offences, and for grave sins were expelled from the Order.

The exact site on which was erected this establishment is not known, for the buildings have long since disappeared; but it was, according to tradition, somewhere on the Dublin Road of the present town of Tuam, and it was erected in 1140. But whether it was filled by the military Knights Hospitallers, who, as time rolled on, became more of soldiers than of religious men, we cannot say for certain. Such an order could hardly have been brought to Ireland at all as early as 1140; so that it is probable that the building was dedicated to St. John the Baptist, but was tenanted by some religious Order other than these knights. It was certainly in the hands of the Augustinian Canons in 1461, for in that year the Prior of St. John's, scandalised at the conduct of the Vicar of the parish church, the Church of the Shrine, reported him to Rome, and the Pope ordered the Archbishop to investigate the charges, and if the alleged facts were true, to deprive the Vicar of his parish.²⁴

²⁴ "Papal Registers," XI, p. 428.



THE CROSS OF CONG.



THE HIGH CROSS OF TUAM.



The High Cross of Tuam.

Muiredach O'Duffy was also associated with another work done in the reign of Turlogh O'Connor. This is the well-known High Cross of Tuam, which, according to Petrie, was probably erected to commemorate the re-building of the Cathedral of Tuam. This would fix the date at about 1140, Turlogh O'Connor being then King, Muiredach O'Duffy "High Bishop of Connaught," and Aedh O'Hoisin Abbot of Tuam. Petrie describes the cross as of far greater magnificence and interest than the Cross of Cashel, and as "the finest monument of its class and age remaining in Ireland." The entire cross is thirteen feet eight inches high, five feet three inches in breadth. On the base or pedestal are two inscriptions in Irish—one asking for a prayer for Turlogh O'Connor and for the Comharb of Jarlath, by whom was made (this cross); the other asking for a prayer for O'Hessian, "for the Abbot by whom it was made."²⁵ The material of the cross is sandstone. The sides, like those of the high crosses at Monasterboice and Clonmacnoise, are panelled and covered with figures, by which are depicted some sacred scenes. On one side is a representation of the Crucifixion; on the other the figure of a bishop with his crozier in his hand, and the figure of another, perhaps an abbot; while on yet another side is what appears to be a funeral procession. As in the other high crosses of the period, the human figures of the different individuals depicted are badly and clumsily drawn; but the characteristic Irish interlaced work is to be seen, and it is done with great skill.²⁶

This high cross has in some way escaped the wreck of ages, even the ruin and destruction of the penal times, and stands in the market-place of the town of Tuam, an object of much interest to the historian and antiquarian, as it is a link with the far distant past.

With the passing away of Turlogh O'Connor, under whom all these things were done, the most prominent figure in Irish

²⁵ Healy, p. 554; Petrie's "Round Towers," p. 317.

²⁶ Miss Stokes, "Early Christian Architecture," p. 22.

life passed away. He left the magnificent Abbey of the Augustinian Canons at Cong. He left the Cathedral of Tuam, one of the finest specimens of Irish Romanesque to be found. And he left Tuam itself the seat of an Archbishop, who as metropolitan was to be the first among the bishops of Connaught, and the ruler of a diocese which for nearly eight hundred years since his day has always kept the faith, and venerated the memory of St. Jarlath.

CHAPTER V.

THE FIRST ARCHBISHOPS.

Aedh O'Hoisin, First Archbishop.

WHEN the Synod of Kells, in settling the number of dioceses in Ireland, made Tuam an archdiocese, the occupant of the See of Tuam was Aedh O'Hoisin (or Hessian). He had been Abbot of some monastery, the name of which, however, is not known; and in 1150, on the death of Maurice O'Duffy, O'Hoisin was raised to the episcopate as Bishop of Tuam. Two years later he was present at the Synod of Kells, over which a Papal Legate, Cardinal Paparo, was sent specially from Rome to preside. At the same Synod there were also present from Connaught the Bishops of Achonry, Clonmacnoise, and Annaghdown.

Whether the proposal agreed to by the Synod to have henceforth four Archbishops, one of whom was to be the Archbishop of Tuam, was agreed to or not by all the Connaught Bishops we do not know. But it was not popular in Armagh, where it was thought that palliums—the symbol of archiepiscopal dignity and authority—ought to be reserved to the Sees of Armagh and Cashel, which were ancient Sees.¹

There was no objection to have Cashel as well as Armagh Metropolitan Sees, and, in fact, at the Synod of Fiadh-Mac-Aenguse, the spiritual ruler of Cashel is called Archbishop, having been so nominated by Celsus, Archbishop of Armagh.¹ And when St. Malachy went to Rome in 1140 he asked for and obtained papal recognition of Armagh and Cashel as

¹ Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," pp. 13-17; Lanigan, IV, p. 140.

Metropolitan Sees.² But the Pope did not give him palliums for these two Sees, but suggested that for this purpose, as if to give added solemnity to such a grant, the Irish Church should hold a national synod, and then send a petition for the palliums.

In the years that followed nothing was done, and when the Synod of Kells met in 1152, Turlogh O'Connor of Connaught was the first among the Irish chiefs, and as such was probably able to influence the assembly at Kells to petition for four palliums instead of two, and, further, to have Tuam one of the four. And the Synod in consultation with and in agreement with the Pope's Legate, made the request, and had it granted.

The new Archbishop of Tuam had the Cathedral of Tuam rebuilt, and had put up the High Cross of Tuam as a monument of this building, and both of these things are put down as having been done about 1152. A few years later (in 1156) Turlogh O'Connor, the friend and patron of the new Archbishop and of the new Archdiocese, passed away, and in 1161 Archbishop Hessian himself died.

Catholicus O'Duffy.

He was succeeded by Catholicus O'Duffy, a much more famous man, a man who filled the Archiepiscopal See for the long space of forty years. He belonged to a family as famous in the service of the Church as the O'Connors were in the service of the State. But we know nothing of his early life, and have no information as to where he was educated, or what position, or positions, he filled before being called to the episcopacy. The close connection of his family with the reigning family of O'Connor naturally gave him influence when there was question of ecclesiastical preferment. But he must have been also well recognised as a man of far more than ordinary ability in 1161, else he could never have been promoted to the high position of Metropolitan of Connaught. For he could not have been more than in early

² Lanigan, IV, p. 40.

³ *Ibid.* IV, p. 112.

middle age at the date of his appointment, seeing that he lived for forty years after he became Archbishop of Tuam.

His lot was cast in troubled times. Turlogh O'Connor had passed away in 1156, after having imposed his will on so many chiefs, both east and west of the Shannon, and after having raised Connaught to a pre-eminence to which she had never before attained. His feeble son, Roderick, or Rory, as he is often called, was ill qualified to perpetuate the pre-eminence thus reached; and though for a time he refused to follow the other Irish chiefs in recognising O'Loughlin of Tyrone, he was compelled to strike his colours in 1157, and henceforth, till 1165, O'Loughlin filled the position of Ard-Ri. He lost this position and his life, because of his treacherous treatment of the Ulster chief, Dunleavy; and then, with singular unanimity, the Irish chiefs turned for a leader and a superior to Roderick O'Connor, who thus became Ardri in 1166.

The Last Ardri.

In the next year the new Ardri convoked a great national assembly at Athboy. Thither came Catholicus O'Duffy himself, Gelasius, Archbishop of Armagh, the great St. Laurence O'Toole, Archbishop of Dublin, and many other distinguished ecclesiastics. Thither also came many noted chiefs—MacDunleavy of Uladh, O'Carroll of Oriel, O'Rorke of Breffny, O'Mellaghlin of Meath, and the Danish King of Dublin. These chiefs had their wise and learned brehons to expound the law, their historians to recall the past, their poets to sing of great deeds. And they had so many guards and attendants that at the whole assembly there were 13,000 horsemen.

How long the sittings of the assembly lasted, and what were the subjects on which discussions took place, we are not informed; but special mention is made of the fact that the various chiefs separated in peace and amity, without battle or controversy ("Four Masters"). And it is also recorded that they passed many wise resolutions "respecting veneration of

churches and clerics and control of tribes and territories, so that women used to traverse Ireland alone." ("Four Masters.") And thus under Roderick O'Connor, and after an interval of 180 years, the happy days of Brian Boru were recalled.

These were proud days for Catholicus O'Duffy, when he saw his chief and patron surrounded and obeyed by the assembled chiefs of Leath Chuin; and when he saw him, with the approval of Munster and Leinster, as well as of Ulster, act as authorised arbiter in Tyrone, and divide its territories between O'Loughlin and O'Neill. And equally pleased must O'Duffy have been to find the Ardri so careful of the wants of the Church that he, in 1169, specially visited Armagh, and raised the salary of the chief professor of the school there by an annual addition of ten cows, doing this in honour of St. Patrick, and for the more complete instruction of the youths of Ireland and Scotland in literature ("Four Masters"). The omens were, indeed, propitious, and all the indications were that under the peaceful rule of a wise and prudent king brighter days had come for Ireland and for Tuam.

But it was only the calm before the storm. Already Dermot MacMurrough had been driven from his kingdom of Leinster, and had sought aid from the King of England, and Henry had promised assistance, and authorised his subjects to help the dethroned chief. And the very year that Roderick O'Connor increased the endowment of the chief professor at Armagh the Anglo-Normans landed on the shores of Wexford.

The events of the next few years belong rather to the general history of Ireland than to the history of any particular diocese. It is enough to say that Roderick O'Connor, so energetic in the years preceding, seemed to have been suddenly stricken with impotence; and instead of attacking Dublin, when he had 30,000 men under his command, he allowed himself to be surprised and attacked, and disgracefully defeated by Strongbow. And though he refused to go

in person to Henry II., and formally tender him his submission, he did so through his agents in 1171.

The Synod of Cashel.

It is not improbable that this was done with the advice of the Archbishop of Tuam, who could not but have realized that the Ardri, in the difficult situation in which he found himself, had neither the capacity nor the energy for supreme command. And the Archbishop also thought it best to attend the Synod of Cashel, in 1172. Presided over by the Papal Legate, Christian, Bishop of Lismore, attended by the accredited representatives of Henry II., by the Archbishops of Cashel, Dublin and Tuam, and their suffragans, though not by the Northern Bishops, it decreed that marriages should be lawfully contracted; that tithes should be paid; that ecclesiastical lands should be exempt from the exactions of laymen, such as bonaght and coshery; that ecclesiastics should be exempt from liability to pay fines in cases where their relatives had been adjudged guilty of murder; that the faithful having property should make their wills at the approach of death; and when death had taken place, that Masses should be said for their souls.⁴

These decrees do not exhibit any great laxity of morals in the Irish Church, and did not call for the special intervention of Henry II., and certainly do not justify the extravagant assertions made in the Bull of Adrian IV. They were, however, salutary decrees called for by the existence of some abuses, and indicating that some things ought to be done which had not usually been done.

Provincial Synod of Tuam.

And it was probably for the purpose of having these decrees published and enforced that O'Duffy held a provincial synod in Tuam, in the same year in which the Synod of Cashel was held. Lanigan thinks it likely that at this synod Gelasius, Archbishop of Armagh, was present, for it is recorded that in

⁴ Lanigan, IV, pp. 204-6.

this year he made his visitation of Connaught, and in the usual way received those tributes paid by Connaught to the successors of St. Patrick.⁵

It is also recorded at the same date that three new churches were consecrated in the western province, though it is not specially recorded, and not known, if these churches were in the Archdiocese of Tuam.⁶

The Treaty of Windsor.

After the departure of Henry II., early the same year, events moved rapidly. Forgetting their late submissions, O'Connor and O'Brien of Thomond joined hands and inflicted a serious defeat on the English army at Thurles. And then, O'Connor acting separately over-ran the lands of the colonists in Meath. The tide turned when the invaders came under the command of Raymond le Gros. O'Brien himself suffered defeat, and Limerick, which he had besieged, was relieved; and in 1175 both O'Brien and O'Connor renewed their submission to the English King. And in the same year the position of O'Connor was more accurately defined by the Treaty of Windsor.

It was called the Treaty of Windsor because the arrangement was entered into at Windsor. The arrangement was made on Roderick's part by Laurence O'Toole, Archbishop of Dublin, by Concors, Abbot of St. Brendan's, and by Catholicus O'Duffy, Archbishop of Tuam. These three Roderick had despatched as his ambassadors to England, and when they arrived there a great council was held at Windsor, and the treaty in question made.

Under its provisions Henry granted to his liegeman, Roderick, that, so long as he continued faithfully to serve him, he should be king under him (Henry), and that he should hold his hereditary territories as firmly and peaceably as he had held them before the coming of Henry into Ireland. He was likewise to have under his dominion and

⁵ "Annals of Loch Ce."

⁶ Lanigan, IV, p. 217.

jurisdiction all the rest of the island, and the inhabitants thereof, kings and princes included, and was bound to oblige them to pay tribute through his hands to the King of England, preserving to that monarch his other rights. These kings, chieftains and nobles were likewise to hold peaceable possession of their principalities, so long as they remained faithful to the King of England, and paid him their tribute and all other dues through Roderick's hands, saving in all things the honour and prerogatives of both these kings. And in case that any of them should rebel against the King of England, or against Roderick, and refuse to pay their tributes, or perform their other duties in the manner before prescribed, or should depart from their fealty to the King of England, Roderick was then authorised to judge them, and if required, remove them from their government or possessions. And should his own power be insufficient for that purpose, he was to be assisted by the English King's constable and his household. The annual tribute demanded of Roderick and the other chiefs was a merchantable hide for every tenth head of cattle slaughtered in Ireland.

The said Roderick, King of Connaught, was moreover empowered to take hostages from all those whom the King of England had committed to him, at his own and the King of England's choice, and was to give the said hostages to the King of England or otherwise at the King's choice. And all those from whom these securities were demanded were to perform certain annual services to the King of England, and were not to detain any person whatever belonging to any land or territory of that prince, against his will or commandment.

It was further agreed that if any of the Irish who had fled from the territories of the King's barons should desire to return thither, they might do so in peace before paying the tribute above mentioned, or performing the services they were anciently accustomed to perform for their lands, according as these lords should think proper; and if any of the Irish who were subjects of Roderick, as King of Connaught, should

refuse to return to him, he was empowered to compel them to do so.⁷

By the Treaty of Windsor, Roderick O'Connor's powers were very seriously curtailed. Even in Connaught his position was subordinate to that of Henry II.; and in the other provinces he was given the *rôle* of Henry's policeman and tax-gatherer. But at least he might hope, that, as long as he observed the terms of the treaty, his position in Connaught would be secure. And yet, though he in no way violated the treaty, his position was assailed.

Connaught Invaded.

A disobedient son of his named Murrogh, on some pretext which is not stated, invited the intervention of the invaders, and on this invitation, Milo de Cogan was sent from Dublin with the consent and approval of the Viceroy De Burgo to invade Connaught. He had five hundred men under his command. But it was failure rather than success which attended his efforts. The people deserted the country through which his army passed. The churches in which they often stored provisions were empty. And when De Cogan reached Tuam he found no enemy to oppose him, and he found no provisions. After remaining there for eight days, his troops, already suffering from hunger, commenced to retreat. The Irish, hitherto concealed, fell upon them, and De Cogan was glad to escape across the Shannon with an army which had suffered severely in numbers and in prestige. Murrogh O'Connor, the traitor son of Roderick, was taken prisoner, and had his eyes put out, and for a time the province was free from a foreign foe.⁸

Civil War.

But it was not destined to have peace, for in 1180 Roderick's son, Conor, and Conor O'Kelly of Hy-Many quarrelled and went to war, and then Conor O'Connor

⁷ "The O'Connors of Connaught," p. 72.

⁸ *Ibid.* pp. 73-4.

(Conor Mainmoy as he was called) broke out in open rebellion against his father, Roderick. To purchase peace, the old King, in 1183, retired into the monastery of Cong, but left it two years later, only to be driven into exile into Munster in the following year. In 1188 Conor Mainmoy fell by an assassin's hand. But even this event did not bring peace to the distracted province, for the contest was renewed between two other O'Connors, Cathal Carrach and Cathal Crovderg. Nor could the intervention of the Primate, Thomas O'Connor, a relative of the combatants, effect a settlement. And the contest lasted until Cathal Carrach was killed in 1201. Then, and only then, was there peace, for henceforth Cathal Crovderg ruled alone.⁹

Death of Roderick.

Meantime, Roderick O'Connor died in the Abbey of Cong, in 1178. He was then old, and had suffered much, even before the infirmities of old age had come on. For he had seen the coming and the triumph of the foreigners; he had lost his high position; even his native province was torn by strife; and the bitter thought was his that he had been alike unable to cope with the invader and to put down the rebellion of his own sons. But the Church, which he had befriended, was his consolation, and the monastery of which he and his family had been such generous patrons, afforded him a safe retreat from the tumult and distractions of domestic war. It may be assumed that every spiritual consolation was his in his last hours; and when the end came his remains were laid to rest in the monastery of Clonmacnoise, beside those of his distinguished father, Turlogh O'Connor.

War Continued.

Roderick's death in no way affected the course of events in Connaught. Crovderg and Cathal Carrach had equally ignored him in his old age, and they continued their quarrels after his death, until the death of Cathal Carrach left Crov-

⁹ Ware's "Bishops"; "Four Masters" and "Annals of Loch Ce."

derg master of Connaught. And even after becoming supreme in Connaught, Crovderg had his troubles, and Connaught was not fated to have a complete cessation of strife.

What the Church must have suffered during these years we gather from a few entries in the "Annals of Loch Ce": "1202: A hosting by Cathal Crovderg and William Burke (de Burgo from Limerick) into Connaught, until they reached the monastery of Ath-da-larag on the Buill, in which they fixed their residence, and they were three days in it, so that they polluted and defiled the entire monastery; and such was the extent of their defilement that the mercenaries of the army had the women in the hospital of the monks, and in the houses of the cloister, and in every place of the entire monastery. No structure of the monastery was left without breaking and burning except the roofs. No part of the buildings of the entire monastery was allowed to the monks and brothers, excepting only the dormitory of the monks and the house of the novices."

The annalist, continuing, says that Burke and his ally, Crovderg, then went to Cong, and sent out their soldiers through Connaught to levy their wages. But a report got abroad, "and it is not known whether it occurred through a man or through the spirit of God in the shape of a man"—it was reported that William Burke had been killed. The resolution adopted by the tribes on hearing of this news was, as if they had taken counsel together, each man to kill his guest. And thus it was done, and the loss, according to the report of their own people, was 900 or more."

Burke, who after the massacre of his soldiers, hurriedly left Cong for Munster, again entered Connaught next year, and "he devastated the west of Connaught, both church and territory" ("Annals of Loch Ce"). In 1204 he continued his career of desecration and plunder, and the churches of Tuam, Kilbannon, Mayo, and many others suffered at his hands. In that year he died rather suddenly of a loathsome disease, and the annalists attribute his sudden death and the disgusting disease from which he died to the wrath of the saints

whose churches he had desecrated, and in many cases destroyed.¹⁰

Other wars than those already mentioned Crovderg also had. He was at war with O'Flaherty of West Connaught in 1207, with McDermott of Moylurg in 1210, with de Courcy in 1210; but he was ever victorious, and when he died in 1224 it was in the Cistercian Abbey of Knockmoy, near Tuam. For though ever ready to draw the sword, he was careful to befriend the Church, and had done much to advance its interests within the territories over which he ruled.

Religious Foundations.

In the Archdiocese of Tuam three noted religious establishments owed their existence to his generosity and zeal. These were the Abbey of Knockmoy, the nunnery of Kilcreevanty, and the Abbey of Ballintubber. The first of these in point of time was Knockmoy, situated some six miles from Tuam, and which was founded in 1190 to commemorate one of Crovderg's victories. It was called the Abbey of the Hill of Victory (*collis victoriae*); and O'Connor Don states that the victory was won over the English. But O'Donovan could not discover when the battle was fought, or who were Crovderg's opponents.¹¹

The Abbey of Knockmoy was a Cistercian Monastery, the first of the Cistercian Order in the Archdiocese of Tuam. It was founded from Boyle, and was liberally endowed¹² with lands by O'Flaherty of West Connaught, with the consent and approval of Crovderg, so that though Crovderg is put down as its founder, O'Flaherty must also be mentioned as having provided the Abbey with lands. These possessions included the Rectory of Lismacun, in which the town of Galway was. Like Mellifont, the building was Gothic, and even the ruins still remaining show that it was a splendid

¹⁰ "Annals of Loch Ce"; "Annals of Clonmacnoise," and "Four Masters."

¹¹ D'Alton's "History of Ireland," Vol. I, p. 284.

¹² Archdall's "Monasticon Hibernicum," II, p. 171.

Gothic building.¹³ As it was itself founded from the Cistercian Abbey of Boyle, it became in turn a parent house, but we do not hear of any of its subsidiary houses (if there were more than one) except the abbey which it founded in Clare Island in 1224.¹⁴

Like Clonmacnoise, Knockmoy became a favourite royal burial-place. There, in 1211, was interred Roderick O'Connor, son of Roderick the Ardri, who was killed by the people of Leyney. Six years after this date (in 1217) Crovderg's wife, the daughter of Donal O'Brien, chief of Thomond, died, and was buried at Knockmoy. And in 1224, when Crovderg himself died, he, too, was buried at Knockmoy, and, in fact, had lived there for some time before his death, clothed in the Cistercian habit.

Kilcreevanty was a nunnery for Benedictines not far from Tuam, and was founded about 1200, before Crovderg had yet become the undisputed ruler of Connaught. It absorbed the possessions of the ancient nunnery of St. Mary at Annaghdown, which had probably fallen into ruin in the beginning of the thirteenth century. Later on it got possession of the lands belonging to the Abbey of Inishmaan in Lough Mask, which would go to show that the ruling authority must have had considerable influence; for we find it recorded at 1223 that the Abbot of Inishmaan died, and we know that he was a son of the great Turlogh O'Connor.¹⁵

The third and, perhaps, the most remarkable of the religious foundations of Crovderg was the Abbey of Ballintubber in Mayo. It was situated in the barony of Carra, just near the well, "Stringle of the Wastes," often mentioned in the journeyings of St. Patrick, and it was endowed and built for Augustinian Canons. The site was part of the ancient diocese of Mayo, and the new abbey was endowed with the revenues of churches which traced their origin, and to some extent their endowments, back to the days of St. Patrick.

¹³ Knox's "Notes on the Diocese of Tuam," pp. 81, 156, 168.

¹⁴ Archdall, II, pp. 171-2.

¹⁵ Knox, pp. 75, 256, 263-4.

Its first Abbot died in 1225, and in that year the church, which was begun nine years before, was finished and roofed with oak.¹⁶ It was manifestly built in the transition period, for while its east windows are Norman, the rest of the building is Gothic.

Cross, near Cong, was a cell to Ballintubber, which means that the Augustinian Canons of Ballintubber founded a house at Cross, and that this new house was ruled from Ballintubber.

Long before Ballintubber was finished—indeed, before it was begun—Catholicus O'Duffy died. Wearied with the cares of office, and weighted down by the burden of years, he had retired to the Abbey of Cong, and there, like his old friend, Roderick, he spent his last years, and there breathed his last in 1201. Trusted by the O'Connor princes, whose adviser he was, he was much respected, was a big figure in Irish affairs, both civil and ecclesiastical, and had ruled the Archdiocese for an unprecedentedly long term of years.

A New Archbishop.

His successor was Felix O'Ruadhan, uncle to Roderick O'Connor. But this must not have been Roderick the Ardri, but probably someone bearing the same name, and a member of the great princely house of O'Connor. Where O'Ruadhan was educated we do not know; but we do know that he was a member of the Cistercian Order, and it was from a Cistercian monastery—perhaps from Abbeyknockmoy—that he was called to the See of St. Jarlath. The very year in which he became Archbishop—namely, in 1202—there was a Synod of the province of Connaught held at Tuam, presided over by the Papal Legate, who was then in Ireland. The Synod was attended both by clergy and laity, and as a result of their joint deliberations many disputed points were settled between the ecclesiastical and civil authorities.¹⁷

The new Archbishop was active in extending the bounds

¹⁶ Knox, pp. 81, 103.

¹⁷ Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," p. 18.

of the Archdiocese and in enlarging its possessions; and in 1209, when Cele O'Duffy, Bishop of Mayo, died, no successor was appointed. The Archbishop had sufficient influence at Rome, or at all events was able to make so strong a case there in favour of the abolition of the diocese of Mayo, that it ceased to be a diocese, and was reduced to the rank of a merely parochial church. This involved the annexation to the archiepiscopal possessions of the lands attached to the ancient See of Mayo. Nor was this all. In the next year there was a convocation of the clergy of Connaught to make constitutions for the taking away of the Termon or Comharb lands, and handing them over to the bishops of the dioceses where they lay ("Annals of Clonmacnoise"). Thus were annexed to Tuam the termon lands of the old Abbey of Cong, as had been already done in the case of Mayo.

But the monastic lands of Annaghdown were not annexed, for Annaghdown was still a diocese. Nor does it seem likely that recent foundations, such as those of Abbeyknockmoy, would be deprived of their possessions. Nor did the Archbishop get complete possession of all the other monastic lands, for Cong Abbey continued to exist till long after the Archbishop's time, and continued in possession of monastic lands. And as to Mayo, even its bishopric disappeared only for a time, for we shall meet with the Bishops of Mayo in later times. But there would be no difficulty in allowing the Archbishop of Tuam the right of visitation at Cong and Mayo, and of officiating in these places as Archbishop, and even of receiving some share of revenue from their monastic lands.¹⁸ Even these concessions, especially the amount of revenue from the monastic lands, must surely have been matters of dispute with the community at Cong and the parochial incumbent at Mayo, and can hardly have been settled without difficulty.

But the Archbishop was not easy to resist, for he was an able man, and it is certain that he was highly thought of at Rome. In 1203 he and the Bishop of Kilmacduagh were

¹⁸ Knox, pp. 98-9.

directed by Pope Innocent III. to excommunicate the Bishop of Waterford and others who had ill-treated and even imprisoned the bishop-elect of Lismore¹⁹ Two years later, the same Pope ordered the Archbishop of Tuam and the Bishop of Meath to settle a dispute between the canon of St. Mary's in Armagh and one Henry de Sai about the donation of some lands.²⁰ And in 1214 the Archbishop of Tuam and his suffragans were directed to hold an inquiry into the thorny and difficult question of uniting the See of Glendalough with that of Dublin. The Bishop of Glendalough had just died, and Henry de Londres was Archbishop of Dublin, and for many reasons it was thought advisable that a union should take place, and this after inquiry was the considered judgment of the Archbishop and his suffragans.

The venerable document, which is still in the archives of Christ Church, Dublin, and still has attached to it the seal of the Archbishop, reads as follows :—

*“ The testimony of the Achbishop of Tuam and
“ his suffragans :*

*“ Master John Paparo, the Legate of the Roman See,
“ coming into Ireland, found a bishop dwelling in Dublin
“ who then exercised episcopal offices within the walls.
“ He found in the same diocese another church in the
“ mountainous parts, which was also called a city, and
“ had a certain rural bishop, but the same Legate appointed
“ Dublin, which was the best city, the metropolitan of
“ that province, delivering the pall to that bishop who then
“ governed the church of Dublin. And he appointed that
“ that diocese in which both cities were should be divided;
“ the one part thereof to fall to the metropolitan, and the
“ other to remain to him who lived in the mountains, with
“ the intention (as we firmly believe) that that part also
“ should revert to the metropolitan on the death of the
“ bishop who then governed (Glendalough) in the moun-
“ tains, which object he would have immediately effected
“ had not the insolence of the Irishry who then had power
“ in that territory, obstructed him. When the Lord Henry,
“ the King of England, learned from many what had been*

¹⁹ “ Calendar of Papal Registers,” Vol. I.

²⁰ *Ibid.* p. 22.

“ the intention of the said Legate, he granted the church
 “ in the mountains to the metropolitan, adhering to the
 “ intention and will of the said Legate. In like manner
 “ our present Lord John, King of England, having heard
 “ from the great and credible men of that territory what the
 “ said Legate did and intended, granted the said part to
 “ John Comyn, the predecessor of the present Archbishop
 “ of Dublin.

“ Besides that holy church in the mountains, although
 “ anciently held in great veneration, on account of St.
 “ Kevin, who there led a hermit's life, has been so deserted
 “ and desolate for the last forty years, that instead of a
 “ church it is a cave of robbers and a hotbed of thieves,
 “ so that more homicides are committed in that valley than
 “ in any other part of Ireland, on account of its deserted
 “ and extensive solitude.

“ FELIX, *Archbishop of Tuam.*”

Disputes with Armagh.

There is here such evident respect for the English King, and such reprobation of the “ Irishry ” as seems strange on the lips of a relative of the O'Connor Kings. But the Archbishop of Tuam was doing what was evidently pleasing to Rome, for his decision was approved of by Pope Innocent in 1215.

In a further dispute which arose between the Chapter of St. Patrick in Dublin and the Chapter of Glendalough, which was also referred to the Archbishop of Tuam, and having been decided by him in due course, his decision in this case also was sanctioned by the Pope. And this decision was adverse to the Chapter of St. Patrick, and by consequence in favour of Glendalough.²¹ A more troublesome subject of controversy was that between the Archbishop of Tuam and the Archbishop of Armagh, touching the rights of the latter in the Archdiocese of Tuam. The Primate claimed jurisdiction over nine churches in the Tuam Archdiocese, and he also claimed rights over the dioceses of Ardagh and “ Kenanensi,” belonging to the province of Tuam. The Archbishop of Tuam charged the Primate with having violently seized

²¹ Burke's “ *Archbishops of Tuam,*” pp. 20-21.

the possessions of these churches, which were clearly within the boundaries of the Archdiocese, and which in some cases had been constructed and consecrated by O'Ruadhan's predecessors in the See of Tuam.

Innocent III. had appointed his chaplain, Master Gregory, to find out the facts, and examine witnesses, and his judgment was that the Primate had not despoiled the Archbishop of Tuam of any rights he might have in the two dioceses named, and the Primate was accordingly absolved from blame. As to the parochial and monastic churches, the question was reserved, for the Papal chaplain does not seem to have been satisfied. But as the question was left unsettled, and continued to be a source of trouble, the Archbishop of Tuam, in 1217, went himself to Rome, and laid the whole matter before the new Pope, Honorius III. And Honorius, recalling the fact that these churches were certainly within the Archdiocese of Tuam, and that in consequence Pope Innocent III. had decreed that only the Archbishop of Tuam had episcopal rights in them, now confirmed Innocent's decree. But he added that the Archbishop of Tuam must not go beyond this. He could, therefore, visit these churches, and officiate in them as the Archbishop of the diocese in which they were situated; but the Primate had still some right of visitation, and perhaps also some title to part of the revenue from these church lands, though this is not made clear.²²

There is some difficulty in identifying some of the places named. Ardagh presents no difficulty, for the diocese has the same name now as in the twelfth century. Kennanensi, as it stands, means Kells; but Kells was never a diocese at all, though it was an important ecclesiastical centre, and, besides, it is difficult, if not impossible, to trace any dependence on the Archdiocese of Tuam, or any connection. Kennanensi may, perhaps, be meant Kieranensi, meaning the diocese of Kieran, the founder of Clonmacnoise, and it is

²² Theiner's "*Vetera Monumenta Hibernorum et Scotorum*," p. 2.

well known that Clonmacnoise belonged to the province of Tuam, and was recognised as such by the Synod of Kells.²³

When we come to the parish churches, Kilmedoin is Kilmaine, Kilbenoin is Kilbannon, both Patrician churches. The same can be said for Kiltullagh, the modern Kiltullagh in the County of Roscommon; Croaghpatrick is, of course, the Church on the Reek; and Aughagower and Turlough, both Patrician churches, have not changed their names. But Enaghamaske is evidently meant for Inismaske, an island in Lough Mask, and is most probably the same as Bullaghamaske, and this, according to Knox, is Inishmaan. Here was an ancient abbey, founded about 550, a full century before St. Fechin founded Cong. Its founder was probably St. Cormac, who, though not one of St. Patrick's companions, must have had his training from those who lived in St. Patrick's time. In this sense the church would be spoken of as a Patrician church, and, as such, looking to Armagh for its episcopal superior.²⁴

Time, which deals destruction to so many things, left the old church in ruins, but the ancient associations of holiness remained, though church and monastery had disappeared; and because of these associations Inishmaan was selected in the thirteenth century as a site for a new monastery. It was most probably founded from Cong, and therefore enjoyed the patronage of the O'Connors, and, in fact, its Abbot, at the date of the dispute between Tuam and Armagh, was Turlogh O'Connor, no doubt a member of the O'Connor royal race. The ruins still remaining are, of course, those of the monastery of the thirteenth century rather than those of the ancient primitive foundation of St. Cormac.

Odun, sometimes called O'Deyne, Knox identifies with the modern church and parish of Ballyheane, now united with Castlebar.²⁵

²³ Lanigan, Vol. IV.

²⁴ Healy's "Two Royal Abbeys."

²⁵ Knox's "Tuam," p. 198.

Archbishop's Revenue.

At this date the revenue of the Archbishop of Tuam must have been considerable. The endowments of the ancient church of Balla had, it seems, long since passed for the most part into the hands of laymen.²⁶ But Mayo, recently merged in the Archdiocese, had considerable possessions. It had then absorbed at least some of the churches and church lands once subject to Balla, and probably also the churches and church lands of Aughagower. Its extent was, therefore, considerable, and included the modern parishes of Mayo, Kilcolman, Kilvine, Crossboyne, Tagheen, Balla and Manulla, Roslea, Robeen, Toughty (near Carnacon), Burriscarra, Drum, Ballyheane, Ballintubber, Ballyovey (or Partry), and that part of Ballinrobe north of the Robe. It had also Aglish, Islandeady, Turlough, Kildacommoge (or Keel-ogues) and Breaffy; and in the Umhall district it had Aughagower, Aughavar, Kilgeever, Kilmeena, Kilmaclasser, Burrishoole, and Achill.²⁷

In addition to the revenue derived from these lands, the Archbishop had the revenues of the mother church at Tuam, and he had the fourth of the offerings made in each of the churches of the archdiocese, the episcopal fourths, as they were called. And he had the right of being supported, himself and his attendants, when he made his episcopal visitations.²⁸

What the Archbishop received from such establishments as Cong, Abbeyknockmoy, Ballintubber, and Inishmaan it is impossible to say with certainty. They probably welcomed him and his attendants when he came to perform his episcopal duties, and perhaps out of the lands left to them they gave him little, and that was all. And it may be that they regarded his coming among them in the light of a visitation rather than a pleasure.

²⁶ Knox, p. 139.

²⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 131-2.

²⁸ *Ibid.* pp. 100-2.

Kilcreevanty.

This would certainly seem to be the case with the Benedictine nunnery at Kilcreevanty. Founded on the site of some ancient church or nunnery, it soon came into great possessions in Galway, Mayo, Sligo, Roscommon, and even in Westmeath.²⁹ From the Benedictine rule the nuns passed to the rule of St. Augustine; but they were still unsatisfied, for they petitioned Pope Honorius, and were allowed by him to adopt the Cistercian rule. They also got Papal confirmation of their ample possessions. Nor were they yet satisfied, for, apparently, they claimed exemption from the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Tuam.

These demands were inquired into by the Pope, who appointed as his representatives the Bishop of Killaloe and the Archdeacon of Limerick. As a result of the inquiry held it *was decided that the Abbess and nuns* should be exempt from the Archbishop's jurisdiction except as to triennial visitation. This he could make, accompanied by the Abbot of Cong, and on such occasions he was entitled to get "three capons and a sextarius of wine." But he must not presume to interdict the nuns, nor excommunicate them, until their own superior had first been notified. So that these ladies, in addition to being rich and influential, were evidently reluctant to part with any privilege which they enjoyed, and were, indeed, a troublesome community to manage.³⁰

And Other Houses.

One other nunnery there was in the Archdiocese at this period, namely, the Canonesses of St. Augustine at Killeencrava, quite close to Ballinrobe. The character of the existing ruins, which are not extensive, would point to the eleventh or twelfth centuries, and it is probable enough that this building replaced an older foundation. The history of the com-

²⁹ Knox, pp. 280-3.

³⁰ *Ibid.* pp. 386-7.

munity is obscure, but it is evident that the nuns there were neither as influential nor as rich as the nuns of Kilcreevanty.³¹

There was also at this date the Little Cell, as it was called, of the Premonstre Canons at Annaghdown. But as yet Annaghdown was a diocese which had not been absorbed by Tuam, and in consequence the Premonstre Canons in their Little Cell did nothing to disturb the peaceful slumbers of the Archbishop of Tuam.³²

Reference has already been made to Clare Island, which was a Cistercian Abbey, founded in 1224, and subject to Abbeyknockmoy.³³

The Archbishop Active.

In extending the limits of his Archdiocese, as he did by absorbing Mayo, and in regulating the affairs of the various churches and religious houses, the Archbishop had a busy time. Nor did his activities end here, for Honorius III. sent him, in 1217, a mandate to inquire into the election of the Archdeacon of Killaloe as Bishop of that See, and if the election were canonical, he was directed to confirm it.³⁴

Ten years later he had a more disagreeable task assigned to him by the succeeding Pope, Gregory II. For the Archbishop, in conjunction with the Bishop of Annaghdown and the Abbot of the Premonstre Canons there, was directed to report to the Pope on the case of the Bishop of Limerick. What report they made does not appear, but the charges were sufficiently grave, the Bishop having been accused of being illegitimate, simoniacal, ignorant and disobedient to his metropolitan.³⁵

Resigns his See.

The Archbishop of Tuam was then old, and in 1235, feeling the burden of years to be too great for the proper discharge

³¹ Knox, p. 273.

³² *Ibid.* p. 274.

³³ Ware's "Antiquities," p. 276.

³⁴ "Calendar of Papal Registers," p. 50.

³⁵ *Ibid.* p. 117.

of his episcopal duties, he resigned his See. And from Rome came a mandate to the Archbishop of Dublin to receive O'Ruadhan's resignation, and to assign him a pension suitable to the high office which he held for more than thirty years, and directing at the same time that the Chapter of Tuam should select a suitable successor.³⁶

As a Cistercian, the aged Archbishop retired to the Cistercian Abbey of St. Mary in Dublin, and there he died in 1238. The entry in the "Four Masters" reads: "In the year 1238 Felix O'Ruadhan, who had been Archbishop of Tuam, and who in 1235 resigned his See, and retired to the house to which he had been a great benefactor, died in the Abbey, and was buried at the foot of the altar, on the left hand."

In the centuries which followed, during which so many changes came, and so many ancient institutions were *overthrown*, the old Abbey fell into ruin. But beneath what remained of the venerable pile the old Archbishop slept peacefully on. Nor was it till 1715 that his slumbers were broken. In that year, while some workmen were digging on the site of the Abbey, the remains of a prelate were found uncorrupted, and dressed in pontificals. They were supposed to be, and probably were, the remains of the Archbishop of Tuam, and were put back, after being disturbed, in the place where they had rested so long.³⁷

³⁶ "Calendar of Papal Registers," p. 132.

³⁷ Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam"; Harty's "Triumphatia S. Crucis"—Murphy's Introduction.

CHAPTER VI.

TUAM IN THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY.

The Tuam Chapter.

THERE is no mention of the Chapter of Tuam till very early in the thirteenth century. Then there is mention made, both of the Archdeacon of Tuam and the Archdeacon of Mayo, in the time of Felix O'Ruadhan. And when O'Ruadhan resigned his See in 1235, his successor was found in Maelmuire O'Lachtnan (or Marian O'Loughlin), Dean of Tuam, who was elected by the Chapter of the Archdiocese.

In many other countries Chapters came into existence much earlier than in Ireland. The priests living in community round cathedral churches, aiding the bishop by their advice, and receiving endowments from the charity of the people, in time divided the property thus acquired; and with the name and title of canon had the right to a stall in the cathedral, and to a share of the chapter's property, called a prebend. They still acted as a council or senate for the bishop, with a right to hold meetings, and be consulted in all matters of importance in the diocese.

In the bishop's absence their presiding chairman was called a dean, being first in honour and dignity among them. The idea was borrowed from the monastic establishments, where the monk in charge of the discipline of ten monks was called a decanus, or ruler of ten, and where, in the absence of the abbot, the senior of these deans took charge of the whole monastery. In course of time an archdeacon was added to take charge of the property of the diocese, a precentor to take

charge of the music at public ceremonies in the cathedral, and a chancellor, who was given care of all diocesan official documents.

These changes did not come into existence in Ireland for a long time, for the Irish Church was monastic, and it was not till the twelfth century that diocesan episcopacy was established. Then gradually the old order gave place to the new. The bishop, who was not always in the first place in the monastery, became first in the diocese. The abbot of the monastery became dean of the chapter, thus taking the second place in the diocese. The *ferlegind* of the monastery disappeared, and in his place came the provost of the chapter, while the monks who formed the abbot's council in the old monasteries had their counterpart in the new order in the canons of the cathedral chapter.¹

Whether these changes were introduced into the Archdiocese of Tuam as early as into the other Irish dioceses we do not know. What we do know is that mention is made of the Chapter of Tuam in 1201; that in the days of Felix O'Ruadhan there is mention made of an Archdeacon of Tuam and an Archdeacon of Mayo; and that when O'Ruadhan resigned his See, the Chapter of Tuam met and elected their dean to the vacant See. Their choice was approved of by the Pope, the appointment was duly made, and in 1236 the dean was consecrated in England.

O'Loughlin, Archbishop.

His name was Maelmuire O'Lachtan (or Marian O'Loughlin). The name is Irish, but the fact that he was consecrated in England shows that he had the goodwill of the English king, and that the king had issued his *congé d'élire* to the Tuam Chapter to elect an archbishop, and approved of the Chapter's selection when made.

His troubles began early, and the very year he became Archbishop a mandate was issued by Gregory IX. to the Archbishop of Dublin, the Bishop of Ossory, and the Prior

¹ Knox, pp. 82, 88, 90.

of All Saints in Dublin, commanding them to inquire and report with reference to the metropolitan rights over the diocese of Ardagh. By the National Synod of Kells, in 1152, that diocese was assigned to the province of Armagh. Just half a century later, when John de Coeli Monte was acting as Legate in Ireland, a National Synod was held at Dublin, and then Ardagh was placed under Tuam, an arrangement which lasted for several years. But when, at the death of Simon McGrath, Bishop of Ardagh, one Malgairy having been duly elected, was confirmed and consecrated by the Archbishop of Tuam, the Archbishop of Armagh took occasion to assert metropolitan rights, and insisted on appointing and consecrating one Joseph, a Florentine. This Joseph, however, could only get recognition from a section of the priests and people of Ardagh, and the Prior of St. John's in Dublin, to whom he appealed, decided that he had not been canonically elected. In spite of this decision the Primate insisted on sustaining Joseph; and when Malgairy, the rightful bishop died, in 1231, Joseph took possession of the whole diocese, and insisted on being recognised as its bishop. At this stage the Archbishop of Tuam intervened, and Jocelin, a monk of Dublin, was canonically elected, and consecrated by the Archbishop as Bishop of Ardagh.

Troubles with Armagh.

At the death of Joseph, in 1233, it might have been expected that the Primate would have recognised Jocelin. But the contrary took place. The Primate appointed a priest of Ardagh, who at the time of his consecration was under sentence of excommunication; who had bought his episcopal position, it was said, by a money payment; and who, when refused recognition in Ardagh, proceeded with an armed band to attack the rightful bishop's house, which, with the church, he burned, and would have slain the rightful bishop himself if the latter had not taken to flight. Jocelin, thus forcibly expelled from his diocese by an excommunicated ecclesiastic,

appealed to the Pope, and for doing so was excommunicated by the Archbishop of Armagh.

It was time for the Pope to interfere, so that an end should be put to these shameful wrangles, and this he did by appointing the Archbishop of Dublin, the Bishop of Ossory, and the Prior of All Saints as a Commission of Inquiry. They were directed to ascertain the facts and pronounce judgment from which there was to be no appeal. Further, the Pope directed them, if there should be any factious opposition to their decision, to invoke the secular authority.

The decision was in favour of Tuam, though its terms are not given. But it is reasonable to expect that such a decision was highly commended at Rome, for the Pope, in his letters to these three ecclesiastics, plainly shows that he was shocked at the conduct of the Archbishop of Armagh, and that he was satisfied that metropolitan rights over Ardagh belonged to the See of Tuam.²

A few years later, when Albert of Cologne was Primate, there was again trouble with Armagh. At 1241 it is recorded that the Primate came from Rome "having privileges from the Pope over the churches of Erin." Whatever demands he made on Tuam as the possessor of such privileges were either granted in their entirety or to such an extent that he was satisfied; for the "Annals" record that "peace was made by the Comharb of Patrick with the Archbishop of Connaught, and with the other bishops likewise on account of Patrick's land in Connaught." ("Annals of Loch Ce.") Then, for the time at least, discord ceased between the heads of the northern and western provinces.

The Diocese of Mayo.

But there were other troubles for the Archbishop of Tuam. In spite of the fact that, in 1207, Pope Innocent III. had decided that Mayo would henceforth cease to be a diocese, but would be a parochial church subject to Tuam, the Proctor of the Church of Mayo appealed to Rome in 1240, refusing

² Gams—"Series Episcoporum"; Theiner, pp. 30-31.

apparently to accept the former Pope's decision. In consequence, Honorius, who succeeded Innocent, ordered his chaplain, "Master James," to decide what was the status of Mayo; and the decision was simply a confirmation of that of the preceding Pope. The stubborn Proctor of Mayo was still unyielding, and the Archbishop of Tuam formally complained of his conduct to Gregory IX. The Pope referred the matter to the Bishops of Ardagh and Killaloe, not, however, for the purpose of sitting in judgment on preceding Popes, but rather to confirm previous Papal decisions.³

In the years that followed there were other Papal documents, in which the Archbishop of Tuam was interested. In 1245 the Pope wrote to the Archbishop, informing him that he had cancelled the election of the Provost of Roscommon to the See of Elphin, ordering the Archbishop at the same time to appoint Archdeacon John, a man of illegitimate birth, and to consecrate him. In the selection of candidates the canons were divided, a majority being for the Provost, and a minority for the Archdeacon. It was unfortunate that the Archdeacon was illegitimate; but the Pope was so impressed with his superior attainments, and his unblemished personal character, that he appointed him in preference to the Provost.⁴

Annaghdown.

Two years later the Archbishop was directed by the same Pope to deal with a different case, and an entirely different class of man. This was the Bishop of Annaghdown, whose name was Thomas O'Malley. When the See became vacant he was Abbot of Parva Cella. He was illegitimate, the son of a high ecclesiastic who had shamefully forgotten his vow of celibacy, and yet, by producing false letters and by simony he had himself elected and consecrated bishop. Then he proceeded to waste the ecclesiastical property of the diocese. For these reasons the Chapter of Annaghdown appealed to the Pope to rescue them and their diocese from

³ "Calendar of Papal Registers" at 1240.

⁴ Theiner, p. 44.

the indignity and reproach of having such a man as their bishop, and in answer to their appeal the Pope wrote to the Archbishop of Tuam. And he directed the Archbishop to go in person to Annaghdown, to see and hear for himself, and with nothing but the fear of God before his eyes. Then, having seen and heard, he was to pronounce judgment—a judgment which was to be the same as if given by the Pope himself, from which as such there was to be no appeal.⁵

What the Archbishop did does not appear. But if all or half of what was alleged against O'Malley were true, only one decision could be given, and that a sentence of deposition. In the list of bishops he is put down as one who was never consecrated. And he must, indeed, have been an intruder and a usurper, who seized upon the temporalities of the diocese, and exercised jurisdiction for years, without being consecrated, until at last the whole Chapter were compelled to appeal to Rome for his deposition, lest all religion should disappear from Annaghdown. Yet he lived on till 1250, attempting, no doubt, to exercise authority, but prevented from doing so by the Archbishop of Tuam.

The latter had cast covetous eyes himself on Annaghdown, desiring to have it amalgamated with Tuam; and when O'Malley died, and Annaghdown was left without even a usurping bishop, and the Chapter proceeded to select one of their number, he was refused recognition by the Archbishop. The choice of the Chapter was a Canon named Concors, and he was unanimously chosen—a singular compliment to one whom the Chapter knew so well. Yet the Archbishop, when directed by the Pope to have him consecrated and inducted into his See, hesitated and delayed, and to such an extent that the Pope was compelled to issue a letter to the Archbishop of Cashel and the Bishops of Cork and Kilfenora, ordering them to duly consecrate and induct the new Bishop of Annaghdown, if the Archbishop of Tuam failed to do so within two months.⁶

⁵ Theiner, p. 47.

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 53.

At that date (1250) the Archbishop of Tuam was Florence MacFlynn. His predecessor had died in the previous year, with the reputation of being an eminent canonist and theologian, and MacFlynn was chosen by the Chapter to be the new Archbishop. He had been Chancellor of the Chapter himself, and must have stood well in their regard. The selection was duly sanctioned by the Pope, and MacFlynn went immediately to Rome, where he protested, but in vain, against any appointment to the See of Annaghdown, declaring that Annaghdown was only a parochial church. Yet, as we have seen, his arguments had no effect; and when he procrastinated about the consecration of Concors the Archbishop of Cashel and two other bishops were ordered to consecrate the bishop-elect; for Annaghdown was still to be a diocese, and must not be left without a bishop.

The De Burgos.

There were then troubled times in Connaught. After the triumph of Crovderg O'Connor over his rivals there was peace. But when Crovderg died, in 1224, faction reappeared. His son, Hugh, and his cousins, Hugh and Turlogh, the sons of the Ardri Roderick, fought long and bitterly; the other Connaught chiefs took sides in the quarrel, as did O'Neill of Tyrone, and O'Brien of Thomond; and the result was that the whole province was desolated with war.⁷

The intervention of the De Burgos was specially mischievous. The first of these, William FitzAdelm, was in such high favour with Henry II. that, in 1179, he got a royal grant of all Connaught, in spite of the fact that the sovereignty of the province had been specially secured to Roderick O'Connor by the Treaty of Windsor. But De Burgo was unable to make good his claims in the west, and for many years confined himself to lands which he had secured in Limerick and Tipperary. Nor was it till 1200 that he interfered in Connaught, and then as the ally of Cathal Carrach

⁷ D'Alton's "History of Ireland," I, pp. 296-7.

O'Connor. Two years later he was again in Connaught, this time as the ally of Crovderg; and on this occasion he desecrated so many churches and perpetrated so many ills on the inhabitants that his soldiers were set upon in the several districts in which they were billeted, and murdered. And in 1204 great was the jubilation throughout the whole province when it became known that William FitzAdelm de Burgo was dead. ("Annals of Loch Ce.")

His son, Richard, was not less energetic or less turbulent than his father. In 1217 he proposed to the English King to pay 3,000 marks at once, and an annual rental of 200 marks, if all Connaught were given him; or, as an alternative, the sum of £1,000 if Connaught were given him after Crovderg's death. For the time, both these offers were refused. But in 1226 Crovderg was dead: Henry III. was now willing to concede what he had formerly refused; and Richard de Burgo was granted all Connaught, and the viceroy, De Marisco, was directed to put him in possession of it. Henceforth De Burgo assumed the title of Lord of Connaught, and sought by fomenting dissension among the O'Connors to undermine their power, and secure his own predominance. And to do this he erected strong castles in Lough Mask and Lough Corrib—Hen's Castle in Lough Corrib, and Hag's Castle in Lough Mask. He overran the whole district of Magh Seola, driving the O'Flaherties to the desolate lands of Connemara beyond the Corrib; and in 1232 he took from them their stronghold at Galway, and henceforth made his headquarters there.⁸

So powerful, indeed, had he become, and so feared, and so crushed was the spirit of his opponents, that the O'Flaherty chiefs aided him in his attack on the O'Connors, carried his boats from Lough Corrib to Killery Harbour, and helped him to plunder and murder the natives who had taken refuge in the islands of Clew Bay. In 1236 he plundered Tuam, Mayo and Turlough, all ecclesiastical centres ("Annals of

⁸ "Annals of Loch Ce." O'Flaherty's "Iar-Connaught," p. 3. Hardiman's "History of Galway," pp. 47-8.

Loch Ce ')); and when he died, in 1243, his power in Connaught was far greater than that of the O'Connors.

His son and successor, Walter, was cast in the same mould as himself. In 1253 we find him in alliance with O'Connor, waging war on O'Rorke of Breffny. In 1260 he is at war with O'Connor, then makes peace with him, and sleeps with him in the same bed, "cheerfully and contentedly" ("Four Masters"). And repeatedly he was at war with Maurice Fitzgerald, another powerful Anglo-Norman, whose power in Connaught was also great. The native chiefs, indeed, were constantly at war—the O'Rorkes, the O'Flaherties, the MacDermotts, and the O'Connors. But not less turbulent were the Anglo-Normans; and the "Annals of Clonmacnoise" does not exaggerate in saying that "there reigned more dissensions, strifes, wars and debates between the Englishmen themselves than between the Irishmen."

These wars have many entries given to them in the native annals, so many that, in comparison, the entries relating to ecclesiastical events are few. But there are a few. In the "Annals of Loch Ce," for instance, we find it recorded, at 1224, that Maurice O'Connor, son of Roderick, the Ardri, was buried in Cong Abbey, and that, in 1226, Nuala, Queen of Uladh, was buried in the same sacred ground. In 1226 Richard de Burgo burned Inishmaan Abbey. In 1245 O'Flanagan, Abbot of Cong, died; in 1247 the Archdeacon of Aughagower. In 1249 the O'Connors burned Athenry. In 1253 Thomas O'Quin became Bishop of Clonmacnoise. In 1255 MacFlynn, Archbishop of Tuam, returned from England, having got from the King all his requests. And in 1256 the death is recorded of the same Archbishop at Bristol.

English influence was then considerable in Connaught, and nowhere more so than in church government. The dean and chapter could not proceed to an election of an archbishop without first getting the *congé d'élire* or licence of the king; and in 1235, such was the advance of English influence, that Henry III., in issuing his *congé d'élire*, directed the chapter to choose an archbishop able to rule the church, and *faithful*

to the King.⁹ By the time that Florence was selected, English influence had still further increased. Nor would Florence have had all his requests granted, in spite of his Irish name, if he had not been the friend of De Burgo and the English interest. This, too, would explain why he so obstinately resisted the appointment of a bishop to the See of Annaghdown. For Annaghdown had passed from the O'Flaherties to the De Burgos, and if Florence had the influence and support of De Burgo, and of Henry III., he would feel secure of having his requests granted at Rome.

But the Pope was not willing to abolish an ancient diocese because MacFlynn wished it, even though he was supported by a powerful noble and an English king. Yet Florence must have had influence at Rome, for, in 1254, he procured a Papal indult that he should not in future be summoned by Papal or legative letters more than one day's journey from his diocese.¹⁰

If this meant that the Archbishop was old and feeble it was strangely at variance with the fact that he was able to undertake a journey to the English Court, and plead his cause there with such success that all his requests were granted.

Renewed Disputes with Armagh.

Like his predecessors, he had his troubles with Armagh. For the Primate insisted that his jurisdiction extended to the province of Tuam, and as the Archbishop of Tuam refused to acknowledge any such claim, the whole question was referred to Rome. Under the presidency of a cardinal a court was set up, and the case argued by the procurators of the two Archbishops, after which the Pope gave his decision. In future the Archbishop of Armagh may call himself Primate of the province of Tuam, if he wishes; he can have the Cross carried before him throughout the whole province; and he can make a visitation of the province once every five years.

But this visitation must not be for longer than twenty-seven

⁹ D'Alton's "History of Ireland," I, p. 328.

¹⁰ Bliss's "Calendar of Papal Registers," p. 300.

days, during which time his expenses are to be borne by the Tuam province. These expenses, however, must not be excessive, nor can any individual be taxed for the purpose for a greater amount than two marks. Should abuses exist in the province, the Primate may endeavour to correct them, by persuasion and argument and salutary admonition. But he must not use censure. His privilege is to report the matter complained of and needing reformation to the bishop of the diocese, and if the bishop fails to do his duty, the Primate may bring the matter before the Archbishop. And if the Archbishop of Tuam fails to correct and amend, the Primate may complain both of bishop and archbishop at Rome, and let the Pope apply what remedy he thinks best.

The only case in which the Primate is allowed to visit an offender in the Tuam province with ecclesiastical censure is the case of those who either endeavour to prevent him from holding his visitation of twenty-seven days, or who, while allowing him to hold it, will not contribute their due share to the expenses of such visitation.

In the event of disputes arising between any suffragan bishops of the Tuam province and their subjects in connection with the Primate's visitation, the disputants may appeal to the Archbishop of Tuam, and if dissatisfied with his decision, they may appeal from him to the Primate. This is the only case in which any appeal from the Archbishop of Tuam to the Primate is allowed. But even in this case the Primate's powers do not go beyond inquiring into the facts. He may transmit these facts to Rome, with his own opinion if he wishes. But he must not attempt to exercise jurisdiction over the Archbishop of Tuam or his province, and must leave the passing of judgment and inflicting punishment to the Apostolic See.¹¹

Appeal to the English King.

In 1255 the Archbishop of Tuam and the Bishop of Killala made a joint appeal to Henry III. on behalf of the bishops

¹¹ Theiner, pp. 68-9.

and clergy of the province. They complained that the clergy were dragged into the civil courts, often long distances from their homes, that the judges in these civil courts did not act equitably, that the government officials often compelled the servants of the clergy to work for them; and lastly, they complained that the King's servants prevented persons from bequeathing lands to the Church.

It was admitted that in some respects the clergy had a grievance, especially as to their servants being compelled to labour for government officials; and it was determined that the judges in the civil courts must act equitably. But it was not conceded that ecclesiastics should be exempt from these civil courts; and no encouragement was given to those who might wish to leave lands to the Church. The reason was that such lands were free from the feudal burdens which the lands of laymen had to bear, and as such were not profitable either to King or feudal lord.¹²

It is not unlikely that it was in connection with these matters that the Archbishop went to England, where he died in 1256.

The Archbishop's Successor.

There was some difficulty about finding him a suitable successor. The Chapter elected one James O'Loughnane, a Franciscan friar, and the King approved of the choice made. But Pope Alexander IV. disagreed with both Chapter and King. He was not satisfied that O'Loughnane's character was above reproach, and therefore he appointed Walter de Salerno, and he himself consecrated him at Rome. The new Archbishop had been Dean of St. Paul's in London, and had been chaplain to the Pope, who had words of praise for his superior knowledge, and for his integrity of life. The fact that he was English—the first English Archbishop of Tuam—no doubt pleased Henry III. in spite of the other fact that O'Loughnane, whom Henry had appointed, was set aside.¹³ But

¹² Knox, pp. 104-7.

¹³ Theiner, p. 76.

De Salerno never reached Tuam, and, indeed, was in no hurry coming there; for it was in London that he died, in 1258, without ever having seen the archdiocese which he had been appointed to rule.

The next Archbishop was an Irishman—Tomaltach, or Thomas, O'Connor. He had been Dean of Achonry, then was elected Bishop of Elphin by the chapter of that diocese, and was consecrated by O'Loughnane, Archbishop of Tuam. In 1259 he became Archbishop of Tuam himself.

O'Connors and De Burgos.

At that date the greatest of the Connaught chiefs was Felim O'Connor; the most powerful of the Anglo-Irish nobles was Walter de Burgo, who, in right of his wife, the daughter of Hugh de Lacy, was Earl of Ulster; and though these two chiefs were nearly related, they were seldom able to agree.¹⁴ They quarrelled and made peace, and again quarrelled, nor were their quarrels ended until Felim O'Connor died in 1265. The Archbishop belonged to the same family as Felim O'Connor, and in 1257 had consecrated the church attached to the Dominican Friary at Roscommon, founded by Felim. But with all the influence attached to his position as Archbishop, and his relationship with this native chief, he was unable to bring peace to Connaught. And when Felim died, his son and successor, Hugh, continued to fight with the Earl of Ulster.

The latter died at his castle in Galway in 1271. In 1274 O'Connor died, and is much lauded by the "Annals of Clonmacnoise." "This is the king that wasted and destroyed Connaught upon the English; this is he that razed and broke down their houses and castles, made them even with the earth, and gave themselves many overthrows and conflicts; this is he that spoiled and defended from other spoils the province of Connaught; and finally this is he that most was feared by the English of all the kings of Connaught that were before his time." ("Annals of Clonmacnoise.")

¹⁴ "The O'Connors of Connaught," p. 110

Yet, in the midst of all this turmoil and bloodshed, which did not end even with the death of Walter de Burgo and of Hugh O'Connor, the work of the Church went on. These warlike chiefs, indeed, did not forget to pray as well as to fight; and when Hugh O'Connor died, the "Annals of Clonmacnoise" is careful to record that he was buried "with great reverence," with the monks in the Abbey of Boyle.

Archbishop's Death.

In 1259, the year of his appointment, we find the Archbishop and the Dean and Chapter of Tuam obtaining from the Pope the necessary authority to borrow, on their joint security, the sum of 2,400 marks for some purpose connected with the Church.¹⁵ One other matter his name is connected with, namely, the licence obtained from the King in 1260 for himself and his successors to hold fairs in Tuam.¹⁶ That the Archbishop was held in high esteem by his diocese, and even by those who lived outside it, is plain from his obituary notice. For the "Annals of the Four Masters," at 1279, has the following entry: "O'Connor, Archbishop of Tuam, the most eminent man in Ireland for wisdom, learning and charity, died, after the victory of penance."

Dominican Abbey of Athenry.

Meanwhile, in a century of discord and war, one noted religious establishment had been founded, and had already become one of the greatest in the Archdiocese of Tuam. This was the Dominican Abbey at Athenry. The place was known long before the coming of the Anglo-Normans. Near the town three principalities met, the territory of O'Heyne of Hy-Fiachrach, that of O'Kelly of Hy-Many, and Magh Seola, which was the land of the O'Flaherties. Hence the passage across the little river that rushed by was called Ath-na-Righ, or the Ford of the Kings, and hence the name Athenry, which the town still bears.

¹⁵ Theiner, p. 81.

¹⁶ Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," p. 28.

The Anglo-Normans were not long in Ireland until they set covetous eyes on the plains round Athenry, and one of them soon dispossessed O'Heyne of part of the land which he ruled. This was Peter, or Piers de Bermingham. His ancestors lived in Warwickshire, near the ancient castle of Bermingham, whence they derived their surname. One of them, Robert by name, came to Ireland with Strongbow, and it was his son, Peter, who came to Athenry and won the lands there by his sword. It was said that he was urged to found a Dominican abbey by St. Dominick himself; but as he was unable to do this during his lifetime, the work was taken in hands by his son, Meyler, who was called Lord of Athenry, and who, in 1241, founded the abbey, and dedicated it to Saints Peter and Paul.

He bought the site from one Robert Brannach, or Walsh, for 160 marks, and proceeded with the work so rapidly that the abbey, in the next year, became the meeting-place of a Provincial Chapter of the Order. De Bermingham himself, besides furnishing the site, gave a contribution of 160 marks for the building, besides inducing his knights and soldiers to contribute. Felim O'Connor, King of Connaught, built the refectory; O'Heyne, the dormitory; O'Kelly, the chapter-house; one Husgard, the infirmary; O'Trasary (probably Tracy), the guest-house; and his wife, an altar; while O'Kelly, Bishop of Clonfert, built the vault near the north side of the altar; and Florence MacFlynn, Archbishop of Tuam, established a theological school there. And when MacFlynn died it was in Athenry Abbey that he was buried. So also were O'Kelly, Bishop of Clonfert, Meyler de Bermingham, the founder, and many others.

Athenry was then a walled town, with its mayor and burgesses and corporation; and among the early benefactors of the abbey was one Nicholas Godson, burgess of the town, who, besides giving tithes, supplied the twenty-four friars with cloaks and habits of English cloth, and had four of the friars at dinner during Lent, and two during the remainder of the year. The Berminghams gave tithes of their posses-

sions; others gave gifts for the altar and for the interior furnishing of the church and abbey; and many gave grants of land; and when Thomas O'Connor, the Archbishop of Tuam, died, in 1279, the Dominican Abbey of Athenry was a prosperous religious establishment, enriched with many gifts of money and lands.¹⁷

New Archbishop.

At O'Connor's death there was considerable trouble in electing a successor. The quarrels between the O'Connors themselves and between the O'Connors and their Anglo-Irish neighbours were not calculated to foster the peace and quietness desirable for an episcopal election. Complications also arose from the fact that the late Archbishop had been able to prevent for years the election of a bishop for Annaghdown, and had himself ruled that See as well as the See of Tuam. The King of England was in no hurry to issue his licence to elect, as the temporalities of the vacant See were returned into his exchequer. Finally—and this was the chief cause of confusion and delay—the Canons of Tuam could not agree.

Of the seven who made up the Chapter and met for the election, five voted for one of their own number, one Nicholas de Machin; the other two voted for Malachy, a Franciscan friar of Limerick. The latter went to Rome, but he was careless and indifferent, and evidently not specially anxious for a mitre, for he left Rome without having made any serious effort to have himself appointed, and he left without the usual licence to leave. The reigning Pope, Nicholas IV., died, and Martin IV. succeeded, but only for a short time, and then came Honorius IV. Meantime, Canon de Machin had come to Rome in the time of Pope Martin, and had his claims considered. But however strong these claims might be, Nicholas knew that a minority of the Chapter were opposed to him; and to avoid discord and dissatisfaction, he resigned such rights as he had acquired by election.

¹⁷ O'Heyne's "Irish Dominicans," pp. 79-80. "Galway Archæological Journal," M. J. Blake's Paper.

It was in these circumstances that Honorius IV., casting his eyes outside Tuam, sought a man who would be acceptable to all—a man of learning and piety—with the proved capacity to rule both in spiritual and temporal affairs. And it was time that some appointment should be made, for Tuam was then without an Archbishop for six years.¹⁸

It was an unusual appointment that was made, as the person promoted was Stephen de Fulburn, then Viceroy of Ireland. He was a native of Fulburn in Cambridgeshire, and belonged to the Order of Knights Hospitallers. Like himself, several members of his family were prominent in Ireland, on the English side. His brother, Walter, became Bishop of Waterford (Ware's "Bishops"). His nephew, Adam de Fulburn, was Rector of Slane, and Adam's brother, John, fought against the O'Mores of Leix, and was imprisoned by them.¹⁹ In 1273 Stephen became Bishop of Waterford, and was consecrated in the following year. In 1275 he became Lord Treasurer of Ireland; and in 1279, deputy to Sir Robert Ufford, then Viceroy of Ireland.

Ufford's conception of his duties towards the Irish we know from his reply to Edward I., who had summoned him to London, and charged him with tolerating disorder and strife in Ireland. For Ufford replied "that in practice he thought it expedient to have one knave cutting off another: it would save the King's coffers, and purchase peace to the land."²⁰

Whether the deputy agreed with his principal in his views of Irish government we do not know. But it is certain that on some matters they disagreed. This, however, did not involve the loss of the King's favour by Fulburn, for when Ufford ceased to be Viceroy, in 1282, it was the Bishop of Waterford who took his place. Furthermore, the King granted Fulburn £500 a year (a large sum on those days) to defray the expenses of his office;²¹ he authorized the Barons of the Irish Exchequer to advance him out of the Irish Ex-

¹⁸ Theiner, pp. 135-6.

¹⁹ Sweetman's "Calendar," p. 250.

²⁰ Gilbert's "Viceroys of Ireland," pp. 108-110.

²¹ Sweetman's "Calendar," p. 44.

chequer all moneys he required for strengthening the King's fortresses against the Irish;²² he allowed him to issue a coinage, and Fulburn's "groats, halfpence and farthings," passed current not only in Ireland but in England. It may be assumed that it was the same royal favour which was instrumental in making Fulburn Archbishop of Tuam.

The latter office he held but two years, for he died in Dublin in 1288. He had, therefore, but little time to make any impression on the affairs of the Archdiocese. But he was long enough in Tuam to quarrel with John de Ufford, brother of the late Viceroy, who claimed to be Bishop of Annaghdown since 1282. The Archbishop denied the claim, and had influence enough to have it disallowed, so that Ufford ceased to be, even nominally, Bishop of Annaghdown, while Fulburn administered both the Diocese and the Archdiocese.²³

~~As a result he had~~ little time either for episcopal or for archiepiscopal work. He was a great state official rather than an ecclesiastic; and a man responsible for negotiating with Irish chiefs and nobles, and making war on them; a man who had to reconcile so many conflicting interests, and superintend so many officials, must have bestowed little care on the spiritual work of the Archdiocese which he only nominally ruled. And while he must necessarily have neglected his spiritual work, he did not escape censure as to the manner in which he discharged his duties as treasurer and viceroy. He was charged with wishing to become unduly rich, with making profit on wine and corn, on fines inflicted, on law-suits, on works carried on for the Crown on Crown lands. It was suggested that he accepted money for appointments to offices, and that he thus enriched his family. It is at all events certain that his brother succeeded him as Bishop of Waterford.²⁴

²² Gilbert, p. 110.

²³ Ware's "Bishops."

²⁴ Sweetman's "Calendar," pp. 12-14.

Viceroy and Archbishop.

If these accusations reached the King, evidently they were not believed, for he retained Fulburn in office. And, further, he remitted any arrears due to the Crown while Fulburn was treasurer and viceroy.²⁵ But when the Archbishop died there was a change in the King's attitude. Of the rolls, writs, inquisitions and other state documents left by Fulburn, which were brought to Dublin at his death, so many disappeared that £10,000 due to the Crown was lost.²⁶ This so enraged the King that the Archbishop's property was seized upon, and even the property of his See. But in 1289 a writ was issued to the Barons of the Irish Exchequer, ordering them to restore to the Dean and Chapter of Tuam the church ornaments, vessels and vestments belonging to the Archdiocese. The fifty horses which belonged to the Archbishop at his death, as well as all his personal property, were, no doubt, retained.

A list of these is given, and is as follows:—

At Tuam: In the Wardrobe: One silver ewer, value £4; one silver-gilt cup; three cloths of gold; twelve striped cloths for esquires; one cloth for men of trade; one cloth for grooms; thirty-three furs with lambskins; eighty-nine ells of linen; ten towels; eleven pairs of silken shoes; five score pounds of almonds; thirty pounds of rice; one frail of figs; ten pounds of dates; two "pieces de cendone"; four ells "de carde"; two cups of silver; one white coverlet; two capes; one large Bible; £100 in silver; one black cloth for the use of the Archbishop; and four black cloths for knights and clerks.

In the pantry there were silver salt-cellars, gold and silver spoons, silver plates, dishes and ewers, and in addition there were "six halberds and two coats of mail, three pairs of iron cuirasses, three pairs of new trappings, and two pairs of old."

In the stables there were many horses, including a large

²⁵ Sweetman's "Calendar," pp. 121-2.

²⁶ Gilbert's "Viceroys," p. 111.

white palfrey, "another called Hackney," and there were several sumpter horses.

At Athlone, in the chapel were : Vestments, mitres, crozier, chalices, embroidered copes, a missal, a breviary, a gradual, a book of the dedication of churches, a censer, a vase for holy water, a portable altar, and many other things.²⁷

There is here no evidence of excessive wealth, accumulated by dishonourable means, and while the number of horses seems excessive, it is not so remarkable in the case of one who was, besides being Archbishop of Tuam, charged with the government of Ireland.

Archbishop de Bermingham.

Another Anglo-Irishman succeeded to Fulburn when William de Bermingham was appointed Archbishop of Tuam. This time the Chapter were unanimous, and it is remarkable that not a single Anglo-Irishman was to be found among them. The De Burgos and the De Berminghams had by this time possessed themselves of much of the lands of Tuam; and in the Church they must have been equally successful, when we find De Alatio, Precentor; De Hyndeberge, Treasurer; De Waekford, Chancellor; and De Wells and De Guascino, Canons of the Chapter of Tuam.

But De Bermingham's own appointment as Archbishop was still more remarkable proof that the invaders of the twelfth century had made great progress in the Church. For De Bermingham was not even a priest. Since his eleventh year he held the church of Corcanffan in the diocese of Cashel, that is, he drew the revenues of the benefice, while, no doubt, getting some priest to do the spiritual work. Later, he got in the same way the churches of Moydrisc in Killaloe, Castleconnor in Killala, and Tynnachton and Athenry in Tuam. As the son of Meyler de Bermingham it was little wonder that he should be Rector of Athenry, and the same influence of descent accounted for his possession of the other

²⁷ Sweetman's "Calendar," pp. 180-1.

churches scattered over so many dioceses. But the discipline of the Irish Church was assuredly lax when a young lad of eleven was allowed to receive the revenues of any benefice; when subsequently, before his twenty-third year, and without being in priest's orders, and without any Papal dispensation, he received the revenues of several other benefices. In spite of all these things he was now appointed Archbishop of Tuam; he was dispensed from all irregularities that he might have incurred; he was ordained priest; and he was consecrated Archbishop.²⁸

The Berminghams were a fighting race, and the Archbishop, though he did not grasp the sword, was certainly not averse to a fight, and had more than one quarrel during his episcopal career. The first of these was with the Dominicans of Athenry. About 1297 the Archbishop ordered his Archdeacon, Philip le Blound, to hold a visitation at Athenry Abbey. But the friars (all but three) refused to attend, claiming exemption from the Archbishop's power of visitation. They even denounced the Archdeacon, though acting in the Archbishop's name. For this the Archbishop laid themselves and their church under interdict, prohibiting the people from giving them food or alms, or even entering their church. The friars got a mandamus from the Lord Chancellor ordering the Archbishop to withdraw the interdict, but the Archbishop refused. Then the friars had the Attorney-General to proceed against the Archbishop, and the latter was compelled to enter into recognizances to have the Archdeacon revoke what he had done. It may have been that the Archdeacon was jealous of these friars, and that the violence and illegality were on his side. However this may be, the war was ended, and henceforth in this direction there was calm.²⁹

Another serious quarrel the Archbishop had in 1303, this time with the Dean of Annaghdown, who appealed to the

²⁸ Theiner, pp. 142-3.

²⁹ O'Heyne's "Irish Dominicans," pp. 81-2. "Athenry Abbey," by M. J. Blake.

Pope, Boniface VIII. His accusations against the Archbishop were grave enough. He had, according to the Dean, seized the church of Annaghdown, and kept the See vacant; he had induced John de Ufford, Bishop-elect, to cease prosecuting his claims at Rome, and to accept instead the Archdeaconry of Tuam; he had deprived the Dean and Chapter of Annaghdown of their dignities and benefices; he had united the Archdeaconry of Annaghdown to that of Tuam; he had seized by force the chest of the church of Annaghdown, deposited for safety with Friars Minor at Claregalway, and containing the mitre, sandals, crozier, ring and liber pontificals; he had forcibly taken possession of the See of Mayo; he refused to confirm the Bishop-elect of Elphin. Further, the Archbishop had committed many acts of simony, oppressed his subjects in various ways, employed notorious malefactors; and he had imprisoned and tortured a canon regular who refused to allow the Archbishop's horse to be stabled where the Blessed Sacrament was kept.³⁰

To investigate these charges the Pope appointed the Bishops of Limerick, Kilfenora, and Killaloe, but what their report was we do not know. Manifestly, the charges were not all true, and were not believed to be true at Rome. For the Archbishop continued to rule the See of Tuam till he died, and when he died in 1312 he was buried in the Dominican church at Athenry ("Annals of Loch Ce").

³⁰ Theiner, pp. 171-2.

CHAPTER VII.

IRISH AND ANGLO-IRISH.

Colonists and Natives.

AT the opening of the fourteenth century the Anglo-Irish were firmly planted in Ireland. The lands of Leinster had long since passed, in great measure, from Irish to Anglo-Irish hands. The Butlers were great in Ormond; the Powers in Waterford; the Fitzgeralds in Desmond; while in Connaught, the De Burgos, or Burkes, completely overshadowed the greatest of the O'Connors.

In some cases the families of the native chiefs and the Anglo-Irish lords had inter-married, and in this manner a certain amount of fusion of races supervened. But if the Anglo-Irish lord became more like an Irish chief, while remaining a feudal lord, and if the native chief sometimes built feudal castles, while still recognising Brehon rather than feudal law, it meant no improvement in the condition of the masses of the people. These conditions had, in fact, become much worse with the lapse of time. Before the invasion the natives had the protection of the Brehon Law; but now, in their dealings with the Anglo-Irish, they had neither Brehon nor feudal law. For the Anglo-Irish lords did not recognise Brehon law except as "a lewd custom," and they were unwilling that the old Irish should have the protection of English law.

Repeatedly the Irish had asked for the status of English subjects, had even offered money to have English law extended to them. But each time the Anglo-Irish lords blocked

the way; and though the English King often wished that the Irish who lived in the midst of the English settlers would be subject to the same law as their neighbours, the Anglo-Irish lords were so powerful that the King's wishes were set at nought. These nobles wanted to plunder the Irish as they pleased, unrestrained by any law except their own caprice, and hence, of the old Irish, only the "five bloods," as they were called, that is, the descendants of the royal houses, the O'Neills, the O'Donnells, the O'Briens, the O'Mellaghlin, and the O'Connors, had the status of English subjects, or the protection of English law.

Union among the Irish chiefs would, even yet, have probably broken the power of these insolent Anglo-Irish lords, or at least would have secured the same laws for native and colonist. But time had proved that no such union was probable; and in these circumstances Domhnall O'Neill, acting for his aggrieved countrymen, had invited Edward Bruce of Scotland to come to Ireland as king. Coming in 1315, he met with such rapid success that he was crowned King of Ireland at Dundalk in 1316. The same year, however, his cause, hitherto so successful, received in Connaught, and in the Archdiocese of Tuam, a mortal blow. The ruling O'Connor chief, Felim, had at first taken sides against Bruce; but when a rival, Rory O'Connor, had denounced him as the ally of the hated English, he hastened to take sides, defeated Rory, and scattered his adherents, and declared that he would chase the whole race of English settlers from his native province.

Battle of Athenry.

The contest was decided on the 10th of August, 1316, at Athenry. The leader of the English, or Anglo-Irish, was Richard de Bermingham, aided by William Burke; while Felim O'Connor was aided by O'Kelly, O'Hara, O'Dowda, and other Connaught chiefs. On the latter side was the superiority of numbers, and valour was certainly not wanting. But men clad in saffron shirts, and armed with battle-axes,

were no match for crossbowmen and mail-clad knights, and when the battle was over, Felim O'Connor and 8,000 of his followers lay dead or dying on the plains round Athenry. Two years later Edward Bruce himself was defeated and slain. For his victory in 1316 Richard de Bermingham was created Lord of Athenry, while his relative, John de Bermingham, for his victory near Dundalk over Bruce, was created Earl of Louth.¹

Malachy MacHugh, Archbishop.

At that date the Archbishop of Tuam was Malachy Mac Hugh. He was a native of Iar-Connaught, and a relative of the O'Flaherties. He had been a priest of the diocese of Elphin, and in 1310 was appointed Bishop of the same diocese.² Two years later he was promoted to Tuam. The Chapter had at first elected their Dean, Philip, but Philip opposed a very firm *nolo episcopari*, evidently having no ambition for a mitre, either in Tuam or elsewhere. The Chapter of Tuam then proceeded to a second election, and on this occasion Malachy, Bishop of Elphin, was their choice. But here again there was no desire for the higher position, for Malachy wished to remain in Elphin. But he submitted himself to the Holy See, and when the Pope directed him to go to Tuam he did not hesitate, but obeyed.³

In addition to the political troubles which came in the years immediately following, and which necessarily brought sorrow to the heart of the Archbishop, there was the domestic difficulty of rebuilding the church of Tuam. And we find that in 1313 there was granted by Papal dispensation a relaxation of 200 days of enjoined penance to those who would contribute to the rebuilding of the church. It had been begun by the late Archbishop, and after his death had been continued by the Dean. And it was this Dean Philip who at this date (1313) petitioned for aid to complete the church.⁴

¹ D'Alton's "History of Ireland," I, pp. 340, 356.

² Theiner, pp. 180-1.

³ *Ibid.* pp. 185-6.

⁴ Bliss's "Calendar of Papal Registers."

Kilcreevanty Again.

A further matter that engaged the attention of the Archbishop, and even the attention of Rome, was the rights and privileges of the convent of Kilcreevanty. These ladies, in the time of Florence MacFlynn, had got recognition of the fact that they were to a large extent exempt from the Archbishop's jurisdiction. For the Archbishop had no right except that of triennial visitation, and then only when accompanied by the Abbot of Cong (Chap. V.) Whether abuses had crept into the convent since then, or whether these ladies had specially flouted the succeeding Archbishop, we do not know. But evidently Archbishop Malachy was not disposed to have any religious establishment in his archdiocese placed outside the range of his jurisdiction, no matter how highly born or highly connected its inmates might be. He, therefore, laid the matter before Rome; and now it was decided by Rome that the Archbishop could visit the convent, whenever he deemed it necessary, whether he was accompanied or not by the Abbot of Cong. But he must take care not to infringe on any of the canonical statutes under which the convent was governed. There was here room for limitations and restrictions, and a promise, perhaps, also of future contention; but the jurisdiction of the Archbishop over the convent, as over the other religious houses in his archdiocese, was clearly and unequivocally recognised.⁵

Annaghdown Diocese.

Nor was this the only matter which disturbed the Archbishop's repose. For another subject remained to be discussed. This was the exact status of the ancient diocese of Annaghdown. Fulburn, as we have already seen, had sufficient influence to set aside the claims of John de Ufford to the See; and De Bermingham, though not a viceroy, and therefore not so powerful as Fulburn, was far more violent

⁵ Theiner, p. 216.

than Fulburn in his opposition to the claims of Annaghdown as a separate diocese. But in spite of all their efforts there was still a bishop of that diocese, and in 1324 we find that the ruling prelate was transferred to the diocese of Connor.⁶

This was the signal for a renewal of the old conflict. Some years previous one Gilbert claimed to be duly selected Bishop of Annaghdown, and claimed confirmation from the Archbishop, and recognition at Rome. But Malachy refused confirmation, alleging that Annaghdown was not a cathedral but a parochial church, having been on a former occasion canonically united to the See of Tuam. In these circumstances the Pope refused to recognise Gilbert. But he also refused to agree with the Archbishop's view, and appointed James Bishop of Annaghdown. And when James was promoted to Connor, Robert, Bishop of Clonfert, was appointed his successor. The Pope did not, however, pronounce finally against the Archbishop, for he found it necessary to *restore* Annaghdown to the dignity of a cathedral church—a thing which would be quite unnecessary if it were already such. Further, the Pope at this juncture sent Robert from Clonfert, because Robert's title to Clonfert was evidently not a good one, as the Pope described him as a bishop without a diocese (*episcopus nullius ecclesiae*). Robert's position, indeed, was rather as administrator of Annaghdown, and as such entitled to a living from the church there. For the rights of Tuam were not ignored, and the appointment of Robert was made without prejudice to such rights, whatever they were.⁷

Union with Achonry and Kilmacduagh.

But Archbishop Malachy was determined that if he could, Annaghdown should not remain a separate diocese. He represented to the Pope—and his view was shared by the King of England⁸—that Tuam was too poor of itself to give decent

⁶ Theiner, p. 229.

⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 231-2.

⁸ "Papal Registers."

sustentation to an Archbishop. He also declared that, not only Annaghdown, but Achonry and Kilmacduagh, also, were too poor to support a bishop; and he suggested that these three dioceses should be amalgamated with Tuam. It helped him, no doubt, that the King of England shared his view. At all events, Pope John XXII. was impressed with his reasoning, and in 1327 issued a Constitution uniting the suffragan Sees of Annaghdown, Achonry and Kilmacduagh to the Archdiocese. The bishops then ruling these several dioceses should not be molested; but as each disappeared his diocese was to be joined to Tuam, and henceforth over this diocese the Archbishop was to have full episcopal jurisdiction. The Chapters of the abolished dioceses should remain, and should have an equal voice with the members of the Tuam Chapter in the selection of the Archbishop of Tuam, whenever a vacancy arose in the metropolitan See.⁹

This arrangement was not likely to be permanent; for the Archdiocese was not quite so poor that it was unequal to the burden of maintaining an Archbishop; and the extent of the united dioceses was too great to be conveniently managed by a single bishop. And, in fact, the difficulties of the new arrangement soon became apparent to the Pope. For, in 1330, when the Bishop of Annaghdown made a complaint that he had been deprived of his diocese by the Archbishop, under the pretext that Annaghdown had been joined to Tuam, the Pope issued a Commission to the Bishop of Killaloe and the Guardian of the Friars Minors at Claregalway, ordering them to ascertain the value of the fruits, rents and profits of the churches of Tuam, Annaghdown, Achonry and Kilmacduagh, and the distances from one another. And the Commissioners were to report whether in their view the several dioceses should be united at all.¹⁰

What was the Commissioners' report is not known; but at all events, nothing was done until 1346, when the Pope ordered the Bishops of Ardagh, Elphin and Clonfert to

⁹ Theiner, p. 239.

¹⁰ "Papal Registers."

summon the Archbishop and Chapter of Tuam, and inform themselves, and decide touching the union with Tuam of "the suffragan churches of Annaghdown, Achonry and Kilmacduagh." It appears that the Chapter of Achonry prayed to have the union with Tuam dissolved, "since the distance between the two churches and the ungovernable character of the Irish make it impossible for them to share in the election of the Archbishop." On their side the Archbishop of Tuam and his Chapter were quite willing to have the union dissolved. Yet there was no dissolution, and in 1350 a Papal mandate was issued to the Bishops of Killala and Kilfenora and the Abbot of Boyle, to summon the Archbishop of Tuam and others and inform themselves touching the proposed dissolution of the union of the Sees of Annaghdown, Kilmacduagh and Achonry to that of Tuam, for which the Chapter of Annaghdown had petitioned.

A few years later the dissolution did take place; for in 1358 the Dean of Kilmacduagh was appointed Bishop of that See. The reason given was that the Archbishop and Chapter of Tuam had declared in consistory that for Tuam the union was an arrangement that was burdensome rather than profitable.¹¹ In the following letter there was a further Papal mandate—this time issued to the Abbots of Knockmoy, Corcomroe and Kilmacduagh to inform themselves and send a report under seal to the Pope—"touching the rents and profits of the Archbishopric of Tuam and of the Bishopric of Kilmacduagh, which were so small that John XXII. united the Sees, which union is now declared in Papal consistory by the Archbishop and Chapter of Tuam to be so burdensome and expensive that the Pope has been prayed to separate the said Sees."¹²

The De Burgos.

While these purely ecclesiastical questions occupied the attention of the ecclesiastical authorities both in Ireland and in Rome, important events occurred in the civil history of

¹¹ Theiner, p. 313.

¹² Bliss's "Papal Registers."

the period which had a very special interest for the Archdiocese of Tuam. At the coming of Edward Bruce, the most powerful noble, not only in Connaught but in Ireland, was Richard de Burgo, Earl of Ulster. He was often called the Red Earl to distinguish him from others who bore the same title. He had vast possessions in Connaught, and as the descendant and heir of De Lacy he had vast possessions also in Ulster. He was, indeed, more like an independent prince than a subject, and such was his position that in all public documents his name was put before that of the Viceroy. The most powerful of the O'Connors were little better than his dependants and his vassals, and dared not measure swords with him; and so self-confident did he feel that he scorned the assistance of the Viceroy or of the Anglo-Irish lords, and declared that he alone would chastise the insolence of Edward Bruce. But instead of this he was badly beaten by Bruce, in 1315, at Conor, near Ballymena: his army was scattered, his brother, Walter, made prisoner; and he himself, mortified and embittered, died in 1326.¹³

His brother, Walter, who had been released by Bruce, did better, and was, next to Bermingham, entitled to the credit of having won the battle of Athenry. After that event he became, indeed, so powerful that he set up and pulled down O'Connor chiefs as he willed; and when he died, in 1325, he left a son, Walter, who was as powerful and as turbulent as himself. This Walter desired to become King of Connaught; but the young Earl of Ulster, grandson of the Red Earl, took sides against him, defeated him, and put him to death, in 1332. Walter's friends believed that he had been starved in prison, and in revenge they murdered the young Earl in 1333.

This event had important consequences. The murdered Earl had left an infant daughter, of whom, and of her vast estates, Edmond Burke, son of the Red Earl, was guardian. With him, as joint guardian, was associated the Archbishop of Tuam. But in this arrangement, which, according to

¹³ D'Alton's "History of Ireland," I, pp. 347-9.

feudal law, would have left the profits of the dead Earl's estates, during the minority of his daughter, in the hands of the English Crown, two powerful Burkes, Ulick and Edward, were not willing to acquiesce. Rather than have it so, they renounced their allegiance to England, became Burkes instead of De Burgos, and, proclaiming themselves Irish chiefs rather than Anglo-Irish nobles, they became MacWilliam Eighter and MacWilliam Oughter—MacWilliam of Galway and MacWilliam of Mayo. Ulick took the Galway estates, and Edward the estates of Mayo, and Edward soon wasted all Iar-Connaught as completely as the most turbulent Irish chieftain could have done.

Further, he took prisoner Edmond Mac-an-Iarla, the Earl's son, who was the guardian of the young Earl's daughter, and he detained him in the Friar's house in Ballinrobe (1338). Apprehensive, however, that his prisoner might be liberated by his friends, he transferred him in the first instance to Ballynonagh Castle, in the townland of Petersburgh, near Clonbur, and thence to an island in Lough Mask. In these circumstances the intervention of the Archbishop of Tuam was urgently called for, and the Archbishop came from Tuam to the island to effect a reconciliation between the prisoner and his jailer. But while the various points of dispute were being debated, and a reconciliation was in sight, an Anglo-Irish family, the Stauntons, were employed to take charge of the prisoner. But instead of guarding him in safety, they put him into a bag, which they weighted with a heavy stone, and then dropped the bag and its contents into the waters of Lough Mask.

Whether this was done with the secret connivance of Edward MacWilliam Burke, or whether the Stauntons themselves had some personal grudge against their prisoner, and perhaps feared for themselves if he were set at liberty, does not appear. Their crime was considered specially black, and brought upon them such reprobation, that the branch of the Stauntons responsible for the deed were called by the opprobrious name of Clan Ulcin, descendants of Ulic. And

the other Stauntons, to escape sharing in their unpopularity, changed their name from Staunton to MacEvilly. The Irish name means son of the knight, and became well known in after years.¹⁴

As might have been expected, these events overshadowed all others in Connaught. As O'Flaherty puts it, "Combustions and wars followed, and turmoil continued till the death of Archbishop Malachy, who died of the plague in the year 1348."

Two Archbishops from Cashel.

Thomas O'Carroll, Archdeacon of Cashel, then became Archbishop of Tuam. The Chapter of Tuam had elected their own Chancellor, Robert de Bermingham; but for some reason this election was set aside by the Pope, and Thomas O'Carroll was brought all the way from Cashel, and, as would appear, without receiving any votes from the Chapter of Tuam, to whom, probably enough, he was quite unknown. That he was a man of recognised wisdom and learning is evident from the fact that he had been selected for the mitre, first by the Chapter of Clonmacnoise, and, secondly, by the Chapter of Ardfert, and that in each case his selection met with the approval of the King of England. But in neither case was he appointed by the Pope, perhaps because the Pope thought someone else more worthy, or perhaps because he himself was reluctant to take up the heavy burden of the episcopacy. In 1348, however, these objections disappeared. The Pope wished him to be an Archbishop, and he was not reluctant himself, and therefore he became Archbishop of Tuam.

His term of office was not marked by such great events as marked the government of his predecessor. But it was not altogether uneventful. It was, for instance, during Dr. O'Carroll's term of office that the union between Tuam and Kilmacduagh was finally dissolved; and this was done with

¹⁴ O'Flaherty's "Iar-Connaught," pp. 47-8.

the full approval of the Archbishop and his Chapter.¹⁵ It was during his term of office that the town and church of Tuam were burned, in 1355, by O'Connor, Sligo.¹⁶ And, finally, it was during his term of office that the Archbishop of Armagh gave up lands in Tuam to which the Primatial See had long laid claim.

The Papal letter by which this was done bears date 1351, and is addressed to the Prior of Duleek, the Prior of Dundalk, and the Archdeacon of Armagh. It appears that the Primate, the well-known Richard FitzRalph, had found that some church lands in Tuam, to which Armagh claimed a right, derived from the days of St. Patrick, were of little advantage to Armagh. In the year following the death of the Earl of Ulster, when Connaught was in the hands of the Burkes and others who refused allegiance to England, the rights of an Archbishop of Armagh, owing his election to the English interest, and in favour with the English King, would be little respected west of the Shannon. There would, therefore, be little revenue derived by the Primate from the church lands of Kilmaine, Turlough, Manulla, Kilbannon, and Kilquire. In these circumstances the Primate, FitzRalph, petitioned Rome to have these lands exchanged for some other property which would be more useful and more profitable to Armagh. And Pope Clement VI. ordered the three ecclesiastics named to see that the exchange was made, but only if the Chapter of Armagh were consulted, and agreed with their Archbishop.¹⁷

In 1365 the Archbishop of Tuam was transferred to Cashel, and as Archbishop of Cashel he was present at the Parliament of Kilkenny in 1367, at which was enacted that infamous law well known to students of Irish history as the Statute of Kilkenny. He died in 1372.¹⁸

The next Archbishop of Tuam was John O'Grady, who, like his predecessor, had also been Archdeacon of Cashel.

¹⁵ "Papal Registers."

¹⁶ "Annals of Loch Ce."

¹⁷ Theiner, pp. 295-6.

¹⁸ Ware's "Bishops." Knox, pp. 194, 200.

At his ordination his chances of ecclesiastical preferment were, indeed, small, for he was illegitimate, and, to make matters worse, his father was a sub-deacon. He got, however, the necessary dispensation, and in due course became a priest, and got a benefice in the diocese of Killaloe. But though he was an able man and a bachelor of civil law, the prejudices against one born out of wedlock remained, and were obstacles to his further advancement. For this reason, the Archbishop of Cashel, the Bishop of Killaloe and others wrote to the Pope on his behalf in 1358. They pointed out that he was a man of great learning, and that such men were then rare in Munster; and they asked the Pope to declare that, in spite of his illegitimacy, he was qualified for any ecclesiastical preferment. This the Pope did, and because of O'Grady's superior merits as a priest and a scholar, all statutes and customs disqualifying him on account of his illegitimacy were to be ignored; and he might even become a bishop if the Chapter of any diocese were to elect him.¹⁹

The hint was taken some years later, when, in 1365, John O'Grady, who in the meantime had been promoted to the position of Archdeacon of Cashel, was elected by the Chapter of Tuam. Perhaps the Chapter had been urged to this by the outgoing Archbishop, who would, as the new Archbishop of Cashel, wish to see his Archdeacon get high preferment, especially as he was so well qualified. At all events, O'Grady was appointed by the Pope, and duly consecrated; and in 1367 we find that he, as did his predecessor in Tuam, attended the Parliament at Kilkenny.

The Statute of Kilkenny.

Edward III. was then King of England—a man of great capacity, who had won renown in his wars in France. Such a man, if he wished, could have imposed his will both on Anglo-Irish lord and on native chief, and in giving English law to all, both native and colonist, would have made both loyal to England. But he knew little of Ireland, and cared

¹⁹ Theiner, p. 313.

little for it, and instead of coming to Ireland himself, and studying the Irish question from personal contact, he sent over as Viceroy his son, Lionel, Duke of Clarence. And a worse selection could not have been made. For Lionel was married to the daughter of the Earl of Ulster, who had been murdered in 1333, and whose lands in Connaught had been seized by the Burkes, who for nearly thirty years now had turned from English to Irish ways. In 1366 there were divisions among the Burkes, but even this did not enable Lionel to recover his lost lands.

It was with a temper soured by failure that Lionel called the Parliament at Kilkenny in 1367, and there had enacted the Statute of Kilkenny. Sir John Davies, good courtier that he was, praises the Statute; but a truer description of it was that it was no more than "a peevish and revengeful expression of the resentment Duke Lionel felt for the opposition he had met with, and the loss of those lands he had come over to claim." He was equally displeased with the Irish and the Anglo-Irish—with the former for opposing him, with the latter for not supporting him—and the evident purpose of this enactment, passed under his influence, was to keep Irish and Anglo-Irish always at war. Inter-marriage between them was prohibited, and trading in horses or armour. The Irish dress and language were interdicted, and Irish names, and even riding on horseback, as the Irish did, without a saddle. Irish bards, harpers, story-tellers and rhymers were put outside the law. Nor was this all. For it was declared unlawful to confer a benefice on anyone who did not speak the English tongue. Nor could a native of Ireland, unless of English descent, be admitted into any collegiate or cathedral church in the Pale,²⁰ nor could any order admit such, even if he knew English (Hardiman's "Statute of Kilkenny").

It is strange, indeed, that the Archbishop of Tuam could have given his assent to such a law. A statesman would have encouraged the fusion of Irish and Anglo-Irish which

²⁰ The Pale was that limited area in Leinster where the King's writ could be enforced.

was going on, instead of setting up barriers between them. For native and colonist inter-married, and had business and social relations, living as they often were side by side; and to brand these relations as penal was to overturn all order in the State, and make necessary both lawlessness and crime. But if Archbishop O'Grady was not a statesman he might surely be expected to act as a Christian, and here especially his action is difficult to understand. The old Irish, both within and without the Pale, were his co-religionists, and yet he brands them as criminals and outlaws. They knew no language but Irish, and this was also the case with many of the Anglo-Irish; and yet he will give them no priest whose tongue they can understand. And he denies promotion or recognition to a clergyman because he is of Irish descent, no matter how great his abilities and virtues might be.²¹

Yet he must have been a good man, and probably assented to these provisions with reluctance. For we find that the "Four Masters," in recounting his death at 1371, speaks of him as "the most distinguished man of his time for wisdom and hospitality." The "Annals of Loch Ce" merely says that he was the Head of the Body of Erin, and that he rested in Christ.

Gregory O'Macken.

The next Archbishop of Tuam was Gregory O'Macken, who had considerable experience already in the episcopacy when, in 1371, he became Archbishop of Tuam. At first he was Provost of Killala, from which position he was promoted to be Bishop of Down. This was about 1355, when the Bishop of Down, who had been absent from his See, was reported dead; and in the belief that this was true, the Chapter of Down selected O'Macken. It was a great compliment, and Gregory O'Macken must have been no ordinary man who had thus attracted the invitation of a Chapter so distant from Killala. But then a strange thing happened.

²¹ Hardiman's "Statute of Kilkenny." D'Alton's "History of Ireland," I, pp. 384-7.

For, after the Provost of Killala had been approved of by the Pope, and duly consecrated, the Bishop of Down, who had been absent and reported dead, returned alive and well, and took possession of his See. In these circumstances nothing was left to Dr. O'Macken but to return to Killala, and there he remained until, in 1357, he was appointed to the vacant diocese of Elphin. In this position he earned such a reputation as a wise and prudent bishop that he was unanimously elected by the Chapter of Tuam to fill the vacancy in the Metropolitan See.²²

Of his episcopal career in Tuam we know little. We do know, however, that in 1378, he was summoned to attend a Parliament at Castledermot, in Kildare, and that he disregarded the summons, and in consequence was fined £100. But, as he ignored the summons to attend the Parliament, he also disregarded the demand to pay the fine, and the fine could not be enforced, as Connaught was then outside the pale of English law. The whole province had thrown off its allegiance to England, except the two walled towns of Galway and Athenry.

In 1384 Archbishop O'Macken died, and the Crown determined to seize the temporalities of the See. But the Crown Escheator had to report to the Court of Chancery that, though he took possession of the lands belonging to the See of Tuam, he could get no rents. The whole province was ruled by Burkes and O'Connors and other chiefs, and neither these chiefs nor their vassals had any intention of aiding an officer of the English Crown in executing decrees, least of all in enabling him to exact money from Church lands.²³

An Archbishop becomes Bishop of Clonfert.

These were the days of the Great Western Schism, when the simple faithful throughout the world were scandalised at the spectacle of a Pope and an anti-Pope thundering anathemas against each other. The long residence of the Popes

²² Ware's "Bishops." Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam."

²³ Burke's "Archbishops," pp. 47-9.

at Avignon had brought the Papacy too much under French influence. Even the return of Gregory XI. to Rome did not satisfy the Italians, and while the election for his successor was taking place a Roman mob broke into the Hall of the Consistory, and so intimidated the assembled cardinals that they fled for their lives. They had, however, already elected a candidate, who took the name of Urban VI. But now, intimidated by the mob, and harshly treated by Urban VI., they fled from Rome and its neighbourhood to Anagni, and there, retracting what they had already done, they elected Robert of Geneva, who took the title of Clement VII. The latter received the support of France, Scotland and Spain; while the remainder of the Church, including England and Ireland, gave their allegiance to Urban VI.

It was Pope Clement who appointed the successor of Gregory O'Macken. His name was William O'Cormacan. *We do not know if he was selected by the Tuam Chapter.* Probably he was, else his selection would not have received the sanction of Clement VII. But a great difficulty was that the King of England did not recognise Clement as Pope, and therefore repudiated any appointment he made. The situation was, indeed, unprecedented. There were many honest men on both sides, and amid the conflicts of interest and passion even those of clear vision might easily lose their way.

At first, no doubt, O'Cormacan thought that Clement was the lawful Pope, and, as such, entitled to his allegiance, and when he felt satisfied that the lawful Pope was Urban VI. he transferred his allegiance to him. This secured him the approval and goodwill of the King of England. But, apparently, this did not end his troubles. It may be that, as he owed his appointment to Clement VII., he continued to be suspected by Pope Urban VI. Or, again, it may be that his administrative abilities were found unequal to the task of governing so extensive a diocese as Tuam, and especially in the troubled times in which he lived. Whatever his offence was, he certainly fell into serious disfavour at Rome, and, in

consequence, was degraded from the higher position of Archbishop of Tuam to the lesser position of Bishop of Clonfert. And it may be also, that as a result of the treatment he received, depression of spirits and serious ill-health supervened, causing his early death in 1393. What seems certain is that he never took up his new position at Clonfert. The "Annals of Loch Ce," in recording his death, says that he was "a man remarkable for his piety and simplicity."

Maurice O'Kelly.

The next Archbishop, and the last to fill the office in the fourteenth century, was Maurice O'Kelly, who was transferred from Clonfert, so that between him and O'Cormacan there was simply an exchange of positions. Where the new Archbishop was born or educated we do not know; but his record at Clonfert must have been good, else he would not have been promoted to the higher dignity of Tuam.

The very year in which his transfer to Tuam took place marked also the separation between the Archdiocese and the See of Annaghdown. The union lasted longer than that with the Sees of Achonry and Kilmacduagh. Indeed, it is doubtful if at any time there was any effective union between Achonry and Tuam; and that with Kilmacduagh lasted only thirty years. But it was of a more permanent kind in the case of Annaghdown, for it lasted sixty years. And it may readily be assumed that the separation in 1393 did not receive the benediction of the new Archbishop of Tuam. However, it remained, and when the Bishop of Annaghdown, Henry Tarleton, died in 1402, another was appointed to succeed him in the person of John Britt (Ware's "Bishops").

One noted event occurred in 1400. In that year Pope Boniface IX. granted liberal indulgences to all those of the faithful who would visit the monastery of Athenry on certain festivals, provided that they contributed to the buildings and necessary repairs of the monastery.²⁴

²⁴ Burke's "Hibernia Dominicana," p. 230. Blake's "Athenry Abbey."

In 1407 the Archbishop died, and is described by the "Annals of Loch Ce" as Archbishop of Connaught, the most eminent man in all Erin in wisdom, charity and humanity.

Irish and Anglo-Irish Archbishops.

Looking back it will be seen that nearly all the Archbishops of the century were of the old Irish stock; for McHugh and O'Carroll and O'Grady and O'Kelly were obviously Irish names. But this does not imply that all these were in sympathy with the old Irish, whose blood flowed in their own veins. For John O'Grady took his share in enacting the infamous Statute of Kilkenny, which bore so heavily on the old Irish. And there is no reason to think that the other Archbishops, O'Carroll and O'Kelly and McHugh, held different views from those which O'Grady evidently held.

On the other hand, while the first Archbishop of the century, being of the Anglo-Irish stock, was, no doubt, more in sympathy with the Anglo-Irish than with the Irish, the second quarter of the century saw a remarkable change. The Burkes, after they had disposed of their kinsman in the waters of Lough Mask, became more Irish than the Irish themselves—Irish in name, in dress, in speech. And the other settlers acted like the Burkes: Bermingham changed his name to MacFerris, D'Exeter changed his name to MacJordan, Nangle became MacCostello; even the Stauntons, who were of lesser note, became MacEvillys, and when Jordan d'Exeter was asked by the King's Escheator in 1334 (this was even before the murder of the Earl's son) for revenue, the only answer he could give was that no money could be got, as the whole province of Connaught had fallen into Irish hands.²⁵

In the beginning of the century the chief complaint of the Irish in Connaught as elsewhere was against the colonists—"that middle nation so widely different in their principles of morality from the English of England and from all other

²⁵" O'Connors of Connaught," p. 143.

nations, that they may be denominated not of any middling but of the most extreme degree of perfidy.²⁶

The invasion of Bruce and the events which followed had, in Connaught at least, annihilated English dominion, and to some extent brought about a fusion of races. But though the Anglo-Irish and the Irish became openly Irish in habits and customs, inter-married, and lived side by side, they were not always at peace; and year after year Connaught was tormented by wars, in which the combatants were Burkes and Berminghams, equally with O'Kellys and O'Connors.

In the midst of so many wars the Church necessarily suffered, and the position of the Archbishop of Tuam was a difficult one. He could not be elected till the King had previously issued his *congé d'élire* to the Chapter; and when the Chapter had voted, it was not the chiefs, whether Irish or Anglo-Irish, who would have influence at Rome. These chiefs were probably unknown to the Pope; but the English King was one of the great sovereigns of Europe, and when his influence was thrown into the scale in favour of a particular candidate, that candidate was usually appointed. This will explain why the Archbishop of Tuam favoured at the Parliament of Kilkenny and elsewhere the views of the King and his ministers rather than those of his own countrymen. The Pope, no doubt, thought that it was more important for the Church to have the favour and protection of a great Catholic prince than the protection and favour of some turbulent chief, or even that of a combination of such chiefs. And, therefore, it was not surprising that when, in 1291, the King of England asked from the clergy of Tuam a tenth of their revenue, the Archbishop at the time urged, though in vain, that the clergy should comply, urging as a reason that they would thereby purchase the King's favour, who would perhaps restore the Church to her former splendour.²⁷ The Archbishop was more successful in 1306, for at that date the bishops and clergy of the province granted the tenths to the

²⁶ D'Alton's "History of Ireland," I, p. 345.

²⁷ Knox, pp. 112-13.

King for two years—a period which was afterwards extended to seven years.

Taxation of the Archdiocese.

For the purpose of assessing the amount payable a taxation of Tuam was made out in 1306; and this document remains, one of the most interesting documents relating to the history of Tuam in these centuries. From it we learn that the total income of the Archbishop of Tuam was £243 19s. 6d., a small sum, measured by the standard of to-day, but not so small when measured by the standard then prevailing. For it would be necessary, if we would get the amount correctly, to multiply by at least twenty, and this would give the Archbishop an income of nearly £5,000 a year. This taxation was made by "jurors of credit," and the Archbishop's income was made up under two heads—his "goods, spiritual and temporal," and the fourths of the revenue of the parishes throughout the archdiocese.

At that date the Isles of Aran belonged to the diocese of Kilfenora, and are not therefore included. Neither are Clare Island or the other western islands, such as Achill, Boffin and Inisturk. The largest amount was the income from the Church property of the Abbey of Knockmoy, which is given at £42 13s. 6d. Kilcreevanty nunnery lands come next, with an annual value of £13 18s. 4d.; while in other cases the amount is so small as 13s. 4d., which is given for Teachsaxon, in the Deanery of Athenry.²⁸

There were other taxations of Tuam in the fourteenth century, but none so detailed as this. It is not probable that the income of the Archbishop, or of the various parishes, was increased in the midst of all the turmoil that prevailed, so that the taxation of 1306 may well be taken for the end of the century as for the beginning.

²⁸ Knox's "Tuam," pp. 193, 204.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

Irish Chiefs and the English King.

IN the year 1395, on the 29th of April, in the conventual church of the Friars Minor, in the city of Waterford, and in the presence of Richard II. of England, Turlogh O'Connor Don made his submission to the King, acting as "captain of his nation." He also made his submission for the chiefs subject to himself—McDermott, O'Dowd, O'Hara, O'Flanagan, O'Rorke and others. Removing his mantle, girdle and dagger, and on bended knees at the feet of the King, he pronounced his submission in Irish, being evidently unable to use any other tongue, and his words were translated into English by the Earl of Ormond.

He promised in the future to be a liegeman to the King of England, to be faithful to him in all things, and to come to the King's Parliament, and to do what a good and faithful liegeman ought "and is bound to do to his natural liege lord." This promise he made on oath on the Gospels. William Burke made similar promises, and under the same conditions; and the Bishops of Ferns and Kilmacduagh, who were present, "threw themselves on bended knees before the King," declaring that these chiefs had power to do homage, not only for themselves, but for their nations as well, that is, for the chiefs subject to them and for their people.

It is plain that Walter de Bermingham made a like submission; for on the first of May following, on the good ship "Trinity," in the port of Waterford, the King created

Turlogh O'Connor, William Burke, and Walter de Bermingham, knights. These chiefs, who, it was acknowledged, had been rebels against the King, but now, having repented of their evil ways, the King desired that they should not leave his sight without a reward or honour; and hence it was that he created them knights. He admitted them to the kiss of peace, and gave to them swords to be honestly used; and afterwards golden spurs were put on their heels; and "the aforesaid Turlogh O'Connor, William Burke and Walter de Bermingham so created knights as well as bending the knee as also in stretching forth of hands according to their promises, bestowed the reverence due to so great a king."¹

Within the Archdiocese of Tuam the O'Connors had then little power, and the chiefs for whom Turlogh O'Connor undertook to make submission to Richard II. dwelt mostly in Roscommon and Sligo and North Mayo, all outside Tuam. But it was not so with Burke and Bermingham; and if these chiefs and their people were henceforth to be peaceful and law-abiding, good subjects of the King, and at peace with one another, Tuam might indeed rejoice that an era of tranquillity was at hand.

But we know that no such era of peace was ushered in by the submissions made by these Connaught chiefs and the honours conferred on them. The "Annals" show that the O'Connors fought with other chiefs and with one another; that in 1430 English power had so far declined that very little of Ireland was loyal except the County of Dublin; that in 1470 English authority was not exercised in Connaught, and therefore not in Tuam; that in 1497 there was an awful famine in Connaught, owing to repeated and destructive wars; and that in 1500 English power was gone, and that the old Irish system of government had taken its place.²

Appointment of Archbishops.

But though the influence of the English King counted for

¹ "O'Connors of Connaught," p. 155-7.

² *Ibid*, pp. 163, 170, 178.

nothing in civil affairs, in ecclesiastical affairs, and especially in such matters as the appointment of bishops, it counted for much. For the nominee of a great Catholic prince would stand in a much stronger position at Rome than the nominee of some Connaught chief, who was either unknown to the Pope, or, if known, it was only because of his turbulence and disloyalty. This will perhaps best explain why the two first Archbishops of Tuam of the fifteenth century were John Babynge and John Wingfield, neither of whose names appears to be indigenous to the soil.

Both were members of the Dominican Order. Babynge had been appointed by Alexander V. in 1410; but as he was foolish enough to take possession of the See and exercise authority without waiting to receive the necessary bulls, he was removed by Pope John XXIII., and was replaced by Cornelius, a Franciscan friar. These were the days of the Great Western Schism, and what Alexander did, his rival, John XXIII., was only too ready to undo. This accounts for the confusion in Tuam as elsewhere. The fact is that neither Babynge nor Cornelius exercised unquestioned authority as Archbishop, and Cornelius is usually not recognised as Archbishop at all. Babynge, however, was appointed perhaps by Gregory X. The name would indicate that he was English; but where he was born, or where he was educated, or what he did as Archbishop, we do not know. What we do know is that he died in 1430. Likely enough he was English, and was known to be a great scholar and preacher. It is also said that he published many works; but with these works time has played sad havoc, for not one of them has survived. Babynge resigned his See in 1430, and apparently retired to the Dominican Abbey at Athenry, where he died in 1437.³

His successor was John Bermingham (sometime called Wingfield), very likely one of the great family of that name dwelling in Athenry, and perhaps a member of the Dominican

³ De Burgo's "*Hibernia Dominicana*"; Ware's "*Bishops*"; Knox, p. 117.

community there. But this we can only guess, and do not know. What we do know is that in his day the people of his archdiocese were hostile to English rule. For there is extant a letter written by the Irish Privy Council to Henry VI. of England, signed by the Archbishops of Armagh and Dublin, by three judges and by the deputy to the Lord Chancellor, in which the complaint is made that English power in Ireland was rapidly disappearing. The land, they say, is well-nigh destroyed "with your enemies and rebels, in so much that there is not left in the counties of Dublin, Meath, Louth and Kildare, taken together, thirty miles in length and twenty in breadth, that a man might ride to answer the King's writ." And when this was the case in these counties, where the inhabitants lived almost under the shadow of Dublin Castle, it was little wonder that the letter continued: "Also the Province of Armagh in the north of Ireland, and the Province of Tuam, are inhabited with enemies and rebels, except the Castles of Carrickfergus and Ardglass . . . and the towns of Galway and Athenry in the Province of Tuam."⁴

Bermingham died in 1438. As belonging to the Anglo-Irish stock he may have had some leanings towards the English, and was able to keep Galway and Athenry faithful to English rule. But this is mere conjecture, and it may be that he was rebellious, as so many of his kindred were, who had forsaken English ways.

At all events, this would be expected from his successor, Thomas O'Kelly, who died in 1441. There is, however, nothing known of O'Kelly, except that he is put down as a man "remarkable for his piety and learning." Nor is there anything known of the next Archbishop, except that his name was John de Burgo, a member of the Clanricard or Galway branch of the famous family of Burke; that he died in 1450; and that his successor was Donatus O'Murray.⁵

But though these Archbishops did nothing very remarkable, and so little is known of their personal history, the half

⁴ Betham's "Dignities," p. 532.

⁵ Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," p. 54.

century over which their rule extends witnessed some events of interest which cannot be passed over in a history of the Archdiocese of Tuam. For one thing, Annaghdown, which had been so long united to the Archdiocese, was now, as in ancient times, enjoying its separate diocesan existence, and one bishop of Annaghdown regularly succeeded another. In 1402, James Britt, a Franciscan, was appointed bishop, and in 1421 another Franciscan, James Conery, became bishop. Then came a bishop named John, whose surname is unknown, to be followed by Bishop Thomas, who became bishop the same year (1450) in which Donatus O'Murray became Archbishop of Tuam.⁶

Diocesan Affairs.

In 1413 the Archbishop of Tuam, as well as the Archbishops of Dublin, Cashel and Armagh, was summoned to the Council of Pisa; but whether the Archbishop of Tuam attended or not does not appear.⁷ Nor does it appear that he attended the General Council of Constance in 1417, which at last put an end to the Great Western Schism. In 1411 we know from the "Annals of Loch Ce" that the monastery of Annaghdown was burned; and from the same source we learn that Brian O'Connor burned Castlebar and Ballyloughmask, and exacted peace from the foreigners and old Irish in Connaught. The same year the town of Galway was burned. Meanwhile, in 1400, Pope Boniface IX. had granted an indulgence to all the faithful who would pay a pious visit to the Dominican church at Athenry, and contribute towards the preservation of the building. A few years later both church and abbey were consumed by fire; and Pope Martin V. granted an indulgence, in 1423, to all those of the faithful who contributed towards the re-building of the establishment.⁸ In 1427 the same Pontiff granted to the Athenry Dominicans a licence to found two other houses of their order. It appears that the

⁶ Gam's "Series Episcoporum."

⁷ Theiner, p. 369.

⁸ "Hibernia Dominicana," pp. 230-1.

Friars had petitioned for such a licence from the Pope on the ground that there was then a want in Ireland of good preachers, who would instruct the people in the Word of God. Having got the desired licence, the Dominicans of Athenry founded two houses, one of which was at Tombeola, situated some ten miles east of Clifden, in the barony of Ballynahinch.

In 1445 there was another brief granted by another Pope, Eugene IV., to the Athenry Dominicans, and this was nothing more than a renewal of that given in 1423 by Martin V. All those who would contribute to the restoration of church and abbey were granted indulgences. And there were many generous benefactors who responded to the call. For instance, William Butler and his wife gave twenty marks and a picture which they had purchased in Flanders for forty marks. Nicholas O'Kearney gave twenty marks and a silk chasuble. The widow of David Weder glazed the windows of the choir and the window behind the high altar, at a total cost of one hundred marks. She also built a stone bridge over the little stream which ran adjacent to the abbey. John Reed gave several statues and a crucifix costing thirty marks, and, in addition, a tabernacle for the altar. Johanna Kelly gave a ciborium and a new gradual. Finally, Walter Lynch of Galway gave two gold chalices; and in addition to this, always entertained the friars when they visited Galway. If, therefore, the fire had done a very ill turn to the Dominicans by destroying both church and abbey, on the other hand, the Popes were not grudging in the granting of privileges to the community, nor were the people of the locality ungenerous in their benefactions.¹⁰

Donatus O'Murray.

The episcopate of Donatus O'Murray was an unusually long one, lasting from 1450 to 1485. Before his appointment to Tuam he had been a Canon Regular of St. Augustine, and at his appointment as Archbishop in 1450 he was also charged

⁹ O'Heyne's "Irish Dominicans," p. 91.

¹⁰ O'Heyne, pp. 82-3.

with the administration of the See of Annaghdown, it being understood that within six months he would pay into the Papal treasury the sum of 333 gold crowns.¹¹ The amount payable on account of his appointment to the Archdiocese was 200 gold crowns. The balance of 133 crowns was the amount payable for Annaghdown. Whether the new Archbishop paid the amount mentioned or not we do not know. But it is significant that in 1458 Thomas Barrett was appointed Bishop of Annaghdown, and that he paid 133 crowns on his appointment. Thus, for a time at least, ended the union between Tuam and Annaghdown. Nor do we hear anything further of O'Murray until 1484, when, within a year of his death, ecclesiastical affairs in the city of Galway sought his special intervention.

Galway and Tuam.

Galway was then a place of considerable importance. Its favourable position had attracted settlers many centuries before this period. In 855 it was destroyed by the Danes under Turgesius; and subsequently, on many occasions before the coming of the Anglo-Normans, both the town and castle suffered. In the twelfth century it was in the hands of the O'Flaherties.¹² From the moment the De Burgos came into Connaught they coveted it; and in 1230 Hugh O'Flaherty was besieged there by Richard de Burgo, Lord of Connaught, who, however, was compelled by O'Flaherty's ally, Hugh O'Connor, to raise the siege. Three years later it was taken by De Burgo, then lost by him, but shortly after re-taken and held by him. De Burgo then fortified it, and henceforth it was the stronghold of his family. By 1270 it was surrounded by a wall, and by that time was the greatest trading and commercial centre west of the Shannon.¹³

In 1312 Sir William de Burgo founded a Franciscan monastery within the city, and in 1320 the De Burgo family

¹¹ Knox's "Tuam," p. 117.

¹² Hardiman's "History of Galway," p. 48.

¹³ *Ibid.* p. 51.

founded the church of St. Nicholas. After the murder of the son of the Earl in Lough Mask, in 1338, Sir William de Burgo, as a revolted subject, became MacWilliam Eighter, with his possessions in Galway County, and his headquarters in the city. But the city was reluctant to revolt from the King, and though following De Burgo at first, it returned quickly to its allegiance, and when the Duke of Clarence died in 1369 he was possessed of Galway in right of his wife.¹⁴

It was not always easy to tell where the rights of the Crown ended, and the rights of the De Burgos (or Burkes, as they were now called) began. The place had been planted from time to time by men of English birth or descent; and though the Burkes were too powerful to be ignored as long as they were great feudal lords holding their possessions from the King, if these Burkes revolted, the citizens were not willing to follow them into rebellion. At most only a section of the city was even willing to do so. We find, for instance, that when, in 1388, Sir William Burke and one Blake induced the city to rebel, both Burke and Blake were tried for treason at Ballinrobe, in Mayo, and the city at once returned to its old allegiance. A few years later, perhaps as a reward for its loyalty, the city got a royal charter, giving it a corporation, with a sovereign or chief magistrate and magistrates.¹⁵

But while Galway oscillated between allegiance to the Burkes and allegiance to the King, the people had no difficulty in agreeing in their hatred and contempt for the old Irish. These they regarded as their enemies.¹⁶ It was to keep these out that the Galway men built their city walls. They disliked even trading with the Irish, or having any relations with them, either social or commercial; and in 1464 the city got a new royal charter excluding all from residing within the walls, except with the licence of the corporation. This struck at the Burkes as well as at the native Irish, and was, no doubt, intended to remind these Burkes that they, too, were bound

¹⁴ O'Flaherty's "Iar-Connaught," p. 33.

¹⁵ Hardiman's "Galway," p. 63.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* p. 64.

to be obedient to the royal authority, and were only subjects after all.¹⁷

Originally, as being part of the territory of O'Flaherty, Galway belonged to the diocese of Annaghdown. Since 1324, however, it had, except for intervals, formed part of the Archdiocese of Tuam. It was, no doubt, better in the eyes of the Galway men to be part of the Archdiocese of Tuam than to belong to Annaghdown—a diocese so long dominated by the O'Flaherties. For the Galway men dreaded the O'Flaherties above all, and often prayed that God would save the city from their attacks. But there was also humiliation in being connected with Tuam, for this brought the fat and prosperous burghers of the city, who loved English imitations and English ways so much, into contact with the wild Irish, whom they so much despised. The Archbishop of Tuam, it is true, ruled Galway through a vicar; but Tuam was, after all, the centre and source of ecclesiastical authority, to which both clergy and laity occasionally and necessarily had recourse. The citizens of Galway murmured at these conditions, and in 1484 induced the Archbishop to give them an unusual form of church government.

A copy of the document by which the Archbishop did this survives; and from it we learn that the writer is acting to promote the glory of God and to provide for the decencies of proper Christian worship; and that he is acting in answer to a petition sent to him by the parishioners of St. Nicholas in Galway, who complain bitterly of the old Irish, in the midst of whom they live. With an air of superior virtue somewhat akin to that of the Pharisees, they described themselves as “modest and mannerly men,” superior in manners to the wild and mountainous natives whose manners they abhor. Being associated with such rude and uncouth men, they can't assist at divine service, nor receive the sacraments “according to the English fashion,” and this they desire, and had been accustomed to in past times. They make against the natives

¹⁷ Hardiman's “Galway,” p. 64.

the grave accusations of disorder, robbery, and even murder, and they fear a continuance of these and of other evils unless they are speedily relieved.

It may be that the Archbishop did not believe in the truth of all these charges. But he was certainly sympathetic. He remembered that many of these Galway men had already made to the church of St. Nicholas grants of lands, rents and buildings, and others would make similar donations if their petition to be relieved from association with the Irish were granted. Therefore, after careful consideration, the Archbishop, by his own proper authority, for the good of religion, and for the safety of his own soul, and the souls of his successors, instituted the church of St. Nicholas a collegiate institution, granting it forever one-eighth part of the revenues hitherto paid to the servitors of St. Nicholas for their sustenance by the Abbey of Knockmoy. Further, he granted to the new corporate body the revenues of the parochial church of Claregalway, in the diocese of Annaghdown, only, however, with the consent of the vicar of that church.

Collegiate Church of Galway.

“ And we hereby unite and incorporate the lands, rents and services of Lynch and Blake, and other rents and services granted by the parishioners of St. Nicholas, as well as other benefices which the church aforesaid has received from us and the Apostolic See, and to the Collegiate church so established, and the brethren therein residing, we grant all the privileges, liberties and immunities of a Collegiate corporation. And we further ordain that the said church shall be governed by a warden and eight presbyters, virtuous, learned and pious men, duly observing the English rite. And we likewise order that they shall be presented by the sovereign or mayor and bailiffs of the said town, to the warden of the said College, and by him to be confirmed as vicars having the care of souls; and that the said warden, who is to be movable every year on the presentation of the said sovereign or provost, should be instituted

by the said vicars; and thereafter have the power and care of souls."¹⁸

Since the seventeenth century a collegiate church can only be erected with Papal sanction, and this is only given under certain conditions. There must be an important locality, with a large population, and a good number of clergy. Further, the endowment must be sufficient, the church of suitable size, and everything must be provided generously for the requirements of divine worship.

No doubt the Archbishop of Tuam considered that these conditions existed in the case of the church of St. Nicholas at Galway. For Galway, even then, was an important centre, with many inhabitants and many clergy, and the church of St. Nicholas was already not ungenerously endowed, and would be more generously endowed in the near future. But though he erected this parochial church into a collegiate church "of his own proper authority," satisfied that he could do so without the intervention of the Pope, the parishioners thought, and so did the Archbishop, that so sweeping a change would derive added dignity and permanency if Papal sanction were obtained. And this sanction was obtained in answer to the petition of the parishioners of St. Nicholas, and is contained in the following letter issued by Pope Innocent VIII. in 1485 :—

"We, exercising the office of a watchful sentinel, as it is granted to us from above, over the Lord's flock, committed by the divine power to our vigilance, do willingly mind these things by which divine worship is augmented, and the salvation of souls is hoped to proceed from; and we cheerfully add the strength of our power to such measures as we have found out these providentially to have sprung from, to the end that they may last the firmer uncorrupted, by being the more strengthened. And for as much as a petition hath been lately proffered unto us, on behalf of our beloved children, all the parishioners of the parish church of St. Nicholas in the town of Galway, in the diocese of Annaghdown, setting forth that our venerable brother, Donatus, Archbishop of

¹⁸ Hardiman's "Galway," Appendix I.

Tuam, who is known to be prelate of the See of Annaghdown, perpetually united to the See of Tuam, had some time ago seriously considered that the parishioners of the said church were modest and civil people, and that they lived in the said town, surrounded with walls, not following the customs of the mountainous and wild people of these parts, and that by reason of the impetrations of the aforesaid wild people, to the vicarage of the said church of St. Nicholas, before commonly governed by vicars, they were so much disturbed that they could not assist at divine service, nor receive the holy sacraments according to English decency, rite and custom, which the aforesaid inhabitants always used; they being much disquieted therein, and sometimes robbed of their goods, and killed by those unlearned men, and also that they were obliged to sustain many other damages and inconveniences, both in person and substance from them, and feared to suffer more for the future, if not speedily succoured.

“ This matter being considered, the said Donatus, at the humble request of the said parishioners, has erected by his proper authority, the church of St. Nicholas into a collegiate church, and therein a college of one warden and eight priests, and for their support he has supplied the fruits, rents and incomes of the said vicarage, and the half-quarter which the incumbents of the said church had been, for a long time, accustomed to have from our beloved children, the abbot and convent of the monastery of Knockmoy, of the Cistercian Order, and diocese of Tuam. He has also appropriated to the capitular table of the said church of St. Nicholas, other goods, rents, lands, tithes, rights and services then expressed by him, and by some of said parishioners bestowed, providently considering that the said premises were scarcely sufficient to support decently four of the said priests.

“ It was his will, that whatever any of the said parishioners might chance to bestow for the future should belong in full right to the said church of St. Nicholas. And he has likewise so united, annexed and incorporated for ever the vicarage of the parish church of St. James of Claregalway, of the said diocese of Annaghdown, by consent of the vicar thereof, for the sustenance of the warden and eight priests aforesaid. And by the same proper authority has ordained that the said church of St. Nicholas, erected into a collegiate church, should be governed in the future, not by one vicar, but by the said eight priests or vicars, who were

to be virtuous, learned and well-bred men, and by one warden or custos, who all should observe the English rite and custom in divine service. He has likewise ordered that the said priests should be presented by the sovereign provost or mayor, and bailiffs and equals of the town, to the aforesaid warden or custos of the said college, and should be confirmed by the said warden as vicars having the care of souls. And that the said warden, who is removable every year, at the presentation of the aforesaid sovereign or mayor and equals should be instituted by the said vicars, and that the said warden, being thus instituted, should have power over all the said vicars and parishioners, and exercise the care of souls.

“ Wherefore, there has been an humble address made unto us, on behalf of the aforesaid parishioners, that we might be pleased, by our apostolical favour, to add the authority of our confirmation, will and ordination to the aforesaid erection, donation . . . to the end that they may subsist more firmly, and that we may be further pleased to provide what may seem fit. We, therefore, who have been always willing, that whoever would have ecclesiastical benefices united to others, should among other things be bound to express the true yearly value of the fruits, rent and incomes of the benefices for which the union should be desired, otherwise that the union should be of no force, and that always in case of unions, matters should be made known to the parties concerned, as is observed in the confirmation of unions already made. We having thus an account of the true yearly value of the fruits, rent and incomes of the said vicarage of the church of St. Nicholas and the college thereof, and of the other donations and oblations, and of the manner of the last vacation of the said vicarages of the churches of St. Nicholas and St. James, and having before us the tenor of the aforesaid direction . . . ; we, by our apostolical authority do confirm and approve, and we supply all and every defect, if any has happened. . . .

WARDEN AND VICARS.

“ We, without prejudice to any other, do erect the said church of St. Nicholas into a collegiate church, and appoint one wardenship for one warden, and eight perpetual vicarages for so many priests, who as head and members of the said collegiate church shall constitute a chapter having privilege of a common seal, a chest or burse, a table and other colle-

giate ornaments. . . . We also unite for ever the vicarage of St. James, with all its rights and appurtenances, to the church of St. Nicholas, to whom the care of souls appertains; and though the vicarage of St. James should be vacant for so long a time as that the collation thereof should lawfully devolve to the Apostolical See. . . . We appoint and order that the church of St. Nicholas, so erected into a collegiate church, be, for the time to come, perpetually ruled by eight priests, who must be learned, virtuous and well-bred men, accustomed to observe the English rite and manner of divine service, and that the aforesaid priests be presented by the chief magistrate or mayor and bailiffs and equals of the said town to the warden for the time being, and that on the same presentation they be instituted by the warden, perpetual priests or vicars in the said college.

“ But the warden, who is every year removable, to be presented to the aforesaid priests or vicars by the said sovereign, provost or mayor and equals, and by the said priests or vicars, to be deputed and instituted warden for that year; and that the said warden should have, for the year for which he is elected, power over all the said priests or vicars of St. Nicholas, and over the parishioners of the same, and exercise the care of souls of both the said priests and parishioners, without prejudice to the right of any other parish churches, or of any other whomsoever.

“ We grant for ever to the aforesaid sovereign, provost or mayor, bailiffs and equals of the said town, a right of patronage, and of presenting the aforesaid priests to the warden to be instituted vicars by him, and of presenting the warden to the said priests or vicars, to be instituted by them. And if any attempt contrary to these shall happen to be made knowingly by any person or authority. . . . We decree the same to be void. . . . And if any person, that was to be provided for, has obtained any Papal letters, for ecclesiastical benefices in these parts . . . it is our will that the said letters be not henceforth extended to the aforesaid united vicarage. But by this we would have no prejudice done to them, as to their obtaining other benefices, or any other apostolical letters . . . provided that by this union the church of St. James be not deprived of due service, and that the care of souls be by no means neglected therein. Let it not be lawful for any person to break or by rash

boldness oppose these our letters of confirmation; . . . and if anyone shall presume to attempt it, let him know that he incurs the indignation of Almighty God and of His blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul.

“Dated at Rome the sixth of the ides of February, the first year of our Popedom (1485).”

Official documents, when much ground has to be covered, are usually long, and this document has more than its share of legal phraseology and legal prolixity. Confirming what had been already done by the Archbishop, in anticipation of Papal sanction, the Pope now gives supreme ecclesiastical jurisdiction in the city of Galway to the collegiate church of St. Nicholas, consisting of nine priests, a warden and eight vicars. All are to owe their position to popular election, that is, to the votes of the mayor and burgesses of the city. After election the warden is to be presented by the mayor to the eight vicars, and the eight vicars to the warden. The supreme authority is to remain with the warden, who holds office for one year, but may be re-elected; while the vicars are to hold office for life. Neither warden nor vicars can be removed from their positions by the Archbishop, though, if they proved unworthy, the Archbishop, no doubt, could admonish them, and if this failed, could bring their conduct before the Pope, and have them removed. This, however, is not made clear in the Papal letter, though, obviously, some such provision is implied.

The collegiate body of warden and vicars, with a corporate existence, was to be a chapter, with a common seal, a chest or burse, a table and other collegiate ornaments. And its income was to be derived from the property of the existing parochial church of St. Nicholas, as well as that of the parochial church of St. James in Claregalway. Finally, it was provided that the warden and vicars were to be virtuous, learned, and well-bred men; and the special injunction was laid upon them that they should “observe the English rite and custom.” From which it follows that the poor natives outside Galway, who might perchance visit the city, and those who lived perma-

nently within the walls, found themselves, as far as their church was concerned, in the unhappy position of strangers in a strange land.

No doubt because the income of the new college was found to be insufficient, we find that in 1487 the Archbishop of Tuam collated the parishes of Oranmore and Maree, as had already been done in the case of Claregalway. Others also were added, until, within a very few years, the collegiate chapter ruled over the parishes of Oranmore, Maree, Rahoon, Moycullen, Claregalway, Kilcommon, Shrile, Errislanan, Roscam, Kilcommon. The last two I am unable to identify, and it may be also that identifying Skrine with Errislanan is an incorrect conjecture. The revenues of these several parishes belonged to the collegiate body; but the warden and his vicars were bound to see that the spiritual needs of the inhabitants of these parishes were supplied.¹⁹

Neither the warden nor vicars, though exercising quasi-episcopal authority, had any episcopal orders, so that when Confirmation was to be administered or Orders conferred, it was still necessary to obtain the assistance of the Archbishop, or of some other bishop.

William Joyce, Archbishop.

In 1485 Donatus O'Murray died, and was succeeded as Archbishop of Tuam by William Joyce. His family came from Wales, where they were of some standing. Thence in the beginning of the fourteenth century one Thomas Joyce, or Joyes—for the name has both forms—emigrated to Ireland, settled in Thomond, and married Nora O'Brien, a daughter of one of the chiefs of Thomond. Being of a restless, wandering disposition, he soon left Thomond with his bride and settled in the west of Ireland, in that wild and desolate district now called Joyce Country, forming a large part of the barony of Ross in the County of Galway. The land is poor, the prospect is barren and bleak, and only bog and heather and

¹⁹ Hardiman's "Galway," Appendices II and IV. O'Flaherty's "Iar-Connaught," pp. 157, 78; 217-19.

mountain are abundant. But poor as the district is, it breeds, as it did in the fourteenth century, a hardy race of men; and the Joyces have always been noted for their great stature.

Joyce Country was then ruled by the O'Flaherties, from whom the Burkes had wrested the more fertile lands east of the Corrib. It was from the O'Flaherties that Thomas Joyce, the husband of Nora O'Brien, received this territory east of Killery Harbour. His son, born at sea on the journey from Thomond, and called in consequence Mac Marie, the son of the sea, was, in time, married to O'Flaherty's daughter; and soon the Joyces not only extended their power over Ross barony, but had become so great even in Galway that one of them was selected to be Archbishop of Tuam. The Joyces, indeed, became one of the Tribes of Galway, with the motto, "*Mors est honorabilis vita.*"²⁰ Nor was William Joyce the first bishop of the name, for in the fourteenth century Walter Joyce, who had been confessor to Edward II., became Archbishop of Armagh; and when he resigned the Primacy, in 1311, he was succeeded by his brother, Roland.²¹

In 1486 the new Archbishop of Tuam confirmed all the privileges granted by his predecessor to the College of Galway. In subsequent years he gave the warden and vicars charge of the parishes of Oranmore, Maree, Ragoon, Moycullen, and Skrine, all belonging to the diocese of Annaghdown. For William Joyce, like his predecessor, was Bishop of Annaghdown. In face of this it is strange to find that one Francis was appointed Bishop of Annaghdown in 1496. But he can have been nothing but a titular bishop, for in 1501, Pope Alexander VI. issued a Bull in regard to the collegiate property of the Galway wardenship, and it was not to this Francis but to the Archbishop that he looked to have the Bull enforced.

Some "sons of iniquity," as the Pope calls them, had been injuring or secreting some of the property in question, and the Archbishop was directed to issue sentence of excommunication against them. Among other items of property thus

²⁰ Hardiman's "Galway," pp. 14, 16.

²¹ Stuart's "Historical Memoirs of Armagh," pp. 105-6.

interfered with, mention is made of tithes, fruits, rents, profits, chalices, church ornaments, oblations, lands, houses, water-courses, mills, wine, corn, provender, gold, silver, vessels of brass and copper, pieces of linen, cloths, jewels, household furniture, books, documents, horses, sheep and other animals, goods, movable and immovable, "legally belonging to the capitular table of the church aforesaid."²²

One other Papal document we find addressed to the Archbishop of Tuam. This was in 1490, and it is as follows:—

"Whereas the province of Ireland is far distant from the Roman Curia, and we have heard from the evidence of witnesses well worthy of credence, there arises sometimes between the natives and inhabitants of the said province contentions and other differences, and wars and slaughter of men, and wastings of churches, and plunder of goods. And whereas sometimes it occurs that for the purpose of allaying the contentions between them and their relatives and friends, and for the purpose of establishing of peace between them, they sometimes contract marriages within the degrees forbidden by the Canon Law. In consequence of so deplorable a state of things, we give to our venerable brother, William, Archbishop of Tuam, certain powers of dispensation."²³

The Archbishop was one of those who stood high in the estimation of Henry VII., King of England. Most of the Anglo-Irish, however, were on the other side. Their sympathies were with the House of York, and against the House of Tudor; and when Lambert Simnel, the son of a joiner at Oxford, came to Ireland, pretending to be the Earl of Warwick, son to the Duke of Clarence, he was warmly welcomed by the Archbishop of Dublin, and even by the Earl of Kildare, then Lord Deputy of Ireland. The young pretender was even crowned King at Christ Church, Dublin, as Edward VI. But the Archbishops of Armagh, Cashel and Tuam would have none of him. They regarded him as an impostor, and rejoiced at his defeat in 1487. For these reasons

²² King's "Church History," pp. 167, 1187.

²³ Theiner, p. 504.

the Archbishop of Tuam was regarded as a friend of the King, and was authorised by his Majesty to issue pardons to those among the Irish who, in siding with Lambert Simnel, had been traitors to the reigning king.²⁴

Preceding Archbishops of Tuam had authorised the exclusion of ecclesiastics belonging to the old Irish stock from the city of Galway.²⁵ But it does not appear that Archbishop Joyce went quite so far as this, though he certainly was loyal to England. And it may be assumed that, like his predecessors, he regarded the old Irish with little favour.

The Archbishop died in the last days of 1501.

²⁴ D'Alton's "History of Ireland," I, pp. 435-8.

²⁵ Gilbert's "Viceroys," p. 420.

CHAPTER IX.

THE REFORMATION PERIOD.

State of Ireland.

FROM a writer, apparently English, or at all events with English sympathies, and writing from the English point of view, we have an account of the state of Ireland in the beginning of the sixteenth century. The writer, who signs himself "The Pander," lived from the days of Edward IV. to the days of Henry VIII., and his testimony is of what he saw. And if his description be accurate—and there is no reason to doubt that it is—the state of Ireland when Henry VIII. ascended the throne called loudly for improvement.

Outside of the small district called the Pale, in which there was a feeble semblance of English rule, all Ireland was in the hands of sixty native chiefs. They were called kings or captains of their nation; and in some cases they ruled over a large tract of land, equal perhaps to a modern county; or it might be much less than this. And there were Anglo-Irish nobles, great feudal lords who had cast off their allegiance to England, or gave her at most a nominal recognition, and whose position differed scarcely at all from that of the sixty native chiefs. Each of them held his lands by the sword. Each was a law unto himself, knowing no will but his own, recognising no restraint except what was imposed by force, and making peace or war as he was moved by interest or caprice or passion.

Nor could the Archdiocese of Tuam claim to be exempt from

the rule of such chieftains, for "The Pander" specially mentions O'Kelly of Hy-Many, O'Flaherty of Iar-Connaught, and O'Malley in the west of Mayo, these being of the old Irish stock. And he also specially mentions Burke of Clanrickard in Galway, Burke of Mayo, Bermingham of Athenry, and Staunton and Jordan and Nangle of Mayo, all these tracing their descent to an English source, and occupying the lands in Ireland which had been won by the swords of their English ancestors. And "The Pander" also mentions that the lesser chiefs and lords imitated the greater, except when they were forcibly restrained. They, too, made peace and war, when they could; and if, therefore, the Joyces of Ross, or the Stauntons of Carra are not mentioned as being at war by the Annalists, it is not that they loved the ways of peace more than the O'Flaherties or the Burkes, but because their quarrels deserved less notice, and could hardly be dignified with the name of war.¹

"The Pander" is pessimistic, and recalling the fact that there was no land in which there was such long-continued war as in Ireland, he fears that just as the pride of France and the treason of England, "the war of Ireland will never have an end."

Hitherto, indeed, the area covered by the Archdiocese of Tuam had had its share of war, and it was in 1504, and in the modern parish of Annaghdown, that the battle of Knockdoe was fought—the most important battle that had been fought, not only in Tuam but in Ireland, since the English under Strongbow came.

Burke of Clanrickard, as we read in the general histories of the time, had quarrelled with O'Kelly of Hy-Many, entered his territory, and took his strong castles of Garbally, Monivea and Castleblakeney. Furthermore, Burke had violated the terms of the charter granted by Richard II. to Galway; for this specifically excluded him from entering the city without the leave of the city authorities.² And now, in

¹ "Correspondence, Henry VIII," vol. ii, p. 1 *et seq.*

² Hardiman's "History of Galway," p. 69.

alliance with O'Brien of Thomond, O'Carroll of Ely, and MacNamara, he forced his way into Galway, and took possession of the city. Against Burke single-handed, still less against the formidable combination of which he was the head, O'Kelly was powerless, and in these circumstances he appealed to the King's Viceroy, the Earl of Kildare.

The latter would find some difficulty in justifying his armed intervention between rival and turbulent chiefs. But when Burke had torn to atoms a royal charter, a cause of intervention had really arisen. And Kildare was, no doubt, glad to intervene, for Burke was his son-in-law, and had proved himself a bad husband, and so roused the anger of the choleric Viceroy. Nor did Kildare deem it advisable to rely only on the forces of the Pale. In addition, he procured the assistance of O'Connor, McDermott, and the Mayo Burkes from Connaught; from Leinster he received the aid of O'Connor of Offaly; and from Ulster came to him Magennis, MacMahon, O'Hanlon and O'Reilly, and, much more important than any of these, O'Donnell of Tyrconnell. Except O'Neill, who was neutral and not unfriendly, he had the whole strength of the northern half of Ireland under his command.

Battle of Knockdoe.

At the head of this powerful combination, formidable in numbers, in valour, and in the ability and vigour of its leader, Kildare marched towards Galway. Burke's forces, however, had left the city and its immediate neighbourhood, and had taken up a position on the hill of Knockdoe, two or three miles due west of his own strong castle of Claregalway. It is situated in the parish of Lackagh. Leaving the city of Galway untouched, Kildare pursued Burke and his army, and on the hill of Knockdoe the battle was fought.

The exact numbers on each side have not been ascertained. They were certainly considerable, and the advantage of arms was on the side of Kildare. For he had cannon—though perhaps not many pieces—while Burke's side, which we call

the Irish side, certainly had not.³ They depended mainly on their battle-axes, and hence the name Knockdoe, which means the hill of the axes.

The "Book of Howth" has much to say about the discussions and debates which took place in Kildare's camp before the battle began. One chief was specially offended at having bishops in their midst, evidently giving advice, and he asked Kildare to send them away. Their business, he said, was to pray and preach and teach the Word of God rather than to take an active share in bloodshed and slaughter. And another chief, O'Connor of Offaly, was anxious to have the lawyers with them sent away. He pointed out that there were no matters of debate or argument to be discussed by pen and ink, but rather by bow and spear and sword. "I never knew," he said, "that those who were learned ever gave good counsel in matters of war . . . and our matter here is to be discussed by valiant and stout stomachs of prudent and wise men of war, practised in the same faculty, and not matters of law or matters of religion."⁴

The Irish, that is those on Burke's side, the author of "The Book of Howth" says, spent the eve of the battle drinking and playing cards. And they were so confident of victory that they fixed upon the distribution among them of the prisoners whom they were to capture on the following day. Their confidence, however, was misplaced, for though they fought well, they were vanquished. Their losses are put as high as 9,000, and as low as 2,000, but were certainly considerable.

After their victory the conquerors rested for the night on the field of battle. Then, says the "Book of Howth," Lord Gormanstown advised that as they had done well in killing most of the Irish opposed to them, they would do equally well if they cut the throats of the Irish on their own side. And thus valour and victory would be stained by treachery and murder. Whether such advice was given or not we do not

³ "Four Masters."

⁴ "Book of Howth," pp. 181-2.

know, but it was certainly not acted upon if it was given. Kildare left Knockdoe for Galway, which he captured. He also captured Athenry, took Burke's two sons and a daughter prisoner, regaled his troops with thirty tuns of wine, and returned to Dublin, where he received the thanks of the King, had conferred on him the Order of the Garter, and was continued in his office of Viceroy.⁵

Racial Troubles.

Such a war as this necessarily had a disturbing effect in the Archdiocese. Nor were the smaller wars which raged so frequently less harmful in their effects. And other causes were not wanting which were even more mischievous than war, whether waged between the greater chiefs or between the smaller men. The Irish and the Anglo-Irish could not lay aside their antipathies and animosities, and mutual distrust and hatred found a home within the sheltering walls of religious houses. From the monastery or abbey which the Anglo-Irish endowed and ruled, the old Irish were excluded, and in the establishments endowed and ruled by the Irish the Anglo-Irish frequently found no place. This was considered the better way to ensure harmony among religious men; and though the Pope disliked this policy of segregation and exclusion, for the sake of peace he often approved.⁶

Ecclesiastical Patronage.

An evil of even greater magnitude was that in too many cases ecclesiastical patronage was in the hands of laymen. The chief or noble who endowed a monastery or abbey or parochial church insisted on having the right of preferment; and often it was a relative of the donor who presided over the religious house of the parish. The promoted ecclesiastic might be in every way worthy of the position to which he was called, for all the Burkes and Berminghams and O'Kellys and O'Flaherties and their friends were not unworthy of ecclesi-

⁵ D'Alton's "History of Ireland," vol. i, pp. 448-50.

⁶ MacCaffrey's "History of the Church," vol. ii, pp. 227-8.

astical office. But neither were they always the most suitable. The archbishop or bishop could protest, but he was powerless against the influential laymen, whose right to appoint was recognised by the Pope. Indeed, the Pope also reserved to himself the right to fill many positions in the diocese, independent of the ruling bishop, whose powers were thus too limited for the effective government of his diocese.⁷

What followed was inevitable. Ecclesiastics were promoted to fill important offices, and placed at the head of religious houses or parishes, who had no qualification except that they were the relatives or favourites of influential laymen. Without religion or zeal, they might be, and often were, avaricious and immoral, allowing their churches to fall into ruins, and their flocks left without the Word of God being preached to them. And they were illiterate, because there were no seminaries where the priests could be properly trained. For the priest was educated either by the mendicant orders, by some member of the diocesan chapter, or by some other learned ecclesiastic, and this mode of training fell far short of what was required.

Little wonder is it then that "The Pander" sheds tears over the state of the Irish Church in his day. "There is," he said, "no archbishop or bishop, prior, parson or vicar, nor any other persons of the Church, high or low, great or small, English or Irish, that preaches the Word of God, except the poor friars beggars." The clergy attended more to the plough rustical than to the plough celestial, neglecting to preach and teach and give good example, so as to save the souls of the poor people committed to their charge.⁸

Yet the clergy were not all bad men, and not all neglectful of their spiritual duties, else the people would have fallen away from them when the shock of the Reformation came. And whatever might be said of other portions of the Church, no great charge of neglect of duty or of personal corruption could

⁷ MacCaffrey, II, pp. 234-5.

⁸ "Correspondence—Henry VIII," pp. 15-16.

be made against the Archbishops who ruled in Tuam in the first half of the sixteenth century.

The first of these was Philip Penson. He was a Franciscan priest, and must have been a man of ability, else he would not have been appointed Suffragan to Cardinal de Castello, Bishop of Hereford. The influence of the Cardinal, no doubt, procured for him appointment to the vacant See of Tuam in 1503. But the new Archbishop never set foot in his Archdiocese. At his appointment he was in Rome, then desolated by the plague, which the Archbishop himself got, and was soon among its victims. He therefore ended his days in Rome rather than in Tuam, and within a few days after his promotion to the Archbishopric.⁹

Maurice O'Fihely.

For the three years following the Archdiocese was left without a ruler, and then, in 1506, Maurice O'Fihely was appointed Archbishop. He was an eminent member of the Franciscan Order. Indeed, to such eminence did he attain that three different places in Ireland have contended for the honour of being his birthplace. It was said that he was born in Down; again that he was born in Galway, which would be specially appropriate for an Archbishop of Tuam; and, lastly, that he was born in Baltimore in Cork. The last of these places would seem to have a strong claim. For Baltimore is a seaport, and O'Fihely is often called Maurice de Portu, as coming from some place on the sea coast. A strong reason in favour of this view also is that the ancient territory of the O'Fihelys was situated near Baltimore.¹⁰ But the claims of Galway cannot easily be set aside, and there is great probability that O'Fihely's birthplace was Clonfert. It is situated on the Shannon, and had a monastery founded by St. Brendan, which was called the monastery "de Portu Puro." And O'Fihely would be then born somewhere near the monastery, and educated there during his earliest years.¹¹

⁹ Ware's "Bishops."

¹⁰ O'Hart's "Irish Pedigrees."

¹¹ "Journal of the Galway Archæological Society," pp. 231-2.

He was probably educated at Oxford, and then, after having taken the Franciscan habit, he went to Padua, where he took his degree of D.D. A man of stainless character and much esteemed, his great knowledge of philosophy and theology marked him out for academic preferment, and in such estimation was he held that he was appointed professor at Padua, and from this position was promoted to be Archbishop of Tuam in 1506.

About this time also he was identified with Venice, and had acted as corrector of proofs to two printers in that city—Octavian Scott and Benet Locatelli. Both were famous printers, the latter an Italian, and the former a native of Mons, who had come south and set up his printing press in the city by the Adriatic. In our day printing is everywhere done, but in the early years of the sixteenth century it was rare even in cities, and Venice acquired fame because it was a centre of printing, and was the home of such men as Scott and Locatelli. And in these days, too, a corrector of proofs was a learned man, for no other men were considered qualified for such a position.

It was in these years, and because of his connection with Venice, that O'Fihely published his several works there. These chiefly dealt with the works of Duns Scotus, of whom O'Fihely was an ardent student. Their titles are—" *Commentaria Doctoris Subtilis Scoti* " (Venice, 1507), and " *Insigne Formalitatum Opus Doctoris Subtilis* " (Venice, 1514). But his activities were not confined to the study of Scotus. He also wrote a Dictionary to the Holy Scriptures, published after his death, and " *Enchiridion Fidei*," or a Manual of Faith (Venice, 1509), which he dedicated to Gerald, Earl of Kildare.

It would seem that his tastes were academic and literary rather than for episcopal government, for he lived on in Italy, whether at Padua or Venice, for years after his appointment to Tuam. As Archbishop of Tuam, however, he attended the Lateran Council of 1512, and only then did he proceed to Ireland.

Before leaving Italy he got from the Pope faculties to grant an indulgence to all those who would assist at his first Mass in his Archdiocese. But he never reached Tuam. Passing through Galway on his way he got suddenly ill, and so seriously that he died in 1513, and was buried in the church of his order there, leaving behind him the character of a man of great learning and holiness of life. At his death he was only fifty years of age, and even then was so highly esteemed by his contemporaries that they called him "Flos Mundi," a great compliment to one of his years.¹²

Thomas O'Mullally.

A Franciscan succeeded to a Franciscan, and the same year in which O'Fihely died, Thomas O'Mullally became Archbishop of Tuam. He was a native of Tullinadaly in the parish of Tuam; but except this we know nothing of his life or acts until he became Archbishop. Less famous in academic circles, and with less literary tastes than his predecessor, he was probably better qualified for the duties of the episcopacy. In 1517 we find his signature was attached to a deed by which Richard de Burgo, or Burke, grants to the Order of Hermits of St. Augustine the pastoral church of Roscam, in the present parish of Oranmore, with the cemetery attached. In addition he gives the Order certain grazing rights—the right, namely, to graze eight cows and six horses—and he gives this *in perpetuum*, for the good of his soul. The Warden of Galway is a signatory to the deed, and so is the Archbishop, who witnesses and approves of the gift.¹³

The transfer of this church and cemetery did not involve the right of patronage. For the Archbishop had united the parish of Roscam to the Wardenship of Galway, thus conferring on the Warden of Galway the right to appoint the rector of the parish of Roscam. This action of the Archbishop, however, was resented by Edward de Burgo, Archdeacon of Annaghdown, who claimed to be rector himself,

¹² Ware's "Writers"; Ware's "Bishops."

¹³ O'Flaherty's "Iar-Connaught," p. 243.

and refused to recognise the right of the Archbishop to make any such transference as he had made. In fact, he appealed from the Archbishop to Cardinal Wolsey, who was Papal Legate in England, and, as such, De Burgo thought might sit in judgment on the Archbishop of Tuam. But though Wolsey was certainly Papal Legate in England, there were grave doubts as to whether he was in Ireland, and whether, therefore, his legatine court could hear Irish appeals. Dr. Allen, Archbishop of Dublin, to whom he committed such cases, told him: "Much doubt is made about your Grace's bulls. Whether you be Legate here or not, I beseech you to let me have transcripts of all your bulls from your first creation of Legate."¹⁴ From Dr. Allen the matter was referred to the Dean of Kilfenora, and he decided against De Burgo, and in favour of the Warden of Galway.

This was in 1529, and ended the matter, as De Burgo did not appeal. The Warden and the Archbishop were satisfied, and had no special desire to contest at Rome the right of Wolsey to hold a Legatine Court in Ireland.¹⁵

There was a similar dispute about the parishes of Shrule and Kinlough, which had also been united to the Wardenship of Galway. Two priests of the Annaghdown diocese claimed these livings, and even got letters from Rome allowing their claim. But the Warden protested that Rome had not been told the truth, not having been told that these two parishes had been already united to the Wardenship. The dispute was then referred to the Archbishop of Tuam, and he, after due investigation, found that the two Annaghdown priests were wrong. He therefore decided, in 1526, that both Kinlough and Shrule did belong to the Warden of Galway.¹⁶

Nor was this the only matter that called for interference on the part of the Archbishop. In 1518 the Archbishop of Dublin held a Synod in his diocese, and one of its decrees enjoined that for the future all persons coming from Con-

¹⁴ "Correspondence—Henry VIII," vol. ii; "Carew Papers—Allen to Wolsey, 1524."

¹⁵ Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," pp. 69-70.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 69.

naught, and wishing to act as priests in Dublin, should be specially examined.¹⁷ This would go to show that the standard of education for the priesthood was not high. No doubt the Archbishop did something by way of reform, though we do not know what he did. He did, however, preside at a Synod in Galway in 1523. There were also present at this Synod the Bishops of Achonry and Kilmacduagh. Its decrees, however, have not been found, and we cannot, therefore, tell if the education of the clergy was one of the matters considered.¹⁸

Archbishop O'Mullally lived till 1536, and when he died in that year he was interred in the same tomb with his more famous predecessor, Maurice O'Fihely.¹⁹

Disputed Succession.

There is an element of doubt as to who was his successor. Perhaps he was Denis O'Dwyer, a member of a well-known and powerful Munster family. But there is no authority for placing him among the Archbishops of Tuam except that of Mageoghegan, and this authority is not sufficient in face of the fact that Ware makes no mention whatever of O'Dwyer; and Wadding, in his *Annals*, mentions such a man as being Bishop of Mayo, but at a later date, namely, in 1574. He could be no more than titular Bishop of Mayo, since Mayo had long since been merged in Tuam. And if he were Bishop of Mayo it would be easy to confound him with the Archbishop of Tuam, to whom the diocese of Mayo belonged. The probability is, indeed, as Renehan thinks, that whatever else this O'Dwyer was, he never filled the position of Archbishop of Tuam.²⁰

Bodkin and O'Frighil.

But there can be no doubt that early in 1537 Christopher Bodkin became Archbishop of Tuam. And it is equally

¹⁷ D'Alton's "Archbishops of Dublin," p. 179.

¹⁸ Hardiman's "History of Galway," p. 238.

¹⁹ Ware's "Bishops."

²⁰ Renehan's "Irish Archbishops," pp. 387-9.

certain that, in 1538, Maurice O'Frighil, a canon of the diocese of Raphoe, was appointed to the same office, so that in that year we had the strange spectacle of two Archbishops of Tuam, Bodkin owing his appointment to Henry VIII. of England, and O'Frighil owing his appointment to the Pope.

The explanation is that Henry VIII. had then renounced his allegiance to Rome, and had set himself up as head of the Church as well as head of the State. It was a remarkable transformation. Henry, in his youth, had been destined for Church preferment. He always had a taste and an aptitude for theological disputation, and in 1521 had so well combated Luther's attack on the seven sacraments that the Pope, pleased with his arguments and his zeal for orthodoxy, gave him the title of Defender of the Faith. Nor would Henry have ceased to be orthodox if his personal interests had been placed by the Pope above law and religion, and his passion sufficiently indulged. But when the Pope refused to ignore the divine law by pronouncing a divorce between the King and his Queen, Catherine, Henry got his tool, Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, to pronounce the desired decree. Then he married his mistress, Anne Boleyn, getting the blessing of Cranmer, and a declaration that Anne's daughter, Elizabeth, was legitimate. Renouncing the spiritual supremacy of the Pope, Henry then called himself head of the Church on earth, and got the English Parliament to recognise him as such in 1534. In 1536 the same thing was done by the feeble copy of a parliament which sat at Dublin, and which only represented the Pale, though the assent of this assembly was not obtained until the proctors or representatives of the clergy in parliament were expelled. Taking his new position seriously, Henry had already appointed Thomas Cromwell his vicar-general, and he conferred benefices, appointed bishops, and granted dispensations, without any consultation with the Pope. It was a strange office for a man who was an adulterer and a murderer, as cruel and as bloodthirsty as the worst of the Roman emperors.²¹

²¹ *Vide* Brewer's "Henry VIII."

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This was the condition of things in 1537, when the Archbishopric of Tuam was to be filled. The King had already appointed Browne, an Augustinian friar, to the Archdiocese of Dublin, and now he appointed Christopher Bodkin, Bishop of Kilmacduagh, to be Archbishop of Tuam. Bodkin had accepted Henry as head of the Church, and so secured promotion at Henry's hands. But to acknowledge Henry's spiritual supremacy was to repudiate the Pope as Vicar of Christ on earth. And hence, in 1538, Pope Paul III. appointed O'Frighil. Dr. O'Frighil, however, was of a timid disposition, unwilling to enter into a contest with Bodkin. It is doubtful if he ever came to Tuam, or ever interfered in the government of the Archdiocese. On the other hand, though Bodkin was a royal favourite, he was more of a time-server than of a heretic or schismatic. His acceptance of the King's spiritual supremacy was merely nominal, and never sincere, and except for this he was quite orthodox. And ~~in considering who was the ruler of Tuam~~ in these days it is Bodkin that counts, and O'Frighil may be ignored.

Bodkin's Family.

The Bodkins even then were an old family. They were a branch of the Fitzgeralds, and if one enthusiastic admirer of the latter family is to be believed, these latter were descended from Aeneas, who came to Italy after the Trojan war.²² In Florence they were known as the Gerardi, and from Florence they made their way to England, and ultimately to Ireland. It is as easy to invent great deeds for the chiefs of the Gerardi in their progress from the Arno to the Liffey as it is to accept the claim of their descent from Aeneas. But we may pass from the realms of fiction to solid and sober fact; and there is no doubt that a well-known Anglo-Norman chief named Maurice Fitzgerald landed in Ireland in the twelfth century. Nor can it be denied that his descendants became great in their new country, until a Fitzgerald was Earl of Kildare, and another was Earl of Desmond. And we may also accept

²² Meehan's "History of the Geraldines," p. 4.

the story that one Thomas Fitzrichard Fitzgerald, in 1300, conquered a valiant knight chiefly by his skilful use of a short sword or bodekin. His descendants became known as the Bodekins, and hence the name Bodkin.²³

There is, indeed, no room for doubt that the Bodkins are a branch of the Fitzgerald family. Even their motto was the same, the well-known "Crom Aboo." It is certain also that they settled in the town of Galway, where they soon acquired wealth and position, that they got grants of land near the town, as well as near Athenry, and that in 1454 one Richard Bodkin, a burgess of Galway, was Provost of Athenry.²⁴

It was in Galway that Christopher Bodkin, the future Archbishop, was born in 1503. Belonging to a prosperous and influential family, he probably received a good education as a boy. Subsequently he went to Oxford and to Rome, and must have attracted the notice of Henry VIII. in the early years of his priesthood, for we find that, in 1533, at the supplication of the King, Bodkin was appointed Bishop of Kilmacduagh. Dr. O'Moloney, the ruling bishop, for some reason had resigned the See; and for the vacancy thus created, the King and the Pope, though they differed on many other questions, agreed that Christopher Bodkin would be a fitting successor. He was consecrated at Marseilles in 1533, the consecrating prelate being the Archbishop of Durazzo, his assistants being the Bishop of Tivoli and one Hironymus Arbutus. For three years Bodkin was simply Bishop of Kilmacduagh, and then, early in 1537, he became Archbishop of Tuam. But he was sent to Tuam when Henry VIII. had already cast off his allegiance to Rome, and he was sent by Henry, and not by the Pope.²⁵

Suppression of the Monasteries.

By that date the monasteries in England had been suppressed—that is, their property had been seized, their inmates

²³ Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," p. 72.

²⁴ Hardiman's "History of Galway," pp. 8-9.

²⁵ Brady, "The Alleged Conversion of the Irish Bishops."

cast out, with perhaps a miserable pittance by way of pension; and in not a few cases, where courage and constancy and resistance to royal decrees were shown, the monks and nuns were cruelly put to death. The English Parliament was servile enough to be the instrument of the despotic monarch, hoping, no doubt, that when Henry had plundered the monasteries he would cease importuning Parliament for supplies.²⁶

But Henry was not satisfied with the plunder of the English monasteries. The wretched image of a parliament at Dublin, threatened, browbeaten and bullied, not only passed the Act of Supremacy in 1536, but in the following year agreed to suppress thirteen of the greater monasteries;²⁷ their property going to enrich the royal treasury or to purchase the allegiance of hirelings in the King's employment. This, however, was not enough, and in 1539 Henry issued letters patent directing that all Irish monasteries not yet suppressed, or which had not voluntarily surrendered what they possessed to the King's officers, should be suppressed.²⁸ This was to be done by royal commissioners, the chief of whom was George Browne, Archbishop of Dublin, a man ready to co-operate in any work which would enrich himself or discredit the religion which he had abandoned and disgraced.

If we were to judge the King by the recitation of his motives for this plunder we should deem him a very pious man. For he is shocked to hear from trustworthy witnesses that "the monasteries, abbeys, priories and other religious houses in Ireland are at present in such a state that in them the praise of God and the welfare of man are next to nothing regarded, the religious and nuns dwelling there being so addicted, partly by their own superstitious ceremonies, partly to the pernicious worship of idols and to the pestiferous doctrines of the Roman Pontiff, that unless an effective remedy be promptly provided, not only the weak lower order but the whole Irish people, may be speedily infected to their total

²⁶ Gasquet, "Henry VIII and the English Monasteries" (Pamphlets), pp. 51, 79, 134.

²⁷ "State Papers," II, p. 370.

²⁸ Morrin's "Calendar of the Patent and Close Rolls," pp. 52-3.

destruction. To prevent the longer continuance of such religious men and women in so damnable a state the King, resolving to resume into his hands all the monasteries and religious houses for their better reformation, to remove from them the religious men and women, and to cause them to return to some honest mode of living and to the true religion, directs the Commissioners to signify his intention to the heads of religious houses, to receive their resignations and surrenders willingly tendered; to grant to those surrendering liberty of exchanging their habit, and of accepting benefices under the King; to apprehend and punish such as adhere to the usurped authority of the Roman Pontiff, and contumaciously refuse to surrender their houses; to take charge, for the King's use, of the possessions of those houses, and assign competent pensions to those persons who willingly surrender."²⁹

These instructions were carried out. The religious houses near Dublin, being the richer, were first dealt with. But when Leinster was cowed, O'Neill and O'Donnell defeated, the Earl of Desmond submissive, O'Brien of Thomond humbled to the dust, and MacWilliam Burke so loyal that he sent his deputy to represent him at the Parliament in Dublin in 1541, even the religious houses in the Archdiocese of Tuam came under the power of Henry's royal commissioners.³⁰

The Augustinians of Dunmore.

Some of them, like the Augustinian Friary at Dunmore, were spared. For Bermingham, Lord of Athenry, to whose family the foundation and endowment of the establishment was due, petitioned that it should not be dissolved. An order by the Lord Deputy and Council was the answer (1541). And this order recited that "the Lord Bermingham of Athenry, having under him a poor monastery of Augustine Friars in the town of Dunmore amongst the Irishree, having neither lands nor profits, but only the small devotion of the people, by the dis-

²⁹ Morrin's "Calendar," p. 55.

³⁰ D'Alton's "History of Ireland," I, pp. 498-507.

solution whereof the King would have no profit, and as it is not surveyed by the Commissioners by the reason that the place stood poor and bare amongst evil company, and as Lord Bermingham supplicated to have this house which was builded and edified by his progenitors in honour of God and our Blessed Lady." The Council's order was that the house should not be dissolved, the prior and four of his brethren should have the place during the King's pleasure, but should put off their clerical habits and put on secular dress.²¹

Abbeynockmoy.

The conduct of Bermingham and his care for this religious house with which his family had been so long associated was in striking contrast to the apostasy and the rapacity of Hugh O'Kelly, Abbot of Knockmoy. He is described as Abbot, or perpetual commendatory, of the monastery, and in appearing before the Council at Dublin, in 1542, he surrendered the monastery and all its possessions. He acknowledged the King as his supreme lord, renounced the Pope; and whenever the King's deputy makes an expedition into Connaught, this Abbot will assist him with eighty horsemen, a band of Scots, and sixty kern. In return for all this he gets a grant of the monastery and all its lands, paying to the King a yearly rent of £5. Finally, he delivers his son, Conor, as a hostage to the deputy. From this it appears that the age of the lay abbots had come back. For it is unlikely that Hugh O'Kelly lived in the Abbey of Knockmoy, and lived there with a concubine as superior of a celibate religious community. He must have been like the lay abbots of the ninth century—a layman who intruded himself into an ecclesiastical position, assuming the name and authority of an abbot, managing the lands of the abbey for his own profit rather than for the profit of the community, and ready when danger came to abandon his faith, and grovel before an apostate king, if by doing so he receives the plunder of the great Abbey of Hy-Many as

²¹ Morrin's "Calendar," p. 84.

the reward of his subserviency and apostasy. For he did not stipulate, like Bermingham, that the monks, or any of them, should be left the shelter of their old home.³²

Clanrickard's Share.

A much more important and more powerful man than this abbot was MacWilliam Burke, who in 1543 was created Earl of Clanrickard. Had he organised his forces and become actively hostile he could have given much trouble to the King's deputy. But because he followed the lead of so many other chiefs in their submission, he was made an earl by Henry VIII., and the royal commissioners gave him the possessions of the religious houses in the extensive district over which he ruled. Thus fell to his share the Augustinian nunnery of Annaghdown, the Franciscan establishment at Athenry, and the house of the Knights Hospitallers at Tuam. In addition he was to have the right of presentation to all benefices within his territory, but he could not meddle in the appointment of bishops. Nor could he be allowed to despoil those already having benefices.

To determine disputes which might arise under these heads the Archbishop of Tuam, the Bishop of Clonfert and the Mayor of Galway were appointed commissioners, and by their award the Earl of Clanrickard should abide.³³

Nor was this the only royal commission on which Dr. Bodkin was placed. In 1543 he was associated with the Bishop of Clonfert in a commission "to ascertain the possessions of the late convent or house of nuns of Kylcrevet (Kilcreevanty), to receive a surrender thereof, to survey and value its possessions, and suppress if necessary."³⁴ Why it is spoken of as the *late* convent it is not easy to see. For if it were already suppressed there would be no need to survey for the purposes of suppression. Nor does it appear that it was then suppressed. But it disappeared at a later date, and its

³² "Carew Papers," p. 190. "Galway Archæological Journal," vol. i, Part I.

³³ "Carew Papers," pp. 211-13.

³⁴ Morrin's "Calendar," p. 93.

possessions were taken over by laymen, as was the case with many other such places. The possessions of Cong, for instance, were divided between the Corporations of Galway and Athenry, that is, between the Mayor and Bailiffs of Galway and the Provost and Burgesses of Athenry. Ballinrobe, Burriscarra, Ballyhaunis and Murrisk, all houses of the Augustinian Hermits, shared the fate of Cong.³⁵ The same is true of the Carmelite house of Ballinsmal, near Claremorris, of Ballintubber, and of Burrishoole on the west coast of Mayo, though these were not effectively suppressed till a later date.

With the partiality of a namesake, Mr. Burke, author of "The Archbishops of Tuam," declares that the Earl of Clanrickard was friendly to these religious houses whose possessions thus came into his hands. Nor is there any reason to deny this, nor to believe that in the Archdiocese of Tuam, whether under Clanrickard or other patentees, the suppression of the religious houses was more nominal than real; and in many cases at this date there was no suppression at all, not even a nominal one.³⁶

Bodkin's Conduct and Character.

One act which Bodkin did in these years was that in 1542 he confirmed to the Collegiate Church in Galway all the benefices which it had, so that whoever suffered in these disastrous times by spoliation and robbery, the Warden and Vicars of Galway were spared.³⁷ This he did at the request of the Mayor and burgesses of the city on the occasion of holding a Synod at Galway.

For the time Bodkin disappears from view. He was inactive until Henry passed away. Nor do we find mention of his name in the reign of Edward VI. until 1549, when he praises the Viceroy, Bellingham, for the vigour and energy of his government, declaring that his fame was divulged

³⁵ Harris's "Ware," pp. 262-284.

³⁶ Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," p. 77.

³⁷ Hardiman's "History of Galway," p. 239.

throughout all Ireland to the great fear of malefactors and evildoers.³⁸

Then came the reign of Mary, a Catholic sovereign. Bodkin's position became difficult. That he should, being of English descent, be loyal to England, Mary expected and appreciated just as much as her predecessors. But while Henry's test of loyalty was that he himself should supplant the Pope, his daughter was a fervent Catholic, having no patience with and no toleration for those who rejected the spiritual supremacy of the Pope. It became necessary then to determine who was the Archbishop of Tuam, and for this purpose an inquiry was held in 1555 at Lambeth Palace, London, by Cardinal Pole.

The principal witness was the Archdeacon of Kilmacduagh, and his evidence is of great interest. The city of Tuam, he said, was then without walls, and almost uninhabited, having, however, a cathedral church dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. It was large and sufficiently furnished for divine service, with a great altar and two side altars, a choir, a baptistry, a sacristy, a bell, and all that was necessary, such as crucifixes, chalices and vestments. There was a chapter consisting of a dean, an archdeacon, a provost, and ten or twelve canons. There were five suffragan sees—Clonfert, Elphin, Killala, Kilmacduagh, and Achonry. As for Annaghdown, it had long been annexed to Tuam. It had now only a small church dedicated to St. Brendan. There was a chapter consisting of a dean, an archdeacon, and some canons, who, however, were non-resident. Nor had the cathedral church but one Mass, even on Sundays and holydays.

The Archdeacon could not deny that Bodkin had been intruded into Tuam by Henry VIII. But he was evidently anxious to make excuses for him. He was of noble birth, exemplary in conduct, learned in theology and canon law—a powerful opponent and even punisher of heretics; and if he

³⁸ Hamilton's "Calendar," pp. 78-81, 103.

fell into schism, as so many others had done, it was not that he willed it, but that he was constrained by fear.³⁹

This accurately describes Bodkin. He was not of the stuff of which martyrs are made, and he was ambitious to be Archbishop of Tuam; and if he opposed Henry VIII. he might have lost his archdiocese and his head. Influenced by fear and ambition, he temporized in accepting the religious views of Henry VIII. and Edward VI. But he did not neglect his episcopal duties. He kept his cathedral in good order, in striking contrast to the way in which it had been kept by some of his predecessors. His influence with the government and his position on royal commissions he used, not for personal benefit, but to protect the religious houses, and not always unsuccessfully, from spoliation. He held at least one synod, and the Archdeacon of Kilmacduagh willingly bore testimony to the fact that there was no heresy, open or secret, in the Archdiocese of Tuam. He was a good administrator, and though a weak man, was a religious and an honest man, and in many ways a contrast to O'Frighil, who probably never visited Tuam, and never attempted to effectually administer it.

What Cardinal Pole did as the result of the inquiry does not appear. It may be that O'Frighil resigned, leaving the field clear for Bodkin. It is, however, certain that Bodkin was treated by the Queen and her government as Archbishop of Tuam, and appointed in 1556 on a royal commission to inquire into the loss of Catholic church property in the two preceding reigns.⁴⁰ Nor is it likely that Bodkin would be so honoured if he were still tainted with schism, and if O'Frighil were regarded by the Pope as still the Archbishop of Tuam.

The following year Bodkin was associated with the Earl of Clanrickard and others acting as royal commissioners in the absence of the Viceroy in England to register the attendance at the Parliament held in Dublin in that year, and then prorogued to Limerick. And the Archbishop and his fellow

³⁹ Moran's "Archbishops of Dublin," Appendix, pp. 413-15.

⁴⁰ Morrin's "Calendar," pp. 369-70.

commissioners were authorised to prorogue the Parliament at Limerick to Drogheda in the next year. This was a high honour, and conclusively shows that Bodkin was in high favour with Mary, the Catholic Queen.⁴¹

He showed his gratitude in 1558, when the Viceroy, the Earl of Sussex, came to Galway, and was received in state. For Bodkin, with his friend, Roland Burke, Bishop of Clonfert, and a large number of clergy were there, dressed in copes, and marched in the procession to the church door. Then the Viceroy kissed the Cross, and was incensed and sprinkled with holy water. And when he was entering the church, "the captain of the young men and his companions saluted the deputy with such a peal of ordnance as the like was never heard." From which it may be concluded that the people in Galway in 1558 were all Catholics, and were little accustomed to the sound of cannon.⁴²

That same year Queen Mary died, and was succeeded by her Protestant sister, Elizabeth. But the change did not seriously affect Bodkin. It is not the habit that makes the monk, and Bodkin's conscience was elastic enough to allow him to be a courtier and a favourite under a Protestant sovereign. One of his first acts in Elizabeth's reign was to join (1559) with the Bishop of Clonfert and the Mayor of Galway in a petition to the Queen, asking her to give the Crown revenues of Galway to the Earl of Clanrickard,⁴³ and also to give him lands belonging to the nunnery of Kilcreevanty. He also petitioned to have Dean Lally of Tuam get the benefice as well as the prebend of Lackagh. It was a strange thing for a Catholic archbishop to do, when it is remembered that Clanrickard was a man who at that date had two wives living,⁴⁴ and that Dean Lally subsequently became the first Protestant bishop of Tuam. But such men were not objectionable to Elizabeth, and, in fact, Clanrickard did get the

⁴¹ Morrin's "Calendar," pp. 375-6.

⁴² "Carew Papers," p. 277.

⁴³ Hamilton's "Calendar," p. 152.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* p. 153.

despoiled lands of Kilcreevanty, and Lally got his benefice and his prebend.⁴⁵

In 1560 a Parliament was held in Dublin, which Bodkin attended, and at which it was enacted that nobody could hold public office who did not take the Oath of Supremacy, the terms of the oath being that Elizabeth was head of the Church. This Parliament further passed the Act of Uniformity, under which the Mass was prohibited, and the Book of Common Prayer already used in England was to be used in all the churches, which churches the people, under heavy penalties, were bound to attend.⁴⁶

It is true that Elizabeth did not claim, like her father, to have spiritual jurisdiction, but only to have supreme dominion over the possessions of the Church. Nor was she unwilling even to be a Catholic if only the Pope would acknowledge the legitimacy of her birth. This being so, the Act of Supremacy was not so harmful as at first appeared. But how a Catholic could vote for or approve of the Act of Uniformity which prohibited the Mass is not easy to see. The concession was, indeed, made that the Book of Common Prayer might be used in Latin rather than in English, as the Irish did not understand English. At first deceived, and thinking, as the liturgy was in Latin, that it was the Mass which they attended, the people soon discovered that the liturgy was nothing more than the Book of Common Prayer in a foreign garb, and as soon as they discovered this, they left the churches unattended.⁴⁷

Bodkin, being an educated man, could not be so deceived, and the excuse has been made for him that he did not vote in favour of this enactment. But it is admitted he attended the Parliament at which it was passed, and he was not the stamp of man who could take a bold or manly stand. Hesitating and compliant, he probably acquiesced, and in doing so was evidently insincere.⁴⁸ For if he had endeavoured to enforce

⁴⁵ Morrin's "Calendar," p. 448.

⁴⁶ D'Alton's "History of Ireland," II, pp. 86-8.

⁴⁷ Moran's "Archbishops of Dublin," p. 61.

⁴⁸ Renehan's "Archbishops," pp. 390-91.

the Act by abolishing the Mass he would have had no congregation in his churches. And if he acted publicly in his own archdiocese otherwise than as a Catholic bishop, he would not have been praised in 1561 as he was by David Wolf, the Jesuit, and the accredited representative of the Pope in Ireland.⁴⁹

They were, indeed, strange times, and strange was the character of the public men. We find that the Earl of Sussex held office as Viceroy under the Catholic Mary and under the Protestant Elizabeth, just as Bodkin continued to be Archbishop of Tuam. The fact was that at that date Elizabeth herself temporized. Nor was it until 1570 that she definitely and finally decided against the Catholics. The reason was that the Pope in that year, having excommunicated her, and absolved her subjects from allegiance to her, the Queen and her ministers judged that henceforth no one in her dominions could be a Catholic and a loyal subject.

During these years Bodkin was not only undisturbed in the exercise of his religion and of his episcopal office, but continued in favour with the government. In 1562 the Earl of Sussex suggested to the Queen that she should appoint a President for the province of Connaught, who would reside either at Galway or at Athlone, and who would be guided by a Council, among whom would be the Earl of Clanrickard and Bodkin, Archbishop of Tuam. Sussex thought it time for the great men of the province to pay the Queen a yearly tribute for their lands, and assist in the introduction of English customs and English law.⁵⁰

This scheme was not then carried out. English law was little respected in Connaught; and no attention whatever was paid in the Archdiocese of Tuam to the Act of Supremacy or the Act of Uniformity. Nor did the Queen or her ministers attempt to put these Acts in force, for their whole resources were required to cope with Shane O'Neill. Clanrickard, though a loyal subject, continued to hold the lands of the

⁴⁹ "Hibernia Ignatiana," p. 13.

⁵⁰ "Carew Papers," pp. 334-5.

Kilcreevanty nuns, and laid greedy hands on other Church lands as well, getting in addition the house of the Dominicans of Athenry as a burial place for his family. Lord Bermingham surrendered his lands to the Queen, and got them back to hold by English tenure. And Sir Robert Dillon, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, being "a grave, wise, ancient and faithful officer and Councillor," was assigned land in Connaught as well as in Leinster.⁵¹

As to Bodkin, he remained the courtier and the friend of government; and when the Viceroy, Sir Henry Sidney, visited Galway in 1567, the Archbishop was there to meet him and to protest his loyalty.⁵² These protestations, however, were not so warmly appreciated by Sidney. The relations were rapidly becoming strained between the Queen and the Pope, and in 1568 the public celebration of the Mass was strictly prohibited. And when the first President of Connaught, Sir Edward Fitton, was appointed in 1569, Bodkin was not named as one of his council. By that time Shane O'Neill had been defeated and slain. The Queen and her ministers not only felt irritated with the Pope, but felt strong enough to propagate Protestantism in Ireland by force; and even in Connaught and in Tuam toleration of the old faith was to cease.

Bodkin's Visitation.

It was during these years of comparative calm, before any serious effort was made to establish the new religion or to uproot the old, that Archbishop Bodkin had compiled what has since been known as Bodkin's "Visitation of the Archdiocese of Tuam." It is a valuable document, throwing much light on the condition of religion in the Archdiocese at the time. The date was about 1558 or 1559, just as Elizabeth became Queen. Unlike former "Visitations," it was not done for purposes of taxation. Nor does it give the name of

⁵¹ Morrin's "Calendar," pp. 516-17.

⁵² Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," p. 90.

every parish or of every priest, for it is not exhaustive, and many important facts connected with the Archdiocese are omitted.

It gives a list of priests rather than of parishes; and so we find no mention made of Knock or Aghamore, of Began or Annagh, of Monivea or Abbert, or of the parishes bordering on Headford, to name but a few. Perhaps it was because these parishes were then vacant, having no resident priest, and perhaps the tithes were held by the rector or vicar of another parish, or by a layman. In the case of Knock and Aghamore, and perhaps also Began and Annagh, there was no incumbent, for these parishes were probably held by the archdeacon for the time being, and the position of archdeacon was then vacant. Some rectors of churches, especially the dignitaries, were pluralists, and both the dean and provost had several benefices. Some parishes were so poor that they were waste, unable to support a resident priest. The revenues of other churches were held by young men of good family who were studying at Oxford, probably for the priesthood. Other cases there were where the priest was resident, and left in undisturbed possession of the parish revenues.

But the cases were very numerous in which laymen had seized the Church revenues, caring little how the priest lived, or whether there was any priest at all to minister to the people. These grasping laymen, recalling the lay abbots of the ninth century, were the relatives of powerful families of the Archdiocese—the Berminghams, Burkes, O'Kellys, and others. In one noted case an ecclesiastical title was assumed. For one William Burke, one of the Burkes of Mayo, was called the Blind Abbot, and had seized the possessions belonging to the Archdeaconry, and, in addition, usurped the prebends of Balla and Faldown and the vicarages of Manulla and Kilmeena. The rectory of Ballinrobe was usurped by Mac William Burke, and so was the vicarage of Ballinachalla and the vicarage of Anney in the present parish of Robeen. The Berminghams had also usurped Church property; and even

the Blind Abbot's cupidity was equalled by that of one John Burke, the sheriff of Galway, a son of the Earl of Clanrickard.

Not even the highest dignitaries in the Archdiocese were exempt from these tormentors. John Eyre was provost, but Thaddeus O'Malley "detains part of the provostship, and Thomas de Burgo detains one of his rectories." The Dean, in addition to the deanery of Tuam, had the rectory of Athenry and the prebend of Lackagh. But his officials, in the collection of tithes, were disturbed by John Burke, the sheriff, and also by one Dumb Thomas Burke, and this "contrary to the letters of the Lord Deputy and the Council." Finally, Edmond Burke, brother of the Earl of Clanrickard, usurped the prebend of Kilmeena "contrary to the Archbishop's collation and the royal letters."⁵³

This was the state of Tuam after Bodkin had been more than twenty years Archbishop—parishes without priests, prebends and rectories seized by rapacious laymen, churches in ruins, religion as a necessary result suffering, and such was the state of things that remained till his death in 1572.

The entry of this event, as given in the "Four Masters," is brief, and is as follows:—"The Archbishop of Tuam, Christopher Bodkin, died and was interred in Galway." He was not then a very old man. But he had long been an Archbishop, and had seen many great changes, and would have seen many more if he had lived longer. And in the troubled times that were at hand he would have found it quite impossible to continue pleasing the representatives of government while doing his duty as a Catholic archbishop.

⁵³ Knox's "Tuam," pp. 203-13.

CHAPTER X.

TROUBLED TIMES.

Connaught Chiefs.

IN the "Four Masters" at the year 1546 we find the entry : "At this time the power of the English was great and immense in Ireland." It is true that the rebellion of Silken Thomas had been put down; that the Irish and Anglo-Irish chiefs for the most part had submitted to England, and acknowledged Henry VIII. as their King; had even followed, or rather pretended to follow, him in his apostasy, and had shown no reluctance to share in the plunder of Church lands.

But this was not subjugation according to English ideas; and whatever progress English authority had made in other parts of Ireland, it had made little in the Archdiocese of Tuam. The O'Flaherties fought and ruled as their ancestors had in the mountainous districts where the Twelve Pins cast their shadow. The Joyces, forgetting their Welsh origin, became as Irish as the waters of Killery Harbour. The O'Malleys, as they sailed their ships over the waters of Clew Bay, or over the wilder waves of the ocean, cared nothing for English institutions or English ways. And the Mayo Burkes, English in origin, but Irish in manners, in dress, and in speech, were ready to found a religious house or to plunder one, but were not prepared to accept the religion of Cranmer or Cromwell.

The Earl of Clanrickard.

The fact that the head of the Galway Burkes had given in

his adhesion to Henry VIII., and accepted from his hands the title of Earl of Clanrickard, was certainly a breach with the past. But the Earl, though powerful, was not able to make the O'Flaherties in Galway or his own kinsmen in Mayo loyal to English rule. And his son and successor, Richard, was more like an independent ruler than a loyal and law-abiding subject. In 1558 he made war, apparently on his own initiative and without any consultation with the Viceroy at Dublin, on some bands of Scots who had come from Ulster into Connaught. Originally from Scotland, these mercenaries hired themselves out as soldiers to the different warring Irish chiefs. They then settled in Ulster, but were ready to go to the other provinces to fight for lands or money whenever their services were required. Frequently they had thus come into Connaught. They were disliked by the English, and though Clanrickard on this occasion presumed to act as an independent chief, the fact that he defeated the hated Scots weakened their power in Connaught for a long time, and probably brought him laudation rather than blame from the government at Dublin.¹

In 1564 Clanrickard was again at war, but this time it was with the O'Flaherties, and his opponent was a redoubtable chief named Sir Murrogh, usually called Murrogh na d'tuagh, or Murrogh of the Battle Axes, from the fact that in his early years he had once gained a victory over a much larger force than his own men—the latter being armed with battle-axes. Clanrickard wanted perhaps to wring submission to himself from Murrogh, or perhaps submission to the Queen. But O'Flaherty was willing to give neither, and retired with his troops before Clanrickard into the recesses of the mountains. Nothing was left to the Earl but to seize all O'Flaherty's cattle, and these he was driving away when he was pursued by Murrogh, overtaken at Trabane, and signally defeated.

In spite of this, O'Flaherty was pardoned by the government, not because he was liked, but because he was a powerful chief, and if loyal himself might keep his kindred from lawless

¹ "Four Masters" at 1558.

ways. His pardon was accompanied by royal letters patent, constituting him chieftain of Iar-Connaught, and binding him to attend sessions when called upon, and to satisfy the demands of the Queen's subjects according to justice and equity.²

But to have the Earl of Clanrickard make war as an independent prince, whether on mercenary Scot or turbulent chief; to have this same turbulent chief ruling his people according to Brehon rather than according to English law; and to have both Clanrickard and O'Flaherty tolerating the Catholic religion, and even professing it, was not what the Queen or her ministers wanted; and in 1569 a serious attempt was made to bring Connaught into subjection. Shane O'Neill was then dead; the Earl of Desmond, most powerful of Munster chiefs, was submissive and a prisoner in London,³ and no chief in Connaught and no combination of chiefs could face on equal terms the very able Viceroy, Sir Henry Sidney, and the forces at his command.

The President of Connaught.

In these circumstances Sir Henry came to Galway, bringing with him Sir Edward Fitton, whom he appointed President of Connaught. Like the new President of Munster, Sir John Perrott, he would be subject to the Viceroy at Dublin, and he was to be guided by a Council, which always included the important officers, such as the Chief-Justice, the Attorney-General, the Provost-Marshal, the sheriffs of counties, the military chiefs, and the great men of the province. But in military affairs the President had supreme and unfettered command. In other matters the only effective restraint on him was the Viceroy, for the Council might be ignored.⁴

He was to divide the province into counties, each having a sheriff, and this he did by forming the counties of Clare, Galway, Mayo, Roscommon and Sligo, leaving Breffni O'Reilly to become later the county of Leitrim, and attaching

² O'Flaherty's "Iar-Connaught," pp. 384-6.

³ "Carew's Papers," I, p. 385; D'Alton's "History of Ireland," II, pp. 55-9.

⁴ Knox's "History of Mayo," pp. 175-6.

the barony of Ross to Mayo, which in later times was transferred to Galway. As the Queen had no revenue from the province it was necessary to continue the old Irish practice of quartering soldiers on the people, so that Fitton's exactions were as heavy as those of the Irish chiefs, and as he put it himself, were "as hard for subjects as for rebels."⁵

It was Fitton's duty also to uproot Catholicity. But such drastic changes as these neither chiefs nor people would have, and in consequence the Mayo Burkes broke out into open rebellion. Fitton, in 1570, took the field against them, having with him the Earl of Clanrickard, 500 hired gallowglasses, some English foot soldiers, 300 mounted men, and some artillery. On the opposite side the leaders were MacWilliam Burke, aided by his own kinsmen, the Burkes of Mayo, and by some of the O'Flaherties of Iar-Connaught. The opposing forces met at Shrule, on the borders of Mayo and Galway, and the fight resulted in a hard-won but not decisive victory for Fitton. The Burkes were driven back by the English foot, but Fitton's gallowglasses fled from the field, and part of Burke's force pursued them for two miles. The Burkes, however, lost more men than their opponents, who remained masters of the field, and got possession of the castle of Shrule. But the indecisive character of the fight may be gathered from the fact that Fitton returned to Galway, glad to escape being pursued, while the Burkes returned home, glad to have saved Mayo from invasion. They were, however, ready to submit, and did so before the end of the year.⁶

To induce the natives to accept English rather than their own Irish law, to abandon their language and customs, and, above all, to desert the faith in which they were born, and turn upon the priests of their own blood, and join with Elizabeth in cursing the Pope, would be no easy task for any man. But for a man of Fitton's temper and character success was utterly impossible. He had no tact in government, no sympathy with the people, no patience with their prejudices,

⁵ Knox's "History of Mayo," p. 176.

⁶ "Four Masters"; Knox's "Mayo," pp. 176-9.

no toleration for their religious belief. On the contrary, he despised them. He was cruel and corrupt, arrogant and domineering, perfidious and intriguing, ready to make reckless charges against men much better than himself, and protesting to Cecil, the Queen's chief adviser, that gentleness would be useless in Connaught, and that he could do no good without force.⁷ His desire was not to administer even-handed justice, and thus show that English justice was superior to Irish, but rather to involve the Irish chiefs in rebellion, so that he could confiscate their lands. And in 1571 he gleefully indicts the Mayo Burkes and the sons of the Earl of Clanrickard with treasonable conduct, predicting that when the Easter term came round the Queen would be entitled to half Connaught.⁸ Add to this that Fitton, in the end of 1571, not having got any money for nearly two years to pay his soldiers,⁹ was compelled, equally with the Irish chiefs, to quarter his men on the Irish, and that his *cess*, as it was called, was as onerous as the Irish, and we need not be astonished that the Earl of Clanrickard's sons broke out into rebellion.

Fitton retorted by arresting the Earl of Clanrickard, and sent him a prisoner to Dublin Castle. Before the Viceroy and Council Clanrickard protested his innocence, and Fitton was unable to establish his guilt.¹⁰ Indeed, he made no definite charges against his prisoner, greatly to the astonishment of the Viceroy and Council, and in consequence Clanrickard was released and sent back to Galway, and with power to pardon all offenders.¹¹

Then began a series of charges and countercharges between Fitton and the Earl, followed by a reconciliation that was outward only and insincere. Finally, the Viceroy, Fitzwilliam, and Fitton quarrelled. The Viceroy even threw Fitton into prison, and complained to the Queen that Fitton's insolence

⁷ Hamilton's "Calendar," pp. 429, 434.

⁸ *Ibid.* pp. 440-41.

⁹ *Ibid.* p. 448.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* pp. 477-8.

¹¹ *Ibid.* p. 481.

was unbearable. But the offending president was soon released and restored to the Queen's favour.¹² Yet, though he returned to Connaught in 1574, and held sessions at Athlone, he was so distrusted that all the Irish kept away from him except the Bishops of Tuam and Clonfert.¹³

By that time even the Queen was convinced of Fitton's incapacity to govern Connaught. In that year she gave orders through her Privy Council to have Clanrickard's sons pardoned;¹⁴ and in the following year Fitton was deprived of his commission, and ceased to be President of Connaught.¹⁵

Submission of Western Chiefs.

At that date a new Viceroy had arrived in Ireland in the person of Sir Henry Sidney. He was able and energetic, stern to evildoers, but far removed from the cruelty and corruption and mischievous intermeddling of Fitton. In 1576 he made a tour of the country, and gave an account of what he saw and did, and it is from this dispatch, and on this occasion, that we get a vivid picture of parts of the Archdiocese of Tuam.

At Galway, where he was attended by the Bishops of Clonfert and Kilmacduagh, by O'Flaherty and O'Kelly, and the Earl of Clanrickard, and by Bermingham, Baron of Athenry, whom he describes as a poor baron, though "the ancientist in this land," he confirmed and approved the division of Connaught into counties. And there he had many visitors. "Out of the County of Mayo," he says, "there came to me seven of the Clandonnells, all by profession mercenary soldiers; they humbly submitted themselves." MacWilliam came also. "I found MacWilliam very sensible; though wanting the English tongue yet understanding the Latin. He desired to suppress Irish extortion and to expulse the Scots . . . and bound himself by oath and indenture to hold his lands of Her Majesty and pay 250 marks yearly. He

¹² Hamilton's "Calendar," pp. 511-15.

¹³ Hamilton, vol. ii, p. 12.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* p. 15.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* p. 80.

received his country at my hands by way of seneschalship . . . the Order of Knighthood I bestowed upon him, whereof he seemed very joyous. . . . He was desirous I should send thither an English sheriff. I sent one with him. He is a great man. His territory is three times as large as the Earl of Clanrickard's. He brought with him all his brethren. Macphilpin, who is called Burke, and others. . . . O'Malley came likewise with him, who is an original Irishman, strong in galleys and seamen. He earnestly sued to hold of the Queen. There also came from Mayo Macfadden, of English surname Barrett, MacEvilly, who in English is Staunton; MacJordan, whose English surname was D'Exeter; MacCostello, who was originally Nangle; and MacMaurice, who was Prendergast. These had been lords and barons of parliament, but now have not three hackneys to carry them and their train home." All these, he says, were crying for justice and English government.¹⁶

Granuaile.

One other visitor Sidney had on this occasion, more famous than any of these named. This was Grace O'Malley, or Granuaile. "There came to me also," he says, "a most famous feminine sea captain, called Grany Imallye, and offered her services unto me, wheresoever I would command her, with three galleys and 200 fighting-men, either in Ireland or Scotland; she brought with her her husband, for she was as well by sea as by land Mrs. Mate with him: he was of the Nether Burkes, and now, as I hear, MacWilliam Eighter, called by nickname Richard in Iron. This was a notorious woman in all the coasts of Ireland."

After ages have been told that as she wandered over the sea she once landed from her ship at Howth Castle, near Dublin, and being inhospitably received by the Earl of Howth, she took away with her his son and heir, and released him only on condition that henceforth Howth Castle would always keep open its door at the hour of dinner. And her power and

¹⁶ "Carew Papers," pp. 48-51.

prowess have been so magnified that when she visited Queen Elizabeth at London it was as a queen and on equal terms. But these two statements are not those of sober fact, but belong rather to the realms of fiction. For the story that she visited Howth Castle in the circumstances named is a myth; and when she visited Elizabeth at her court in London it was as a suppliant and a subject, with protestations of loyalty and a petition for justice.

The sober facts about her are, that she was a daughter of O'Malley, chief of Murrisk, and that she married as her first husband Donal O'Flaherty of Iar-Connaught, by whom she had two sons—Owen, who was killed in 1586, and Murrogh, who subsequently got as his inheritance, a fourth part of the barony of Ballinahinch. Further, she married as her second husband Sir Richard Burke, nicknamed Richard-an-Iarain, perhaps from the armour which he wore,¹⁷ and by him she had a son, Tibot-na-Long, or Theobald of the Ships. She is credited with having had a castle in Clare Island, which even yet is called Grania's Castle. But her chief residence was Carrickhowley, or Rockfleet Castle, near Burrishoole, strongly built as if to hurl defiance at the tempests which assailed it, and licked on three sides by the surging billows of the Atlantic. As became a daughter of O'Malley, strong in ships and in seamen, she loved the salt sea and the sailing ship. She was a woman with the mind of a man, with the capacity and the instinct to command; and if she had had a larger theatre for her exploits she might have acquired greatness. For she was masterful and daring, appalled by no danger, fearing no foe, wandering at will in search of adventure, and ready, as the occasion arose, for piracy or battle.¹⁸

Clanrickard and His Sons.

At Athenry, on his way from Galway, Sidney saw a pitiful sight. It was totally burned—college, parish church and all

¹⁷ M. J. Blake in "Galway Archæological Journal."

¹⁸ "Carew Papers," p. 353; H. T. Knox in "Galway Archæological Journal," vol. iv; "Dr. Healy, Archbishop of Tuam: Papers and Addresses," pp. 539-42; "State Papers"; O'Flaherty's "Iar-Connaught," p. 402.

—by the sons of the Earl of Clanrickard, “yet the mother of one of them was buried in that church.” Sidney taxed the surrounding country to the amount of £2,000 for the rebuilding of the town, taking a bond from the Earl of Clanrickard to have this done under a forfeiture of £5,000.

He was evidently pleased with his tour. Even the turbulent sons of Clanrickard were penitent and submissive. They came into the church at Galway on Sunday at public service, and there craved pardon. “I committed them to my Marshal, and have them here prisoners in the Castle of Dublin.” He left two learned lawyers in Connaught to determine controversies, and was so satisfied with the peaceful condition of the province that before the end of the year he set Clanrickard’s sons free.

But his hopes of a peaceful Connaught were found to be fallacious. For no sooner did Clanrickard’s sons cross the Shannon than they were again in revolt, and, at the head of their followers, attacked Athenry, and beat away the masons who were rebuilding the ruined town.¹⁹ This done, they invited Sir Richard Burke (MacWilliam) to join them, and as he refused they attacked and captured his stronghold of Castlebar. In 1577 Sidney again crossed the Shannon, visited Athenry, passed through Shrile on to Mayo, captured Castlebar, and gave it back to Sir Richard Burke. This done, Clanrickard himself was taken prisoner, and lodged in Dublin Castle.

His case was a hard one. In spite of his sons’ restlessness and turbulence he loved them, and was ready to make excuses; for he was their father, and they were his children. But there was not a particle of evidence to show that he encouraged them in their lawlessness, or favoured rebellion himself. Yet he was thrown into prison in Dublin Castle, and kept there without trial. He asked, being a nobleman, to be tried by his peers, but was refused. He asked for some freedom of movement in Dublin, and for some better diet, so that his health

¹⁹ Hamilton’s “Calendar,” p. 97.

might not suffer.²⁰ The Viceroy answered these requests by bringing him to England "to prevent rebellion in Connaught."²¹ Again, in England, Clanrickard petitioned the Queen's minister, Burleigh, for a speedy trial "that he may settle his old years and sickly body in quietness at home;"²² and he assured the Queen that he had no correspondence with foreign princes, and never encouraged his sons to rebel, and "he leaves his life, state and all he has to her."²³

But that heart of adamant was not to be touched either by pity or justice. It was enough that Clanrickard was suspected of disloyalty; and although her representative in Connaught reported in 1580 that in the whole province not one man was in rebellion,²⁴ Clanrickard was not set free until 1582. In spite of all his protestations, he knew he was suspected of having encouraged his sons. He knew that his son, William, had been hanged in Galway by the English, after having submitted and come to the city under a safe conduct;²⁵ and he knew that his two other sons were regarded by government officials as "the two worst men on earth."²⁶ Little wonder was it that the old man's health was undermined, and his spirits broken, and that he died in Galway shortly after his arrival there in 1582.²⁷

Sir Nicholas Malbie.

At that date the Governor of Connaught was Sir Nicholas Malbie. Fitton had made the very name of President so odious that it was considered better not to continue it, and Malbie was called Colonel of Connaught, but with the same powers as Fitton had. He came with Sidney to Castlebar in 1577; and when MacWilliam's enemies had been driven off and his castle of Castlebar restored to him, to hold in the

²⁰ Hamilton's "Calendar," p. 136.

²¹ *Ibid.* p. 142.

²² *Ibid.* p. 147.

²³ *Ibid.* p. 162.

²⁴ *Ibid.* p. 216.

²⁵ "Four Masters" at 1581.

²⁶ Hamilton's "Calendar," p. 320.

²⁷ *Ibid.* p. 388.

Queen's name, Sidney returned to Dublin, leaving Malbie in charge of Connaught. He was not a corrupt man like Fitton, and not needlessly cruel, and he had a much higher sense of justice and fair play, and more tact in the management of men.

Yet he had his difficulties, and not merely with the Burkes of Galway but with the Burkes of Mayo as well. The chief of them was MacWilliam—Sir John Burke of English title—who had just been put in possession of Castlebar, and was friendly. But a man almost equally powerful was Richard Burke—Richard-an-Iarain, or Richard of the Iron—and neither he nor his more masterful wife, Granuaile, were disposed to be enthusiastic in their loyalty. The same year (1577) in which Sidney met them at Galway, Granuaile was in Munster, and must in some way have offended the Earl of Desmond—perhaps plundered his people—for he arrested her, and threw her into prison at Limerick; and there she was seen in 1578 by Drury, President of Munster. He describes her as governing the country of the O'Flaherties, "famous for her stoutness of courage and person, and for sundry exploits done by her at sea."²⁸ Drury sent her to Dublin, where she was imprisoned; and perhaps she was there when her husband broke out into rebellion in 1580.

By that time the Earl of Desmond was in rebellion in Munster, and he appealed for aid to Connaught. But nobody joined him except Richard-an-Iarain, who got the aid of the Clandonnells and their gallowglasses. The rebellion, however, was not a very formidable one, and was soon put down by Malbie, who came from Munster for the purpose. From Galway he went through Athenry and Shrile by Ballinrobe, and took McDonnell's strong castle at Liskillen. Then he captured Donamona Castle from Shane Machubert Burke, Richard-an-Iarain's chief supporter, and "put the ward, men, women and children to the sword. Then he went west, and stayed at the Abbey of Burrishoole. He found a goodly and large lough on the upper part of the river, full of great timber, grey marble, and many other commodities, not without great

²⁸ Knox's "History of Mayo," p. 186.

store of good ground, both arable land and pasture. Specially it hath a very plentiful iron-mine and abundance of wood. Towards the sea-coast there lieth many fair islands . . . there cometh hither every year about fifty English ships for fishing; they have been before this time compelled to pay a great tribute to the O'Malleys, which I have forbidden hereafter till Her Majesty's pleasure be known. It is accounted one of the best fishing-places in Ireland for salmon, herring, and all kinds of sea-fish."

Richard-an-Iarain, forsaken by the Clandonnells, and unable to make further resistance, fled into the islands with the Scots.²⁹

Malbie fortified the Abbey of Burrishoole, and left there a garrison of one hundred men; and as he was anxious to return to Munster he was glad to get offers of submission from the rebellious Richard-an-Iarain. The same year MacWilliam died, "a munificent and very affluent man, who preferred peace to the most successful war."³⁰

Then there was a dispute as to who should be The MacWilliam, and as Richard was an aspirant, and Malbie was gone, he took up arms and got the Clandonnells and the Scots to aid him. But his employment of these was rather against a rival for the chieftainship than against the English; and when Malbie came from Munster, Richard was once more penitent and submissive. And Malbie received him into favour, and recognised him as The MacWilliam, and conferred on him the honour of knighthood.³¹

In 1583 Sir Richard Burke, as he then was, died, and is described by the "Four Masters" as a plundering, warlike, unquiet, and rebellious man, who had often forced the gap of danger on his enemies, and upon whom it was frequently forced.

The next year (1584) Sir Nicholas Malbie died, and is praised by the "Four Masters" as a man "learned in the

²⁹ Knox's "History of Mayo," p. 189.

³⁰ "Four Masters."

³¹ Knox's "Mayo," pp. 191-4.

languages and tongues of the islands of the west of Europe, a brave and victorious man in battle." The "Annals of Loch Ce" is not less, but rather more, eulogistic when it says, at the same year: "There came not to Erin in his own time, nor often before, a better gentleman of the foreigners than he." When such is the praise from the Irish Annalists we cannot be surprised to hear his fellow-countrymen say that "the people of Connaught embrace dearly the Governor Malbie. Their affection is like that of a natural father and good children."³² Certainly he was a higher type of official than Fitton, as he was a better man than the ruthless tyrant who succeeded him.

Dean Lally.

In the midst of so many moving figures—high-placed officials, Irish chiefs, military leaders and mercenary soldiers—the figure of an ecclesiastic during these years rarely passes across the stage. When Bodkin, Archbishop of Tuam, died in 1572, William Lally was appointed his successor by the government—the entry being that the Queen directed the Lord Deputy to appoint Mr. Lally Bishop of Tuam.³³ Like a good courtier, this ecclesiastic attended Sir Henry Sidney in Galway in 1576, and he went to see Sidney in Kilmallock the next year.³⁴ He was one of those who witnessed the agreement made by Clanrickard's sons with the government; and when Malbie was marching from Athenry to suppress Richard-an-Iarain's rebellion he was met at Shrule by the Bishop.³⁵ Lally was one of the commissioners who settled the succession to the deceased Earl of Clanrickard in 1582; and in 1585 he was one of the government commissioners for the composition of cess in Mayo.³⁶

It is true that Sidney complained that Lally and the other bishops who were at Kilmallock in 1577 were papists, and

³² Hamilton's "Calendar," p. 392.

³³ Morrin's "Calendar," p. 551.

³⁴ "Carew Papers," pp. 49, 352.

³⁵ Knox's "Mayo," p. 188.

³⁶ "Carew Papers," pp. 263, 334, 405.

were unwilling to admit that they held anything from the Queen but their temporal patrimony. But it is quite certain that Lally did not recognise the Pope as his spiritual superior, and could not, therefore, claim to be the Catholic Archbishop of Tuam. Under Bodkin he had been dean of the Archdiocese—a greedy, grasping man, ready to sacrifice his faith for lands and honours and government position. It is as a government favourite and as one appointed by the Queen, he is put down as Archbishop, and more correctly as Bishop, the first Protestant Bishop of Tuam. He lived, it seems, until 1595, and was then so old that he was unable to do any duty.³⁷

Had he been a professing Catholic he would have got short shrift from the government. For an Irish Catholic was then considered a disloyal subject, in league with Spain and the Pope, both mortal enemies of the Queen. But though leniency might be shown in some cases to lay Catholics, none was shown to ecclesiastics. The bishops and priests were the accredited agents of the Pope, and, as such, they must be hunted down. And what happened them when they were captured we know from the fate which overtook Patrick O'Hely, Bishop of Mayo.

O'Hely, Bishop of Mayo.

A native of Connaught, and a member of the Franciscan Order, he studied and distinguished himself at the University of Alcalá. He was at Rome in 1575, and, as Tuam was still vacant, he was appointed titular Bishop of Mayo, so that the people of at least part of the Archdiocese might not be left without a bishop. Coming back to Ireland, and accompanied by a brother Franciscan, O'Rorke, he landed at Dingle, but was almost immediately captured and thrown into prison at Limerick. In August, 1579, these two were brought before the President of Munster, Sir William Drury. They did not deny their names or their offices, both declaring their willingness if need be to die for the faith. Drury was a cruel man, for not only did he sentence them to death, but to torture as

³⁷ Knox's "Tuam," p. 126

well. The two Franciscans were put on the rack; their arms and legs broken with hammers; sharp needles were thrust under their nails, and then they were taken down and hanged from the branches of a neighbouring tree. For fourteen days their bodies were left dangling there, being used as suitable targets by the English soldiers.

They were soon avenged. When the Bishop was being carried to execution, he turned to Drury and summoned him to appear quickly before the tribunal of God to answer for his crimes. Fourteen days later Drury died at Waterford of some strange disease which baffled all available medical skill. He suffered so much, indeed, before his death, that he cried aloud for relief, saying that he was tormented with all the pains of hell.³⁸

No Archbishop in Tuam.

Such being the treatment meted out to bishops and priests, it need not excite surprise that the Archdiocese of Tuam was left for years without an archbishop. The priests could not meet to elect, and from Bodkin's death, in 1572, there was no archbishop until Nicholas Skerrett was appointed in 1580. How limited the field of selection was in these terrible times we gather from the fact that Skerrett, who had been a pupil of the Jesuits at Rome, was but six months a priest when he was appointed Archbishop. From Rome he made his way to Galway, and there he was so poor that he was compelled to open a classical school. But though there were certainly many friends of the Catholic religion then in Galway, there were enemies, too, and Dr. Skerrett was arrested and imprisoned in Athlone. He managed, however, to escape and fled to Lisbon, where he died in 1583.

Two years later Adam Magauran was appointed, like O'Hely, Bishop of Mayo; but we know nothing of what he did. Nor do we know anything of Miles O'Higgin, except that he was appointed Archbishop of Tuam in 1586; that he

³⁸ "Our Martyrs," pp. 100-105; Moran's "Archbishops of Dublin," p. 140.

wrote some hymns; and that on his journey from Rome to his archdiocese he died at Antwerp. Then, for the space of five years, Tuam was once again without an archbishop.³⁹

The Composition of Connaught.

Meantime, in civil affairs important events were taking place in Galway and Mayo. In 1584 a new Viceroy came from England in the person of Sir John Perrott, reputed to be an illegitimate son of Henry VIII.⁴⁰ With him came Sir Richard Bingham as Governor of Connaught. There was a striking contrast between the two. Perrott was a strong man, and could be stern and severe with evildoers. But he had a strong sense of justice, and while anxious to win the Irish to English ways he preferred to do this by persuasion and kindness than by force. Bingham, on the contrary, had no faith in kindness, always preferring to use force. Terror and threats, cruelty and confiscation, and wholesale hangings, in which the innocent and guilty were confounded, were the weapons he employed. The result was that he and the Viceroy quarrelled.

In 1585 Perrott held a Parliament at Dublin, which was attended by the Earl of Clanrickard, sitting as a peer. Sir Murrough O'Flaherty went from Galway to consult with the members, but had no seat in parliament himself. Nor did any representative go from Mayo. One result of the deliberations of this parliament was the appointing of a commission consisting of Bingham, the Earls of Thomond and Clanrickard, Sir Richard Burke (the MacWilliam), Sir Murrough O'Flaherty, and others, to arrange with "the chiefs, gentlemen, and freeholders of Connaught," as to the tenure of the lands held by them. Each chief was to surrender his lands to the Queen, receiving them back to be held by knights service, and at a Crown rent of one penny per acre. And inheritance would be from father to son. This was what came to be known as the "Composition of Connaught," and each

³⁹ Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," pp. 91-4.

⁴⁰ "History of Sir John Perrott," p. 275.

chief who accepted the arrangement vested his new rights on an instrument called An Indenture of Composition.⁴¹

These were revolutionary changes but they were acquiesced in by the chiefs of Galway and Mayo. The semi-independent state in which they had lived so far they knew well could not be indefinitely maintained against the might of England. They probably feared the fate of Desmond, whose rebellion had involved his own death and the confiscation of his lands. And they must have been weary of a system which bred perpetual strife, which gave them no certainty of tenure in their lands, and under which it was possible for some turbulent chief to crush them to the earth by an oppressive cess. These chiefs were already familiar with sheriffs and sessions; and if the change to the English method of administering justice had not been complicated by interference with the people's religion, there could be little doubt that the change would be for the better. A prudent governor would have avoided religious persecution, would have made allowance for ancient prejudices, would have even tolerated discontent, so that the old order would be gradually and peaceably replaced by the new.⁴²

Sir Richard Bingham.

But Bingham would have none of this. The more rebels the more confiscated lands at the disposal of the Queen, the better chance that the rapacity of himself and his brothers might be satisfied. Flouting the authority of his fellow-commissioners, and heedless of any remonstrance made by them, or advice given, he held sessions in Galway in 1586, and put seventy persons to death. In Mayo he held sessions at Donamona. The Burkes and McDonnells, evidently afraid to trust him, failed to attend, and in revenge Bingham attacked the strong castle of Castle Hag in Lough Mask. He was unable, however, to take it, but the Burkes, who escaped in their boats to the other side of the lake, he hunted down; and

⁴¹ D'Alton's "History of Ireland," II, pp. 110-111.

⁴² "O'Connors of Connaught," pp. 193-6.

Richard Burke, nicknamed the Hedge, or Fence, of Erin, who came with offers of submission, he put to death. Then he destroyed Hag's Castle as well as Annie's Castle in Lough Carra.⁴³

The same year (1586) there was a dispute between the Burkes about a division of lands made by Sir John Perrott; and Edmond Burke, joined by the McDonnells and the Joyces, were in rebellion. Bingham assembled his forces of about one thousand at Ballinrobe, and as he could not catch up with the rebels themselves, he devastated Ross and even the territory of the friendly O'Flaherties of Iar-Connaught, "killing women, boys, peasants and decrepit persons." And he hanged a poor old man, named Theobald O'Toole, who was guilty of no offence except that he kept a house of hospitality in Omey Island, and as such must have often relieved the wants of the traveller and the poor.⁴⁴

Nor was this all. In the jail at the Neale were three children of the Burke family—Ulick, son of the Blind Abbot; Richard, son of Shane Burke; and William, son of Meyler Burke. They were pledges for their fathers' good behaviour, and as their fathers had sided with the rebels, the children must be sacrificed. The oldest was but fourteen years old; the second, nine; the youngest only seven. The Justices of the province remonstrated, saying that the children were too young to be executed, that they could not pawn their lives for their parents' behaviour. It was useless. Bingham had the little boys executed. They knew English, it seems, and could read and write, and as they were led to execution, one little fellow said to the others: "I have heard that scholars and such men as could read and write ought to have the benefit of clergy. I can read; why does not Sir Richard allow me the benefit thereof?" Another wept, saying: "I perceive my death is at hand." But one of his little companions consoled him,

⁴³ "Four Masters."

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

saying: "Never care for that, for we shall shortly be in a better place than here, because we are guiltless of offence."⁴⁵

In 1585 Bingham admitted that Connaught was peaceable, that forty-one Macs and twenty-six O's (these being the chief Irish families) had accepted the Composition of Connaught.⁴⁶ And in the next year he tells Burleigh that Connaught was quieter than the English Pale.⁴⁷ He is careful, however, to attribute this to fear, boasting that if he destroyed three strong castles, and executed the Burkes themselves, "they were the best despatched men that were hanged in Mayo for many a year."⁴⁸ He tells Perrott that hunting down the Burkes inspired the most salutary fear.⁴⁹ And he complains bitterly that at this stage Perrott stayed his hand and pardoned some of the Burkes; nor had he any doubt that the subsequent trouble arose from this leniency.⁵⁰ He glories in having executed the Burkes' pledges, and thinks he deserves a good deal of praise, because, before executing Burke of Castlebar, he had him tried by courtmartial, the object being that conviction entailed "that his lands might escheat to Her Majesty."⁵¹

Two such men as Bingham and Perrott could not long remain in the same government. One was ready to use the sword, but only when other means failed; the other knew no other weapon. Between them there were inevitable conflicts, though Bingham had friends on the Council in Dublin,⁵² and was able to induce the Blind Abbot and many of his namesakes to declare that they had not been unjustly treated, even with the execution of their children and the plunder of their lands.⁵³ Perrott, however, prevailed, and in 1587 Bingham was removed from his government and sent on foreign service

⁴⁵ "O'Connors of Connaught," pp. 207-9.

⁴⁶ Hamilton's "Calendar," pp. 549-582.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.* vol. iii, p. 58.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* p. 68.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* pp. 132-4.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.* pp. 171-2.

⁵¹ *Ibid.* p. 174.

⁵² *Ibid.* vol. iv, p. 97.

⁵³ *Ibid.* pp. 198-203.

to Flanders. But he was persevering and intriguing and continued to attack Perrott and lament the treatment he had got from him.⁵⁴ Perrott, on the other hand, though he had friends on the Irish Council, had enemies too who ceased not to sympathise with Bingham; and in 1588, as his health was failing, he resigned his post, and went to England. To make matters worse for Ireland, but especially for Mayo, the new Viceroy, Fitzwilliam, brought with him the exiled Bingham, who once more became Governor of Connaught.⁵⁵

Neither appointment boded good for Galway or Mayo. Fitzwilliam was cruel, treacherous and avaricious—a man of no principle, who came to Galway seeking for Spanish treasure rather than to promote peace or order.⁵⁶ For this was the year of the Spanish Armada, which was to extend still further the ample dominions of the Spanish King, and hurl from the English throne a heretic Queen. But, instead, the mighty fleet, the sport of adverse winds, was scattered over the waters, and many of the Spaniards, famished and hungry, were cast on the Galway and Mayo coasts. The ships were broken up—one off Clare Island and one off Iar-Connaught—the treasure was lost, and so enraged was Fitzwilliam at this that he publicly hanged in Galway all the Spaniards he could lay hands on, and persecuted any who gave them shelter.⁵⁷ The Spaniards shipwrecked off Clare Island were set upon by the O'Malleys, and cruelly put to death; and there is no reason to think that the remaining Spaniards fared any better. But it suited Bingham to assume that the native chiefs were harbouring them, and were, therefore, ill-disposed; and on some slight disturbance in West Mayo he sent a force against them under John Browne. He marched by the old road from Ballintubber to Croagh Patrick, and would have done better to have stayed at home. For he was defeated and slain by the Burkes near Newport. This success caused the flames of war to spread.

⁵⁴ Hamilton's "Calendar," pp. 417-19.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* pp. 517-19.

⁵⁶ D'Alton's "History of Ireland," II, pp. 117-18.

⁵⁷ Hardiman's "History of Galway," p. 93.

Sir Murrough O'Flaherty, striving to be loyal, and yet plundered in 1586, was so embittered that he crossed the Corrib with six hundred men, and was joined by the Burkes, Joyces and MacDonnells. They were, however, defeated at Milltown, near Tuam, by Bingham, though the defeat did not seriously weaken their strength, and the prospect was that all Connaught would soon be ablaze, and that perhaps the whole fabric of British power would be destroyed.

In these circumstances, Fitzwilliam, ignoring Bingham, who was all for war, opened negotiations with the Irish, and concluded peace with them. The terms were that the rebel leaders would give in pledges for their future good conduct, disperse their forces, and live as loyal and peaceful subjects; would deliver up any Spaniards in their midst, make satisfaction for any injuries done while in rebellion, and pay such fines as the Deputy would impose.

This agreement was solemnly entered into in 1589, in the Church of St. Nicholas at Galway, in the presence of the Deputy, the Protestant Archbishop of Tuam, the Mayor of Galway, and several noblemen and high officials. The Irish chiefs swore on the Gospels, and it is curious that all (the Blind Abbot and Sir Murrough O'Flaherty included) they could do was to make their marks. For it appears that they were unable to write their names.⁵⁸

This peace, however, was not destined to endure; nor did the Connaught chiefs expect that it would. They knew that what Bingham wanted was to be followed by confiscations; that "all whom he did not hang he set at war with the Queen; that his brother, John, as truculent as himself, 'kept faith with nobody, either in church or territory.'"⁵⁹ If only the insolent and overbearing Governor were to leave the province, all perhaps would be well. Hoping to bring about so happy a change, the Burkes, in a "Book of Complaints," made many accusations against Bingham. But though the Deputy and many members of the Irish Council were certainly

⁵⁸ Knox's "History of Mayo," pp. 221-36; "Four Masters."

⁵⁹ "Annals of Loch Ce."

not friendly to Bingham, others of the Council were willing to take his part. He had influence also in England, where violence and brutality against the Irish were rather praised than condemned, and he was therefore acquitted of the charges made.⁶⁰

Disappointed at this result, and ignoring Bingham, Fitzwilliam came to Galway in 1590, talked in a friendly way with Sir Murrough O'Flaherty, and received his composition rent, as he did at Kilmaine that of the Burkes. But the Blind Abbot, wary and distrustful, kept away. He even assumed the title of The MacWilliam, and gathered together a force with which he met the Queen's troops at Barnagee. But he was defeated, and lost a leg in the battle; and then he sued for peace, and put in pledges, and paid his rent. Even Granuaile, who had been roving the sea in pirate fashion, was induced to become peaceful and law-abiding; and by the end of 1590 Fitzwilliam was back in Dublin, the Burkes and MacDonnells had paid fines, and garrisons held for the English the strong castles of Cong and Cregmore, near Kilmaine. And Bingham reported that war had ceased under his rule.⁶¹

His policy of driving the chiefs into rebellion had not been without advantage to his family, for his brother, John, who was now high sheriff of Mayo, was in possession of Cloonagashel, and had also got Castlebar. The castle and lands of the latter place had been acquired by Fitzwilliam's brother, and from him had been bought by Bingham for a trifle. The Burkes must have resented the spoliation of their kinsman; but they dissembled their vexation, and when a party of Scots arrived on the west coast of Mayo, the assistance of the sheriff was asked and obtained (1591). And Burke and Bingham united in defeating the invaders. But the fire of disaffection smouldered rather than was extinguished, and the same year a party of the Burkes unexpectedly attacked the hated sheriff. Such treachery must be punished, and in the next year Sir Richard Bingham held sessions at Cloonagashel, and hanged

⁶⁰ "Galway Archæological Journal," vol. iv.

⁶¹ Knox's "History of Mayo," pp. 239-46; "Four Masters."

some refractory Burkes and MacDonnells. Then he proceeded to occupy and garrison the castles of Donamona, Guesdian and Clooneen, and having done this he made a sort of triumphal march to Burrishoole, Cahir-na-Mart (Westport) and Aughagower, returning by Ballynonagh on Lough Mask to Cloona. From the Burkes, O'Malleys, MacDonnells and Joyces he took pledges; and, in addition, he plundered and spoiled as he went along, bringing with him many prisoners, "men and women and many horses and cows."⁶²

In 1593 there came trouble from an unexpected quarter. Tibbot-na-Long, or Theobald of the Ships, on mere suspicion of being in league with the Ulster rebels, was arrested and imprisoned by Bingham. To obtain his release his mother, Granuaile went to London, and had a personal interview with the Queen. The result was that the Queen ordered Tibbot's release. He had been brought up with Bingham's cousin, George, and could speak English, and this was, no doubt, in his favour with the Queen. But Elizabeth had some pity for Granuaile also, and ordered Bingham to treat her well, and provide her with sufficient maintenance for the rest of her days. Bingham was then able to report that there was peace in Mayo.⁶³

But the beaten chiefs were cowed rather than content. They submitted because dissension had made them incapable of resistance. They yielded to terror rather than to justice; and when they came to make their submission to Bingham it was noted that they were so "ghasted with fear" that they looked rather like ghosts than men.⁶⁴ They only waited a favourable opportunity to strike at the hated English, and the opportunity came in 1595, when all Ulster was in arms. Hugh O'Neill had joined his forces with those of O'Donnell and Maguire. Portmore had fallen, and Sligo also, and George Bingham had been killed. Fitzwilliam was then replaced by Sir William Russell; and when the new Deputy came to

⁶² "Four Masters."

⁶³ Knox's "History of Mayo," pp. 253-5.

⁶⁴ Dowcra's "Narrative."

Galway at the end of the year he got so many complaints there of Bingham's savageries that in the next year Bingham was recalled, and Sir Conyers Clifford became President of Connaught.⁶⁵

Important events followed. In 1598 Clifford was defeated by O'Donnell near Ballyshannon; the English of Leinster were badly beaten at Tyrell's Pass; and at the battle of the Yellow Ford the English suffered the greatest defeat they had yet suffered in Ireland.⁶⁶ Finally, in 1599, O'Donnell's men destroyed Clifford's army in the passes of the Curlew Hills, Clifford being among the slain;⁶⁷ and at the end of that year the Mayo and Galway chiefs were all on O'Donnell's side, except the Earl of Clanrickard. And except a few garrison towns, nothing in Connaught remained in English hands.⁶⁸

Rebellion in Mayo.

Meantime O'Donnell had come to Mayo in the end of 1595, and set up a MacWilliam. Many of the Burkes aspired to the honour, nor could they agree among themselves. Ultimately, Theobald, son of Walter Burke, was chosen by O'Donnell, and proclaimed The MacWilliam on the mound of Rausakeera, near Kilmaine. O'Donnell himself was present, with 1,800 of his soldiers, and so were the Burke, McDonnell and O'Malley chiefs. Those whose allegiance was doubtful he sent as hostages to Tyrconnell; and O'Donnell spent Christmas with the new MacWilliam at the castle of Brize near Claremorris.⁶⁹ The next year MacWilliam joined his forces with O'Donnell to oppose the English under General Norris, but both armies, on opposite banks of the Robe, separated without battle. The fact was that negotiations for a peace were going on. But they came to nothing, and early in 1597 O'Donnell and MacWilliam wasted Clanrickard's territory. The castle of Athenry was too strong and

⁶⁵ Hardiman's "History of Galway," p. 94.

⁶⁶ "Four Masters."

⁶⁷ O'Clery's "Life of Red Hugh O'Donnell."

⁶⁸ D'Alton's "History of Ireland," II, p. 161.

⁶⁹ O'Clery's "Red Hugh O'Donnell," pp. 113-15.

too well defended to be captured. But O'Donnell's men burst open the town gates, and burned all the houses in the town, leaving the church and abbey untouched. Till then Athenry was prosperous, but its destruction by O'Donnell, and the plunder of the inhabitants was so complete, that it never recovered its prosperity.⁷⁰

In 1598 MacWilliam was with O'Donnell at the Yellow Ford. In 1599 he desolated the district round Aghagower because the inhabitants there were unfriendly, and in this he had the assistance of O'Donnell's troops.⁷¹ And in 1600 O'Donnell and MacWilliam plundered both Thomond and Clanrickard.⁷² But the Mayo chiefs were not content with their lot. The fact was that O'Donnell had outraged the feelings of many of these chiefs by his appointment of Theobald MacWalter to be The MacWilliam; and he had made war as frequently and almost with as destructive an effect as Bingham.⁷³ There was, therefore, no enthusiasm among the Mayo chiefs, either for MacWilliam or O'Donnell, and when the turn of the tide came in 1601 the Burkes set up an opposition MacWilliam in the person of Richard Burke, son of the Devil's Hook, who was, however, soon killed in battle.⁷⁴ MacWilliam went with his patron to Munster in 1601, and shared his defeat at Kinsale. His subsequent history we do not know. What we do know is that his fall ended rebellion in Mayo.⁷⁵

Dr. O'Hely, Archbishop.

During these troubled times we catch a passing glimpse of the Catholic Archbishop of Tuam. The place and time of his birth, and the place of his education are unknown. But his capacity and character must have been appreciated at Rome, else he would not have been appointed to so high an office.

⁷⁰ O'Clery, pp. 131-3; Hardiman's "History of Galway," pp. 94-5.

⁷¹ *Ibid.* p. 189.

⁷² *Ibid.* p. 245.

⁷³ Knox's "Mayo," p. 269

⁷⁴ "Four Masters."²

⁷⁵ O'Clery's "Red Hugh O'Donnell," Introduction, p. 143.

Though we do not know in what year he was appointed, he was certainly Archbishop in 1592, when the Mayo chiefs were in rebellion. He was then using his influence in uniting all these chiefs against the English, and in forming an alliance between them and Red Hugh O'Donnell, who had escaped from Dublin Castle. Bingham informed the government that he had intercepted letters from Dr. O'Hely to O'Donnell, and was much annoyed that the Burkes depended so much on the Archbishop's advice.⁷⁶

With the Irish bishops O'Hely was in high favour, and it was as their agent he went to Spain (1593) and obtained a promise of aid from the Spanish King. In 1594 he left Spain for Ireland. But he never reached his own country. For while the ship conveying him waited at Santander for more favourable weather to set sail, the captain quarrelled with some man and killed him, and to avoid imprisonment, and perhaps death, he set sail before the winds had abated. Disaster soon overtook him, and in the open sea the ship, with all on board, went down.⁷⁷ And in 1595 both O'Neill and O'Donnell appealed to the King of Spain, telling him that his letters, sent by the Archbishop, had never reached Ireland—the fact being that both the Archbishop and the letters were at the bottom of the sea.⁷⁸

Persecution and Spoliation.

The episcopal career of the Archbishop was short, and in Ireland his duties must have been discharged with difficulty. Sir John Perrott was thought much of in Connaught, and yet he declared in his last will that he abhorred the Mass; that he never favoured friars, "or such kind of vermin," and that while in Ireland he suppressed more monasteries and friars than was done by all the governors of Ireland for thirty years.⁷⁹ If such a boast could be made by Perrott, what might be

⁷⁶ Knox's "History of Mayo," pp. 248-9.

⁷⁷ O'Clery's "Red Hugh O'Donnell," Introduction, pp. 51-2.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.* p. 76.

⁷⁹ "The History of Sir John Perrott," pp. 307-11.

expected from Bingham? He drove the Blind Abbot from Mayo, and forced him to die in Clare;⁸⁰ and the Blind Abbot was only a layman. But what would he not have done to the Archbishop of Tuam, who was urging the Burkes in rebellion to unite with O'Donnell, and who was seeking aid from the King of Spain? It is true that the Archbishop was not put to death, only because he was not captured by Bingham. For the same reason there were still priests in Tuam who ministered to the people. When the Catholic chiefs were strong enough they defied the English, and protected the priests and religious establishments. When they were weak, the priests were outlawed, and the abbey and monastic lands were seized by greedy officials. And in these cases where government grants were made to local lords, the latter often acted in the interests of the monks and friars, paying rent for the lands themselves, which was repaid by the monks and friars, who by this means were left protected and undisturbed.⁸¹ But in many cases it was not the local and Catholic chiefs who got the confiscated Church lands, but rather adventurers from England, or Irishmen of English descent, whose sympathies were known to be with England; or, again, to those who held office in Connaught, either civil or military.

Thus it happened that before the close of the sixteenth century, strangers had already settled in Mayo. The Binghamms were firmly planted at Castlebar and at Cloongashel, near Ballinrobe. John Browne had more than 5,000 acres in Mayo, and of these acres nearly 1,500 were free of even the composition rent. His nephews had settled at the Neale, where their descendants still remain. Bowen and Garvey settled in the parish of Hollymount. In addition, there were merchants from Galway, like the Blakes, who were buying land in Mayo.⁸²

In Galway there was less change. The country of the O'Flaherties and Joyces was too poor to attract the cupidity of

⁸⁰ "Four Masters" at 1598.

⁸¹ Knox's "History of Mayo," p. 163.

⁸² *Ibid.* pp. 218-9; "Blake Family Records."

settlers, either Irish or English. And Clanrickard being on the side of the government, was left in possession of his castles and lands.

The Inquisition of 1591.

But though Protestants were thus established both in Galway and Mayo, and Catholic possessions were passing from Catholic hands, there must have been many priests in the Archdiocese of Tuam when the Inquisition of 1591 was taken. It was taken by someone acting in the interests of the government, and probably under the supervision of the Protestant Archbishop, Lally, whose name appears often in the State Papers of the time, and always on the side of the government. There are three divisions: the incumbents, the prebends with the prebendaries, and the vicars. There is nothing said about the amount of Church property, the state of the Church buildings and religious establishments, the provision (if any) made for education or for charity, so that the Inquisition is incomplete, and is, in fact, little more than a list of names.

In spite of this it is of much value. The Queen is put down as Rector of Galway, Killascobe, Cong, Turlough and Roba, and of many other places as well. But this does not imply that she exercised spiritual functions in these places, only that the Church property had passed into her hands, and that she could appoint the rector if she pleased. The Dean of Tuam was named Brown; he was also Dean of Mayo and Rector of Athenry. The name would indicate that he was English, or of English descent, and probably he was a Protestant, his Protestantism consisting, like that of the Queen, in abhorrence of the Pope as the enemy of England. The Archdeacon bore the unmistakably Irish name, O'Konovan, no doubt another form of Canavan; and the name of the Provost was O'Horan, which was also Irish. Such men as these, owing their honours and benefices to the Protestant Archbishop, would be, like him, at least nominal Protestants; and the same would be true of Thomas Nolan, Rector of

Ballinrobe, where English power was strong. But in O'Malley's Country, in Joyce Country, and in Iar-Connaught, where Irish law was still enforced, the rectors and vicars were Catholics, giving their allegiance to the Pope rather than to the Queen. Hence we find in Kilmaclasser Thomas O'Huban; in Moyrus and Ballindoon, David O'Chuniffe; and in Burrishoole, Hubert Og.

The districts where the Earl of Clanrickard and Bermingham were powerful stood in a different category. Both these noblemen were professing Catholics, but were loyal to the Queen, and always on the side of her President. We need not, therefore, be surprised to learn that John Bermingham was Vicar of Kilbannon, Kilcloony and Liskeevy, and it may be taken that as all the Berminghams were Catholics so was he. And Laurence O'Grady, Vicar of Kilmeen, would be allowed to discharge his duties as a Catholic priest because he was under the patronage and protection of the Earl of Clanrickard.⁸³

After Kinsale, English power became definitely and finally established even in Galway and Mayo; the lines of division between Catholic and Protestant became more sharply defined, and Penal laws could be not only enacted but enforced.

⁸³ Knox's "History of Tuam," pp. 222-27.

CHAPTER XI.

THE SUPPRESSED RELIGIOUS HOUSES.

The Abbey of Knockmoy.

THE religious houses of the Archdiocese of Tuam fared badly under the Tudor sovereigns. Augustinians and Franciscans, Dominicans and Cistercians, all suffered; all were flourishing when the first Tudor king ascended the English throne; and when the last of these Tudor sovereigns had passed away, the religious houses had all but disappeared. The few that still remained existed rather than flourished; their possessions in the hands of laymen, their members scattered, their greatness only a memory.

One of the most famous of all these was the Cistercian Abbey of Knockmoy, though it was not the first in point of time. An interval of more than fifty years separates its foundation from that of Mellifont, the first of the Cistercian houses which were established in Ireland. This was in 1142, in the days of the great St. Malachy. He had to lament to St. Bernard that the primitive fervour of the early Irish monasteries had long passed away; and that in the early years of the twelfth century the Irish monks were monks only in name.¹ Abuses in the Church were many and grave. There was a confusing diversity of liturgies, there were no synods, preaching was neglected, the sacraments of Baptism, Penance and Confirmation were not administered, in too many cases concubinage had supplanted marriage; and little could be expected from a clergy among whom simony was common. St. Malachy

¹ St. Bernard's "Life of St. Malachy."

judged that the example of the Cistercians would have a powerful effect for good : that their life of prayer and sacrifice and self-denial, their habit of constant labour, their charity to the poor and the distressed would be as a light amid the gloom. And the Cistercians became so popular that many other houses were founded throughout Ireland—at Bective, Baltinglass and Boyle, to name but a few.

It was from Boyle that Knockmoy was founded. The Anglo-Normans had then (in 1198) been in Ireland for thirty years. They came, if we are to believe Henry II. and his admirers, to plant the seeds of virtue in a corrupt Church, and to root out the seeds of vice.² But they had only added to the existing confusion and disorder. They had spread desolation far and wide; they had pulled down churches and religious houses which ages of internal disorder had spared; and when Cathal Crovderg O'Connor founded Knockmoy, Tuam had known what was the difference between Anglo-Norman promises and the fulfilment of them; for even Tuam had seen the horrors of an Anglo-Norman invasion, wanton and unprovoked. Still greater disorder resulted from the rivalries and ambition of the western chiefs themselves. There was then, in 1198, urgent need in the Archdiocese for a centre of religion and reform, as there had been in Armagh when Mellifont was founded. Nor was it inappropriate that Cathal Crovderg should wish to atone for all the blood he had spilled, and for all the violent deeds he had done by establishing and endowing a great religious house, to which he himself retired, and in which, clothed in the Cistercian habit, he died.

His original gift of land was considerable, and was added to in the centuries which followed. Spread over a period of one hundred and fifty years, no less than eleven charters were given to the Abbey, some giving lands or tithes, and others confirmatory of grants already made. Crovderg in the days of his power had lands in abundance, and he gave not only in the neighbourhood of the Abbey but also at Galway. In 1275 the Archbishop of Tuam, Thomas O'Connor, gave by

² D'Alton's "History of Ireland," I, pp. 237-8 (Copy of Adrian's Bull).

charter the church and parsonage of Idermoda; and a subsequent Archbishop, in 1292, or thereabouts, gave the Abbey the rectory of Kilfege or Killascobe. There were also charters given by the bishops of Killala, Elphin and Kilmacduagh, and one by the Red Earl of Ulster; but what they gave in each case does not appear.

The property thus acquired by the grants of generous chiefs and equally generous bishops was considerable. This we find from the enumeration of the Abbey's possessions in two royal grants of the reign of James I. From these documents it would appear that the Abbey of Knockmoy had nearly 2,000 acres of land, besides tithes. In addition, there was the right of preferment to the parishes of Killascobe and Idermoda, of Oranbeg, near Oranmore, and the "rectory and vicarage of Galway." This being the case, it was little wonder that the position of abbot was sometimes held by an O'Connor prince or an O'Kelly chief, nor that covetous eyes were cast on the broad acres which made up the monastic possessions. And if the O'Kellys, in whose territory of Hy-Many the Abbey lay, were often generous benefactors, an O'Kelly was also found to betray his trust, and received from the hands of an apostate king the possessions of the great Abbey as the price of his own apostasy.

This was Hugh O'Kelly, who, in 1541, acknowledged Henry VIII. as head of his Church, and in doing so renounced the spiritual supremacy of the Pope. By that time the possession of so much wealth had done its work, and the Cistercians of the sixteenth century had departed a long distance from the simplicity of the days of St. Malachy. But Knockmoy would have sunk to a low level, indeed, if a layman who had children were its ecclesiastical superior, living within the Abbey enclosure. What is much more probable is that Hugh O'Kelly, as the son of the ruling Hy-Many chief, was entrusted with the guardianship and protection of the Abbey's possessions. In this sense he was abbot in *commendam*, a not unusual arrangement when there was a difficulty in finding within the walls of the abbey a suitable member of the

order to fill the office of ecclesiastical superior, and defend the possessions and rights of his house.

But Hugh O'Kelly betrayed the abbey which he had promised to defend. Nor did he receive a large reward for his treachery; for the grant to him by the government of the Abbey lands was only during the "King's pleasure"; and this might mean much or little according to the caprice of the reigning sovereign. Anxious above all to keep in his hands the plundered possessions of the great Abbey, O'Kelly's religious convictions were as flexible as the age required; and when Henry and his son were gone, and the Catholic Mary reigned, O'Kelly still managed to hold the lands of Knockmoy. We find, indeed, that in 1557 he assigned the collection of the Abbey tithes in Galway to one Nicholas Blake; but he did so in conjunction with the Prior of the Convent, as if this were insisted on under the rule of a Catholic queen. Subsequently his ill-gotten possessions passed from the hands of his family, and the family itself fell from its high position. In 1566 the Abbey and the lands of Knockmoy were granted by Queen Elizabeth to one Andrew Brereton, an Englishman, no doubt. Later they fell into the hands of Nicholas Fitzsimons of Galway, then to the Mayor and Corporation of Galway, after which for a time they were leased to Sir Patrick Barnwell.

Finally, one part of the Abbey's possessions was given in fee simple to Sir John King and Sir Adam Loftus, much the larger portion having been granted to Sir Valentine Blake, of Galway. These lands were created "The Manor of Knockmoy"; and Blake was authorised to hold courts, leet and baron, and to hold a weekly market and a yearly fair. Since that date the lands have remained in the Blake family.³

But one other Cistercian house existed in the Archdiocese, and this was a cell to Knockmoy, and was situated in Clare Island. Its possessions could not have been valuable, nor its community large. It was, no doubt, supported by the mother

³ M. J. Blake in "Galway Archæological Journal," vol. i, No. II. In this valuable paper, the result of much research, all the authorities are given.

house of Knockmoy, and was selected perhaps for a change of air, for health purposes, and perhaps also for greater retirement. It would have been suitable for both these purposes. For the sea breeze was invigorating. Nor could any place be more desolate and lonely than this rocky and barren isle, where solitude held sway, and where the dwellers had forever in their ears the moaning of a restless sea.⁴

The Premonstratensians.

On the shores of Lough Corrib, at Annaghdown, the sons of St. Norbert had erected their Premonstratensian Abbey. The exact date of its foundation is unknown; but it could hardly have been as early as that of Knockmoy. It was called the Monastery or Abbey of the Little Cell. This description would indicate that the community was not a large one. But the Abbot had certainly a right to appoint to the church of Foranmore, and perhaps to other churches as well;⁵ and in some cases a member of the community, one of the canons, was raised to the episcopacy. Its importance declined gradually, its possessions dwindled, and at the time of the suppression of the monasteries it had entirely disappeared.⁶ There was also the Premonstratensian Abbey of Holy Trinity at Tuam. It was said to have been founded by De Burgo in the early part of the thirteenth century, and owned about one hundred acres of land. Its history is even less known than that of its sister house at Annaghdown; and, like Annaghdown, it must have disappeared before the period of the suppression of the monasteries.⁷ We may then take it that the Premonstratensian Order never filled a large place in the ecclesiastical history of the Archdiocese; and that when Elizabeth laid greedy hands on the broad acres owned by the religious communities, there was nothing to satisfy her cupidity in the Premonstratensian houses of Tuam or Annaghdown.

⁴ Knox's "History of Mayo," p. 94.

⁵ "Calendar of Papal Registers," IV, p. 414.

⁶ Knox's "Tuam," p. 274.

⁷ *Ibid.* p. 274.

Cong Abbey.

The Canons Regular of St. Augustine held a much greater position, and were much more richly endowed. Such early foundations as Ardoilean and Omey, Kileana and Killursa, were centres of missionary activity of solitary men, and never attained to the status of great abbeys. But Cong, which owed its origin to St. Fechin, became in the twelfth century one of the greatest religious establishments of the Archdiocese. Its position on the main highway connecting the districts east of the lakes with those of the west admirably fitted it to be a centre of missionary activity. The fame of St. Fechin made it hallowed ground long after St. Fechin had passed away. It was in the twelfth century the seat of a bishop; but when diocesan episcopacy had finally replaced the ancient monastic system, the diocese of Cong disappeared. It has been suggested that Annaghdown represented the suppressed see of Cong; for Annaghdown is not mentioned till the twelfth century, while Cong ceases to be mentioned as a diocese after that date.⁸ But a better way of describing the position is that Tuam absorbed Cong, and that to provide for the needs of the districts beyond the Corrib, hitherto under the rule of Cong, a new see was established at Annaghdown.⁹

It was Turlogh O'Connor who first brought the Augustinian Canons to Cong, and it was his son, Rory, the last of the Ardris, who built for these Canons the beautiful Abbey, beautiful to-day, even in its ruins. It was within the shelter of the Abbey that Roderick spent his last days, and there he died. And both the O'Connors and the Burkes, who at a later period dispossessed them, gave lands to the Augustinian Canons at Cong with no niggard hand.

The donors to the Comharbs of St. Fechin include two Ardris, and Turlogh O'Connor and his son, Roderick, were even more generous than they. The arrangement between the Archbishop of Tuam and the Abbot of Cong, in the early years of the thirteenth century, left the Abbey shorn of some of its

⁸ O'Flaherty's "Iar-Connaught," p. 155.

⁹ Dr. Fahy in "Galway Archæological Journal," III, p. 104.

possessions, but yet not poor. The Burkes of a later age emulated the generosity of their predecessors; and when the possessions of the Abbey came to be reckoned up, early in the seventeenth century, they were found to be considerable. It had lands in three counties—in Galway, Mayo and Roscommon, the greater part of these being in Mayo. The whole amounted to 4,620 acres of land, if we reckon 120 acres to a quarter.

No doubt some of these lands, like those in the barony of Ross in Galway were not of a high quality; but Creevagh and Drumshiel and Lisloughry, in the parishes of Cong and Kilmolara, were not inferior in quality; and the same could probably be said of the lands of Lisduff in Roscommon. And the tithes of the parishes the Abbey owned were of valuable and productive lands. These parishes were Kilmaine, Shrile, Kilmolara, Kilcommon, Ballinrobe and Cong; and these parishes contain some of the finest lands in Mayo. In the north of the same county, in distant Tirawley, and in Sligo, in the barony of Tireragh, the Abbey had 1,200 acres, and had also the tithes of these and other lands. It had also the tithes of the fishing of the Moy from its source to the sea: and at the sea every ship that entered the river's mouth was bound to give a bell rope to the Abbey of Cong.

Nor was this all. Cormac MacCarthy invaded Connaught in 1133, and after killing the royal heir of the O'Connors, and demolishing the O'Connor fortress of Dunmore, left, having plundered the most part of the province.¹⁰ Perhaps it was in atonement for these deeds of violence that MacCarthy became generous to the Abbey of Cong. Dr. Healy, Archbishop of Tuam, suggests this, and the suggestion is eminently reasonable. Certainly he was generous, and among the rights and privileges he accorded Cong was the right to a bell rope from every vessel that entered the harbour at Cork. Further, the Abbot of Cork was bound, on the day of his installation in office, to give 16 half marks of gold to the Abbot of Cong for the gilding of his chalices; and he was also bound to give him

¹⁰ "Annals of Loch Ce."

a supply of vestments. This particular grant was either remitted in after ages by the Abbot of Cong, or perhaps considered unduly irksome by the Abbot of Cork, and as such repudiated by MacCarthy's successor. But even if it be omitted, Cong was rich. Nor is it wonderful that a religious house which owned nearly five thousand acres of land and half the tithes of eleven parishes in Mayo, besides its possessions in Sligo, Roscommon and Galway, stood out in dignity and influence throughout the whole province.

The confiscation of its property could not take place until Mayo was brought under English rule. But in 1597 we find that one Edmond Barrett got from the Crown some of the lands of the Abbey of Cong in Mayo and Sligo "in consideration of his wounds and for his services in the war manifestly rendered."¹¹ Two years later fifty acres of arable land, "part of the lands and possessions of the Abbey of Cong," were given to Trinity College.¹² In 1609 the whole remaining possessions of Cong Abbey were given by royal grant to John Bingley and John King, two English Protestants. And thus were the Canons Regular of St. Augustine at Cong despoiled.¹³

Mayo Abbey.

At Mayo Abbey the course of events was similar. After the absorption of the See by Tuam the Abbey church became a secular collegiate church. But in the fourteenth century Archbishop O'Grady had the place put under the rule of the Canons Regular of St. Augustine, and in 1411 the Pope took the community under his protection, confirming the Canons in all the possessions and privileges which they held. Nor were these inconsiderable. For they had under their jurisdiction the parish churches of Robeen and Loona, the rectories of Tagheen and Tirnachtan, the perpetual vicarages of Kilcolman and Roslee, "with confirmation of all papal

¹¹ Morrin's "Patent and Close Rolls," p. 313.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 416.

¹³ Knox's "Tuam," pp. 258-262.

liberties and immunities and all liberties and exemptions, granted by kings, princes and others, from secular exactions.¹⁴

The reformers cared little for Papal grants or Papal privileges, but it was otherwise with the tithes, and above all with the rich lands of the ancient Abbey. For the most part these lands were situated near the Abbey itself, and are easily recognisable—such as Ardcorkey and Portagh and Freheen and Kilecolla, which in later ages became Brownhall. These townlands were in the modern parish of Mayo, while Garrynabba is in Kilcolman, and Kiltrone in Robeen. The lands were about 1,200 acres in extent, and were rich in quality. They fell in part to Geoffrey Brown and one Dillon, and in part to the provost and burgesses of Athenry, and thus the possessions of Mayo like Cong disappeared.¹⁵

St. John's.

The Abbey of St. John the Baptist in Tuam was given to Lord Clanrickard before 1562. But it is not quite certain that its inmates were Augustinian Canons, and it is certain that its possessions were not extensive or very valuable, and that it never filled in the history of the Archdiocese anything approaching the commanding position held by Cong, or even Mayo.¹⁶

Ballintubber Abbey.

Ballintubber stood on a different level, and was one of the greatest religious foundations west of the Shannon. Like Knockmoy, it owed its establishment to Cathal Crovderg O'Connor, and it owed much to his liberality and to the liberality of the Burkes of Mayo. Other donors mentioned are Walsh and Joyce and Butler, as well as two Archbishops of Tuam, John de Burgo and Donatus O'Murray.

A careless abbot, who forgot his duties and became immersed in secular pursuits, might easily be tempted to waste

¹⁴ "Calendar of Papal Registers," VI, pp. 274, 277, 290.

¹⁵ Knox's "Tuam," p. 263; Harris's "Ware."

¹⁶ *Ibid.* p. 265.

and perhaps alienate the valuable possessions of the Abbey, and such an abbot lived in the fifteenth century. For there is a Papal letter, dated 1462, addressed to the Abbot of the Monastery of St. John the Baptist at Tuam, and to two Canons of the Archdiocese, directing them to investigate grave charges of malversation against one Thomas O'Ronain, Abbot of Ballintubber. And if these charges were proved he was to be deposed from his office.¹⁷ Whether these grave charges were proved or not, and whether, as a consequence, O'Ronain lost his position, does not appear. It is, however, certain that the Abbey was rich in lands and in tithes in the sixteenth century, and when the last abbot, Walter MacEvilly, submitted to Henry VIII., in 1542, the Crown had many acres with which to enrich its greedy dependents and supporters. This surrender of MacEvilly, however, was little more than nominal, for English rule had then no footing in Mayo; and not until the reign of Elizabeth was Ballintubber and its lands in actual occupation of the Crown.

There were many eager to get a share of the spoils, and it is from these royal grants that we discover what was the nature and extent of the Abbey property. The first of these grants was a lease for twenty-one years, given in 1569, to Edward Fitzalexander. The second grant apparently ignored, in part at least, the lease to Alexander, for this was a lease of the Abbey lands given to the Corporation of Galway in 1578. Again there was a further grant of Abbey lands to John Bingley and John King in 1608, two Englishmen already enriched by the lands of the Abbey of Cong. And there was also a lease of some of the Abbey lands to Sir John Everard in 1610. Finally, in 1619, there was a fee-farm grant of these lands to Richard Blake of Galway. He had probably, in Ballintubber as at Knockmoy, lent money by way of mortgage on these Church lands, and in return he got in due course his fee-farm grant. He got power to hold courts leet and baron, and to hold a weekly market at Ballintubber, and a yearly fair on the feast of Saints Simon and Jude. The

¹⁷ Theiner, "Vetera Monumenta Hibernorum."

amount of lands given to him was 18 quarters, which would be more than 2,000 acres.

But this was only part of the possessions of the Abbey. It had more than 25 quarters and nearly 25 townlands scattered over the modern parishes of Burriscarra and Ballintubber, Robeen, Kilmaine, Drum, Ballyheane and Killawalla. It had property even in Erris, where a cell belonging to Ballintubber was established at Cross. And it had the tithes of all these lands. If, therefore, we put 120 acres for each quarter of land, and include the number of townlands also, the Abbey, apart from its tithes, must have been in possession of more than 5,000 acres of land.¹⁸

Smaller Houses.

Two very much smaller foundations connected with the name of St. Augustine were Annagh and Killeenacrava. Both were houses for females. Annagh was founded early in the fifteenth century by Walter Burke, and was a cell of Cong Abbey. It was situated in Robeen parish, on the shore of Lough Carra, and never owned more than 300 acres of land. Killeenacrava, a little to the west of Ballinrobe, was still smaller and still poorer. Its church was small; its community of Canonesses of St. Augustine must have been few; and at the suppression of religious houses, in the sixteenth century, it owned about 60 acres of land.¹⁹

But all this does not exhaust the religious establishments of the Archdiocese associated with the name of St. Augustine. For the Augustinian Hermits had houses in Ballinrobe and Burriscarra, Ballyhaunis, Dunmore and Murrisk. These friars—for they were friars and not monks—were of a later date than the Augustinian Canons, and were really an aggregation of scattered congregations placed under one rule and authority by Pope Alexander IV. in 1265. The Order rapidly spread, until, in the sixteenth century, when the troubles of

¹⁸ Knox's "Tuam," pp. 265-71; M. J. Blake's "Ballintubber Abbey"; Archdall's "Monasticon Hibernicum."

¹⁹ Knox's "Tuam," pp. 272-3.

the Reformation came, there were 3,000 convents of Augustinian Hermits and 30,000 friars.

The Augustinians.

The date at which Ballinrobe was founded is uncertain. Knox suggests that its founder was Maurice Fitzgerald of Offaly, who in the thirteenth century held the whole surrounding district. Whoever founded it, and whatever the date of its foundation, it was certainly in existence in the early part of the fourteenth century. For when the Burkes took the son of the Earl prisoner they lodged him in the house of the Augustinian Hermits at Ballinrobe. This was in 1338. The history of the house is obscure. The church was a good one; but the community being of the mendicant order had not the broad acres of Ballintubber or Cong; and when the suppression came the Augustinian Hermits at Ballinrobe were discovered to have but 120 acres of land. They had, in addition, part of two acres and a mill and watercourse. This latter, however, was the property of the Prior of Kilmainham. It was originally called St. John's, and perhaps was originally a small establishment of the Knights Templars, subsequently transferred to the Augustinian Hermits. The lands once owned by the friars are still called Friar's Quarter.

Burriscarra was founded by Stanton of Carra, and was originally a Carmelite house. But it was transferred to the Augustinian Hermits in 1412 by order of Pope John XXIII. Its history is little known, nor was its property more extensive than that of its sister house at Ballinrobe.

Ballyhaunis was also a poor establishment, and was founded probably by the Costelloes. It has had the rare distinction of weathering the storm during the Penal times, for the community, a small one as of old, exists still.²⁰

The Augustinian House at Dunmore owed its foundation in 1423 to Bermingham, Lord of Athenry, as it owed its preservation from the spoiler to another Bermingham in 1541.

²⁰ Knox's "Tuam," pp. 275-6.

But the provision that only the prior and four friars could remain there, and that these should cast off their habits and put on secular dress, diminished its importance, and restricted its missionary activity. In after times the chancel of the friars' church was converted into a parish church. But meantime the friars clung tenaciously, and no doubt secretly, to their ancient home. The persecutions of Elizabeth and James were impotent to scatter the community. There was then a return to better times in the reign of Charles, and when the rebellion of 1641 broke out there were in the Augustinian house at Dunmore a prior and 30 friars. They went about openly in their habits, had their oratory, dormitory and refectory as in ancient days, "and observe the rights of their order as fully as when they were in Spain."²¹

The only other Augustinian house in the Archdiocese was at Murrisk. The name signifies the sea marsh—a suitable name, since Murrisk stands on Clew Bay, and is forever listening to the voice of the great sea. And it was appropriately selected as the site of a religious foundation, for it stands within the shadow of the great mountain on the rugged summit of which St. Patrick so often fasted and prayed. At Murrisk itself St. Patrick built a church, over which he placed his disciple, Rodan, as bishop. The founder of the Augustinian house was O'Malley, chief of the district; the time of the foundation the fourteenth century, the amount of the endowment being 120 acres of land. What the number of the friars was we do not know. But the O'Malleys were not ungenerous, and the community, judging by the remains of the church, was not poor. In 1578 the friars were driven out, and a lease for 21 years of Abbey and lands was given by the Crown to James Garvey, brother of the Protestant Archbishop of Armagh. In 1615 the eldest son of the same Archbishop got a grant in fee, with even a larger quantity of

²¹ Knox's "Tuam," p. 276; Archdall, II, p. 205; Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," p. 125; Rev. J. Neary in "Galway Archæological Journal." The mention of Spain refers to their having been educated there.

land than his uncle had got, and lands and Abbey have ever since remained in the hands of the Garvey family.²²

The Carmelites.

Enthusiastic admirers of the Carmelites trace back their origin to Elias, whom they name as the founder, maintaining that the Order has flourished without a break from the days of Elias until now. And Ireland, it is said, was at a very early period brought into contact with the Carmelites. For Palladius was a Carmelite, and was in Ireland before St. Patrick came, though even his friends must admit that in Ireland he was not a striking success.²³ More reasonable than this is the view that the Carmelite Order was founded in the end of the twelfth century, and had many houses in England, and some in Ireland, when St. Simon Stock was Carmelite General in 1245. But though the Order established many houses in Ireland, and had among its members more than one famous man, it made no great progress in Tuam. The O'Flaherties founded one house at Ballynahinch, but this is all we know of the house in question.²⁴ The O'Malleys founded a small house in Clare Island in 1224. It was a suitable site, desolate, remote, and wind-swept, if the original spirit of the order were to be observed. For the Carmelites could not own property, nor eat meat, nor live in community, but must live in separate cells. These strict rules were relaxed in 1247. Subsequently the Carmelite cell in Clare Island passed into the hands of the Cistercians, and was subject, still as a cell, to the Abbot of Knockmoy.²⁵

A similar fate befell Burriscarra, which was founded by Stanton, Lord of Carra, in the thirteenth century, was abandoned by the Carmelites, and then given over by Pope John XXIII., in 1412, to the Augustinian Hermits.²⁶

²² Knox's "History of Mayo," p. 359; M. J. Blake in "Galway Archaeological Journal," VIII, pp. 50-51.

²³ Rushe's "Carmel in Ireland," pp. 21-2.

²⁴ Archdall, II, p. 198.

²⁵ Knox's "Tuam," p. 289.

²⁶ Rushe's "Carmel in Ireland," p. 29.

Ballinsmala near Claremorris lived longer. It owed its origin to the Prendergasts, who were lords of the Clanmorris barony, and was probably founded in the thirteenth century. It owned one quarter of land, and had a mill, and probably was not a large community. Its history is obscure. The Prendergast property, including the strong castle of Brize and the abbey of Ballinsmala passed, in 1585, from its ancient owners to one Francis Barkly, Provost Marshal for Connaught, a government official, and presumably an Englishman. Thence it passed into the hands of the Moores of Louth, who settled at Brize, and had at Ballinsmala Abbey a vaulted tomb as the family burial place. Ballinsmala finally passed by marriage into the hands of the Lynch-Blosses of Balla, and thus the last of the Carmelite houses in the Archdiocese disappeared.²⁷

The Dominicans.

There were but three Dominican houses—Athenry, Tombeola, and Burrishoole, the best known of which was Athenry. As a Bermingham had been the founder and the Berminghams were lords of Athenry, and had been generous benefactors to the establishment which their ancestor had founded, and as they had in the troubled times of the Tudors sided with the government rather than with the people, it might have been thought that at the suppression they would be the chief sharers in the spoil. But there had been other benefactors as well as the Berminghams—among them the O'Connors, the O'Kellys, the Archbishops of Tuam, and the Burkes, as well as the burgesses of Athenry. Nor, indeed, is there any reason to think that Bermingham wanted to despoil the Abbey with which his name had been so long and so honourably identified.

The Athenry Dominicans, in 1541, petitioned that their house should be exempt from the suppression. Probably this petition was supported by Clanrickard and Bermingham and

²⁷ Knox's "Tuam," p. 300; Rushe, p. 36; M. J. Blake in "Galway Archæological Journal," VIII, pp. 44-49.

by the inhabitants of Athenry itself, which had always been an English town. The result was that it was spared, the reason given by the Irish Council being that as the monastery was situated among the Irishry, and that by the dissolution thereof our sovereign lord, Henry VIII., should have little or no profit, therefore it was to be spared. It was conceded that "the said house of friars shall stand without dissolution. . . . And that said Adam Coppinger (the Prior) and his brethren, changing their habit and weeds of a friar into a secular habit, shall have and continue the name of custos of that place until such time as our said sovereign lord the King's Majesty shall determine the contrary." That time came in the reign of Elizabeth, and in 1574 there was a lease of the site of the monastery given to one Thomas Lewis. But the lease seems not to have taken effect, for the same year the abbey and lands were given by royal grant to the Provost and Burgesses of Athenry. Special mention is made of the site of the Abbey, a water-mill and twelve cottages and land in Athenry and its immediate neighbourhood.²⁸ O'Heyne, who had been a pupil there, adds that the Abbey had in all 1,500 acres of land.²⁹ In 1627 these lands and other possessions passed into the hands of four Galway merchants, who were dispossessed by the Cromwellians in 1655, at which time the lands were given to Henry Farrelly, a transplanted Catholic from Tipperary. But he, too, was despoiled, and the Abbey and all it once owned were given to Captain Hugh Montgomery.³⁰

Though dispossessed, the Dominicans were not extinguished. Protected by Clanrickard,³¹ and near the old home though not in it, they continued their old work during the persecutions of Elizabeth and James. In 1629 there were but five fathers, two young clerics and a lay brother; but in 1644 the community had so far recovered lost ground that the Abbey became a general house of studies for the Order.

²⁸ O'Heyne's "Irish Dominicans," Appendix, pp. 79, 85.

²⁹ *Ibid.* p. 169.

³⁰ M. J. Blake's "Athenry Abbey" (reprint).

³¹ O'Heyne's "Irish Dominicans," p. 173.

Spoliation and exile came with the Cromwellians in 1653; but the Cromwellians passed away, and the Restoration came, and again Athenry Abbey flourished. And it recovered so rapidly that when O'Heyne received the habit of the Order in 1665 the Abbey had 300 scholars in its school. In 1685 the old Abbey buildings were entirely restored to the Dominicans under a Catholic king. But again the tide turned, and the Dominicans were driven forth by Penal Laws.³² Yet the Dominicans clung to Athenry, and when the long night of persecution was passed they still remained. Nor did they finally disappear until the opening of the twentieth century, and then voluntarily, to make way for another famous Order in the Church.

Tombeola was at best but a small foundation. Situated in a region, mountainous, marshy and thinly populated, it had but eight friars, and was abandoned altogether at the time of the suppression. Even the stones of the building were used by O'Flaherty to build a castle on a little island in Ballinahinch Lake. An attempt was made to re-establish the Dominicans there in the eighteenth century, and for a time there were a few friars at Tombeola. But this community also disappeared.³³

Burrishoole.

Burrishoole was not so rich in possessions, nor founded at such an early date as Athenry, but like Athenry it was tenacious of existence. It was described by Sir Nicholas Malbie in 1579 as an Abbey standing very pleasant upon a river side within three miles of the sea. It was situated on the northern shore of Newport Bay—an inlet of Clew Bay, two miles distant from Newport town. As Burrishoole (the country of the apples) belonged at an early date to the O'Malleys, O'Heyne thought (but erroneously) that the Abbey was founded and endowed by an O'Malley chief. But in reality

³² De Burgo's "Hibernia Dominicana."

³³ O'Heyne, pp. 217-19, Appendix 91; De Burgo's "Hibernia Dominicana," pp. 308-9.

the land of Burrishoole was taken possession of in the thirteenth century by the Butlers, relatives of the Ormond family. In the end of the fourteenth century they too were dispossessed, and Burrishoole passed into the hands of the Burkes of Mayo. It was one of these who founded and endowed the Abbey. He was The MacWilliam of his time, and, therefore, chief of his name in Mayo, his name being Richard. Living in troubled times, and chieftain of his name, he was, no doubt, a warlike man, and had perpetrated in his day many deeds of violence. And perhaps it was to atone for these that he brought the Dominicans to Burrishoole in 1469, and gave them nearly two hundred acres of land. Further, having resigned the chieftaincy, he took the habit of the Dominicans, and in 1473 died in the Abbey at Burrishoole.

But it was punishable by excommunication to found a religious house without Papal dispensation, and this was done in the case of Burrishoole Abbey. It became necessary, in consequence, to appeal to Rome, and the necessary dispensation was granted by Pope Eugene VIII. in 1484. This document not only gave pardon for the past offence, but removed the consequent irregularity; and perhaps it was as a thanksgiving for this that the grandson of the founder presented to the Abbey in 1494 a magnificent chalice. It still exists, and is known as the De Burgo Chalice, and is a beautiful specimen of the Irish metal-worker's art.

For long after this date the history of the Abbey is uneventful. It was undisturbed by the suppressions of Henry, and even the earlier confiscations of Elizabeth. But when Sir Nicholas Malbie came to Mayo he laid sacrilegious hands on the Abbey of Burrishoole. In 1579 he made it his headquarters when making war on the Mayo chiefs. He even fortified it, and when he left Mayo he replaced the Dominican friars by a garrison of 1,000 men. The two townlands which comprised the landed property of the Abbey—Rosnambrahir and Carrowkeel—were given by royal grant in 1606 to John King, famous for receiving monastic lands. He,

however, sold his rights to one Michael Cormack, though Rossnambrahir was taken from Cormack in 1617, and given to Sir John Davies.

All this, however, did not end the Dominican community of Burrishoole. Driven from the shelter of their home and dispossessed of their lands, they continued to reside at Burrishoole, and were there when the Cromwellians came in 1653. Burrishoole had twenty friars in 1731, in the very darkest period of the Penal times; nor did the last of its Dominicans disappear till 1785.³⁴

The Franciscans.

The Franciscans were less prominent in the Archdiocese than the Dominicans, nor did any of the Franciscan houses at any time rival in influence or in possessions the great Dominican house at Athenry. The Third Order of St. Francis had two houses—Templemoyle and Teachsaxon—both in the Newcastle district of the parish of Athenry. Both were founded by members of the Burke family—Templemoyle in 1441, and Teachsaxon during the reign of Henry VII. Both were small establishments, owning but little property, and not imposing in the ruins which remain. Who got possession of these lands is unknown, as is also the date at which they ceased to exist. There was also a small house of the same Order at Kiltulla, in Roscommon, founded by an O'Flynn in 1441, but this is all we know of it.³⁵

At Athenry was a house of the Friars Minors, or Grey Friars. It was founded by the Earl of Kildare in 1464, and was certainly a larger and more important building than Templemoyle or Teachsaxon, and more richly endowed. At the suppression it fell into the hands of the Earl of Clanrickard.³⁶

³⁴ O'Heyne, pp. 219-29, Appendix, pp. 91-3; De Burgo's "Hibernia Dominicana," pp. 317-22; Knox's "Mayo," pp. 158, 179; M. J. Blake in "Galway Archæological Journal," VIII, pp. 50-52; V, pp. 241-3.

³⁵ Knox's "Tuam," pp. 297-8.

³⁶ Archdall, II, p. 198.

Rosserilly.

The best known of the Franciscan houses, however, was Rosserilly near Headford, founded in 1351 by Sir Raymond de Burgo. It was of the Strict Observance, and in due course rose to importance. For in 1474 the Franciscans held a provincial chapter there, and it was on this occasion that Lady Nuala O'Donnell, wife of the Tyrconnell chief, journeyed from the north to Rosserilly to beg of the assembled friars the establishment of a branch of the Order in Tyrconnell. Her request was granted, and Lady Nuala soon saw the famous Franciscan Friary at Donegal.³⁷

The church and monastery at Rosserilly were imposing buildings, but the site was a bleak and desolate one; and a Franciscan house of the Strict Observance, and as such imitated the self-denial of St. Francis of Assisi, was not rich. Father Mooney, the Provincial of the Irish Franciscans, who visited the place in 1608, thus describes it: "Never was a more solitary spot chosen for the habitation of a religious community than that on which Rosserilly stands; for it is surrounded by marshes and bogs; and the stillness that reigns there is seldom broken, save by the tolling of the church bell, or the whirr of the countless flocks of plover and other wild birds that frequent the fens which abound in that desolate region. Another remarkable feature in this locality is that the monastery can only be approached by a causeway paved with large stones over an extent of fully 200 paces, and terminating at the enclosure, which was built in 1572 by Father Ferrall MacEgan, a native of Connaught, and then Provincial of the Irish Franciscans. . . . He was singularly fond of Rosserilly, which he used to compare to the Thebaid, whither the early Christians went for prayer and contemplation.

"As for the church of Rosserilly, it is a beautiful edifice; and the same may be said of the monastery, which, though often garrisoned by English troops during the late war, is still in excellent preservation. Cloister, refectory, dormitory, chapter-house, library, and lofty bell-tower have all survived

³⁷ Meehan's "Franciscan Monasteries," pp. 4-5; Archdall, I, p. 186.

the disasters of that calamitous period; but in 1584 the friars were expelled . . . and monastery and church were by a royal ordinance granted to an Englishman, who laid sacrilegious hands on our vestments, altar-plate, books and muniments, leaving us nothing but bare walls and the rifled tombs of our ancestors.

"It was not long, however, till the friars returned to Rosserilly; for that great and good man, the Earl of Clanrickard, took pity on them, and having purchased the grantee's interest, restored them to their venerable abode." The community then consisted of six priests and two lay brothers. It is pleasant to read of the kindness of the Earl of Clanrickard. Neither should the kindness of the Protestant Archbishop of Tuam be forgotten. In 1601 he was ordered by the Viceroy, Sir Arthur Chichester, to take possession of Rosserilly, and imprison the friars. But he privately warned the latter of their danger, and when the soldiers arrived at the monastery the friars had escaped. They soon returned, and we find *them there in 1641, aiding the unfortunate Protestants* who survived the massacre of Shrile, on which occasion they not only succoured the wounded but gave friendly shelter to the wife of the Bishop of Killala. In 1647 a chapter of the Order was held at Rosserilly, and there were certainly friars there until the end of the seventeenth century. But the Penal Laws which followed, and were enforced, could not be evaded, and when toleration at last came, Rosserilly was deserted and in ruins.³⁸

The Knights Hospitallers.

Of the military orders only the Knights Hospitallers had any establishment in the Archdiocese. It is doubtful if the Priory of St. John at Tuam, founded by Turlogh O'Connor, was at any time a house of the Knights Hospitallers. If it was it had ceased to be so long before the suppression of the

³⁸ Meehan's "Irish Franciscans," pp. 78-9; "Four Masters" at 1604; Wilde's "Lough Corrib," pp. 112-20; Miss Hickson's "Ireland in the 17th Century," II, pp. 254-5.

monasteries. At that date it was the home of the Canons Regular of St. Augustine. It had the right of appointment to and the revenues from the parishes of Aghamore, Annagh and Began, and had, besides, the tithes of nine quarters of land, several of the townlands being in the parishes of Ballindine and Crossboyne. All these, with the Abbey itself, passed by royal grant, in 1570, to the Earl of Clanrickard. Nor do we know how long he left the Abbey in existence after he had become the recognised owner of its lands.³⁹

At Ballinrobe the Knights Hospitallers had a small property consisting of one quarter of land, now called Friar's Quarter, and in addition a small parcel of two acres of land, as well as a mill. At the suppression this land was treated as part of the possessions of the Augustinian Hermits. Indeed, it is not unlikely that the Hospitallers never dwelt in Ballinrobe, but had this small property managed from outside. For it is expressly said that the Hospitallers' land at Ballinrobe was under the Prior of Kilmainham at Dublin.⁴⁰

Kilcreevanty.

The Benedictine nunnery of Kilcreevanty, like the great Abbeys of Knockmoy and Ballintubber, owed its foundation to Crovderg O'Connor. It was founded about 1200, and was endowed with the possessions of several small decayed nunneries, especially the lands owned by the nuns of Clonard. Subsequently many ladies of the princely house of O'Connor became members of the community. This gave the community considerable influence, and the nuns at Kilcreevanty were not always in a submissive mood when the authority of the Archbishop was invoked. These high-placed ladies got on their entrance into the Order, or subsequently received from their friends, large grants of lands, until at the suppression Kilcreevanty was, without question, the richest community of nuns west of the Shannon. They had lands and

³⁹ Knox's "Tuam," pp. 264-5; Archdall, II, pp. 178, 226.

⁴⁰ Knox's "Tuam," p. 275; "Blake Family Records," I, p. 66; "Galway Archæological Journal," IV, pp. 216-17.

tithes and the appointment to parishes in Galway, Mayo, Sligo, Roscommon and Meath. In Galway County they owned nearly 1,000 acres of land, and, in addition, the head rent of many more acres. In Mayo hundreds of acres were also in their possession. They had all the islands in Lough Mask, an eel weir on Cong river, "the town and lands of Ballinchalla," and the tithes of two quarters in the barony of Kilmaine. In Roscommon they had more than 1,000 acres, and also the tithes of three parishes. In Sligo their possessions were little less.

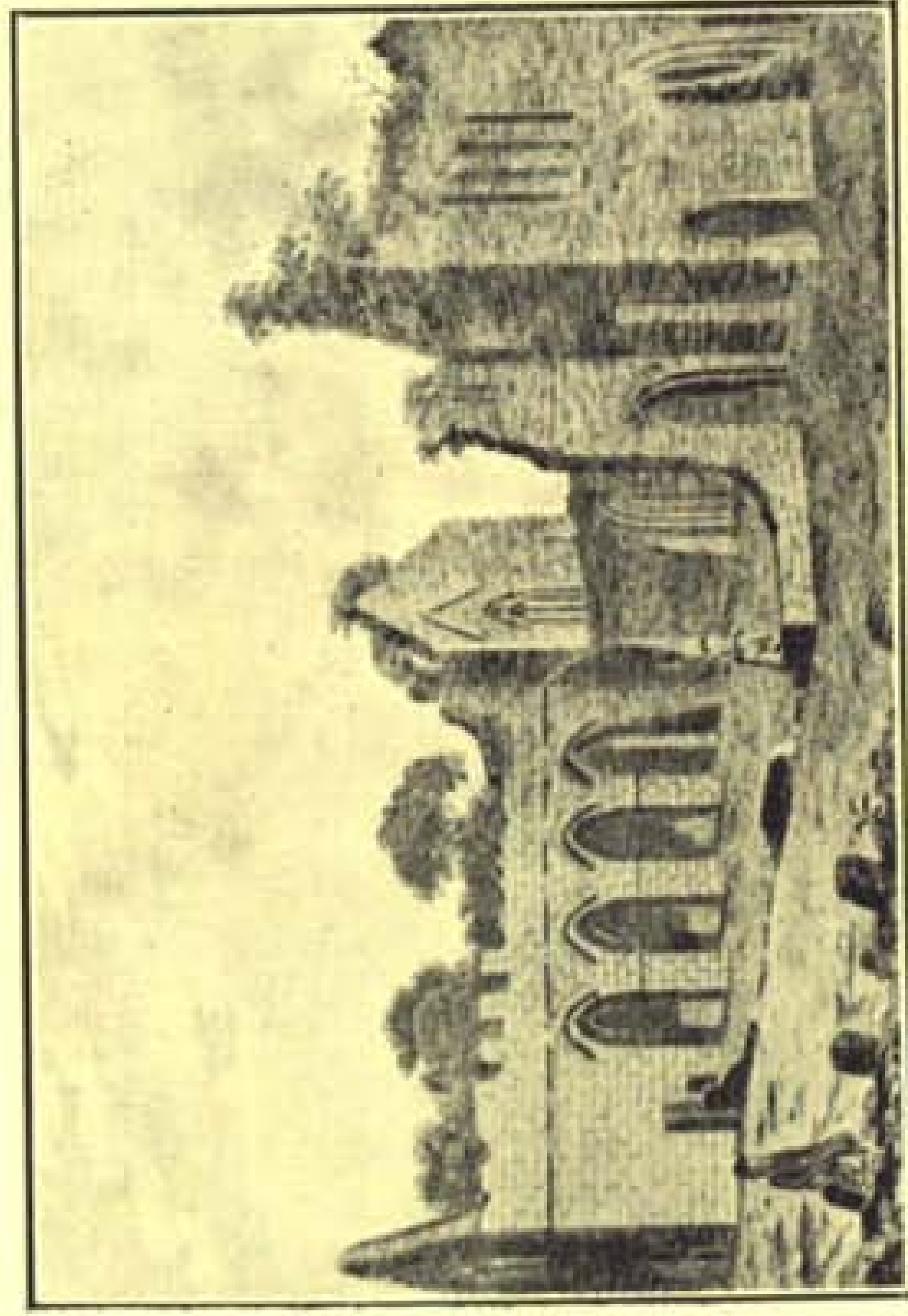
To hand over all this property to the Earl of Clanrickard was to greatly amplify his already ample possessions. Nor do we know if the Earl, so enriched, still left the nuns at Kilcreevanty, or even its neighbourhood—perhaps with a greatly diminished income.⁴¹

General Ruin.

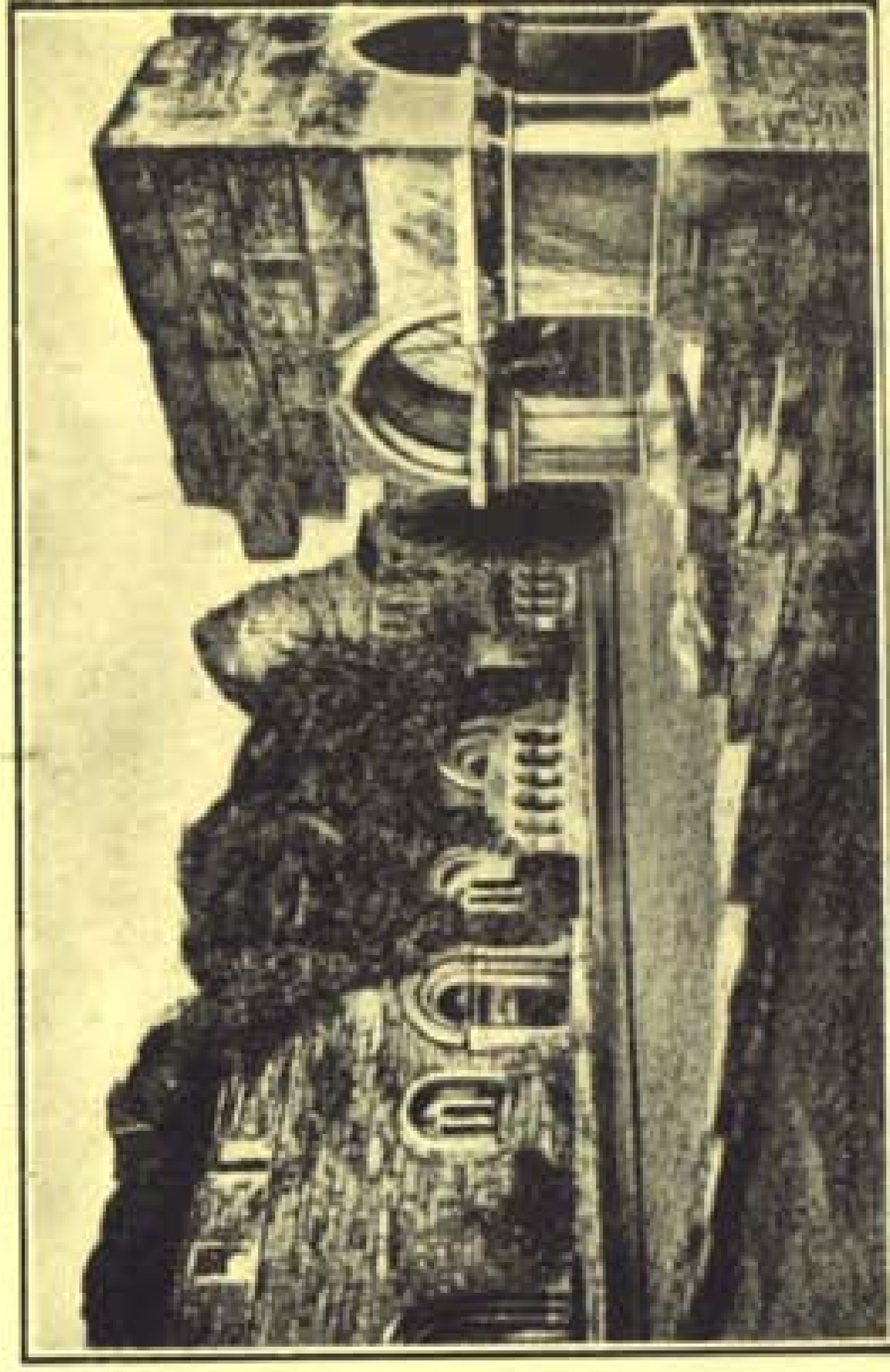
Thus passed into the hands of strangers the lands and tithes and other property of the religious houses of the Archdiocese of Tuam. Cistercians, Augustinians, Dominicans, Franciscans and Benedictine nuns were all despoiled. The Abbey church was no longer open in the early morning for sacrifice and prayer. The psalms were no longer sung within the cloistered walls; the vesper bell no longer tolled when the shades of evening fell. With the friars, monks and nuns beggared or in exile, the student was left uninstructed, the sick unvisited, the poor unrelieved. The Tudor sovereigns passed away with the sixteenth century, but their works of spoliation and sacrilege remained; and while the seventeenth century was yet young, in the vast majority of cases, of the once beautiful churches and abbeys nothing remained but broken arches and tottering walls.

⁴¹ Knox's "Tuam," pp. 280-85; Archdall, II, pp. 219-20.

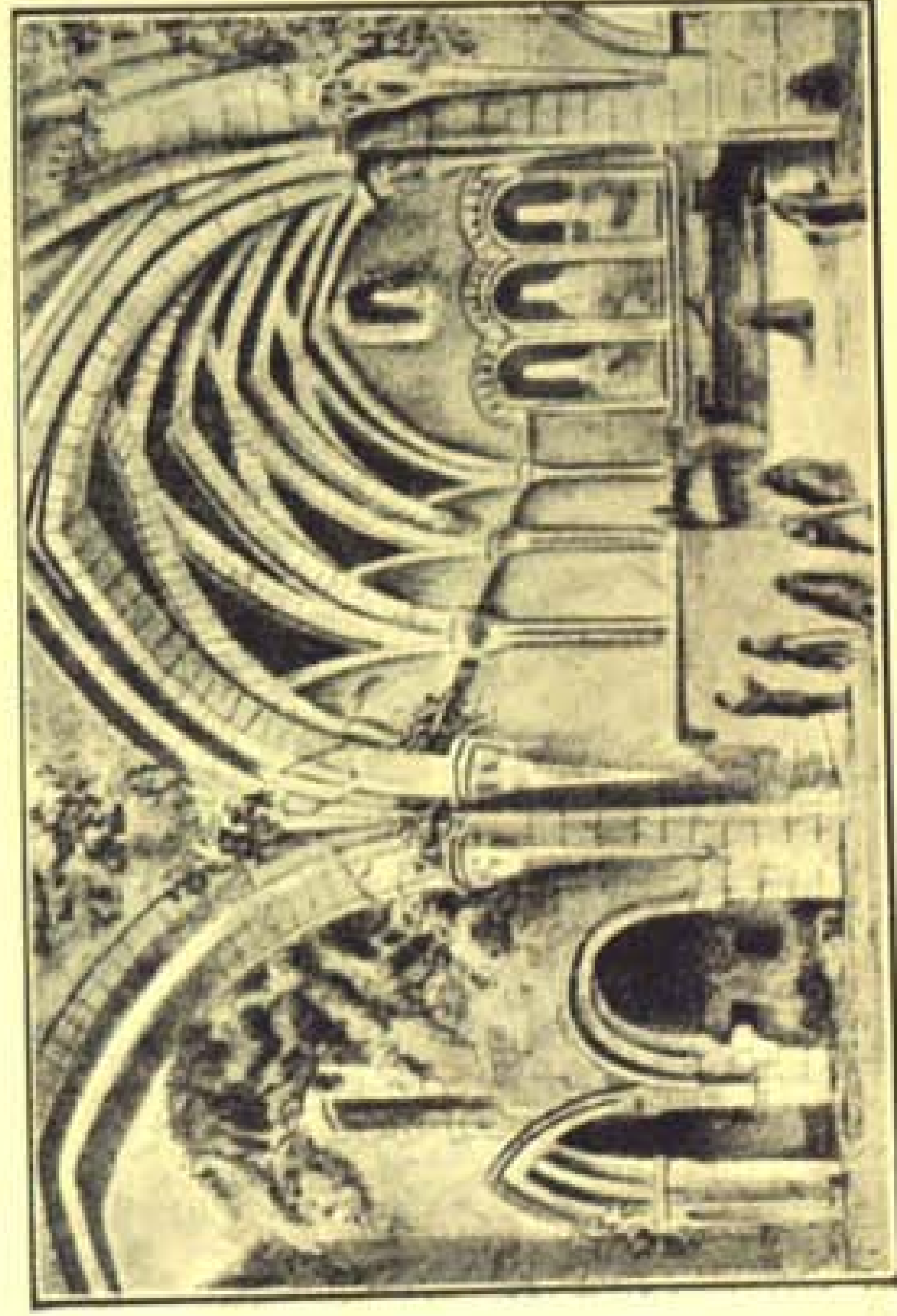
FOUR OLD ABBEYS.



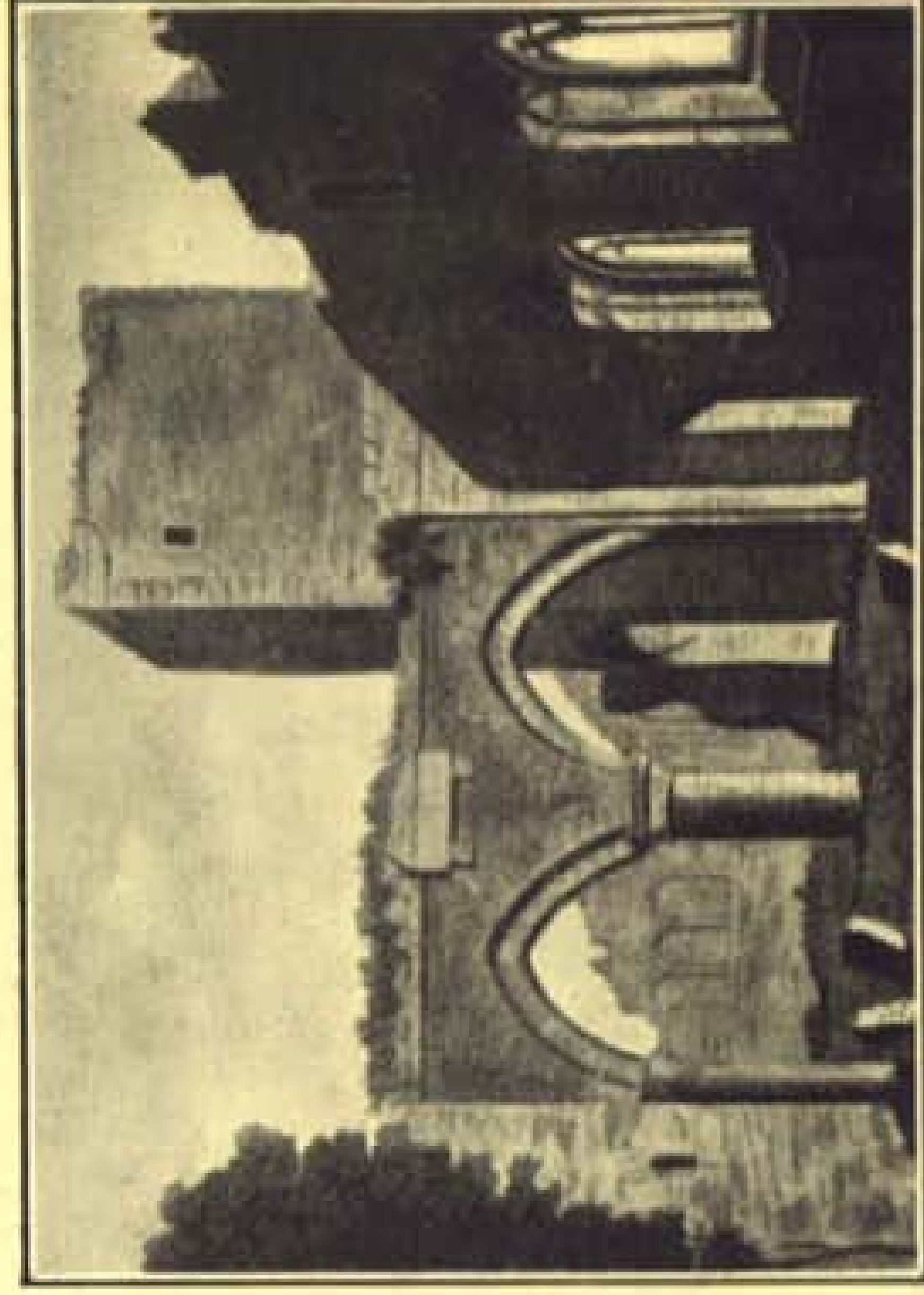
KNOCKMOY ABBEY.



CONG ABBEY.



BALLINTUBBER ABBEY.



BURRISHOOLE ABBEY.

THE ARCHDIOCESE OF TUAM.

These repeated accusations at last produced the effect desired. The King's mind was poisoned against the whole country, and when Linchester was being sent to Ireland in 1594, he was directed to have the true religion established there, which meant that Catholics were not to be tolerated, and Protestantism was to be forced on the

THE PENAL LAWS.

As we have seen, the Penal Laws commanding Catholics to leave the Protestant Churches, on pain of death, had not been strictly enforced; and a law requiring all office holders to take the oath of supremacy. But James, who had inherited the royal prerogative, went further, and issued a proclamation commanding all priests to leave the country, and was a criminal for any of his subjects

CHAPTER XII.

UNDER THE STUARTS.

Elizabeth and James I.

All over Ireland there was rejoicing at the death of Queen Elizabeth, and Tuam had reason to rejoice with the rest of Ireland. Elizabeth had completed the work begun by her father of infamous memory, and in Tuam, at the end of her reign, English power was firmly established, and English oppression was felt. To a large extent the old order had disappeared. In many cases the Burkes, O'Flaherties and O'Malleys had been robbed, and their lands given to the Protestants and the strangers. The religious orders were no longer allowed to console the afflicted, or relieve the poor; the Catholic priests and bishops were hunted down; and the Catholic people denied the practice of the religion which they professed. Little wonder was it then that the western Archdiocese was glad when the news came that the employer and admirer of Fitton and Bingham had passed away. The Catholics, indeed, thought that the Penal Laws enacted during the Queen's reign ceased to operate when the Queen was dead. And they felt sure that no further Penal Laws, and no persecution of Catholics, would come from James I., the son of Mary Stuart.

But they were destined to be soon and grievously disappointed. James was told by his ministers that to tolerate Catholics would be to endanger his crown; that the priests were his deadliest enemies; and that if they were allowed to remain in Ireland and influence the people, there could be no

peace. These repeated accusations at last produced the effect intended. The King's mind was poisoned against the whole Catholic body, and when Chichester was being sent to Ireland as Viceroy, in 1604, he was directed to have the true religion established there, which meant that Catholics were not to be tolerated, and that Protestantism was to be forced on the people.¹

Penal Laws Enforced.

Bad as Elizabeth had been, the Penal Laws commanding the Catholics to frequent the Protestant Churches, on pain of a fine of twelve pence, had not been strictly enforced; and neither had that other law requiring all office holders to take the Oath of Supremacy.² Now these laws were enforced, and were felt to be severely oppressive. But James, who had extraordinary notions of the royal prerogative, went further, and in 1605 issued a proclamation commanding all priests to leave Ireland, and making it criminal for any of his subjects even to give shelter to the priests.³

The Earl of Clanrickard was then Governor of Connaught, and as he was favourable to the Catholics he showed little desire to have Penal Laws or Penal Proclamations enforced; and it was owing to his mildness and toleration that in 1604 Galway could be described as loyal and quiet; the people as civil and more obedient than their neighbours of the Pale. "His (Clanrickard's) affability and good temper win him great love and respect."⁴ It was not an easy task for one in his position to shield the Catholics of his province from persecution; but the task of fining and imprisoning them was certainly not congenial, and this he left to the Vice-President, Sir Robert Remington.⁵

When it is considered what was the character of the clergy of the Protestant Church at that period, and in what condition

¹ Russell's "Calendar."

² *Ibid.* I, Introduction, pp. 78-104.

³ *Ibid.* I, p. 302.

⁴ *Ibid.* pp. 214-15.

⁵ *Ibid.* II, p. 38.

their churches were maintained, it was hard to expect that Catholics, or anyone with respect for any religion, should attend their churches on Sunday. Sir John Davies describes the Protestant clergy as mere idols and cyphers, unable even to read, some of them serving-men and horse-boys, each with two or three benefices. As for the churches, they were fallen to the ground in all parts of the kingdom. "There is no divine service, no christianing of children, no receiving of the sacraments, no Christian meeting or assembly, no more demonstration of religion than amongst Tartars or cannibals."⁶

Yet, the priests who refused to abandon their own religion, and accept a mockery such as this, were commanded by royal proclamation to quit the kingdom. And the rich Catholics of Galway, in 1605, who refused to attend the Protestant churches on Sunday, were severely fined. William Lynch FitzPeter, Oliver Browne and James Lynch FitzMartin were each fined £40; Marcus Lynch FitzWilliam, £30; and Thomas Browne, £20. These fines were inflicted by the Vice-President of Connaught, and they were inflicted, not by law, but by royal mandate. For James I. was satisfied that he could when he chose dispense with law, and that his proclamations and mandates had the force of law.⁷

Florence Conry, Archbishop.

There was then no Archbishop of Tuam, nor had there been since James Healy went down in 1595 in the Bay of Santander. But in 1609, after an interval of fourteen years, Florence Conry was appointed Archbishop of Tuam. He was then nearly fifty years old, having been born in 1560. He is sometimes put down as a native of Galway; but it is at least equally probable that he was a native of Roscommon, for Roscommon was the native county of a celebrated family named Mulconry, or O'Mulconry, and Florence is often called Mulconry rather than Conry. In his youth education for a Catholic boy was

⁶ Russell's "Calendar," I, p. 143.

⁷ *Ibid.* II, Introduction, pp. 96-9.

difficult to get in Ireland, and Florence got little. But his love of learning and religion was strong, and before he had reached man's estate he went abroad and studied both at Louvain and at Salamanca. At the latter college he markedly distinguished himself, especially as a student of St. Augustine's works, and there he entered the Franciscan Order, after which he returned to Ireland, and was professed at the Franciscan house at Moyne near Killala.

The Abbey was built on land granted by MacWilliam Burke, and church and abbey were consecrated in 1461 by the Bishop of Killala. The site was well chosen, where the waters of the Moy mingle with the sea; and Burke and Barrett and Synott, and, above all, the O'Dowda chiefs were generous in their gifts to the Franciscan friars. Nor did it infrequently happen that one of these powerful chiefs laid aside his sword and spear and entered the Abbey of Moyne, and died there in the habit of the Franciscans.⁸

After his profession, Conry returned to Spain, and we hear no more of him till 1588, when he was appointed Provincial of the Irish Franciscans, and when as such he accompanied the Spanish Armada. Like many others, he was wrecked on the Irish or Scotch coasts; but, unlike many others, he escaped death, and was able to reach Spain. There he remained until 1601, when he again visited Ireland. This time he came with D'Aguilla; and when the disaster of Kinsale put an end to all hope of Irish freedom, Conry accompanied Hugh O'Donnell to Spain. With the latter he shared the long period of waiting for Spanish aid which never came; and the illness which attacked O'Donnell, and from which he died at Simancas in 1601, was in that day attributed, in part at least, to that hope deferred which makes the heart grow sick. Father Conry was with the exiled chief at the last, and he it was that brought O'Donnell's body to Valladolid, and had it buried in the Franciscan monastery there. Nor did Conry cease to ask for Spanish aid for his country, even after O'Donnell's death, though his efforts like those of O'Donnell

⁸ Meehan's "Rise and Fall of the Franciscan Monasteries," pp. 60-63.

were in vain. Both were mercifully unconscious of the fact that the death at Simancas was not due to natural causes, but came from the poisoned cup of a treacherous Irishman. And Conry, as a Connaughtman himself, would have been specially shocked had he known that the assassin was a Galway man named Blake.⁹

By that time Conry was well known at the Spanish Court, and had much influence there; and though he failed to get a new expedition to proceed to Ireland he was able to remove from his office the Rector of the Irish College at Salamanca. This seat of learning had been set up for the persecuted Irish Catholics by the King of Spain, and in 1602 was presided over by one White, a Jesuit. He was an Irishman of the Pale, whose sympathies were with England rather than with Ireland; and when Conry brought this fact before the King of Spain, White was dismissed from his position, and a rector nominated by Conry took his place.¹⁰ Nor was Conry's influence at the Spanish Court unknown to the Irish Government. For Sir John Davies, in 1606, described him in a letter to Salisbury as already Archbishop of Tuam living at the Court of Spain.¹¹ In the next year a spy employed by Chichester, the Viceroy, reported that "Father Florence was recommended at his death by O'Donnell to the King of Spain, who ever hath him in such credit as that all Irish matters are managed by him, and that no man can get a pension but by his recommendation."¹²

A man of such ability and influence, and who loved Ireland so well, would be sure to aid the Ulster chiefs, O'Neill and O'Donnell, and when they fled from Ireland in 1607, Conry met them in France, at Douay, and accompanied them to Belgium.¹³ It was he probably who drew up Tyrone's state-

⁹ "Carew Papers," pp. 350-1; Atkinson's "Calendar," pp. 472-3; "Four Masters"; O'Clery's "Life of Red Hugh O'Donnell," Introduction.

¹⁰ Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," p. 100.

¹¹ Russell's "Calendar," II, p. 18.

¹² *Ibid.* p. 229.

¹³ Meehan's "Fate and Fortunes of the Earls of Tyrone and Tyrconnell," pp. 80-86, 122-140.

ment of grievances, which was a scathing indictment of James I. And when the Earl of Tyrconnell died at Rome in 1608 he was attended in his last moments by Florence Conry.¹⁴ It was not, therefore, surprising that a man who was at the same time the friend and favourite of the King of Spain and of the banished Irish chiefs, and who from his abilities must have created a favourable impression on the reigning Pope, was selected in 1609 to fill the vacant See of Tuam.

Catholics Persecuted.

These were troubled times in Ireland. The ministers of the Protestant Church were ignorant and idle, and their churches neglected and in ruin. So wrote Davies and Chichester and other officials.¹⁵ Yet, though the Catholic clergy were admitted to be more zealous and more educated, and to have influence with the people, they were excluded from the churches built by their fathers, and which the Protestants had allowed to fall into decay. The laity were fined if they did not attend the Protestant services. Those who held office, civil or military, were compelled to take the Oath of Supremacy—which no Catholic could take—or resign their offices. Some, as in Galway, were fined under a king's mandate, and without any process of law. Those who allowed their children to be baptized were punished, and so were schoolmasters who trained Catholic children. As for bishops and priests, they were repeatedly ordered to quit the kingdom. If they remained they were tracked and hunted down.¹⁶ O'Devany, Bishop of Down, after a long period of imprisonment, was led forth to execution in 1611, and hanged, drawn and quartered before thousands of people; and many others met the same fate.¹⁷ Chichester was well pleased, and when he was told that the people venerated O'Devany and his fellow-sufferers as

¹⁴ Meehan's "Fates and Fortunes of the Earls of Tyrone and Tyrconnell," p. 172.

¹⁵ Russell's "Calendar," I, p. 55; III, pp. 250-251.

¹⁶ "Our Martyrs," pp. 17-19.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 250-52; "Four Masters."

martyrs he replied that he would soon give them many more martyrs to revere.¹⁸

This was the state of things when a Parliament met in Dublin in 1613. The plantation of Ulster was then an accomplished fact. The broad acres of Tyrone and Tyrconnell had been parcelled out to settlers from Scotland and England who hated the Irish and their faith; and Parliament was called to set the seal of its approval on the work of James and his ministers. By the creation of new boroughs, mostly in the newly-planted districts, and by various tricks and devices on the part of partisan and Protestant sheriffs, a majority of Protestants was secured. The Catholics protested against a few beggarly cottages called a village being raised to the rank of a parliamentary borough; and they protested against the gross partiality of the returning officers. But their protests were unheeded by the King, and the Catholics, fearful of further Penal Laws, agreed to bills attainting the Earls of Tyrone and Tyrconnell, and vesting their lands, as the lands of traitors, in the hands of the King.¹⁹ Thus was spoliation covered with the cloak of law; and foreign nations were told that the Ulster chiefs were condemned by the national and freely-elected assembly of their native land.

Conry's Remonstrance.

Disgusted with such timidity on the part of his countrymen and co-religionists, Florence Conry wrote the following letter, which he called: "*A Remonstrance addressed by Florence Conry, Archbishop of Tuam, to the Catholic Members of the Parliament held in Dublin, 1613*":

"I received your letter of December 24th, informing me of what has taken place in your anti-national parliament. I entirely agree with you that the religious constancy of the Catholic party, in which you so confidently trust, deserves the highest praise. In my love for them, which is great and lasting, I heartily wish and pray that their virtues may be made known to the whole world; but I must tell you frankly

¹⁸ Russell's "Calendar," IV, p. 244; "Spicilegium Ossoriense," I, p. 127.

¹⁹ Russell's "Calendar"; "Carew Papers."

that I think their honour is somewhat blemished, if it be true, as I am assured, that it is mainly through their doings that the Catholic religion has been reduced to such fearful extremities in Ireland. For they have not only frustrated the efforts of their brethren and countrymen who had undertaken the defence of the Catholic religion against Elizabeth, and those who sought to restore it to its ancient splendour and greatness, but, by depriving these brave defenders of the faith of their estates, they have backed up the enemies of our holy religion. If we calmly reflect on their conduct, we shall be forced to admit that their present endeavours and fidelity, no matter how great, can never repair the injury done religion, or restore it to that greatness from which they cast it down.

“ Though their glory be now more obscure than it would have been, had they not, by their fault, driven the whole kingdom into such misery; still, as the past cannot be recalled, and what is done cannot be undone, I feel certain they will do great service to the cause of religion by persevering in the course they have taken. Should they act otherwise, they will deserve the Gospel rebuke: ‘ This man began to build and was not able to finish.’

“ However, I apprehend that in some things they may show themselves weak and inconstant. The circumstances you relate to me of their accepting that Protestant speaker, so undeserving of the country, and again their acknowledging these new members, in open violation of the laws and customs of the country, prove no small falling away from the old Catholic spirit. And, besides, by tolerating these unconstitutional members, they seem to confirm all the wickedness that has been committed in that parliament.

“ I feel obliged, too, to tell you, though with sorrow, that my fears have been greatly increased by what you write concerning the Bill of Confiscation. Even you, though well aware, I am sure, of its injustice, are inclined not to oppose it lest offence be given to those who advocate it. What folly! Are they not offended with Catholics who refuse to take the Oath of Supremacy? Will they not likewise take offence if, by-and-by, you offer opposition to the confiscation of your own property? In short, nothing can be more impotent and foolish than this conduct in Catholics. How can persons seeking to put such designs in execution be regarded as staunch Catholics? Is not the Protestant error which asserts that by faith alone, and without good works, one may be a

good Catholic, totally opposed to the teaching of the Church? And again, what evil work is equal in wickedness and injustice to that of robbing men convicted of no crime? It may be said that all this has been done by solemn act of parliament. I answer this makes the act of injustice more atrocious inasmuch as parliament should not proceed without certain and public knowledge of the crimes of the accused, and should be willing to admit all possible excuses. But in the present case no such thing has taken place. On the contrary, I have been told . . . that those men, whose property is now being confiscated, were most kindly and honourably received by the King, and confirmed in possession of all their estates. And, if afterwards, in order to shield themselves from the calumnies of enemies who sought to excite the prejudice of the King against them, or, preferring the salvation of their souls to the gain of the whole world, they passed into other countries, where they might more freely practise their religion, have they thereby committed an offence against His Majesty? For what crimes do your Catholic members arraign these men? Have they been taken *flagrante delicto*? Have they been convicted by their judicial confession? Has their guilt been proved by reliable testimony? Most assuredly this confiscation is a grievous sin, and the greater because the law which prohibits the coveting or robbing your neighbour's goods is not positive law which the King might dispense with. Neither will it avail you to say that subjects are not bound to examine the orders of a superior as to whether they are just or not. Is that plea to hold good when such orders are openly unjust? Upon what proofs have these Catholics been induced to condemn these men? Is it by the cunning and false witness of malicious enemies? Strange idea of justice! Men are accused and condemned by their enemies without trial or opportunity to make their defence. No one can doubt the iniquity of the proceeding, which even the heathens regarded with horror.

“God grant that those Catholics who boast themselves defenders of the faith may take no part in such an infamous proceeding. Let them remember that the faith of good Catholics is a living faith that worketh by charity; not that dead faith which permits the spoliation of your neighbour's property. . . . I call God to witness that I have no other object in expressing these opinions than pity for the misled Catholics, who, for some moments of apparent repose, imperil

their eternal salvation. . . . You who scruple to infringe the ordinances of the Church, do not hesitate to break the immutable laws of God and Nature. You cannot escape the rebuke of our Lord, 'Ye blind guides who strain at a gnat and swallow a camel.' . . . Take care lest you all, clergy and laity, fall under the judgment of the Lord. If the threats of heretical ministers, 'who to-morrow shall descend to hell to dwell with devouring fire,' . . . unless peradventure God may give them repentance to know the truth, and they may recover themselves from the snares of the devil, 'by whom they are held captive at his will.' . . . If these threats are sufficient to scare you from the way of justice and truth, verily we may cry out with the Apostle, 'We are of all men most miserable.' If the Church, by-and-by, asks these theological abettors of the confiscation to prove their reasons for counselling it, I feel certain that they would decline the attempt.

"But, beloved, we hope better things of you, and we have confidence that the words of the Apostle will be fulfilled in you. 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ.'

"We earnestly beseech the Almighty to avert such a calamity; for by this act of injustice your glory will be sullied, His anger will be provoked, and heresy will strike deeper roots in the country, thereby depriving Him of many souls."²⁰

This letter is dated March, 1614, and was sent from Valladolid; and is described by Meehan as being stamped in every line with the impress of a great mind.²¹ We may easily agree with this, while at the same time agreeing with Dr. Renehan that "letters, however learned, were but an inadequate compensation to his diocese for the loss of his example and personal superintendence."²² For the fact was that he never set foot in Tuam from the day of his appointment to the day of his death. At his appointment Tuam had been for fourteen years without an Archbishop, and as he lived for twenty years after his appointment, the people of the Archdiocese were for the long space of thirty-four years without coming into personal contact with their chief pastor.

It is true that Conry was a marked man with the King and

²⁰ Meehan's "Earls of Tyrone and Tyrconnell," pp. 395-7.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 262.

²² Renehan's "Archbishops," p. 397.

his Irish officials. His movements would, therefore, be carefully watched, and when it was rumoured in 1610 that he had landed in Cork, Chichester, the Viceroy, was much perturbed, fearing Conry's influence with the people. And Chichester was correspondingly relieved when he found out as a certainty that Conry had not come at all.²³ There is, therefore, little doubt that if Conry had come to Ireland, the government hirelings would have tracked him to his doom, and that in the fierce persecution of 1611 he would have shared the fate of O'Devany, Bishop of Down. But, after all, the fate of O'Devany was that of a martyr and a hero, and well became an Irish bishop; and if Conry had fallen he would only have trodden in the footsteps of the Good Shepherd who had so willingly laid down His life for His sheep. All this does not imply that he was not concerned with the government of his diocese, nor that he did not in his foreign retreat render valuable aid to the Irish Church.

Irish Colleges Abroad.

The suppression of the monasteries had closed the monastic schools; and the ruthlessness with which Catholic chiefs had been despoiled of their lands, and Catholic bishops and priests hunted down, made it difficult and almost impossible to maintain colleges at home for the education of the Catholic clergy. It was, therefore, necessary, if Irish priests were to be trained at all, that they should be educated abroad; and before the seventeenth century had passed its youth there were already many Irish students in foreign colleges. To counteract this state of things, indeed, was one of the chief reasons why Trinity College was founded. For it was complained by Queen Elizabeth that too many of the Irish went abroad to get learning in foreign universities, "whereby they have been infected with popery and other ill qualities."²⁴ There were, in fact, Irish students at Rome and Rheims, at Douay and

²³ Russell's "Calendar," III, pp. 461-4, 467.

²⁴ Mahaffy, "An Epoch in Irish History," p. 62.

Bordeaux, at Salamanca and Lisbon and Seville, at Madrid and Alcala and Santiago.²⁵

But there was urgent need for more centres of learning for the Irish exiles, and it is to Florence Conry's credit that he was able to establish the College of St. Antony at Louvain. The endowment was obtained by Conry from Philip III. of Spain; the foundation stone was laid in 1610 by Archduke Albert, Governor of the Spanish Netherlands; and henceforth Louvain was a home and an educational centre for Irish exiles.²⁶ And it became the usual residence of Conry, who moved about a good deal to Brussels and Valladolid and Madrid, but always returned to Louvain.

Dr. Kirwan, Vicar-General.

While thus remaining abroad his Archdiocese was managed by a Vicar-General, Francis O'Mellagh. The latter, in 1618, had some dispute with William Lynch, a Carmelite friar of Galway, and Lynch appealed from the Vicar-General to the Archbishop. His journey was by Dieppe to Louvain, and at Dieppe he met his nephew, Francis Kirwan, whom he took with him to Louvain. Kirwan was a priest and a young professor of philosophy at Dieppe; and such was the ability he displayed before Conry, such the favourable impression he made, that the Archbishop removed O'Mellagh from the office of Vicar-General, and put Kirwan in his place. Nor could a happier selection have been made.

Kirwan's family, long resident in Galway, was ancient and respected. Some, indeed, will have it that the Kirwans derive their origin from Heremon, second son of Milesius; while others are content with claiming that the family settled in Galway in the reign of Henry VI. As one of the thirteen ancient families of the city, they were one of those who made up the Galway Tribes; the Kirwan's motto being, "*J'Aime mon Dieu mon roi et mon pais.*" Others of the name, how-

²⁵ D'Alton's "History of Ireland," II, pp. 511-12.

²⁶ Rev. J. Neary in "Galway Archæological Journal," vol. viii.

ever, prefer to put their motto in plain English, and in their case the motto is: "God's providence is my inheritance."²⁷

Becoming prosperous as merchants, the Kirwans were prominent in the civil life of the city; but, though loyal to England, they refused to follow Henry and Elizabeth in their change of faith. Kirwan's mother was Lynch, a member of a family still more opulent than the Kirwans, and, like them, one of the ancient tribes.²⁸

Born in 1589, Kirwan received his early education from his uncle, the Rev. Arthur Lynch. To maintain a Catholic school in Ireland was difficult, because penal, and Lynch could only give instruction privately. It was, therefore, necessary to go abroad to obtain the necessary training for the priesthood, and Kirwan finished his studies at Lisbon. In 1614 he returned to Ireland, and was ordained priest in that year by David Kearney, Archbishop of Cashel. Subsequently, being a man of marked ability, he taught philosophy at Dieppe, and it was from Dieppe he went with his uncle, Lynch, to Louvain to see the Archbishop of Tuam. The result was the displacement of the Vicar-General O'Mellagh by Dr. Kirwan. This took place about 1620, or perhaps a little earlier. At all events, Dr. Kirwan, as Vicar-General of Tuam, returned to Ireland in 1620, and took up his residence in his native city.

A few years earlier, in 1610, Speed, the Antiquary, visited Galway, and described it as the Third City in Ireland;²⁹ and Sir Oliver St. John, who filled the office of President of Connaught, described it as a small town with stately buildings and rich merchants, who were "great adventurers at sea." "Their commonalty is composed of the descendants of the ancient English founders of the town, and rarely admit any new English to have freedom or education among them, and never any of the Irish."³⁰ The place was so strongly Catholic

²⁷ Hardiman's "History of Galway," pp. 7, 8, 16.

²⁸ Lynch's "Life of Dr. Kirwan," pp. 25-27.

²⁹ Hardiman's "History of Galway," p. 22.

³⁰ "Carew Papers," p. 295.

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that when St. John, in 1611, was making an estimate of what the composition of the proposed Parliament of James might be, he declared that there was no hope of having any Protestant elected for Galway.³¹

Though a warden and vicars were chosen under the charter of Edward VI., and must have been Protestant, the Catholics ignored the charter and the election, and meeting privately every year they elected their mayor and bailiffs, and these elected the Catholic warden and vicars. The Archbishop of Tuam, however, questioned the right of this body to appoint the warden and vicars, asserting that Papal sanction was necessary. But the townspeople would have none of his interference, and when James Fallon was elected Catholic warden in 1620, though he asked and obtained from the Archbishop confirmation of his election, he was careful to say that no such confirmation was necessary. The Vicar-General would always give confirmation if there were a petition from the people of the town. But no such petition would be sent, as the people feared that their privileges would then be lost; and Fallon declared that they were as steadfast in the matter that for all the clergy in Ireland they would not lose one atom of their privileges.³² The trouble was that the Archbishop had power of visitation; but the warden maintained that he himself had quasi-episcopal jurisdiction, and was exempt from the Archbishop's visitation. But though the Galway men were unwilling to comply with the requests of the Archbishop, and were obstinate in adhering to their ancient privileges, they were sound Catholics, and treated their townsman and Vicar-General with respect and generosity.

Clanrickard, who had been President of Connaught, had then ceased to hold the office, and since 1616 was Governor of Galway county and town, and exempt as such, both himself and Galway, from the jurisdiction of the ruling President.³³ No doubt this helped to give some toleration to the Catholics,

³¹ "Carew Papers," p. 145.

³² Hardiman's "History of Galway," p. 245.

³³ Russell's "Calendar," V, pp. 118-19.

though it was difficult to protect them, considering the temper of the times. When Archbishop Usher came to Galway in 1615 he found Alexander Lynch at the head of a great classical school, with 1,200 pupils from all parts of Ireland. His eminence as a teacher did not save him, and Usher insisted on having the school closed;³⁴ though he gave a high character to Lynch, and would willingly have tolerated him if he were a Protestant. Such bigotry as that of Usher too often found expression in royal proclamations and Penal enactments, and in spite of Clanrickard's friendliness there was peevish and intermittent persecution.

The result was that the machinery of Church government became disorganised, and many serious abuses flourished in Galway city and throughout the whole Archdiocese of Tuam. The religious houses had either disappeared altogether, or had decayed, and were therefore unable to educate the clerical students. And it was difficult for the students educated abroad, and promoted to the priesthood, to return home for the work of the mission. Priests ministering at home, and living by stealth and in fear, were, in too many cases, uneducated, ignorant alike of theology and of the ceremonies of the Mass. Some of them were addicted to gambling, and had fallen into other bad habits as well. Ignorance, neglect of duty, and disordered lives on the part of the priests produced the inevitable effects on the people. There was discord and turbulence and usury; there was little frequentation of the sacraments; adultery was not uncommon; and such was the ignorance among masses of the people that they could not repeat the Lord's Prayer.³⁵

These abuses recall the days of St. Malachy and the condition of Armagh in the twelfth century; nor was Kirwan deficient in reforming zeal. He visited on foot even the most remote parts of the Archdiocese; and such was his spirit of mortification that he took no meat through the whole of Advent; and on Fridays throughout the year he took neither

³⁴ Lynch's "Kirwan," p. 15.

³⁵ *Ibid.* p. 41.

eggs, butter nor milk. He preached and instructed and reproved in every parish; and sometimes, in imitation of St. Patrick, he ascended the rugged sides of Croagh Patrick, and there, in fasting and prayer and solitude, above the homes of men and the turmoil and tempests of human passion, he communed with God.³⁶

Knowing that so much depended upon an educated and zealous priesthood, he compelled the clerical students of the Archdiocese to spend a year in his house previous to their ordination; and he insisted on a residence with him of equal length in the case of old priests who were ignorant of the ceremonies of the Mass. Illiterate priests he suspended till they acquired sufficient knowledge for the fulfilment of their duties;³⁷ and priests who gambled or who were guilty of disorderly conduct he punished either by suspension or by removing them, in punishment, to the more remote districts. Suave and conciliatory, he often ended litigation among the people, and the evils which litigation breeds, by reconciling those who were disputing.³⁸ Gentle and kind with the repentant sinner, as his Master was with Magdalen, he readily pardoned those who turned in repentance from their evil ways. But with the obstinate and hard of heart he was stern and severe, denouncing their crimes before the people with flashing eyes. In each parish he appointed monitors, whose duty it was to inform him of those who were leading lives of sin; and when he next visited these parishes he threatened to publish the names of those sinners; and if this failed to correct them (and it seldom did), publication and denunciation followed.³⁹ Public sinners he compelled to do public penance; and sometimes those who were guilty of adultery, known to the people, he had them publicly whipped.⁴⁰

That such punishments could be inflicted by the mere force of public opinion, in the teeth of Penal enactments, seems

³⁶ "Life of Kirwan," p. 83.

³⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 63-5.

³⁸ *Ibid.* p. 89.

³⁹ *Ibid.* pp. 47-53.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* p. 55.

extraordinary. And strange also it is that he was able in his house in Galway to be hospitable to foreign ecclesiastics who came to visit him, to feed and clothe many widows and orphans,⁴¹ and to relieve the poor prisoners in the jails, and the sick in the hospitals. The explanation, no doubt, is that the people of the Archdiocese, captivated by his apostolic charity and zeal, were generous in their offerings to him; and it may be also that his own relatives in Galway, many of whom were rich, generously gave him of their wealth. Even the hirelings of government were ashamed to put Penal Laws in force against such a man, and were tolerant and sometimes even helpful towards him. Such was the man who ruled the Archdiocese of Tuam for so many years.

Florence Conry's Writings.

Meanwhile Tuam had not seen its Archbishop. Conry was abroad, usually at Louvain. He had, it seems, little taste for the work of the episcopacy, and none at all for being a martyr, and loved rather to frequent courts and mingle with statesmen and scholars. He had considerable influence at Rome, as he had with the King of Spain and with the Archduke who ruled in the Netherlands, and was often able to do great service to Irish exiles in these countries. And he was busy with his pen. He wrote a small work in Irish, "The Mirror of a Christian Life," which was really an Irish Catechism, and was much needed in Ireland, where publishing or printing Catholic works of any kind was under a severe ban. Indeed, the fact that Conry set up in his Franciscan College at Louvain an Irish printing press was a signal service to Ireland; and this Catechism of his was one of the many Irish books printed and published at Louvain.

Conry was also author of the following works: "De St. Augustini Sensu Circa B. Mariae Conceptionem" (Antwerp, 1619); "Tractatus de Statu Parvulorum Sine Baptismo decedentium ex hac vita juxta Sensum St. Augustini"

⁴¹ "Life of Kirwin,"¹² p. 71.

(Louvain, 1624); "*Peregrinus Jericonthus—Hoc est de Natura Humana feliciter felicitatis instituta, infeliciter lapsa, miserabiliter vulnerata, misericorditer restituta*" (Paris, 1641); "*De Flagellis justorum juxta mentem St. Augustini*" (Paris, 1644). The two last works were in manuscript when Conry died, and were published after his death.

He was a diligent student of St. Augustine's works. Indeed, his brother Franciscan, Luke Wadding, says that he always found Conry at Madrid engaged in the study of St. Augustine; that he had read all his works seven times, and the parts dealing with grace no less than twenty times. Conry's learning was undoubtedly extensive; he was a diligent and painstaking student; and he was specially attracted to the writings of St. Augustine. On such difficult subjects as grace, predestination and free will, he did not undertake to teach anything that was new. His desire was to make clear what St. Augustine taught on these subjects; and though he was entirely honest and anxious only to teach sound Christian doctrine, he was not always successful. Jansenius, the celebrated Bishop of Ypres, was one of his pupils, and it is said imbibed from his master his errors on grace and predestination. It is true that Jansenius submitted himself entirely to the supreme authority in the Catholic Church, and apparently had no desire to be anything but orthodox in what he wrote and taught. Out of his works, however, were extracted five well-known propositions which the Pope solemnly condemned in 1653.

The first of these maintained that even for just men, striving to be good, some of God's Commandments were impossible to keep, considering their own imperfect powers and the insufficiency of grace given them. In the second proposition it was laid down that no one resists interior grace in the state of fallen nature. In the third, that merits depend on exemption from external restraint rather than from interior necessity. And according to the fourth proposition, the semi-Pelagians were guilty of heresy in holding that grace can be followed or

resisted. Lastly, as a fifth proposition, it was wrong to say that Christ shed His blood for all men.⁴²

Jansenius, it appears, was unconscious of the fact that he held or taught heretical doctrine, and died with the conviction that he was quite orthodox in his beliefs. Similarly it is quite clear that his master, Conry, was quite satisfied that he himself was quite orthodox. He would have been greatly shocked to think that his long and careful study of Saint Augustine would have led him into serious error. He was a scholarly man, but his knowledge never inflated him with pride. He was holy and humble as well as learned, and it was certainly no part of his ambition to be the parent or preceptor of Jansenism.

The Archbishop's Death.

Conry died in the Franciscan house at Madrid in 1629, being then in the 69th year of his age and the 21st of his episcopate. His countrymen at Louvain, however, were so proud of his talents and virtues that they translated his remains from Madrid in 1654, and Conry was laid to rest in the college church of St. Antony of Padua, on the Gospel side of the high altar.

The following was the inscription placed on his monument :

“ Illustrissimus ac Reverendissimus Florentius Conrius Connaciensis, Ordinis Minorum Regularis Observantium Archiepiscopus Tuamensis, Provinciae Hiberniae quondam Minister; Pietate, Prudentia, Doctrina, Maximus Aeternae Memoriae Dignissimus. Quo Sollicitante, Pro Restauranda in Hibernia fide orthodoxa. Hoc St. Antoni a Padua Collegium, Munificentia Philippi III Hispaniarum Regis. Fundatum est Anno Christi 1616. Laboribus variis Fidei et Patriae ergo Fractus. Pie Obiit in Conventu S. Francisci Madriti, 1629, XIV. Kal. Dec. Aetates 69. Archiepiscopatus 21. Hujus Colegii PP Anno, 1654. Quo ejus ossa ex Hispania translata. Et hic immortalitatis praemium expectant grati posuere.”⁴³

⁴² Rapin, “ Histoire du Jansenisme.”

⁴³ Harris's “ Writers ”; Rénéhan's “ Archbishops,” pp. 400-401.

It was thought and desired by many that the zealous man who had so long ruled Tuam as Vicar-General would now become Archbishop.⁴⁴ But Dr. Kirwan was not ambitious of such distinction, and the choice of Rome fell on Malachy O'Queely.

Malachy O'Queely, Archbishop.

He was a native of Clare, and in his early years educated at home. Then he crossed to France, and was educated for the priesthood at the College of Navarre in Paris. He must have been born several years before the close of the sixteenth century, for he was ordained early in the seventeenth century, and, returning to Ireland, became, in 1622, Vicar-Apostolic of his native diocese of Killaloe. At Paris he received his doctorate of theology, and subsequently taught philosophy in the college where he had been trained. Even after his ordination, and even while acting as Vicar-Apostolic of Killaloe, he studied medicine, and had the rare distinction for a priest of getting his degree of doctor of medicine in the University of Paris. And such was his reputation for prudence and piety among his own people, that when the diocese of Killaloe was to be filled in 1624, the chief laymen of the diocese petitioned Rome to have him appointed. They spoke of his learning, his zeal, his administrative capacity, of the example he set to others; and they declared that he was clearly, and with the unanimous consent of the people, the best man for the place.

No appointment was then made, O'Queely remaining as Vicar-Apostolic. In 1629 it was rumoured that one Dr. Moloney, a distinguished man also, was about to be appointed to Killaloe; and on this occasion the Bishop of Limerick pointed out to the Holy See that Dr. O'Queely had decidedly superior claims. He spoke with enthusiasm of his piety and learning, his stainless life, his influence with all classes of the people, a man "qui totam illam vastissimam diocesim mirifice

⁴⁴ "Life of Kirwan," p. 105.

in utroque statu intra paucos annos reformavit."⁴⁵ Dr. Walsh, Archbishop of Cashel, was quite at one with the Bishop of Limerick. And the Earl of Tyrone, son of the great Hugh, also intervened in the following letter to Luke Wadding:—

"Most Illustrious Lord: I am informed that the Queen Mother of France was induced by the representations of some parties to write to the French Ambassador residing in this city (Brussels) concerning the promotion of some Irish priest to the bishopric of a diocese in the province of Cashel. It has been well impressed upon you, as well by our letter as by those of other nobles and clergy, that Malachy, Doctor of Sacred Theology, Vicar-Apostolic, is a man who merited well of his creed and his country, whom the clergy and nobles of the Kingdom strenuously demanded for the episcopacy, and still demand by their letters. Equity and the common good appears to demand that his merits and the just desires of the clergy and people should be taken into account rather than the letters of the Queen, which favour alone has obtained. I therefore entreat of you to do whatever is for the common weal. May God, the Greatest and Best, preserve you safe for His Church.

"Given at Brussels 20th January, 1629,

"O'Neill, Tyrone."⁴⁶

The influence of the Queen prevailed, and Moloney was appointed to Killaloe in 1629. But O'Queely's merits could not be ignored, and in the following year (1630) he was appointed Archbishop of Tuam, and was consecrated in a private oratory in Galway on the 11th October, 1631. Nor did he allow the grass to grow under his feet, for the very year of his consecration he convoked and presided at a Synod in Galway. It was a provincial Synod, attended by the bishops and representative priests of the whole province, and enacted many salutary decrees.

Tuam Synod.

From these we may gather what were the abuses which prevailed; and it must be said that these abuses were not so

⁴⁵ Meehan's "Irish Hierarchy in the Seventeenth Century," pp. 299, 301.

⁴⁶ Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," p. 120.

serious as might have been expected in such troubled times. There was nothing wonderful in having noisy lamentations at funerals; but neither was it wonderful to have such keening prohibited as out of place in the presence of the dead. Legacies left by Catholics for pious uses, when the uses were not specified with sufficient distinctness, might reasonably be left to the bishop to be expended by him, and this is all the statute prescribed. It was also prescribed that parish priests were not to act on dispensations obtained from outside bishops, but were to refer to their own bishops. And it was also enacted that parish priests were not to expose relics for public veneration without the permission of their own bishop. Another statute enacted that a fourth of the voluntary offerings at funerals was to be given to the bishop; and it was laid down as a general principle that the parish priest was entitled to nothing more than decent sustenance at the hands of the people to whom he ministered.

In an age when Penal Laws were in full swing, the priest was an outlaw, and the exercise of the Catholic religion was a crime both for priest and people. And for the depraved Catholic who, for government favour or reward, undertook to spy on the priests, and give the agents of government due notice of their movements, there was a special statute enacted at this synod. This was that such informers were to be denied the sacraments of the Church.

For the priests themselves there were some enactments which go to show that there were abuses, and that, in some cases at least, their rule of life deserved to be placed on a higher level. Priests were warned, for instance, that when they travelled they ought to do so in a modest and decent fashion, were not to consort with dubious characters, and were not to have more than one horse, and, at the most, two servants. They were not to be absent from their parishes without the express leave of the bishop or the vicar-forane of their deanery. They ought, when staying in the houses of their parishioners, to instruct the people, and especially the ignorant. Further, they were not to play cards or dice, or frequent taverns. They

were to avoid disputations with Protestants, which in that age was usually productive of harm rather than good. They were also to avoid fairs and markets. Finally, they were not to keep dogs, nor unduly nourish their hair. This last statute was, no doubt, to prevent coursing matches; and the provision about not taking undue care of the hair was to prevent the priest from cultivating the fashion of the day, as a man of fashion might be expected to do. We are dealing with the age of Charles I., and though kings might furnish a fitting subject, with their long ringlets, elaborately oiled and curled, for the pencil of Vandyke, such would be considered quite out of place for a priest.

But, after all, these abuses, even if they were general, and there is no evidence to show that they were, were not of a serious kind. They show no general laxity of morals, and it is quite evident that Dr. Kirwan had not laboured in vain in the Archdiocese, and that the unhealthy growths of twenty years past had fallen before his reforming hand.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Renehan's "Archbishops" (Copy of the Statutes), pp. 490-95.

CHAPTER XIII.

O'QUEELY AND DE BURGO.

Failure of Protestantism.

THE influences at work to destroy Catholicity when O'Queely became Archbishop were strong. In 1628 Lord Falkland advocated the plantation of Connaught by Englishmen and Protestants, and declared that there were not then in Connaught six gentlemen of any sort or quality who professed the *Protestant religion*. All were Catholics. There were not Protestants of sufficient standing to be appointed magistrates, and, in fact, most of the magistrates were Catholics.¹

Two years later, in spite of the King's express order countermanding the proclamation for the banishment of the priests, the judges going assize levied fines on the Catholics for not going to the Protestant service; insisted that Catholic magistrates should take the Oath of Supremacy; Catholic schools were suppressed, and Catholic wards were being brought up Protestants.²

Again, in 1633, when Strafford became Viceroy, Archbishop Usher urged that he should enforce the attendance of the Catholics at the Protestant Church service, failing which the usual fines prescribed by the law in such cases should be enforced.³ And he asked this while the Protestant clergy were not thinking of religion but of wealth; while one bishop in Connaught had twenty-three benefices in his hands; and

¹ Mahaffy's "Calendar" (1625-60), pp. 128-9.

² *Ibid.* p. 161.

³ Mahaffy's "Calendar" (1633-47), p. 6.

when the vaults in Christ's Church in Dublin were used as a beerhouse, it is easy to imagine what had become of the churches in the more remote parts of the country.⁴

But Strafford knew well that the King, as the husband of a Catholic Queen, had no sympathy with persecuting zeal; and, in fact, had already issued orders countermanding the existing proclamations for the banishment of the priests. Strafford was too good a courtier to run counter to the King's wishes; nor had he, indeed, any burning desire to interfere with men's religious beliefs. He was a tyrant, and he was unscrupulous, but he was not a bigot. When, therefore, Bedell, the Protestant Bishop of Kilmore, complained of the energy and zeal of the Catholic priests, his complaint fell upon deaf ears.⁵ Strafford would wish to have the Protestant Church flourish, but he could see no hope of this until there was reform from within. And what he saw in sore need of reform within the Protestant fold was "an unlearned clergy who have not as much as the outward form of churchmen to cover themselves with." Churches and parsonages were in ruin; the people untaught, because the clergy were non-resident, and the rites and ceremonies of the Church run over without decency or order.⁶ Strafford was not in any humour to persecute the Catholics for the sake of such a travesty of a Church as the Protestant Church was. Therefore, he was tolerant, though not sympathetic; and in 1635 the Archbishop of Tuam was able to report at Rome that "the province of Tuam enjoyed perfect repose"; that all the clergy, regular and secular, laboured faithfully for the edification of their flocks. He had already visited every part of his Archdiocese, preaching and confirming as he went along; and held a provincial synod, and reconciled many Protestants to the Church. He added that the parochial clergy of the Archdiocese numbered 56, and that there were 89 parishes, 12 prebends, and 16 rectories.⁷

⁴ Mahaffy's "Calendar" (1633-47), p. 17.

⁵ Mant's "History of the Irish Church," I, pp. 465-6.

⁶ *Ibid.* pp. 475-6.

⁷ "Spicilegium Ossoriense," I, pp. 193-5, 203.

Synod at Galway.

He could also have reported that in the years immediately following he was left undisturbed; and in 1640 he held another synod at Galway. It was attended by the Archbishop himself, by the Bishops of Elphin and Clonfert, by the Vicars Apostolic of Achonry and Killala, and by the Abbot of Cong. In addition to republishing the decrees of the synod of 1631, this synod had some new decrees of its own. It was, for instance, enacted that in future newly-ordained priests must not hold collections at their first Masses. Priests who took undue care of their hair, by trimming, oiling and curling, and perhaps dyeing, were to be fined five shillings for each such offence. An injunction was laid upon the secular and regular priests to live together in charity. It was also enacted that promises of marriage were not to be entered into without the consent of the parents of the contracting parties, nor without witnesses. Nor were those about to be married to live in the same house, but should wait till the marriage had taken place.⁸

Tuam in 1641.

That Catholic bishops should be thus allowed to hold synods and pursue the work of governing their several dioceses, was to many Protestants a cause of very great offence. And we find the following written by a Protestant in 1641, and appropriately styled a remonstrance against the condition of things in the Archdiocese of Tuam:—

“ Dr. Malachy O’Queely, Titular Archbishop of Tuam, is very public amongst us. He presents himself openly in general assemblies. He travels up and down with great companies, is plentifully maintained, generally respected, feeds of the best, and it is a strife among the great ones who should be happy in being the host of such a guest. Every Church living in the province of Connaught hath a Romish priest as constantly as a Protestant minister. The country suffers grievously under a double clergy, Protestant and Papist. They (the Papists) have everywhere their mass houses whereunto the people in multitudes resort.

⁸ Renehan’s “ Archbishops,” pp. 497-8.

"The friars swarm *hic et illic* and are often met on the highways in their habits. In Dunmore is a house consisting of a prior and thirty friars. . . . The titular Archbishop of Tuam and his suffragans do publicly and powerfully exercise jurisdiction, and such obedience is given to them that the jurisdiction of our Church is altogether neglected.

"The natives, weary of the charge of a double clergy, do much repine at our ministers. They keep back tithes, conceal their glebes, deny them any place of residence where they might look to their flocks. But what is most grievous to us, they do maliciously indict them at assizes and call them to the Parliament to their utter undoing, for no other cause but for receiving such customs as were anciently paid to their predecessors,"⁹

The Rebellion.

Then came the rebellion of 1641. Thirty years before it had been foreseen by Carew, the infamous President of Munster. Sir John Davies had been rejoicing at the plantation of Ulster, and thought it was a good work well done. But Carew expected that there would be trouble, and that when it came it would be a bitter and bloody struggle.¹⁰ And there were other causes than the plantation of Ulster. There was a plantation in Wicklow, in which the lands of the O'Byrnes had been confiscated by fraud, and 14,000 of the natives sent adrift; and there were plantations, or attempted plantations, in King's County, Leitrim, Westmeath and Longford.¹¹

There was, in addition, general uncertainty of tenure. Nobody knew when his title to his lands would be questioned by some unscrupulous adventurer, backed up by corrupt officials. Worse still, when Charles I. was needy for money to put down Scotch Covenanters and a recalcitrant Parliament, he promised the Irish Catholics that henceforth Catholic lawyers might practise in the Courts without taking the Oath of Supremacy; that sixty years' tenure furnished a good title

⁹ Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," pp. 124-5.

¹⁰ "Carew Papers," Preface.

¹¹ D'Alton's "History of Ireland," II, p. 235.

to lands; and that Connaught proprietors might get new patents. But when the money had been paid by the Catholics, in return for their concessions the King basely broke his promise.¹² Further, in defiance of these promises, Strafford attempted to plant Connaught, and would have followed up his partial success in Mayo and Roscommon by the confiscation of all Connaught to the Crown if the strong opposition of Lord Clanrickard and the Galway juries had not defeated him.¹³ Little wonder was it that the rebellion of 1641 took place, nor that Connaught joined hands with the rest of Ireland.

The "Massacre of Shrile."

And among the bloody deeds of the time a high place must be given to what has been called "The Massacre of Shrile." The efforts to despoil and proselytize made by so many presidents and deputies from Bingham to Strafford had not been altogether unsuccessful in Mayo. There were Protestant Bingham and Brownes where once ruled the Catholic Burkes and the Catholic O'Malleys. There were Burkes who had abandoned the old faith to save their castles and lands, like the grandson of Granuaile. And round these Protestant lords, whether of English or of Irish descent, there were a few members of the new creed, tenants or servants of the great man within whose roof or within the shadow of whose castle they dwelt.

One such Protestant colony was that of Castlebar, where Sir Henry Bingham dwelt. Living on lands torn from the grasp of the Catholic Burkes, and in the midst of a Catholic population who execrated the memory of the first and the greatest of the Bingham, Sir Henry, at the outbreak of the rebellion, felt himself and his friends to be in deadly peril. He was besieged by Burke of the Owles, and appealed for help to Lord Mayo, a convert from Catholicity and a good Protes-

¹² Cox, "Hibernia Anglicana," pp. 45, 55.

¹³ "Strafford's Letters," I, pp. 259, 277-9, 443-4, 451-4.

tant like himself. Lord Mayo went to his aid, and the siege of Castlebar was raised. But it was not considered a safe place to remain; and in full agreement with Lord Mayo, Bingham and his friends resolved to go to Galway, where they would be sheltered effectively from the storm that had gathered. In the last days of June, 1642, they commenced their journey—Bingham, Dr. Maxwell, Bishop of Killala, fifteen Protestant ministers, the whole party numbering sixty. Lord Mayo having undertaken to see them safe out of Mayo, sent with them one Edward Burke with an escort. Thus escorted, and with Lord Mayo himself and his eldest son, Theobald, as their companions, the party passed safely through Belcarra, Ballinrobe, and the Neale, to Shrule.

At the Neale, Bingham, feeling unwell, remained with his friend and co-religionist, John Browne; the others went on. They were to be met at Shrule by Murrough-na-doe O'Flaherty and Ulick Burke, of Castlehacket, who were to bring them to Galway City; and Lord Mayo, believing that they were quite safe, left them at Shrule. His son, however, remained, and so did Burke; and instead of the unfortunate Protestants being protected, they were set on by their escort from Mayo, and by their pretended protectors and guardians from the other side of the river, and many of them were butchered in cold blood. How many were murdered is not quite certain; but there were certainly some. Nor did Lord Mayo's son do anything to save them; and because of his neglect he was, ten years later, put to death by the Cromwellians. But it is equally certain that some were not murdered, though many of those who survived were maltreated and robbed. Young Theobald Burke, indeed, tried to fix portion of the blame on Malachy O'Queely, the Archbishop of Tuam, saying that the Archbishop had guaranteed the Protestants his protection, and for part of the way accompanied them, and then, at or near Shrule, basely deserted them. But this charge was made in 1652, when the Archbishop was dead, and no longer able

to defend himself. And it was made by a man who wished to save his own life and excuse his own cowardice.¹⁴

There is not in fact even in the excited and prejudiced depositions of some of the survivors, a particle of evidence to show that the Archbishop was a party to the murder, or at any time approved of it. And it is pleasant to remember that the friars at Rosserilly cared for and nursed the wounded; that the Bishop of Killala escaped without injury, and that Burke of Castlehacket brought others to his house, and cared for them, and that all those who survived ultimately reached Galway in safety.

Catholic Confederation.

So far the Catholics of English descent had, for the most part, little sympathy with the rebellion, and the Catholics of the Pale not only held aloof, but were so aggressively loyal to the English connection, that they were eager to march against those in rebellion, and for that purpose tendered their services to the government at Dublin. This offer was rejected with scorn. The Lords Justices, in whom the government of the country then was, were Sir John Borlase and Sir William Parsons. Both were bigots, both in sympathy with the Puritan faction in England, and were, therefore, faithless to the King, whose nominal representatives they were. Parsons, the stronger man of the two, wanted no peace with the Catholics. He had already enriched himself by confiscated lands in Tyrone, Wicklow, and Fermanagh, and if the Catholic lords of the Pale rebelled, there would be more confiscated lands, and he would be still further enriched.¹⁵ Therefore, he rejected the offers of these Catholic lords, told them he would have no toleration of their religion, and no mercy for their co-religionists, plainly regarded them as enemies, and ordered them to leave Dublin at once under pain of

¹⁴ Miss Hickson's "Ireland in the Seventeenth Century," I, pp. 379-97; II, pp. 1-8.

¹⁵ Carte's "Ormond," I, pp. 190-191, 200-201.

death.¹⁶ And when they attempted to hold a meeting at Swords, he had the meeting proclaimed.¹⁷

In these circumstances, menaced by a common danger, and seeing no hope of safety except in armed rebellion and in unity, the Catholics of the Pale and the old Irish came together in December, 1641, and on the basis of freedom to practise their religion and equal civil rights with other subjects, and loyalty to the King, they formed an alliance.

In the beginning the Catholic forces did well, especially in Ulster; but reverses soon came, and it became quite plain that there should be closer co-operation between the old Irish Catholics and those of the Pale; that there should be some central authority to provide for the needs of the Catholic army, else disaster would come on the heels of the defeats already sustained.¹⁸

In May, 1642, the Ulster bishops met at Kells to consider the situation; and their meeting was soon followed by a National Synod at Kilkenny. A national association was there formed, which came to be called the Confederation of Kilkenny, as its members came to be called the Confederate Catholics. Proclaiming the justice of the war, the Synod also proclaimed the necessity of armed resistance in defence of their lives and liberties. And each member of the Confederation bound himself by oath to be faithful to the King, and defend his prerogatives, to uphold the laws, to fight for the free exercise of the Catholic religion, to defend all other Confederate Catholics, and to ask for no pardon for himself not given to others, nor submit to any peace which the Supreme Council of the Association had not previously sanctioned.¹⁹ The governing body of the Association, consisting of six members from each province, was the Supreme Council, and there were also, as subordinate executive bodies, provincial and county councils. But all these bodies derived their

¹⁶ "Ormond MSS.," II, p. 9.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* II, pp. 36-40.

¹⁸ D'Alton's "History of Ireland," II, pp. 255-6.

¹⁹ Meehan's "Confederation of Kilkenny," pp. 28-9.

authority from an elected body called the General Assembly of the Confederate Catholics, which met at Kilkenny in October, and then appointed the Supreme Council to replace that appointed provisionally in the preceding May.

Dr. O'Queely's Position.

Dr. O'Queely of Tuam was a prominent member of these bodies, and took a leading share in the leading events of that memorable year. He was present at the National Synod in Kilkenny; he took the Oath of the Association and signed the Synod's manifesto to the Irish people, calling on them to defend their religion and their civil rights, asking them to be united as one man in opposition to their common enemy and not fritter away their strength in idle contentions. Finally, the manifesto struck with the terrible penalty of excommunication those who violated their oaths or who aided the enemies of the Confederation. He was also a member of the General Assembly, which met in October. He was a member of the Upper House, which consisted of all the Catholic bishops, mitred abbots, and peers of the Irish Parliament. And he was one of the six members of the Supreme Council from Connaught, the other members of the Council from Connaught being John de Burgo, Bishop of Clonfert, Lord Mayo, Sir Lucas Dillon, Geoffrey Browne, and Patrick Darcy.²⁰

The Catholic armies set on foot were commanded in Ulster by General Owen Roe O'Neill; in Munster by Lord Muskerry and Gerald Barry; and in Leinster by General Preston. But in Connaught there was a difficulty, and supreme command was given to John Burke, who was named Lieutenant-General. The hope was that the Earl of Clanrickard, being a good Catholic, would take supreme command. He was appealed to by Dr. O'Queely and by the Bishops of Clonfert and Elphin not to adhere to the enemies of his faith, not "to sprinkle his ancestors' graves with the blood of such as will sacrifice themselves in the justifiable cause."²¹ But the appeal

²⁰ "Spicilegium Ossoriense," I, 262-8; II, pp. 9-16.

²¹ Clanrickard's "Memoirs," p. 171.

was in vain. Clanrickard followed the lead of Ormond, who hated the Catholics, and in consequence he would offer no opposition to Coote and Lord Ranelagh, the President of Connaught, who were plundering and killing the Catholics in the King's name, but whose sympathies were rather with the rebel Puritans of England than with the Royal cause.

Remembering these things, most of the Connaught Catholics regarded Clanrickard as an enemy. They took his castle at Aghenure, though Galway itself was captured by Clanrickard. The next year General Burke took possession of Athenry, where the Earl's influence was great; a little later his strong castle of Clare Galway fell into Catholic hands; and much more important than this was the capture of Galway itself by General Burke. On this occasion the articles of capitulation were drawn up by the Archbishop of Tuam.²²

Peace Negotiations.

At this date, when the Confederates were strong, and ought to have pushed the advantages already got, they foolishly entered into negotiations with the government at Dublin, and under the influence of Ormond, Clanrickard and the Catholics of the Pale, a cessation of hostilities was agreed to, the hope being that this would be the prelude to a permanent peace.²³ Negotiations for peace, long drawn out and futile, followed. The King, hard-pressed in England, and in 1645 disastrously defeated by the Puritans at Naseby, wanted peace, and, in return for men and money from the Confederate Catholics, was willing to grant them concessions. But the bigotry of Ormond, the King's Viceroy, stood in the way. Meanwhile the Catholics, condemned to inactivity by the cessation, saw the Puritans grow strong, their intolerance being in proportion to their strength. Coote had finally renounced his allegiance to the King, and had been appointed Lord President of Connaught by the English Parliament. Clan-

²² Meehan's "Confederation of Kilkenny," pp. 52, 57, 71.

²³ Cox, "Hibernia Anglicana," Appendix 16.

rickard then took office as Lord President under Ormond, not however as the ally of the Confederates. But he was unable to make headway against Coote, who, with a strong force, took possession of Sligo.

O'Queely's Death.

At this juncture the Supreme Council took action, and a force was sent against Coote, of which the Archbishop of Tuam was placed in supreme command. The appointment was not a happy one. The Archbishop was an able man, a great ecclesiastic, a statesman and a patriot. But he had no training and no capacity for military command. Sir Frederick Hamilton, in command of a Puritan force, had taken possession of Sligo in 1645, and murdered all whom he met. O'Queely, at the head of two thousand men, then marched to Sligo, and drove out Hamilton. His obvious duty was to guard against surprise, and here it was that he conspicuously failed. For, instead of setting guards, he was so unsuspecting that he invited a number of officers to dine, as if no Parliamentary army were near. The fact was that Hamilton only retired, and soon returned with reinforcements under Sir Charles Coote. The surprise was complete. The Confederate army was routed, Sligo was captured, and O'Queely who retreated was overtaken at Creevagh, near the shores of Lough Gill, and put to death. He was accompanied in his flight by two Augustinian priests (Higgins and O'Connell), who were also put to death. This occurred in October.

The Archbishop's body was ransomed for £30, and then taken by Walter Lynch to Tuam, where a solemn requiem Mass was said. The remains were then taken in charge by Lady Athenry, who had them secretly buried, so that not knowing the place of burial in later years neither the Puritans could desecrate, nor the Catholics venerate, the body of the Archbishop. Nor has the place of burial ever since been discovered. In the hope that it would, an admirer of the Archbishop wrote the following epitaph :—

"Praesulis hic multo laniatum vulnere corpus
 Caniteesque sacro sanguine sparsa jacet.
 Pro rege non renuit vitam profundere. Pastor
 Quam bene pastorem mors ista decet bonum.
 Purpurei fulgete patres in murice sanguis
 Pulchrius hic vestri muricis igne rubet." ²⁴

The Archbishop's death was accounted good news by the Puritans, and as such was published in the English Parliament. But his co-religionists deeply regretted him, his wisdom, patriotism and sanctity being universally recognised. The Papal Nuncio, Rinuccini, who had but just arrived in Ireland, and who did not personally know the Archbishop, gave utterance to what the people felt in his letter to Cardinal Pamphili from Kilkenny. "It was," he said, "so sorrowful for Ireland, as he (the Archbishop) had used all his strength in defence of the Catholic religion, and had worthily closed all his earthly labours, receiving in heaven a reward equal to the greatness of his merit." The Rev. Father Finaghty, a priest of Elphin, and a well-known contemporary, claimed that O'Queely was a martyr and a saint; that he had himself some relics of the dead Archbishop; and that by touching with these he had cured five hundred persons. A Synod at Tuam in 1660 examined these statements, but gave no definite judgment, merely saying that the relics and the cures effected by them appeared to be genuine, yet they would like further proof.²⁵

In O'Queely's day the Church came forth from the catacombs, and for a brief period the old Cathedral of Tuam was in Catholic hands. It was during these years that the Archbishop presented a beautiful gold chalice to the Franciscan Community at Rosserilly,²⁶ and another gold chalice—no doubt, made to his order—for the Cathedral of Tuam. It is

²⁴ Lynch's "Kirwan," pp. 110-11; Hardiman's "Galway," p. 123; Meehan's "Irish Hierarchy," pp. 105-6.

²⁵ O'Rourke's "History of Sligo," I, pp. 164-70.

²⁶ Lynch's "Kirwan," p. 111.

still in existence, with cruets and plate, all of solid gold, and beautifully ornamented, and having the name of the Archbishop himself, and the date, 1645. It is now in possession of the Very Rev. Richard Canavan, P.P., of Carnacon.

One other interesting relic of the Archbishop still remains in his "Description of the Three Islands of Aran and their Churches," which was written for Colgan, and inserted by him in his "Acta Sanctorum Hiberniae." It is put in as an Appendix to Colgan's "Life of St. Enda," and is the most complete account we have of the ecclesiastical remains of Aran at the time. The Archbishop also wrote for Colgan an account of the churches of the whole Archdiocese, a valuable document if it could be found. But unfortunately only that portion relating to Aran was included in his work, and it is this portion only which remains.²⁷

General Confusion.

At the Archbishop's death the state of affairs in Ireland, civil and ecclesiastic, was one of confusion, and greater confusion and complexity soon followed. The Puritans, victorious over the King, would make no terms with the Catholics. The King, defeated and desperate, would have given them concessions in return for their armed assistance, but his Viceroy, Ormond, loyal in everything else, was disloyal in this. Then, behind Ormond's back, the King sent an English nobleman, Lord Glamorgan, to Ireland, who promised the Catholics the free and public exercise of their religion in return for an army of ten thousand men. A copy of this royal promise was found in the baggage of the dead Archbishop, and in due time was published by the Puritans.²⁸ And the King, intimidated by the wrathful Puritans in England, and faithless as he always had been to every promise and to every party, repudiated Glamorgan, and had Glamorgan cast into prison by Ormond. The Anglo-Irish, anxious to preserve their estates, would have accepted almost

²⁷ Archdall's "Monasticon Hibernicum," II, pp. 179-81.

²⁸ "Confederation of Kilkenny," pp. 97-8.

any concessions in order to avoid war and confiscations. The old Irish, on the other hand, had no faith in Ormond, and wanted full freedom of religion and security in their lands. Finally, there was John Baptist Rinuccini, Archbishop of Firmo, who had been sent to Ireland in 1645 as the Pope's Nuncio to aid the Catholics, and who from the first sympathised with the old Irish, and with their manlier attitude. He was entirely distrustful of Ormond, and instead of having the Supreme Council negotiate with him, he desired that they should vigorously prosecute the war until peace was obtained as the price of victory.²⁹

John de Burgo.

One of the strongest supporters of the Nuncio on the Supreme Council was John de Burgo, Bishop of Clonfert. Born at Clontuskert in Galway in 1590, he was son of a country gentleman, and related to the Earl of Clanrickard. Both himself and his brother, Hugh, became priests; but while Hugh became a Franciscan, and was educated at Louvain, John became a secular priest, and was educated at Lisbon. His academic career was one of singular distinction. On two occasions he was chosen as the champion of his university to engage (as was the custom of the time) in a public concursus with another university, with Evora first, and then with Salamanca, and on each occasion was proclaimed the victor. And such was the impression he made at Salamanca that the University there conferred on him the doctorate of theology. In 1624 he returned to his native diocese of Clonfert, and for years was engaged in the ordinary missionary work of a secular priest. As early as 1629 his name was put before Rome for the vacant See of Clonfert. Five years later he offered strenuous opposition to Strafford's attempted plantation of Connaught, and in consequence had to fly to the woods to escape arrest. In 1640 his name was

²⁹ "Rinuccini's Letters," pp. 94-100.

again sent to Rome by O'Queely, and this time he was appointed Bishop of Clonfert, and was consecrated in 1642.³⁰

Like the Archbishop of Tuam, he was a member of the Supreme Council of the Confederate Catholics, and was always in sympathy with his views. And when Tuam became vacant by O'Queely's death, the Supreme Council recommended De Burgo for the vacant See. Rinuccini approved of De Burgo as "a man of mature judgment and upright intention, but slow in debate," not a very enthusiastic approval, indeed.³¹ De Burgo, however, improved his position. He supported the Nuncio in the more vigorous policy which eventuated in the splendid victory of Benburb, and he opposed the Ormondists on the Supreme Council, and denounced them for their treaty with Ormond, which secured nothing for the Catholics in spite of the victories they had won. The Nuncio was grateful, and in his report to Rome in August, 1646, he recommended De Burgo for Tuam. "I have," he said, "nothing to add concerning the Church of Tuam, as the Bishop of Clonfert, from my six months' experience, appears to me quite worthy of his election."³² Such a recommendation was decisive, and in February, 1647, De Burgo became Archbishop of Tuam. A successor to him at Clonfert was at the same time appointed in the person of Walter Lynch, who had been Warden of Galway and Vicar-General of Tuam; and this in spite of the fact that the Grand Duke of Tuscany had interfered on behalf of Father Nicholas Donnelly, an Irish Franciscan resident abroad.³³

Opposition to Rinuccini.

Then a strange thing happened. De Burgo, as Archbishop of Tuam, opposed everything which he had supported as Bishop of Clonfert. He became one of the props and pillars of the Ormond faction on the Supreme Council, one of the

³⁰ "Spicilegium Ossoriense," I, pp. 252-3; Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," pp. 143-4.

³¹ Rinuccini, pp. 105-6.

³² *Ibid.* p. 193.

³³ *Ibid.* pp. 232, 240-41; Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," pp. 146-7, 150.

most aggressive opponents of the Nuncio. This conduct roused the Nuncio's ire, and when Hugh de Burgo, the Archbishop's brother, complained of not having been appointed Bishop of Clonfert, and threw the blame on the Nuncio, the latter retorted that it was inadvisable to have the "two highest prelacies of the province in the hands of two brothers, both very ambitious and self-willed"; "and I have found that one of them, the new Archbishop of Tuam, is more intractable and averse to the recognition of my authority than any other among the bishops."³⁴ This was a great change in the short space of eighteen months.

And De Burgo continued the same course, writing from Kilkenny, in 1648, that the Nuncio complained of his ceaseless opposition.³⁵ For De Burgo consented to the truce between the Confederates and Lord Inchiquin, who had deserted the Puritans and gone over to the King, but who, whether a Royalist or a Puritan, was the foe of the Catholics. When the Nuncio published sentence of excommunication and interdict against the aiders and abettors of Inchiquin, De Burgo and others refused to obey.³⁶ When the Nuncio went to Galway in 1648, and was treated there with great disrespect by the Marquis (lately the Earl) of Clanrickard, the Archbishop countenanced and encouraged Clanrickard, and openly flouted the Nuncio.³⁷ Finally, when Ormond, who had left Ireland in 1647, returned as King's Viceroy in 1648, De Burgo hastened to Cork to bid him welcome, and in spite of the Nuncio's repeated warning, and Ormond's repeated treachery, De Burgo recognised him as Viceroy, and entered into treaty arrangements with him.³⁸ At last, worn out by intrigue and faction, and despairing of unity among the Irish-Catholics, Rinuccini left Galway for his own country in 1649. And it may safely be assumed that, at his departure, De Burgo shed no tears.

³⁴ Rinuccini, pp. 307-8.

³⁵ *Ibid.* p. 382.

³⁶ *Ibid.* p. 414.

³⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 419-20.

³⁸ *Ibid.* p. 457.

Walter Kirwan.

Associated with De Burgo in his opposition to the Nuncio was Dr. Kirwan, Bishop of Killala.³⁹ This was he who had so long filled, both under Conry and O'Queely, the position of Vicar-General of Tuam, and filled it with satisfaction to all. Nor did Dr. O'Queely ever find it necessary to disagree with anything he had decided. In 1639 his zeal took a new direction, and he left Galway for France, taking with him a few young men whom he wished to train suitably for the priesthood at home; and such was the regret at his departure that crowds assembled at Galway to bid him good-bye, and forty horsemen accompanied him to Dublin. There were difficulties, however, in carrying out his project. The money promised from Ireland ceased to be sent after 1641, and the school established by Kirwan at Caen was broken up. Some of the students joined religious orders, and Kirwan himself went to Paris, where he became the close personal friend of St. Vincent de Paul, and where he trained young men for the Order of Augustinian Canons.⁴⁰ In 1645 Dr. O'Queely sent his name to Rome for the vacant See of Killala. He was duly appointed, but only under severe pressure did he consent to assume the burden of the episcopacy. Consecrated in Paris in 1645, he returned to Ireland, and passed from Galway to his diocese. In the assembly at Kilkenny he was the friend of the Nuncio, but he came under the influence of the Marquis of Clanrickard, and perhaps this was responsible for the change in his views.⁴¹ Certain it is that he joined with John de Burgo in opposition to the Nuncio, and in flouting his censures. He soon repented, however, and was forgiven.⁴²

In Killala his conduct was the same as it had been at Tuam. There was the same zeal, the same charity, the same spirit of poverty, the same austerity of life. The victory of the Puritans brought him outlawry and imprisonment and banishment

³⁹ Rinuccini, p. 468.

⁴⁰ Lynch's "Life of Kirwan," pp. 119-135, 147-51.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* pp. 157-161.

⁴² *Ibid.* pp. 171-3.

from the Cathedral which he had restored.⁴³ Subsequently he made his way to Galway, where he long lay concealed. But his hiding-place was at last discovered, and he was then thrown into prison, and suffered much. Finally, he was sent into exile to France, in 1655, and died at Rennes in 1661.⁴⁴

The Cromwellians.

A somewhat similar fate befell the Archbishop of Tuam. Headstrong and violent, a factionist rather than a patriot, he supported the Nuncio in 1646, when he imprisoned the Supreme Council—a proceeding which increased the Nuncio's enemies, and was bad for Ireland.⁴⁵ But when De Burgo became Archbishop he was equally violent in opposition to the Nuncio. Ormond and Inchiquin were not the stamp of men who would willingly help the Catholics, and yet De Burgo became their friend and ally.⁴⁶ Had he joined O'Neill, who was a capable commander and loyal to the Catholics, he would certainly have influenced others, and perhaps preserved unity in the Catholic ranks. And never was unity and discipline and capable leadership more required. For Cromwell and his Puritans came to Ireland, and the massacres of Drogheda and Wexford showed what sort of mercy was to be expected from these ruthless conquerors. Too late De Burgo saw the error of his ways. His efforts and the efforts of the other bishops at Clonmacnoise, in 1650, to heal the dissensions existing and to offer an effective resistance to the enemy were unavailing.⁴⁷ Cromwell's career of victory continued, and when he left Ireland in 1650 his lieutenants crossed the Shannon and completed the work he had begun.

In 1649 Owen Roe O'Neill died. The following year Ormond, distrusted and repudiated by the Catholic bishops, left Ireland, leaving the Viceroyalty to the Marquis of Clanrickard. The latter made an effort to get help from the Duke

⁴³ Lynch's "Life of Kirwan," pp. 179-89.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* pp. 203-27.

⁴⁵ "Confederation of Kilkenny," p. 165.

⁴⁶ Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," p. 155.

⁴⁷ Murphy's "Cromwell," p. 237.

of Lorraine, but the help was insufficient. Preston was commander at Galway, but was unable to hold the place, and the city surrendered to Coote in April, 1652. The next year Boffin and Aran surrendered, and the rebellion, which had lasted so long, was at an end.⁴⁸

As the Puritan troops entered Galway at its capture, the Archbishop of Tuam left the city by a different gate, and for two years he lay in hiding at the residence of his friend, Malachy O'Connor, of Kilclooney, near Dunmore. There he was arrested in 1654, thrown into prison in Galway, and in 1655 deported to France.⁴⁹

The miseries borne by his subjects throughout the Archdiocese were then extreme. When the rebellion broke out in 1641 many in England, unable to serve against the rebels, subscribed money to put them down. Their object was to equip a force to be raised and officered by the State, and in return the subscribers were to receive the confiscated lands of those in rebellion. These subscribers were called adventurers, because they adventured their money on Irish lands. They hoped, indeed, that the rebellion would soon be over, and that the Irish lands would soon be theirs, and they were grievously disappointed that the war lasted ten years.⁵⁰ But with the surrender of Galway the war was practically over; the adventurers wanted their lands, and the time came for Puritan promises to be redeemed.

This was done by two Acts of the English Parliament—an "Act for Settling of Ireland," passed in 1652, and an "Act for the Satisfaction of Adventurers and for Soldiers in Arrears of Pay," in 1653. The first Act declared who were guilty as rebels, and therefore punishable by confiscation of their lands; the second Act declared how these confiscated lands were to be distributed. Assuming that they were the people of God, engaged in a holy work when they murdered and despoiled Irish Papists, these Puritan legislators, in the preamble to the

⁴⁸ Gilbert's "History of Irish Affairs," III, pp. 50-59.

⁴⁹ Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," pp. 164-5.

⁵⁰ Mahaffy's "Calendar" (Adventurers).

Act of 1652, declared that they did not intend to extirpate the whole Irish nation. They would spare husbandmen, ploughmen, labourers, artificers and others of the inferior sort; for these would be useful to the new planters, and, without leaders, could not be a danger.

And the leaders got little mercy. All concerned in the rebellion in the first year of the war were exempted from pardon of life or estate. The same was the case with priests who advised the beginning or the continuance of the rebellion. No mercy was to be shown to those in arms in August, 1652, who did not lay down their arms within twenty-eight days; nor to one hundred eminent persons specially named, among whom were Bermingham, Lord Athenry, Viscount Mayo, Murrough-na-Mart O'Flaherty, Thomas Burke of Annaghkeen, and John Browne of the Neale. All officers, civil and military, must go abroad and lose two-thirds of their landed estates. Those in arms who submitted within twenty-eight days would be left one-third of their estates, and the same amount would be left to those who could not prove that they had during the whole course "manifested their constant good affection to the Puritan interest."⁵¹

This meant that the lands of the whole country were at the disposal of the victorious Puritans; and by the Act of 1653 it was declared that only Connaught and Clare would be given to the old proprietors; the other provinces would go to the adventurers and soldiers. In addition, some of the choicest of the Connaught lands went also to the adventurers and soldiers; but little, if any, of the lands of the Archdiocese of Tuam. The reason was that the amount of good lands it contained was little; and the Puritans, having the better lands of the province to get, would scorn to possess the lands of West Mayo or Iar-Connaught. But if the lands were not good enough to excite the cupidity of the Puritans, they were good enough to satisfy some despoiled proprietors from beyond the Shannon. These were the transplanters. The dispossessed from Armagh, Tyrone, Monaghan and Cavan were trans-

⁵¹ Gilbert's "History," III, pp. 341-6 (Copies of the Acts).

planted to the baronies of Ross and Ballinahinch in Galway, and to Murrisk and Burrishoole in Mayo; and as evidence of partiality even here, the dispossessed from Down and Antrim, being partly of Scotch descent and non-Catholic, were transplanted to the better lands of Clanmorris, Carra, and Kilmaine in Mayo.⁵²

Lord Roche, from Fermoy, with its rich lands and its glorious scenery, was put down in the barony of Burrishoole, in what to him must have been uncongenial surroundings.⁵³ Lord Trimleston, banished from his lordly castle near Trim, was given a small estate at Monivea. And this involved sending adrift the owner of Monivea, one Patrick French, a case of great hardship.⁵⁴ For the Frenchs, having made money as merchants in Galway, purchased the Monivea estate, and now Patrick French was dispossessed, getting as compensation the smaller estate of 800 acres at Currandoo. And Sir Oliver French, the Mayor of Galway, was robbed of his property in that city, and had to accept the small estate of Frenchbrook, near Kilmaine.⁵⁵

What heartburnings these plantings and transplantings entailed. The newcomer to Mayo came from a greater to a smaller estate, from affluence to indigence, from a people among whom he was respected to a people whom his coming necessarily dispossessed, and who would, therefore, have for him little welcome and little sympathy in his misfortune. Nor was this all. The transplanted had to wander wearily from court to court, to beg favours from tyrannical and overbearing officials, and often to bribe with part of his new lands officials who were not only tyrannical but corrupt.⁵⁶

Anxious that the system of wholesale robbery called the Cromwellian Settlement should not be disturbed, the Puritans were ill at ease until the soldiers should leave the country; and as each garrison surrendered it was stipulated that the

⁵² Prendergast's "Cromwellian Settlement," pp. 160-2.

⁵³ *Ibid.* p. 184.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* pp. 152-3.

⁵⁵ "Galway Archæological Journal," VIII, pp. 213-14.

⁵⁶ Prendergast, p. 152.

men should embark for foreign service. Within a few years, 40,000 Irish soldiers had thus taken service in the armies of Spain, France, Austria and Venice. How many of them belonged to the Archdiocese of Tuam we do not know. What we do know is that Colonel Synott, who commanded at Aran, was given, by the Articles of Capitulation, but six weeks to transport himself and his men "to Spain or into any other place in amity with England."⁵⁷ Colonels Cusack and Costelloe, when they surrendered Boffin, got but twenty-eight days to dispose of their personal property in Ireland before they were embarked at Galway for Spain.⁵⁸ The terms of agreement also set out that the number of the Boffin garrison thus compelled to leave their country was 1,000, and that these were from Clare Island and Inisturk, as well as from Boffin, and that they were to embark from Clare Island.⁵⁹ The Galway garrison also went abroad, and among them must have been many from the Archdiocese.

These men loved their homes, no matter how humble these homes might be, and they must have felt keenly to be thus forcibly driven across the sea, robbed of their lands, and separated from their families. Amid the changing scenes of the camp and the battlefield they learned perhaps to forget; and when honours came as the price of their valour they were to some extent consoled. Yet they must have often thought with sorrow of their western homes, wondering what was the fate of wife or mother or sister in a land where the Cromwellian ruled. And if they had but known what their families had to endure, how much would not their sorrow have been increased? Connaught had prolonged the war to the last, and had experienced to the full the savageries of Sir Charles Coote. Famine had followed in the wake of war, and the plague was carried from Galway throughout the province, and famine and pestilence and war had struck down the people on all sides.⁶⁰ The Cromwellians looked on while the old and

⁵⁷ Gilbert, III, p. 363.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.* III, pp. 364-6.

⁵⁹ "Spicilegium Ossoriense," I, p. 395.

⁶⁰ Gilbert, III, p. 372 (Letter of Colonel Jones).

the infirm perished. But for young boys and girls the remedy was transportation; and from Galway alone 1,000 boys and 1,000 girls were sent to the sugar plantations of Barbadoes.⁶¹ The boys were to work in the sugar-cane fields; the girls were to be the wives or mistresses of the planters. It was calculated, at a later date, that at least 12,000 were thus shipped to Barbadoes, and the fact that 2,000 left Galway alone showed that the Archdiocese of Tuam contributed its share. And in Barbadoes their lot was pitiable. They could not carry arms, nor own a boat. They could not practise their religion. They worked in the burning sun without shirt, shoes or stockings. They were often flogged, and were despised even by the negroes, who called them white slaves. Such treatment rapidly thinned their ranks, and by 1656 many of them had died.⁶²

For the priests, in the eyes of the Puritans, no punishment was too great, and no suffering too severe. At Drogheda, Cromwell knocked them on the head.⁶³ He told the Catholic Bishops, in 1650, that he certainly would not allow the Mass.⁶⁴ And his successors in Ireland followed faithfully in his footsteps; and whoever could expect mercy, the priests could expect none. They were specially struck at in the "Act for the Settling of Ireland" (Clause II.). In every surrender they were the first to be denied life or liberty. They were exiled in crowds, chiefly to Spain, then to Barbadoes, and finally, in 1657, to the Islands of Aran and Boffin, where cabins were built for them, and sixpence a day voted for their support.

A thousand years before Enda had sanctified Aran, and Colman had sanctified Boffin. And now other holy men had come to these rock-bound isles, driven by furious fanaticism, and given for their subsistence less than a pauper's dole.⁶⁵

⁶¹ Prendergast, pp. 89-93; "Spicilegium Ossoriense," I, p. 404.

⁶² Saintsbury's "Calendar," pp. 481-7; Moran's "Persecutions Under Cromwell," pp. 174-83.

⁶³ Murphy's "Cromwell," pp. 82-118; "Cromwell's Letters," II, pp. 56-66.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.* pp. 406-10.

⁶⁵ Prendergast, pp. 319-23.

Such was the Puritan dread of the priests' influence with the people, that whoever sheltered a priest was guilty of death, and whoever knew of a priest's hiding-place, and did not inform the officers of the law, was liable to have his ears amputated, and to be whipped.⁶⁶

The Archbishop's Last Days.

It was, no doubt, harder to enforce these laws in the Archdiocese of Tuam than elsewhere. Its inhabitants were almost entirely Catholics; and the priest, disguised as a labourer, or ploughman, or gardener, lived among them still. This will explain how the Archbishop lived for nearly two years under Mr. O'Connor's roof. Marched into Galway, he was then thrown into a prison crowded with priests and Catholic laity, but not till he was robbed of his episcopal ring and other valuables. He suffered at the time from paralysis, and was unable to move, so that his deportation to France in 1655 was a relief. He lived at Nantes till 1660, when he changed to Dinan, where he could hear through the ships arriving from Ireland how it fared with his country and his Archdiocese. It was doleful news—of the desolation of Connaught, of the confiscation of Catholic lands, of the deportations to Barbadoes, of the hunting down of priests. The Cathedral of Tuam, which he had restored and beautified, had again passed into Protestant hands. His archiepiscopal palace had shared the same fate. The diocesan library which he had been collecting at Tuam was scattered, and the house in Galway, three storeys high, which he had built for himself in the days of prosperity, had long been in the hands of strangers.⁶⁷

Meanwhile great changes had come. Cromwell was dead; the Puritans hurled from power; the Stuarts restored in the person of Charles II.; and Ormond, now a duke, was again Viceroy of Ireland. De Burgo thought the time had come for his safe return to Ireland and to Tuam. Had he not visited

⁶⁶ D'Alton's "History of Ireland," II, p. 354; "Spicilegium Ossoriense," I, pp. 407-12.

⁶⁷ Meehan's "Irish Hierarchy," pp. 125-7.

the Nuncio? Had he not been the champion of Ormond and Clanrickard? Had he not been the first to welcome Ormond to Ireland in 1649? These things would surely not be forgotten by the Lord Lieutenant, who was now all powerful, and the old Archbishop might safely come back to his own people.

But Ormond could easily forget past services when his prejudices or personal interests intervened; he was not a man to feel any gratitude towards a Catholic bishop; and instead of remembering the action of the Archbishop in 1648, he would much more readily bear in mind that among his bitterest opponents in 1646 was the same Archbishop of Tuam. And if the Archbishop had any doubts on the subject, these were soon removed by Ormond's friend, Peter Walsh. Born in Kildare, and educated at Louvain, Walsh had joined the Franciscan Order, and became a priest. He was at Kilkenny in 1646, and strongly opposed the Nuncio, as he strongly supported Ormond's peace. Henceforth, through all the troubled years till 1660, he was in Ireland, managing somehow to escape the Cromwellians. He was always the defender and the apologist of Ormond. With the Restoration, the latter became a duke; but earl or marquis or duke mattered not with Walsh; and not even Boswell was a more slavish admirer of Johnson than Walsh was of Ormond. The Nuncio or bishop or peer who opposed his idol he repudiated and condemned. Whatever Ormond did was right; and when Ormond returned from exile at the Restoration, Walsh hastened to London to bid him welcome.

Walsh was not a strong Catholic; indeed, Burnett, who knew him well, described him as "almost wholly a Protestant."⁶⁸ But Walsh was nevertheless ready to pose as the patron of his Church, using his influence with Ormond and Charles II. for its protection. And the harassed Irish clergy, needing help so badly, were willing to have him as their representative with both King and Viceroy. In this position he undertook to effect an arrangement between the King and

⁶⁸ Burnett's "History of the Reformation."

the Irish bishops and clergy, and drew up, on their behalf, a Remonstrance for presentation to the King.

With profuse protestations of loyalty, and even of affection, to the King, these ecclesiastics were made to declare that in future all ecclesiastics should be licensed by the King; that they were to exercise no jurisdiction by virtue of any commission coming from any power beyond the seas, papal or princely; nor could they meet in synod without first having got the royal licence to meet. This was really a renunciation of the Pope's authority, and could hardly be distinguished from taking the Oath of Supremacy. As such it was favoured by Ormond, and in the hope that the bishops and clergy would follow Walsh's lead, he allowed them to assemble in Dublin in 1666. But only one bishop and sixty-eight priests could be found to sign the Remonstrance. The Primate, who presided, condemned it, and for doing so was imprisoned by Ormond; and the same fate befell Plunkett, Bishop of Ardagh. And the Bishop of Kilfenora would have also been imprisoned if he had not escaped from Dublin in time.⁶⁹

The Archbishop of Tuam was unable to attend the meeting in Dublin, but he was an uncompromising opponent of the Remonstrance. Dr. Darcy, Bishop of Dromore, the only bishop who favoured it, wrote to the Archbishop early in 1662; but the reply, written from Dinan, was not very favourable. The Archbishop was, indeed, effusive in expressions of loyalty and affection towards his "Divine Majesty" Charles II.—unmerited terms, surely, in the case of such a worthless monarch and such a profligate man. But the Archbishop had his doubts about the language of the Remonstrance, "not through any disaffection to our sovereign's service, but through misconstruction, its style resembling somewhat the Oath of Allegiance."⁷⁰ In 1663 he arrived in Dublin, and as he had come without a licence, and was known to be un-

⁶⁹ "Spicilegium Ossoriense," I, pp. 440-45 (Vatican Archives); "History of the Remonstrance," pp. 7, 9, 15-17, 24-5, 120-1, 637-742; "Spicilegium Ossoriense," I, p. 446; Brady's "Episcopal Succession," I, p. 226; Burke's "Irish Priests in the Penal Times," pp. 14-18.

⁷⁰ Renehan's "Archbishops," pp. 407-8.

friendly to Walsh's party, he was ordered to leave the city. As he was too ill to walk or ride, he had to make the journey to his Archdiocese carried in a Sedan chair. He probably lived disguised and in secret, and in his enfeebled condition could devote but little time to administrative work. Nor had he any desire to mix in the angry controversy that raged round the Remonstrance, though he continued to profess his devoted loyalty to the King and to the Duke of Ormond. His letter, addressed to the Bishop of Ardagh, dated March, 1665, shows this.⁷¹

His views remained unaltered in the next year. He did not attend the Synod at Dublin, as he was physically unable; but he sent his proxy to Dr. Lynch, Bishop of Kilfenora, and his vote was therefore cast against Walsh and his Remonstrance.⁷²

The same year (1666) the Archbishop died, having then reached his eightieth year.

⁷¹ Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," pp. 167-9.

⁷² Renehan, pp. 411-12.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE PENAL TIMES.

James Lynch, Archbishop.

A PERIOD of three years elapsed from the death of De Burgo, in 1666, until a new Archbishop was appointed, and then the appointment fell to Dr. James Lynch. The date of his birth would be about 1620, so that when he was appointed to Tuam he would not have yet reached his fiftieth year. There were Lynchs at Galway, at Lavally, and at Shrule, but we do not know to which of these branches of the family Dr. Lynch belonged. Nor do we know in what year he was ordained. But we do know that he was educated at the Irish College, Rome, and that he laboured for many years in his native province, and that he earned the good-will and respect of those among whom he lived, even of those who did not belong to his own faith. For when the Propaganda was asked to appoint him, he was described as "a most worthy Irishman, and much desired by the principal gentlemen and people of the Tuam province, and not hated by the heretics, who, for his good behaviour, allow him to preach and teach."¹

The Archbishop's family was a distinguished one. If we are to believe O'Hart,² the Lynchs were partly Irish, deriving their descent from Longseach, of the race of Ir. The name, Longseach, which means "a mariner," became in process of time Anglicised to Lynch. Some of the Lynchs themselves say they came from Linz in Upper Austria, and trace their

¹ Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," p. 172.

² O'Hart's "Irish Pedigrees," pp. 159-60.

descent to Lincaeus, a friend of Aeneas, whom he accompanied in his wanderings after the fall of Troy. A Sir Hugo de Lynch, one of his descendants, was a general in the army of William the Conqueror, and one of his descendants came with Henry II. to Ireland.

Leaving however the domain of fiction, and confining ourselves to sober fact, we find that the Lynchs were an Anglo-Norman family, who settled in Meath under Hugh de Lacy, and had their residence at Lynch's Knock near Trim and there remained until they were dispossessed in the Cromwel-
lian Settlement. A branch of that family settled in Galway city early in the thirteenth century, were always recognised as English, and were numbered among the Tribes of Galway. These Galway Lynchs soon acquired wealth and power. Nicholas Lynch was, in 1312, the deputy of the Earl of Pembroke in the office of Marshal of Ireland. And no other family in Galway was so prominent in the public life of the city. The first Mayor of Galway, in 1485, was Dominick Lynch, and the last Catholic Mayor of Galway was Thomas Lynch, who was deposed for a Protestant in 1654. In the intervening period of 169 years no less than eighty-four members of the Lynch family filled the position of Mayor. Amassing money by trade, they were generous benefactors towards the Church. One of them built the greater part of the Church of St. Nicholas, and then had it raised to the dignity of a Collegiate Church, with its wardens and vicars.³ Others built convents and monasteries and hospitals; and James Lynch has been made famous for his stern civic virtue, which impelled him to hang his own son because he had been convicted of the crime of murder.

In the higher offices of the Church, also, there were many Lynchs, and two of them, who were contemporaries of the Archbishop, were themselves bishops. Andrew Lynch was appointed Bishop of Kilfenora in 1647; and William Lynch became Bishop of Clonfert in the same year. A still more famous man than either of these was John Lynch, Archdeacon

³ O'Flaherty's "Iar-Connaught," p. 35.

of Tuam, who so well vindicated the fame of his country against the lies of Gerald Barry.⁴

Dr. Lynch's appointment bears date, 21st January, 1669; other appointments on the same day being made to Cashel, Dublin and Ossory.⁵ Persecution had so well done its work that there were then but two bishops in Ireland, and it became necessary for Dr. Lynch to proceed to Ghent, where he was consecrated in May by the Bishop of Ghent, the assistant bishops on the occasion being Dr. Talbot, Archbishop of Dublin, and Dr. Lynch, Bishop of Ferns. The new Archbishop at once returned to Ireland and to his Archdiocese, and announced the fact of his consecration and of his arrival home to the Cardinal Protector at Rome.⁶ A few months later he wrote from Galway to the Pope and to the Propaganda, as well as to the Cardinal Protector. With all humility he pointed out the difficulties before him. There were dissensions among the mendicant friars; the clergy stood in need of reform; there were disputes among the people; there was much ignorance, with loose living and disordered lives.⁷

Condition of the Catholics.

The fact was that the whole machinery of Church government was in disorder, nor could it be otherwise under the rule of such a man as Ormond, filled with an unquenchable hatred of the Church of his ancestors. It was a good omen, however, that the very year of Dr. Lynch's appointment, Ormond ceased to be Viceroy of Ireland, and for the next few years there was a period of comparative repose.

Ormond's immediate successor at Dublin was Lord Roberts, who in a few months was succeeded by Lord Berkeley. The latter held office until the end of 1672, and was succeeded by Lord Essex, who held office until 1677. Lord Berkeley was

⁴ "An Account of the Lynch Family," by M. J. Blake, B.L., in "Galway Archæological Journal," VIII, No. 2.

⁵ Moran's "Life of Oliver Plunkett," p. 36.

⁶ "Spicilegium Ossoriense," I, p. 481.

⁷ *Ibid.* p. 494.

instructed, on taking office in 1670, to see that all officers and soldiers took the Oath of Supremacy, and that Catholic bishops who thwarted Peter Walsh and his Remonstrance were to be severely dealt with.⁸ But while he was to bring all into conformity of religion, his action was to be characterised by moderation and wisdom rather than by intemperate zeal. Friendly to the Catholics, as he was, and the personal friend of the Duke of York, himself a Catholic, the Viceroy interpreted his instructions in a liberal spirit. Instead of persecution there was toleration, and Catholics were put on the bench and into the corporations without taking the Oath of Supremacy; Catholic bishops were allowed to exercise their functions openly and in the light of day; and Peter Talbot, Archbishop of Dublin, became the Viceroy's special friend. The latent bigotry of the English Parliament was roused by these proceedings, and the King was compelled to recall Berkeley.⁹

The next Viceroy, Essex, was expected to follow in the footsteps of Ormond rather than of Berkeley. But, though he was a strong Protestant, he had some sense of justice and fair-play, and he could not but feel that excessive zeal against the Catholics would involve him in serious difficulties. For if it earned him—as no doubt it would—the encomiums of fanatics in Ireland and in the English Parliament, it would just as certainly bring upon him the displeasure of the King. He was in the position of one who tries to serve two masters. On the one hand, the King authorized him, in defiance of the law, to dispense many officials and members of corporations from taking the Oath of Supremacy.¹⁰ On the other hand, any appearance of toleration roused into fresh activity the sleepless bigotry of Ormond and the English Parliament; and it was owing to such mischievous influences that Essex was compelled to issue a proclamation in 1673 ordering Peter Talbot and all the archbishops, bishops, vicars-general,

⁸ Cox's "Hibernia Anglicana," pp. 9-11.

⁹ Carte's "Ormond," II, p. 418.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* II, pp. 438-9.

abbots, and "all others exercising jurisdiction from the Pope," as well as all regular priests, to quit the kingdom before the first of December following. And all loyal subjects were forbidden to give shelter to any such ecclesiastics.¹¹ Toleration was blended with persecution during the remainder of the Viceroy's term of office, and in Tuam the Archbishop was able to do his episcopal work, though with difficulty.

In 1671 he was present at a Synod in Dublin, and in 1674 Oliver Plunkett came from Armagh to confer the pallium on Dr. Lynch. The Primate speaks with special laudation of Dr. Dowling, the Vicar-General of Tuam, who then held the office for thirty-five years, and "as the Catholics of the diocese inform me, kept alive the spark of religion which remained in the diocese." He also speaks of the Warden of Galway challenging the jurisdiction of the Archbishop; and he adds that though it is not his business to interfere, he is quite satisfied that "the warden is in the wrong, and is not exempted from the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Tuam."¹²

The Archbishop's Troubles.

Later in the same year the Primate wrote to the Archbishop of Tuam with reference to the vicar-generalship of Killala. It appears that this Dr. Dowling, whom Plunkett himself had so highly extolled, had been Vicar-General of Killala from 1654-1666, and about this time had his appointment renewed by the Archbishop of Tuam. But Dr. John de Burgo had been appointed Vicar-Apostolic in 1671, with instructions to visit the Killala diocese within four months, otherwise his faculties ceased. He was really unable to appear in Killala, and so his faculties ceased, though they were renewed in the following year. But when De Burgo came to Killala, in that or the following year, Dr. Dowling refused to recognise him, and so did the Archbishop of Tuam. From them he appealed to the Primate, and from the Primate's letter it seems certain that in his opinion De Burgo's claims were good. Dr.

¹¹ Burke's "Irish Priests in the Penal Times," pp. 39-40.

¹² Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," pp. 175, 177-8.

Dowling, however, had his way, and from being Vicar-General he was appointed by Propaganda to the higher position of Vicar-Apostolic of Killala.¹³

Meantime, the Archbishop of Tuam had become involved in serious trouble with one of the priests of his own diocese. His name was Martin French, a member of the Augustinian Order, probably at Galway, where the name of French was prominent and influential, and where there was an Augustinian Convent. Involved in trouble with his ecclesiastical superiors, and perhaps having been punished in some way by the Archbishop, he had recourse to desperate measures. He was evidently anxious to curry favour with the Government and to earn Government money by acting as a spy on the actions of the bishops and priests of his Church. In 1671 he charged the Archbishop before the civil courts in Galway with exercising foreign jurisdiction, and the Court decided that, in consequence, the Archbishop was guilty of *præmunire*, and as such placed outside the protection of the law. The Archbishop appealed, and was allowed his freedom until the courts sat in Dublin in the following October. Then he was to be defended by Nicholas Plunkett, one of the ablest lawyers of the time. But when the case was called French did not appear. For the time, at least, he repented of his evil ways, and throwing himself at the feet of Oliver Plunkett, with protestations of penitence and amendment, he was pardoned by him as well as by the Archbishop of Tuam.¹⁴

But French's good resolutions did not last. In 1673 and in 1674 he was again spying on Catholic ecclesiastics, and earning Government pay for his treachery. Again the Archbishop of Tuam was accused on his evidence, and brought before the civil court in Galway in 1674, and having been found guilty of *præmunire*, was sentenced to transportation. He was, therefore, compelled to live abroad, and found a refuge in Madrid, where he remained for several years.¹⁵

¹³ Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," pp. 179-80.

¹⁴ Moran's "Life of Oliver Plunkett," pp. 175-6.

¹⁵ Burke's "Priests in the Penal Times," pp. 91-3.

Renewal of Persecution.

He was there in 1678, when the storm broke on the heads of the Catholics as a result of the lying accusations of Oates and Bedloe. In the circumstances Madrid was a safer residence for him than Tuam. For he was accused by Oates of being engaged in the Popish plot in conjunction with Peter Talbot, Archbishop of Dublin. The latter was thrown into prison, and left there till he died; and a little later, in the same frenzy of persecution, and on equally groundless charges, Oliver Plunkett was brought to the scaffold. Nor can there be any doubt but that Dr. Lynch would have fared as badly as the other two Archbishops had he been in Ireland at the time.¹⁶

Since 1677 Ormond was back again in Ireland as Viceroy, and again at his old trade of worrying the Catholics. In 1678 he issued a proclamation ordering that all archbishops, bishops, vicars-general and regular priests should quit the kingdom, and that all convents and churches should be closed. He also issued a proclamation "offering a reward for the discovery of any Popish officer or soldier who shall hear Mass." In the next year there was a further viceregal proclamation commanding all priests to leave Ireland; and all Catholics were turned out of Galway and many other towns.¹⁷

At this time there were in Connaught many of the dispossessed landholders, robbed of their lands by the Cromwellians. In revenge they lived, under the name of Tories in lawless bands, defying the law, and preying on those who had despoiled them. Ormond now ordered that in any parish in which Tories were found, the priest should be taken and thrown into prison. It was a heartless measure taken against innocent men, many of whom knew nothing of these Tories, and who had no sympathy with their lawless ways. But any pretext was good enough for Ormond to strike at the priests. Nor was it to be wondered at that one of them despairingly

¹⁶ "State Trials: Trial of Oliver Plunkett."

¹⁷ Carte's "Ormond," II, pp. 478-80; Record Office, 23rd Report, Appendix 2.

said: "This Lord Lieutenant will make an end of the Catholics of Ireland if God does not take him away."¹⁸

After the fierce storm of fanaticism, generated by the lies of Oates and Bedloe, had culminated in the judicial murder of Oliver Plunkett in 1681, there was a reaction to sanity and justice. But such mildness was little to Ormond's taste. He was now an old man, but age had not chilled his hatred of Catholicity and its ministers; and when he heard that the Dominicans of Athenry were partially restoring their ruined abbey, and were putting up a tomb to a benefactor, and an altar, he ordered the Protestant Archbishop of Tuam to have both tomb and altar taken down. And in 1683 he ordered that the Dominicans of Burrishoole Abbey should be punished because they had Mass said there, and had admitted nuns into the Dominican Order, and assisted at their reception. Each so assisting was to be fined £50.¹⁹

The Archbishop in Exile.

The exiled Archbishop of Tuam could only survey these pitiful scenes from afar, and hope that better days would come. In 1677 he wrote from Madrid to Rome, describing his treatment in Ireland, where he was falsely accused, and where, though innocent of guilt, he had to live the life of an outlaw, sheltered by his own people, but afraid, for their sakes as well as for his own, to remain a second night in the same house, lest he might bring ruin on those who sheltered him. If he returned to Ireland he knew that both his liberty and his life would be in deadly peril. But he submitted himself to his authorities at Rome, and if they thought it was his duty to be in Ireland rather than in Spain he was ready to go.²⁰

He was not, however, advised from Rome to face deprivation of liberty and life, and in 1684 he was still at Madrid. In that year he again wrote to the Prefect of the Propaganda, saying that he was weary of being in exile ("de exilio summe

¹⁸ Prendergast's "Ireland after the Restoration," p. 83.

¹⁹ Burke's "Priests in the Penal Times," pp. 59-60.

²⁰ "Spicilegium Ossoriense," II, pp. 249-51.

fatigatus ''), but that great changes had taken place in Ireland, and that he was hoping to return home.²¹ And in fact great changes had taken place. Ormond had ceased to be Viceroy, and never again held office. Charles II. soon died a Catholic, and in 1685 James II., a Catholic, was King, and Dr. Lynch was soon back in Tuam.

He returns to Tuam.

Once more he could go among his own people and openly exercise the functions of his office. But such was the intolerance of the English Parliament and of their friends in Ireland, that even under a Catholic King Catholic disabilities continued, and though Dr. Lynch and others were allowed to wear their episcopal dress in public, they were not allowed to wear the pectoral cross.²² The tithes of the ancient See were still left to the Protestant Archbishop; and while the Protestant Archbishop of Tuam had a seat in the Parliament held by James at Dublin in 1689, the Catholic Archbishop had not.²³ But to be free in Tuam to do his work and rule his Archdiocese without hindrance to one who had so long lived the life of an outlaw, and had so long eaten the bitter bread of exile, was, indeed, a welcome change.

Then came the revolt of Protestant England and of Protestant Ulster against the rule of a Catholic: the siege of Derry, the sieges of Limerick, the battles of the Boyne and Aughrim, and, finally, the Treaty of Limerick, which guaranteed the Catholics some toleration, though not equality. But every student of Irish history knows how the Treaty was broken with shameful perfidy. Instead of toleration, there was fierce persecution, and the Archbishop of Tuam was compelled to fly from his quiet retreat at Clonbur, and was once more a fugitive and an exile.

²¹ "Spicilegium Ossoriense," pp. 268-9.

²² *Ibid*, pp. 279-80.

²³ Davis's "Patriot Parliament of 1689," Appendix A:—List of Members of Parliament for Galway—Oliver Martin and John Kirwan; Athenry—James Talbot and Charles Daly; Tuam—James Lally of Tullinadaly and Walter Burke.

For the next quarter of a century the whole resources of victorious Protestant ascendancy were employed in elaborating the Penal Code. So far Catholics were free to sit in both Houses of Parliament; but in 1692 the English Parliament, presuming to legislate for Ireland, enacted that all members of Parliament should take the Oath of Supremacy, and make a declaration that they did not believe in Transubstantiation or in the Mass, and that the reverence paid to the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Invocation of Saints were idolatry. And the Irish Parliament acquiesced in this usurpation of legislative power because it struck at the hated Papists.

The Penal Code.

In 1695 an Act was passed "to restrain foreign education." Under its provision, parents who sent their children abroad to be educated were punished by forfeiture of goods and lands; and for a Catholic at home who publicly taught school the penalty for each offence was £20 and imprisonment for three months. The same year was passed an "Act for the better securing the Government by disarming the Papists." Under this Act two magistrates might search any house, and if arms were found, the penalty for the first offence was a fine of £30, and a year in prison, for the second præmunire. No gunsmith could take Catholic apprentices, nor could a Catholic own a horse worth more than £5. The next year an Act was passed making it penal for Catholic labourers not to work on Catholic holy days, the penalty being a fine, and if this were not paid, a public whipping. In 1692 there was an "Act for banishing all Papists exercising any ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and all regulars of the Popish clergy out of this kingdom." All such not going abroad before 1st May, 1698, were to be imprisoned; to return after going abroad was high treason; and to shelter such involved forfeiture of lands and goods. A further Act prohibited the inter-marriage of Protestants and Catholics, the penalty being forfeiture of

estate, and for the officiating minister a fine.²⁴ In 1698 there was an "Act to prevent Papists being Solicitors."

In 1703, with the last of the Stuarts on the throne, there was an "Act to prevent Popish priests from coming into this kingdom."²⁵ Under its provisions every priest or bishop coming in incurred the death penalty; those who sheltered them incurred forfeiture of goods, and a magistrate neglecting to enforce the Act was fined £100. A still more infamous enactment of the same year was "an Act to prevent the further growth of Popery." This Act made it præmunire to convert a Protestant to the Catholic faith. To send children abroad for their education involved forfeiture of estate. A Catholic child turning Protestant was put under the Court of Chancery, and provided for out of his father's estate. No Catholic could be a guardian to children, nor purchase land held on lease for longer than thirty-one years, nor vote for members of Parliament, nor live in Galway or Limerick; and the Catholic making a pilgrimage to a holy well was to be whipped.²⁶

The same year was passed an Act compelling every priest in Ireland to register himself, failing which he was liable to transportation. Apostate priests were to get a salary of £20, levied off the county. In 1709 an Act was passed, under which a Catholic's estate at death was gavelled, so that his children inherited in equal shares. The same Act provided a reward of £50 for the discovery of an Archbishop, Bishop or Vicar-General; £20 for every regular priest; £10 for a schoolmaster. Even registered priests were to take the Oath of Abjuration;²⁷ nor could such officiate outside their own parishes. Finally, no Catholic in any trade could take more than two apprentices.²⁸

Nor were these laws allowed to fall into disuse. Parliamentary resolutions were often passed censuring magistrates who

²⁴ Irish Statutes.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ By this Oath the priest swore that the son of James II. had no right to the Crown, and that the Oath was taken "freely and willingly."

²⁸ Irish Statutes.

were tolerant, and commending those who rigorously enforced the Penal Laws. Apostate and degraded Catholics who spied upon their priests were regarded as benefactors to the State, and rewarded as such. And Viceroy after Viceroy spoke of the Catholics as the common enemy, who must at all costs be put down.²⁹

Diocesan Administration.

With the Archbishop in exile, and such laws as these enforced in Ireland, it was difficult to preserve the faith in the Archdiocese of Tuam. How difficult it was we learn from the case of the Rev. Patrick Duffy, Parish Priest of Ballinrobe. The original documents have been diligently made out by Father Burke, and cover the period from 1696 to 1712.³⁰ Father Duffy was born about 1658, educated at Douay, ordained at Cambrai in 1687, and appointed Parish Priest of Ballinrobe in 1696. Had he been an ordinary parish priest, the Government would probably have extended to him the same grudging and contemptuous toleration that it extended to others in a similar position. But Father Duffy was Vicar-Forane of the Ballinrobe deanery, and as rural dean he was the mouthpiece and representative of the Archbishop, or rather of his Vicars-General; and Vicars-General were then objects of special abhorrence, because they exercised authority derived from the Pope.

The two Vicars-General at the time were Dominick Lynch, a nephew of the Archbishop, and Dr. Francis Burke; and these two, in the enforced absence of the Archbishop, ruled the Archdiocese, and in various letters communicated their wishes to the Parish Priest of Ballinrobe. They were compelled to conceal their place of residence and their identity. Lynch passed as Dominick Deane, and Burke as Miles Staunton. They must have passed as laymen, and there is evidence in their letters that they were poor. More than once the Vicar-General Lynch has to ask Father Duffy for a little

²⁹ "Journals of the House of Commons," III, p. 698; IV, p. 874.

³⁰ "Priests in the Penal Times," pp. 239-50.

money; and on one occasion he asks him for a pair of shoes, "the heels not too high, and well nailed."

Secrecy and subterfuge were everywhere. The celebration of the Mass, the administration of the Sacraments, the renewing of the holy oils were all done in secret, so as to escape the eye of the Government official or of the priest-hunter. In 1696, Dominick Lynch ordered Father Duffy to assemble the priests at Kilcommon to receive the new oils; and from another letter we learn that the oils had been brought all the way from Cork. In 1698 there was a diocesan synod held under the presidency of Lynch, but the place is not stated. It must have been in secret. The following year Lynch ordered Father Duffy to reprimand one Father Owen Malley, who was guilty of some reprehensible conduct. In 1701 Lynch asks Father Duffy to meet him at Donamona, where secrecy could best be secured. His letter was sent to Father Duffy at Liskillen, a short distance from Ballinrobe. In 1702 the Vicar-General ordered Father Duffy to assemble the clergy at Father Walter Burke's "mass house." This was the visitation, and each priest was to bring his vestments, pyxis, oilstock, breviary and ritual, and each was to pay a crown by way of cathedratics.

A little later, hearing that the old Abbot of Cong was dead, Lynch wished to see Father Duffy, and he directed that the interview should be at night. In 1711, Captain Browne, of the Neale, a Catholic and a devoted friend of the priests, died, and the clergy were anxious to attend his funeral. But Lynch was compelled to advise caution; for if Browne was known to have died a Catholic his estate would be divided by law among his children, and his other property would go to some Protestant who discovered that he was a Catholic, and for doing so was entitled by law to the price of his treachery and betrayal.

Father Duffy had taken the Oath of Allegiance to William and Mary, and in 1706 had become a registered priest, his securities being John Browne, of the Neale, and George Browne, of Liskillen. But this did not save him, and on suspicion of exercising Popish jurisdiction his arrest was ordered from Dublin Castle. The order was sent to one Robert Miller,

of Milford, the moving influence being the Protestant Archbishop of Tuam, who for a time filled the office of Lord Justice. Father Duffy was pursued to Ballintubber, whither it was thought he had fled, though this surmise of the authorities was incorrect. Before the end of the year 1711, however, he was arrested and lodged in prison, his house at Ballinrobe being also searched by Miller. The charge against him was easily proved, for among Father Duffy's papers Miller found a letter from the Vicar-General, giving him faculties to absolve those who had taken the Oath of Abjuration. Another document gave a list of those so absolved. Convicted by these documents, Father Duffy was sentenced to transportation, and an order was given by the Lords Justices, addressed to the Sheriff of Dublin, to put Father Duffy on board the good ship "Diligence," then in Dublin, and about to sail for Spain. This is the last we hear of Father Duffy, and no doubt it was in Spain, and not in Mayo, that his last days were spent.

The Archbishop usually abroad.

The Archbishop, during these terrible times, was in Spain, and in 1692 his name, with that of other exiled Irish bishops, is appended to a letter sent from St. Germain's to the Pope.³¹ But he sometimes ran the risk of coming to his Archdiocese, for in 1698 we catch a passing glance of him. He was then at the Neale, no doubt under the protection of Captain Browne, and there the question was discussed of the right of presentation to the three parishes of Dunmore, Kilkerrin and Killarney. The right was claimed by Bermingham, Lord of Athenry, though evidently not willingly recognised by the Archbishop. The matter was arranged by having appointments made to these parishes with the joint consent of the Archbishop and Bermingham, leaving the exact rights of each to be determined at some future time.³²

At what other dates the Archbishop returned to his Archdiocese, and how long he remained, we do not know. His

³¹ "Spicilegium Ossoriense," II, pp. 305-7.

³² Burke's "Priests in the Penal Times," pp. 239-50.

permanent residence was abroad. In 1692 he writes, and in good Latin, from Paris to the Propaganda, bemoaning all that his poor people had to suffer for their faith; and he takes pardonable pride in the fact that, in spite of all they had suffered, and were suffering, they had never deserted the faith. Even at that date the Vicar-General and the other clergy were going among the afflicted people, with great caution, indeed, and by stealth, and not one of the people would betray them.³³ In 1698 the Archbishop was at the Abbey of St. Amand in Flanders, in the diocese of Tournay, no doubt as a guest. And in 1707 he was in France, probably at Paris, and there he spent the last years of his long life. His residence was at the Irish College, and there he died in 1713.³⁴ He was able, no doubt, owing to the generosity of some benefactor, to leave the College a sum of £25 a year for the education of Galway students studying for the priesthood. His body was interred in St. Paul's Church, and there a marble bust was erected to his memory.³⁵

Pitiable State of the Catholics.

Pitiable, indeed, was the state of his Archdiocese and of his country during these last years of his life. In 1708 an Italian missionary from China, accompanied by a foreign bishop, was returning to Rome in an English ship, which made a stay of some time in Galway. Neither bishop nor missionary was allowed to land; but the missionary, in his letter to the Pope, described what he saw. The Catholics from the city came out in their boats, clamouring to see the bishop and to get his blessing. The Catholics on board fasted and abstained on the prescribed days, though in doing so they were objects of scorn and ridicule for the Protestant officers on the vessel. A young Catholic gentleman, named French, well born and educated, simply because he asked to see the bishop, was set upon by a Protestant colonel, beaten severely

³³ "Spicilegium Ossoriense," II, pp. 309-11.

³⁴ Boyle's "Irish College at Paris," p. 29.

³⁵ Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," p. 187.

with a stick, then tied with ropes, and was about being thrown into the sea, until other officers on board interfered and restrained the savage colonel. Finally, both the bishop and the missionary were put into a dark room at the bottom of the vessel, and kept there until the Catholics from the city had left the ship and returned to land.³⁶

Pitiable also was the position of the Irish Catholics abroad. There were bishops who had been expelled from their dioceses, priests from their parishes, teachers from their schools, officers without employment, landlords beggared, widows and orphans cast penniless upon the world. Louis XIV. did something to alleviate the general distress, and so did the King of Spain, and in one year (1710) the Pope, out of an income not too large, sent to France the sum of 24,000 livres for the relief of Irish exiles.³⁷

The Stuarts nominate to Irish Sees.

Nor should it lightly be forgotten all that was done for these afflicted Irish exiles by Queen Mary, the wife of the dethroned James II. Money she had not to give, but for twenty years she poured forth a constant stream of letters asking for assistance and favours for them. She wrote to French bishops, friars, abbesses and superiors of convents, asking perhaps for a benefice for a destitute priest, for shelter for destitute Irish ladies, for free education for Catholic girls, for a burse in some ecclesiastical college for an Irish ecclesiastical student.³⁸

Much less meritorious was the interference of the Stuarts in the appointment to Irish Sees. James II. died in 1702, and apparently must have claimed the right of nomination; for his son after him certainly did, as did his Queen. In the year 1704 she writes to the Archbishop of Tuam:—"As for what relates to the filling up of the vacancy upon the death of the Bishop of Elphin, I am of your opinion that nothing should be done in it at present whilst the Parliament of Ireland is

³⁶ "Spicilegium Ossoriense," II, pp. 376-8.

³⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 415-16.

³⁸ "Stuart Papers," I, pp. 95, 118, 121, 131, 136-7, 143, 147.

sitting. Nor till the ferment be over of the persecution now raised against the Catholics in that country. When it shall be seasonable to proceed in the matter I will not fail to take your advice concerning the person most proper for that charge, and in the meantime I shall be glad if you sent me the names and qualifications of such as you think fittest to fill that See."³⁹

Her son, the Elder Pretender, who never filled a throne, but who nevertheless wrote himself down as James III., nominated to the Sees of Kilmacduagh, Ardfert and Killala; and is very much hurt in 1707 that the Pope had not appointed those he had nominated.⁴⁰ Three years later he is again complaining that those he had nominated had not always been appointed by the Pope, and declares that such was "an attempt to infringe my right of nomination to the bishoprics of Ireland."⁴¹ It was little wonder, indeed, that the Pope did not always accept the guidance of this royal exile, and it is, on the other hand, rather surprising that an arrangement was come to in 1715 between Pope and Pretender, with which the latter declared he was satisfied, and in accordance with which he nominated to the vacant See of Armagh.⁴² But meantime there was an angry growl from the Pretender to the Cardinal Protector of Ireland in 1714, that the new Archbishop of Tuam and others had been appointed without his nomination, and, indeed, without his knowledge.⁴³

In 1710, Dr. Lynch, the Archbishop, was a very old man, and asked that his nephew, Dr. Gregory Lynch, Vicar-General, should be appointed his Coadjutor. Whether the appointment was about being made or not does not appear, for Dr. Gregory Lynch died in that year, and not until 1713 was a Coadjutor appointed in the person of Francis Burke. He was appointed Titular Bishop of Militopolitanus, and on

³⁹ "Stuart Papers," I, p. 193.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 210.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 239.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 366.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 331.

Dr. Lynch's death in the same year he became Archbishop of Tuam.⁴⁴

A New Archbishop.

The Archbishop was consecrated early in 1713 by the Bishop of Killala, assisted by John Bodkin, parish priest of Lackagh, and another priest, for bishops, except the consecrating prelate, were not available. Nor could the ceremony take place except in secret, and hence it was "in the place of our refuge." But Dr. Burke was no stranger to living in secret and acting by stealth, as he had long filled the office of Vicar-General, and had been compelled to adopt disguises, and pass under an assumed name. The events of his episcopate are not, therefore, known, for no record could be kept. All we know is that he died in 1723, after having lived, at least for some time previous to his death, at Ryehill, in the parish of Tuam.

One glance into the conditions of diocesan affairs we get from a presentment of the Protestant Grand Jury in 1715. The Judges of Assize in this presentment were informed that the friars were returning to their old abbeys in great numbers: to Ross, Athenry and other places; that unregistered priests were saying Mass; that the Catholic gentry were sending their sons abroad for their education; and that the Marquis of Clanrickard's son, who was the "Popish Archbishop's" cousin, was absent, presumably abroad in some college.⁴⁵

A copy of the Archbishop's will is still preserved in the Dublin Record Office, and is as follows:—

"In Dei nomine, Amen. I, Francis Burke, being in a languishing distemper, but, I thank God, in perfect sense and memory, do make my last will and testament as follows:—Imprimis, I bequeath my soul to the Almighty, and order my body to be buried in the Parish Church of Clonbern, or as my friends shall order, and that decently, without ostentation. Secondly, I bequeath all my black cattle and sheep to my cousin and faithful servant, Elizabeth Kelly, together with

⁴⁴ Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam."

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* pp. 187-8.

all my household stuff, pewter, metal, and brass; also all my beds and bedclothes and linen. Thirdly, I order that if the expense of my distemper and funeral, which funeral I beg may be discreetly, without noise or any sort of ostentation, performed, will leave any money in the hands of the said Elizabeth Kelly, it may be distributed as Father Denis Kelly shall think fit as legacies to the priests of this diocese of Tuam. Fourthly, I bequeath all my books, vestments and ornaments to Father Denis Kelly for the use of my nephew, Myles Burke, and do hereby appoint the said Denis Kelly sole executor of this my last will and testament, as witness my hand this 20th day of June, 1723."

The will was proved in the Protestant Archbishop's Court in August, 1723, and is endorsed, "Copy will Francis Burke of Knockantagle, County of Galway, and Diocese of Tuam."⁴⁶

Tuam in 1731.

At Dr. Burke's death the Penal Code was complete. In their own country Catholics were outlaws and slaves, excluded from Parliament, from the corporations, from the bench and bar, from the grand juries, and even petty juries, from residence in many cities and towns. The Irish Parliament had done its work well, and if legislation could have abolished the nation's creed, Catholicity in Ireland would have been extinguished. Nor was the Irish Parliament content to legislate. The laws made must be enforced, and many were the resolutions passed by these bigot-legislators urging magistrates and law officers to be zealous, and censuring those who were inclined to mercy and toleration. And from time to time reports were called for as to the state of Catholicity.

We have one such report called for by the Irish House of Lords in 1731, and made, as far as Tuam was concerned, by the Protestant Archbishop of Tuam. The Mayor of Galway and others assisted him by getting evidence; and from this report we learn that in the year mentioned there were between seventy and eighty churches, or mass houses, as they were

⁴⁶ Very Rev. Canon Carrigan, D.D., in "Archivium Hibernicum," vol. iii—Episcopal Wills.

called, with a corresponding number of registered parish priests. Some of these parish priests were old, and had curates; others had none. A few of the parochial churches were ornamented, but the ornamentation must have been little, and the churches were simply ruins; and there were parishes where there was not even a ruined church, and where Mass was said in a barn lent by some pious Catholic. All these were public mass houses; but there were private chapels where the friars officiated, often in the residences of the richer Catholic families. The friars rambled about a good deal, and sometimes, though it was a criminal offence, they married Protestants and Catholics. But the parochial clergy dared not do this, and had a fixed place of residence.

In place of the Catholic schools, which were prohibited, Protestant schools had been set up. But the Protestant Archbishop had to lament that the Catholic children would not come to those, "there being scarce a Papist who will send his child to a Protestant school, even to learn his grammar, or so much as to read." Priests often acted as teachers in private houses, being tutors to the family, and teaching also the children around. In all, the Archbishop made out thirty-two Catholic schools in the Archdiocese, in some at least of which Latin and philosophy were taught, and sometimes theology. But for ecclesiastical students the more usual thing was to send them abroad. They learned Latin and philosophy, and perhaps a little theology at home from some priest, and then were sent abroad, to Louvain or Paris, or some such centre of ecclesiastical learning. Not uncommonly they were ordained before being sent abroad to complete their education. As to female education, there were in Galway City three communities of nuns who kept boarders, but what provision was made for similar education in the other parts of the Archdiocese the report does not say.

In Galway City there were nine secular priests, eight Augustinians, eight Dominicans, eight Franciscans, one Jesuit; and there were eight Catholic schoolmasters. At Athenry the

Dominicans still lingered, but lately they had removed near Esker,⁴⁷ some distance from the town. The community numbered twenty. The Franciscans of Rosserilly were eight in number, and had lately removed to Shrule. There were still friars at Ballinrobe and at Ballyglass in the Milltown parish, and also at Ballintubber, but the number of friars in each case was unknown. At Murrisk there were still Franciscans, at Tombeola some Dominicans, and at Burrishoole there were twenty Dominicans.⁴⁸ The Archbishop might have added—but perhaps he did not know—that the Augustinians had lately left their old home at Dunmore, and had got shelter at Garbally, in Menlough parish, from the local landlord, Mr. French,⁴⁹ and had increased in 1731, no doubt by additions from abroad.⁵⁰

Dr. O'Gara, Archbishop.

The Protestant Archbishop mentions that the Popish Archbishop was one "Brien Garah," which was his way of writing Bernard O'Gara. In a presentment of the Mayo Grand Jury at the Assizes of 1715, dealing with the state of Catholicity in the county, Brian Gara is put down as officiating at Knock parish, the late parish priest, John Morris, having died. How long Father O'Gara was then a priest, or where he was educated, we do not know. But we do know that he came of a good old Irish stock. His ancestors had been lords of Moy O'Gara and Coolavin in the County of Sligo, and his grandfather was Farrel O'Gara, who sat in the Irish Parliament of 1634. He gave valuable assistance to the Four Masters in their work, and they, in turn, dedicated the "Annals of the Four Masters" to him. Farrel O'Gara died in 1660, leaving a son, Bernard, whose two sons, Bernard and Michael, became in succession Archbishops of Tuam.⁵¹

⁴⁷ They rented Esker from Mr. Denis Daly and built a house, but in 1723 they were so poor that they to sell 7 of their old chalices.

⁴⁸ "Archivium Hibernicum," III, p. 124 et seq.

⁴⁹ Burke's "Irish Priests in the Penal Times," pp. 252-4.

⁵⁰ O'Heyne's "Irish Dominicans," Appendix, p. 86.

⁵¹ Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," p. 189.

Bernard O'Gara was consecrated secretly in 1724 by the Bishop of Elphin, assisted by Father Denis O'Kelly and Father John Bodkin, priests of the Tuam Archdiocese. Two years later he received a Papal brief dispensing him from the reception of the pallium, but giving him all the power as if he had received it.

In these days it was a crime to be a Catholic Archbishop, and though Tuam was mainly Catholic, even the gentry still clinging to the old faith, the agents of Government were watchful. Hence we find the Archbishop compelled to live in secret, and under the assumed name of George Fowler.⁵² There was special reason in his case. Bermingham, Lord of Athenry, who, like his ancestors, had been a Catholic, in 1726 publicly conformed to Protestantism, and not content with this, had informed Dr. O'Gara of the change. The disgusted and indignant Archbishop wrote a strong letter of remonstrance, sending his letter by the hand of one Thady Glynn. But the messenger neglected to deliver the letter, which fell into the hands of some Government agent, and finally found its way to the House of Lords. The bigotry of these titled legislators was inflamed, the privileges of a Protestant peer were seriously infringed, and a special resolution was passed in 1731 directing that "Bernard O'Gara, the reputed Popish Archbishop of Tuam, by a letter dated 6th June, 1726, written to the Right Hon. Lord Athenry, insolently and scandalously misrepresented his lordship." And the Sergeant-at-Arms was directed to take into custody both the Archbishop and Thady Glynn.⁵³ These proceedings sufficiently explain why the Archbishop was compelled to take an assumed name. He might escape the officers of the law as George Fowler a layman, and probably a Protestant, but it would be much more difficult to avoid capture and imprisonment as Bernard O'Gara, Catholic Archbishop of Tuam.

The Archbishop had also some trouble with the Warden of Galway, who, like so many others of his predecessors, denied

⁵² Burke's "Irish Priests in Penal Times," p. 263.

⁵³ Journals of the House of Lords, 1731," vol. iii, p. 206 et seq.

that he and his vicars were in any way subject to the Archbishop's jurisdiction. Again, as on former occasions, an appeal went to Rome, and the Bishop of Limerick was ordered by Rome to inquire and report; and after his report had been sent to Rome and examined, it was decreed that the Archbishop should have power to make a triennial visitation in Galway. All ecclesiastical matters were first to be examined and decided on by the Warden, but there was a right of appeal to the Archbishop. Further, it was decreed that in future the election of warden and vicar should be triennial, and not annual as hitherto.⁵⁴

Dr. O'Gara died about 1740. The exact date is not known, but it is known as a certainty that in that year, Bernard O'Gara being dead, he was succeeded as Archbishop by his brother, Michael O'Gara. The latter died in 1749, and, no doubt, like his brother, his desire was to escape publicity and persecution.

Two scattered rays of light are thrown on his short term of office. In 1744 the Sheriff of Galway County writes from Loughrea to Dublin Castle that "the titular Archbishop of Tuam was one O'Garah." He did not, however, know what was his Christian name, nor did he know where he lived.⁵⁵

In 1747 one Stratford Eyre, who held the post of Vice-Admiral of Connaught, and was a ferocious bigot, wrote that Galway was full of Papists, thirty Papists to one Protestant; and he was specially horrified to find that several old Protestants and the children of such had been perverted to the Popish religion by the indefatigable assiduity, diligence and unlimited access these ecclesiastics had to the town and suburbs.⁵⁶ Such was Galway, and such, we may confidently assume, was the Archdiocese of Tuam when the Archbishop died in 1749.

⁵⁴ Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," p. 190. Bull of Clement XII.

⁵⁵ Burke's "Irish Priests in the Penal Times," p. 428.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* pp. 419-420.

CHAPTER XV.

THE DAWN OF TOLERATION.

Catholics Outlaws.

THE third quarter of the eighteenth century had come without any relaxation of the Penal Code. And how hard this Code pressed on the Irish Catholics, groaning under the weight of it so long, we learn from Lord Charlemont. "The restrictive laws," he says, "which were meant to operate to the diminution and impairment of Catholic property, had amply produced the desired effect, and by far the greater part of those Papists who possessed large estates had, in order to rescue themselves and their families from the destructive operations and galling yoke of those tyrannous institutions, become converts to the established religion.¹ This was written in 1772, and five years later Charlemont repeated it by saying that "the greater part of the old Catholic gentry had, either from conviction or from convenience, conformed to the established and ruling religion."²

The Catholic peasantry were simply outlaws, without any of a citizen's rights, knowing nothing of government or law except as instruments of taxation and oppression. Charlemont, though not a liberal-minded man, and indeed, having much of the ascendancy spirit, had some sympathy with them, and in his place in the Irish House of Lords brought in a Bill in 1772 to enable Catholics to get leases for ninety years of the cabins which they occupied, and a potato garden attached.

¹ "Charlemont Papers," I, p. 45.

² *Ibid.* p. 44.

But this Bill, though it passed the second reading, was thrown out.³

The Catholic shopkeeper was no better off than the farmer, as far as legal rights were concerned. In 1759 a Miss Toole, a Catholic, was being intimidated by her Protestant friends into changing her religion, and fled for refuge and protection to the house of a Dublin Catholic merchant, Mr. Saul. For this offence, the offence of preventing a Papist from becoming a Protestant, Mr. Saul was prosecuted and heavily fined. The Lord Chancellor, who decided the case, declared that "the laws of this land did not presume that an Irish Papist existed in the Kingdom, nor could they breathe here without the connivance of Government." Mr. Saul was so disgusted that he left Ireland for ever, and settled in France, declaring that he was compelled "to take flight from a country where I have not the least expectation of encouragement to enable me to carry on my manufactures to any considerable extent."⁴ Other Catholic merchants, equally hampered in their business, followed Mr. Saul's example, and many Irish Catholics joined the army of France, or emigrated to America.

In Tuam the old Catholic gentry long clung to the ancient faith. But even in Tuam the operation of the Penal Code was felt, and Bermingham of Athenry and Browne of Mayo had gone over to Protestantism; and so had Clanrickard of Galway. Much of the Catholic lands of Mayo had passed into the hands of Protestant settlers, such as the Ormsbys and the Binghamms; and though there were still Catholic Blakes and Brownes, their possessions were not extensive, and their influence was but little. The Catholic tenant, as in the rest of Ireland, was a serf, and the Catholic shopkeeper, not being wealthy enough, like Mr. Saul, to leave the country, carried on his business hampered by restrictions and disabilities at every turn. The whole executive of the country was in Protestant hands. The judges and magistrates and sheriffs, the revenue officers, and even the constables, were all Protes-

³ "Journals of the House of Lords."

⁴ Moran's "Penal Laws in the Eighteenth Century," pp. 177-8.

tants; and at every turn the Catholic met an enemy, and often a tyrant, who coveted his property and hated his faith.

Dr. Mark Skerrett.

The Archbishop of Tuam was then Dr. Mark Skerrett. The family, according to O'Hart, derives its origin from MacCarthy More, Prince of Desmond. One of these princes was called MacCarthy of the bushes (in Irish *na-scairte*), hence the name.⁵ In Galway, however, the Skerretts were considered to be English, and were one of the twelve tribal families of the city. One of them settled at Ballinduff, in the present parish of Annaghdown, and it was to this particular branch of the Skerrett family that the Archbishop, Mark Skerrett, belonged. Where he was born, or where he was educated, we do not know. At all events, he became a priest, and must have attained distinction, else he would not have attracted the notice and the patronage of the Young Pretender. For it was this prince, the heir of the Stuarts, who nominated Skerrett, and through whom he was appointed Archbishop of Tuam, in 1749.

With the Catholics of Tuam still outlaws, like their co-religionists throughout Ireland, and with their bishops still considered by the Government the special friends of the Stuarts, and therefore the special enemies of the reigning house of Brunswick, it was necessary that the Archbishop should walk warily. He must not attract notice, nor exercise his functions publicly, and must study the ways of secrecy. Nor can we find anything to record of the Archbishop's life or actions in the early years of his episcopal career, except that he held a provincial synod at Balla in 1755; and even the decrees of this provincial synod have not survived.

In 1760, however, we have a record of a diocesan assembly, not a synod, at which the Archbishop presided. The place of meeting we do not know, for it is not stated. But we do know that it was attended by the Dean of the Archdiocese, the Provost, the Precentor, and by five Canons, so that all the

⁵ O'Hart's "Irish Pedigrees," p. 75.

members of the Chapter were evidently not present. The Archbishop and the Chapter lament that the various parishes, so thinly populated and so poor, are unable to give decent sustenance to the clergy and to the Archbishop. A remedy might be found, no doubt, in the amalgamation of parishes, thus having larger parishes and fewer priests. But for the sake of the people this remedy was not applied, and instead certain regulations were made as to the amount of the voluntary offerings made by the faithful. In future every married couple would pay the priest an annual sum of two shillings; at every marriage an offering of two shillings and sixpence would be given; and at each baptism a sum of one shilling and sixpence.⁶ These modest contributions, it was hoped, would enable the clergy at least to live, though they could hardly do much more.

The beginning of Reform.

For many years after that date we lose sight of Dr. Skerrett. Then came great events for Ireland and for Tuam. The American Colonists had protested against the imposition of taxes on them by the British Parliament, while they themselves were not represented in that assembly. It was, they said (and said truly) taxation without representation; and when, in defiance of their repeated protests, a tax was imposed on tea imported by the British East India Company, the American Colonists promptly threw the tea into Boston Harbour. When England retorted by withdrawing the Charter of Massachusetts, and giving that State only the status of a crown colony, the Colonists' answer was to raise an army under George Washington, and defeat the British troops at Lexington and Bunker's Hill. This was rebellion, and it became successful rebellion, when the English army was defeated at Saratoga; and when the Colonists found that France and Spain and Holland joined them against England, and formally acknowledged the independence of the United States of America.

⁶ "Spicilegium Ossoriense," III, pp. 273-4.

(D 705)

In England it was thought wise to conciliate the Catholic minority there by some concessions; and the case for concession was much stronger in Ireland, where the Catholics were in an enormous majority. Moved, therefore, more by pressure from England than from any strong desire to be just or liberal, the Irish Parliament began to retrace its steps, and in 1778 an important measure for the relief of the Catholics was passed, though not without considerable opposition.⁷ Only a few years earlier Lord Charlemont failed to pass a bill which would give Catholics a right to obtain a lease of a cabin and a potato garden. But now the same legislature passed an Act enabling Catholics, on taking the Oath of Allegiance, to hold leases of land for 999 years, and to inherit and transmit land in the same way as Protestants. This Act also abolished the inducements hitherto held out to the children of Catholic landlords to conform to Protestantism; and it also abolished the old system under which the landed property of Catholics should be divided equally among the surviving children. Nor could the eldest son of a Catholic henceforward mortgage his father's property, without his father's consent, as a reward of his own conformity to Protestantism.⁸

This was a great change, a first step towards admitting the Catholics to equality with those of other religious denominations. They were no longer to be considered as outlaws in their own land, nor as enemies of the State; and though the Irish Volunteers obstinately refused to admit Catholics into their ranks, dreading, no doubt, to put arms into their hands, they willingly accepted Catholic money to help themselves to obtain arms and equipment. And the English military authorities were glad to get Catholics into the army; and in 1776 some bigots complained that a certain Colonel Dalrymple had been enrolling Catholics for the King's service, and was

⁷ Lecky's "History of Ireland," II, pp. 216-17.

⁸ Irish Statutes—"An Act for the Relief of His Majesty's Subjects of this Kingdom Professing the Popish Religion."

aided by Dr. Skerrett, the Catholic Archbishop of Tuam, or, as it was put, by the "Popish Archbishop of Tuam."⁹

Dr. Skerrett's Will.

These concessions, however, left the Catholics still far removed from an equality with their non-Catholic fellow-citizens. Mass was still said in private houses. Nor was it till 1783 that Dr. Skerrett was enabled to build a small church in Tuam. Two years later he died, and was buried in the Catholic graveyard at Tuam.¹⁰

A copy of his will can still be seen in the Record Office, and is as follows :—

"Memorandum that both my nephew's and his son John Skerrett's bond for £500, the income of which is to be paid to Messrs. Stephen Lynch and Thomas Kirwan, or their successors in office, to be paid to the poorest parish priests in the diocese of Tuam in the same manner as Father George McNamara's money is laid out, and with the same obligations, and that by the appointment of my successors in office.

"*Nota Bene.*—That £10 a year of said income is to be paid to my niece, Mary Geoghegan, during her life. The money when paid is to be lodged in some bank, as Father George's money is. This is my last will in regard of this bond, as witness my hand this 3rd day of April, 1782."¹¹

It will be seen that Dr. Skerrett does not sign himself Archbishop of Tuam. Nor are their titles given to his two executors, Stephen Lynch and Thomas Kirwan. The first-named was then Parish Priest of Ballinrobe, and had been for many years, as he was then, Dean of Tuam. Father Thomas Kirwan was Archdeacon of the Archdiocese, and was Parish Priest of Headford. Had they and the Archbishop been given their proper ecclesiastical titles, it would, no doubt, have given offence to the bigots of the Dublin Parliament. And this was in 1782, the very year that legislative independence was granted, when the American Colonists had already

⁹ Walpole's "Last Journals," II, pp. 25, 85, 235.

¹⁰ Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam"; Moran's "Persecutions in the 18th Century," p. 36.

¹¹ "Archivium Hibernicum," II, pp. 221-2.

secured recognition as a free and independent nation, and at a time when Irish public men talked much of equality and liberty.

Dr. Phillips.

Dr. Skerrett's successor in the See of Tuam was Dr. Philip Phillips, a native of Clonmore, in Mayo. He had been originally an officer in the Austrian army, but turned from a military to an ecclesiastical career, and in due time became a priest. It is surmised that his residence abroad brought him under the notice of the Pretender. At all events, it is to the Pretender that he owed his elevation to the episcopacy, for the following letter is extant, written by the Pope in 1760, when Dr. Phillips was appointed Bishop of Killala.¹²

"Clement VIII, Pope. To our beloved son in Christ, James, the illustrious King of Great Britain and Ireland. Whereas we . . . have appointed to the Bishopric of Killala, now vacant in your kingdom of Ireland our beloved son Philip Phillips, of whose qualities to support the weight of such an office we have had the necessary testimonials.

"And whereas we were of opinion that in our said letters no mention need have been made of the nomination made by your Majesty. Now we by these presents expressly declare that our intention was and now is that from the omission which the condition of the present time demanded no detriment should occur to your prerogative of nomination; but that all your rights should be preserved, untouched and inviolate, just as if they had been expressly set forth in our said Apostolic letters, which we trust you will accept as a proof of the close and paternal affection with which we now embrace you in the Lord, and we hereby impart to you our Apostolic Benediction."

It is rather surprising to see that fugitive prince, who never did anything remarkable, and never had any tangible prospect of reaching the throne of his ancestors, described as the illustrious King of Great Britain. And it was certainly unfortunate for the persecuted Irish Catholics to have this right of nomination allowed to these Stuart princes. For it put

¹² Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," pp. 198-9.

especially the bishops and priests in antagonism with the reigning English sovereigns. And in branding them with disloyalty to the Hanoverian kings, it gave both the British and Irish Parliaments an excuse for the continuance of the Penal Laws.

His Report on Killala.

In a report sent to Rome in 1771 by Dr. Phillips we have an interesting survey of the diocese of Killala at that date. There was then no Catholic Cathedral in Ballina, the ecclesiastical capital; and throughout the diocese there were no parish churches as we know them now, though there was in each parish a house used solely for divine worship, a house poor and humble in appearance, but decently kept. In some of these churches (if we can call them such) there were the usual vestments, and in the richer ones, chalices of silver. In other parishes, where the people and church were poor, the chalices were of some bright metal, such as tin. There was a diocesan chapter, consisting of a dean, an archdeacon, a precentor, and twelve canons, rather a large chapter for a diocese having but twenty parish priests and four administrators—twenty-four parishes in all. There were no nuns, and of the religious orders of men, only a few old men were left, worn out with age.

The Bishop speaks highly of the piety and zeal of the clergy. There was a difficulty in holding diocesan synods, but the regulations made by himself were faithfully followed. Priests were bound to preach the Gospel in Irish every Sunday and every holyday of obligation, and to teach the children the Catechism in presence of the older people; and they did so. And so well had their work been done, that, in spite of persecuting laws and a hostile Government, the people remained staunchly Catholic, being twelve times as numerous as the Protestants.

The Bishop laments that mixed marriages were not infrequent. They took place in the Protestant churches, and with unhappy results. He also complained that servile work,

coupled with the omission to hear Mass on holydays of obligation, was all too common. Other serious vices were rare, though he thought it rather remarkable that the less educated people, while unable to speak English, could curse in that language with great volubility.

The difficulty of performing his episcopal duties was made all the greater by the fact that there was no episcopal residence in the diocese, and the Bishop was compelled to live at his ancestral home at Cloonmore, in the neighbouring diocese of Achonry. In spite of this, however, he visited nearly all the parishes every year. The exceptions were four parishes in the mountains, and these he visited every third year, making his visitation and administering Confirmation in the usual manner.¹³

His Death.

From Killala Dr. Phillips was transferred to Achonry in 1776; and in 1785, on the death of Dr. Skerrett, he was appointed Archbishop of Tuam. Of what he did in Achonry we know nothing. Nor do we know anything of what he did in Tuam, except that in 1787 he visited the Isles of Aran to administer Confirmation. The accommodation was so bad that he was compelled to sleep on a bed of rushes, which brought on so serious an illness that he died the same year at Tuam.¹⁴

Boetius Egan.

His successor was Boetius Egan, who since 1776 had filled the See of Achonry, so that as he was the successor of Dr. Phillips at Achonry, he was also his successor at Tuam. That he was of good family, was born at Dunblayney near Tuam in 1734, and was educated at Bordeaux, sums up all that is known of his early life. When he was ordained, or where, or by whom, and in what way he spent his priestly life, whether in a college or in the ordinary work of the mission, we do not

¹³ "Spicilegium Ossoriense," III, pp. 318-23.

¹⁴ Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," p. 199.

know. And little, indeed almost nothing, is known of his life in Achonry. There is a reference to him in 1781, in a letter of Charles O'Connor of Belenagare. The writer thanks Dr. Carpenter, Archbishop of Dublin, for his recommendation of Dr. Boetius Egan. "He is a worthy man," he adds, "and will undoubtedly answer your description of him in whatever station or dignity he is placed."¹⁵ At all events, his character was such that he was considered suitable for the position of Archbishop of Tuam in 1787.

Ireland was then supposed to be a free country, and much glittering rhetoric had been expended by Grattan on the glorious destiny that awaited her. But the Catholics were still in chains. In 1782, Gardiner, the author of the "Relief Act of 1778," brought in and passed an "Act for the further relief of His Majesty's subjects professing the Popish Religion." Under its provisions Catholics were enabled to purchase land, and bequeath it in the same way as Protestants. Henceforth Catholics were no longer bound to declare where they last heard Mass, and might own a horse worth more than £5. Catholics might also teach school, and set up schools if they first received a licence from the Protestant bishop of the diocese in which they lived. They could also be guardians of Catholic children. But Catholic priests were still forbidden to wear their vestments outside their churches; Catholic ecclesiastics could not assume any ecclesiastical title, nor could Catholic churches have either steeple or bell.¹⁶

Orde's Educational Proposals.

It is true that Grattan urged, but in vain, that Catholics should get votes. And Hely Hutchinson, the Provost of Trinity College, urged that Catholics should be admitted to Trinity College, and that diocesan colleges should be set up to which Catholics would be admitted free, though he would not have a Catholic University.¹⁷ These proposals were not

¹⁵ "Spicilegium Ossoriense," III, p. 312.

¹⁶ Irish Statutes.

¹⁷ Irish Parliamentary Debates.

then assented to, but in 1787 they were revived by Mr. Orde, then Chief Secretary for Ireland. In a series of resolutions he proposed that a school should be set up in each parish; that the existing diocesan schools should be reformed; that four endowed schools should be set up, and in addition that two higher schools should be called into existence, charged with preparing boys for the University. Finally, while admitting Catholics to Trinity College, there should also be established a second University which would admit students of all religions or none, and so would admit the despised Papists. But though these resolutions passed unanimously through the House of Commons, nothing further was done.¹⁸ Orde's intention was that his proposals should take legislative shape in the session of 1788. But in the interval between the two sessions there was a change of government, Orde ceased to be Chief Secretary, and the passing of his resolutions was not followed by legislation.

This was no matter for regret in the mind of the Archbishop of Tuam. Before the session of 1788 he had been requested for his views, and the views of the bishops of his province, by Dr. Troy, Archbishop of Dublin, and his reply is the following, written from Dunblayney in February, 1788 :—

“ My ever dear and venerated Lord,

“ I have on receipt of your most esteemed favour wrote to the prelates of this province. Our thoughts on Mr. Orde's system of education are that it is a deep-laid and hostile plan against the interest of the Catholic religion. Nor is it to be supposed from motives of persecution, but from a political view of strengthening the hands of Government by increasing the numbers of the Established Church. For what other can be the design in establishing Protestant schoolmasters in every parish throughout the Kingdom, to the exclusion, no doubt, of Catholic teachers, and with so many inducements to the poor to send their children there? And what will be inculcated in such schools but Protestant principles? The youth will be there fitted for different employments in which Protestants alone are trusted, and all

¹⁸ Parliamentary Debates, VII.

these motives will be carefully and artfully insinuated and displayed before their eyes. But what remedy? If this be the determined plan, as it seems to be, of Government, they will carry it into execution, nor do I see how it can be naturally prevented from taking place.

"The point will be then for us to think of some plan to obviate the evil that must arise to the cause of religion, and keep the spark that remains alive. This will be the business of the most intelligent, zealous and leading men amongst us, and the good and merciful God, I hope, will preserve his little flock. Latin schools are totally on the decline in this province, and so much so that in some time hence we will hardly get proper candidates for ordination."¹⁹

Concessions to Catholics.

In public affairs, as far as Catholics were concerned, there was a pause. The Catholic Association, founded by Wyse, Curry and O'Connor, relied too much on addresses and petitions, and with such poor results that, as late as 1790, a Catholic petition would not be received by Parliament, and in 1791 a Catholic address would not be received at Dublin Castle. On the one hand, the Catholic leaders themselves, like Lord Kenmare, were without vigour or capacity. On the other hand, the ascendancy forces, led by Fitzgibbon, the Attorney-General, himself the son of a pervert Catholic, set their faces against any concession. Finally, Flood and Charlemont, so often lauded as Irish patriots and lovers of liberty, would give no liberty to their Catholic fellow-countrymen; and it seemed as if the Catholics would never get the rights of citizens.

But on the Continent the French Revolution had broken out. The masses had risen against the nobles, who so long had oppressed them, and against the clergy, who, in too many cases, had neglected their duties and ranged themselves with the people's oppressors. Both nobles and ecclesiastics were now deprived of power, and the French revolutionists, abolishing all religious disabilities, and soon abolishing all religion,

¹⁹ "Spicilegium Ossoriense," III, p. 410.

pronounced all men to have equal rights. The Irish Volunteers, especially those in Ulster, endorsed and approved these revolutionary principles; and the Society of United Irishmen, formed in Belfast, with Wolfe Tone, a Protestant, as its secretary, wished to bring Catholic and non-Catholic together in the interest of religious freedom and parliamentary reform. And it was of great importance that, at the same time, the Catholic Association, merged into the Catholic Committee, passed under the vigorous leadership of John Keogh, and instead of petitions and addresses to an Irish Parliament which would not listen, petitions were sent direct to the King in England.²⁰

Fitzgibbon and the ascendancy bravoës blustered and threatened, and were aided and abetted by the Viceroy, Lord Westmoreland. But Pitt and his ministers in England were determined to have peace in Ireland by timely concession, and under pressure from them the Irish Parliament passed a Catholic Relief Act in 1792, allowing Catholics to set up Catholic schools, to practise at the Bar, and to intermarry with Protestants.²¹

As these meagre concessions were insufficient to still the rising storm, further pressure from England became necessary, and was applied, with the result that really important concessions were granted in 1793 by the Catholic Relief Act of that year. Sweeping away all disabilities in regard to the tenure of land, the inheritance and transmission of property and education at home and abroad, the Catholics were for the first time in a century given the parliamentary and municipal franchise. They were admitted to the corporations, to civil and military offices, though still excluded from the higher offices of State, such as the offices of Viceroy, Lord Chancellor and Commander of the Forces. Nor could Catholics be privy councillors, King's Counsel, Lords Lieutenant of counties, nor even sheriffs or sub-sheriffs. But they could get university degrees and even professorships, though not in

²⁰ Lecky, III, pp. 17-18.

²¹ Irish Statutes.

Trinity College—at least not until its statutes were changed to admit them. Except in possession of an income of £100 a year, they could not carry arms; nor would they be allowed to sit or vote in either House of Parliament.²³

The Education of the Priests.

These were large concessions, and were mainly due to the troubles on the Continent consequent on the French Revolution. On the other hand, that same revolution had done serious injury to the Catholic Church in Ireland. For the Atheists who ruled in France had closed in France itself, and wherever their arms had triumphed, the foreign colleges where so many generations of Irish students had been educated for the priesthood, and the Irish bishops had no college at home. In these circumstances they presented a petition to the Viceroy, Lord Westmoreland, in 1794. Emphasising their own and their priests' loyalty to the King, and their obedience to the laws, they pointed out that hitherto 400 Irish ecclesiastical students had been constantly educated and maintained in foreign colleges now closed, and that this number of students was required to supply the wants of the Irish mission. They ventured respectfully to suggest that even the interests of the State required that the Catholic priesthood should be maintained, and therefore that seminaries should be set up at home for their education.

No doubt the recent relaxation of the Penal Laws made it possible to have the priests educated at Trinity College, that is as soon as the statutes were changed. But they remind the Viceroy that the Catholic was a very ritual religion, and that to train their clerical students with laymen was not desirable. In addition to this, Catholic parents were too poor to send their sons to Trinity College. It would be necessary to set up purely ecclesiastical colleges, and the bishops hoped that the liberality of individuals of their own Church might furnish them with sufficient endowment. But they understood that

²³ Irish Statutes—"An Act for the Relief of His Majesty's Popish, or Roman Catholic, Subjects of Ireland."

such endowment could not be accepted and utilized without the licence of the King; and they prayed the Viceroy to procure them such a licence.

To this reasonable request the Viceroy's answer was a curt and offensive refusal. The Archbishop of Dublin, who had written in the name of the whole Episcopacy, was addressed as "Sir," and without any mark of respect. With Fitzgibbon Lord Chancellor it was easy to get the law officers to pronounce that the licence asked for would be contrary to law. And Lord Westmoreland himself was reactionary, narrow-minded and illiberal, glad to patronise and protect Protestant ascendancy, and reluctant to be identified with any concession to the Catholics.²³

Happily, however, the rule of Irish Viceroys is not permanent, even when they are reactionaries and bigots, and early in 1795 Westmoreland was replaced by Lord Fitzwilliam. The Catholic bishops then asked Grattan's assistance. Fitzwilliam was friendly, and the atmosphere was much more favourable than in the preceding year, so favourable that the bishops accepted an endowment from the Government. Their intention was to set up a seminary in each province. They were willing also to educate lay students with the clerical students; but they laid special stress on the necessity of having the appointment and dismissal of the professors in their own hands, no matter what might be the composition of the governing bodies of the seminaries to be established and endowed.²⁴

With the advent of Fitzwilliam Catholic hopes were high, for there was to be, it was confidently expected, complete Catholic emancipation—O'Connell's work was to be antedated by more than thirty years. But though these hopes proved illusive, and Fitzwilliam was recalled, his successor, Lord Camden, while instructed by Pitt to oppose Catholic emancipation, was also instructed to erect and endow a college for the education of the Catholic priests. This was done in

²³ "Spicilegium Ossoriense," III, pp. 462-5.

²⁴ *Ibid.* pp. 470-4: Letter to Grattan.

the session of 1795, and before the end of the year the new college at Maynooth had opened its doors.

Dr. Egan, of Tuam, was one of the first trustees of the new college. They were twenty-one in all—all nominated by the Crown: the four Catholic Archbishops, Dr. Hussey, the first President of the College, three Catholic lords, three Catholic commoners, and the four chiefs of the High Courts of Justice. These latter were all Protestants, at their head being Fitzgibbon, Earl of Clare.²⁵

The establishment and endowment of Maynooth was the only gracious act of Lord Camden's Government, the only thing calculated to soothe and to appease. Everything else he did was calculated to irritate and to provoke. There was no concession to Catholics, no attempt to reform the corrupt Irish Parliament, nothing to bring Catholic and Protestant together for the common good. Such a blending of creeds would have interfered with Pitt's project for a legislative union; and, therefore, the old gang of reactionaries, with Fitzgibbon in command, were continued in office. The Peep o' Day Boys, while raiding Catholic houses in Armagh, and driving the Catholics from their homes, were protected by Government, or at least not condemned. The Orange Society, established in the end of 1795, for the express purpose of maintaining Protestant ascendancy, and which gradually absorbed the Peep o' Day Boys, was encouraged in all its excesses against Catholics. Thus encouraged and protected, they issued their orders to the Catholics of Armagh to go to hell or Connaught, burned houses and churches, and slaughtered the people. Nothing of the kind had occurred in Ireland since the days of Cromwell.²⁶

Promoting Rebellion.

In 1796 and 1797 the Government armed the Ulster Yeomanry, recruited from the Orange Society, and let them loose to disarm the Catholics; and under commanders like Car-

²⁵ Healy's "History of Maynooth," pp. 107-10.

²⁶ Lecky, III, pp. 428-30, 446.

hampton and Lake every atrocity was perpetrated. Homes were burned, women were outraged, the innocent murdered, and thousands were caught up by press gangs and sent to serve in the fleet. An Insurrection Act was passed, placing unlimited power in the hands of ferocious magistrates and licentious troops. The Habeas Corpus Act was suspended. An Indemnity Act was passed covering with the shield of law every excess, either civil or military. At last Grattan, in 1797, retired from Parliament in despair, declaring that rebellion was being deliberately fomented by the authorities, that the Government were endeavouring to blood the magistracy with the poor man's liberty, and employing the rich like a pack of bloodhounds to hunt down the poor.²⁷ And General Abercromby, the Irish Commander-in-Chief for a brief period, declared in 1798 that the Irish soldiers, demoralized by excesses, were formidable to everyone but the enemy, and that within twelve months ending with the spring of 1798, these soldiers had committed every cruelty that could be committed by Cossacks or Calmucks.²⁸

These horrors, confined chiefly to the other three provinces, were scarcely known in Connaught, and not at all in the territory covered by the Archdiocese of Tuam. But even here there was unrest and turmoil and disaffection. There were many refugees from Armagh, and Lord Altamont, from his house in Westport, wrote to the Castle authorities that there were 4,000 such refugees in Mayo, chiefly round Westport and Castlebar; while on Colonel Martin's property in Connemara no less than 1,000 refugees had sought shelter. This was in 1796. The next year Lord Altamont was greatly disturbed about these refugees. They had been deprived of all they possessed, and were absolutely destitute. They believed that Government were urging on the Orangemen, and the Mayo peasants among whom they had come easily shared their conviction.²⁹ In these circumstances disaffection made pro-

²⁷ Lecky, IV, pp. 203-4.

²⁸ *Ibid.* p. 208.

²⁹ Lecky, III, pp. 440-2; IV, pp. 139-40.

gress, and the ranks of the United Irish Society got accessions even in Mayo and Galway; and in Ballinrobe a Mr. Bermingham tried to enrol a force of yeomanry from the people around, but could not induce them to take the Oath of Allegiance.³⁰ Little wonder, indeed, that they should feel no attachment to such a Constitution and to such a King.

Catholic Address to the Viceroy.

The position of the Archbishop of Tuam and his clergy was a difficult one. To teach obedience and respect to the Government and laws under which they lived would earn the reprobation of their own people, and indeed of their own conscience. On the other hand, it would be unsafe to openly condemn the Government, for this would be quickly followed by accusation and punishment; and it was dangerous to condemn even secretly. How easy it was to be suspected of disaffection we learn from the fact that so loyal a man as Dr. Troy fell into such suspicion.³¹ And if the Archbishop and clergy of Tuam were to be friendly to those suspected even of being United Irishmen, they might easily become suspected themselves. At least they would be taunted with ingratitude by the Government which had given them the College of Maynooth.

It was in these circumstances that the Archbishop and his colleagues of the episcopacy and some Catholic noblemen wrote the following address to the Lord Lieutenant:—

“ We, the undersigned, His Majesty’s most dutiful and loyal subjects, Roman Catholics of Ireland, think it necessary at this moment publicly to declare our firm attachment to His Majesty’s royal person, and to the Constitution under which we have the happiness to live.

“ We feel, in common with the rest of His Majesty’s subjects, the danger to which both are exposed from the implacable and enterprising enemy, menacing invasion from abroad, and from evil disposed men, compassing treason within His Majesty’s kingdom. Under these impressions we deem it necessary to remove by open and explicit declarations,

³⁰ Lecky, III, pp. 480-1.

³¹ Lecky. IV, p. 77.

every idea of countenance afforded on our part to a conduct bearing even the appearance of indifference or indiscretion. Allow us to assure Your Excellency that we contemplate with horror the evils of every description which the conduct of the French Republic has produced in every nation hitherto weak enough to be deluded with its promises of liberty and offers of fraternity. We anticipate similar misfortunes as awaiting those in His Majesty's kingdoms in the deprecated event of successful invasion. With confidence we state our determination not to be outdone by any class of our fellow-subjects in our zealous endeavours in averting that calamity; and although anxious to enjoy, free of every restriction, the full benefit of our Constitution, we reject with indignation any idea of removing the restrictions under which we still labour by means of foreign invasion, or by any other step inconsistent with the known laws of the land. We prefer without hesitation our present state to any alteration thus obtained, and with gratitude to the best of kings and to our enlightened legislature, we acknowledge such a share of political liberty and advantage already in our possession as leaves us nothing to expect from foreign aid, nor any motive to induce us to look elsewhere than to the tried benignity of our Sovereign and the unbiassed determination of the legislature as the source of future advantage.

“ We cannot avoid expressing to Your Excellency our regret at seeing many of our persuasion engaged in unlawful associations and practices. Yet we trust that Your Excellency's discernment will lead you to make every just allowance for the futility with which men open to delusions from their situation in life, are led astray from particular duty. It should be our endeavour to recall such men to a sense of that duty, by pointing out to them how inconsistent their conduct is with their real interests, and how contrary to the maxims of the religion they profess. Nor shall we less endeavour by our conduct to convince all descriptions of our fellow-subjects how much we are impressed with the necessity of laying aside all considerations of religious distinctions, and of joining in one common effort for the preservation of our Constitution, against a nation whose avowed principles aim at the destruction of them all.

“ We request that Your Excellency will make these our sentiments known to His Majesty, and we rely with unfeigned confidence on Your Excellency's acknowledged candour and honesty that you represent us in that light to which we venture

to hope our conduct and principles have given us a just claim."³²

This address was not presented to Lord Camden until the end of May, 1798. But as it bears Dr. Egan's signature, it was written in January at the latest, for in that month Dr. Egan died at Dunblayney.

³² Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," pp. 204-6.
(D 705)

CHAPTER XVI.

THE UNION PERIOD.

Dr. Dillon, Archbishop.

AMONG those who signed the Bishop's address to Lord Camden, early in 1798, was Edward Dillon, Bishop of Kilmacduagh, who the same year was promoted to the Metropolitan See of Tuam. He was born at Carna, near Ballinasloe, and educated probably at Douai, of which college he became president. From this position he was promoted to be Coadjutor-Bishop of Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora in 1793. Shortly after, on the death of the bishop, he became bishop himself of the united dioceses.

Whilst yet in Kilmacduagh, and only a few months before his promotion to Tuam, he wrote the following pastoral letter, dated from Kilcornan, April, 1798, and addressed to the laity of the dioceses over which he ruled :—

“ A father who looks on with silent indifference whilst danger and ruin in a thousand shapes threaten his family, may justly be considered as guilty of high treason against human nature. The fond emotions of paternal affection have never vibrated in his heart. Studious of his own ease, attentive to himself alone, wholly occupied in gratifying his inclinations, or consulting his own safety, he feels no alarm on seeing the snares that are laid for his children, and suffers them without a pang to rush on to unavoidable destruction. Such exactly would be my case should I omit at this time to warn you of the dangers with which you are surrounded.

“ There is not one amongst you, even in the most remote and obscure hamlet, who has not heard of the oaths and

associations which have entailed so many misfortunes on various districts of this kingdom. How many poor exiles from Northern counties have you seen arrive amongst you, sent adrift without pity or remorse by a barbarous association. How many atrocities have you heard committed by persons belonging to societies of, if possible, a still more dangerous tendency. How many villages destroyed and districts laid waste in consequence of illegal oaths and conspiracies? It would be foreign to my purpose further to pursue this tale of woe; much less does it fall within the sphere of my duty to investigate that maze of moral and spiritual causes which have occurred to beget that restlessness and agitation of the public mind which prevails in various parts of the kingdom. Suffice it to observe that these oaths and associations have been proscribed by the legislature under the severest penalties. And it would be doing an injury to the opinion which I entertain of your principles to suppose that any of you could be so little acquainted with the obligations which he owes to society as not to know that you are bound both by the law of God and by the law of nature to obey the ordinances of the State in all civil and temporal concerns.

“ But, waiving these considerations, your own interest and the happiness of the districts in which you reside, call upon you to avoid, with the utmost caution, all illegal oaths and combinations. Take warning from what has happened in the various parts of the kingdom which have had the misfortune to experience the direful consequence of these illegal associations. Learn to appreciate the inestimable blessings of peace and tranquillity which you have hitherto enjoyed. Thrice happy if while the thunder of anarchy growls at a distance, you are allowed quietly to partake of your frugal fare, and compose yourselves to rest without dread of the assassins or the midnight robber.

“ There are, no doubt, even amongst us, some few whose hearts are corrupted. . . . They tell us with a malignant and ill-dissembled satisfaction, that we must not flatter ourselves with the hope of escaping a visit from the French. . . . I will not hesitate to declare that the wrath of heaven could scarcely visit us with a more dreadful scourge. Witness the atrocities which have marked their footsteps in every country into which they have intruded themselves. Treasures and valuable effects carried off under the name of contributions, churches pillaged and profaned, our holy

religion proscribed, the Supreme Pastor of our Church, not only reviled and calumniated, but also stripped of that property which enabled him to display a generosity and benevolence worthy of his high station—such are a part of the blessings which, under the specious name of liberty, have been bestowed on many neighbouring countries by the rulers of the French people.

“ Ill-fated people, destined to wade through torrents of blood in quest of that liberty which has hitherto escaped their pursuit. More restless than the waves of the ocean which dash against their shores have they plunged from revolution to revolution, the sport of every prevailing faction, and are at length compelled to bend under the iron rod of tyrants, more despotic than any of the kings who swayed the sceptre of the nation.

“ In the meantime let me conjure you through the precious blood of our Divine Redeemer, whose death we thus commemorate, to have mercy on yourselves, your children and your country, to reject with horror all clandestine oaths which may be proposed to you. As for my part, it will be the pride of my life, and the greatest consolation which I can enjoy here below, should I be in any degree instrumental in preserving you from the machinations of dangerous and designing men. I may surely, without presumption, have a juster claim to your confidence than those workers of iniquity who delight in darkness. The God of all truth knows that I am a stranger to political parties, and that in this address I am influenced merely by the desire of promoting your happiness, and by the imperious call of sacred duty. Indeed when I reflect on the happy days which I have spent with you at your respective chapels . . . I am filled with the most sanguine expectations that I do not address you in vain. . . .

“ Immediately after Easter I shall meet you at stated days at your respective chapels, and trace out to you the plan of conduct which appears to me the most desirable for you to pursue in this emergency. I shall conclude with the words of St. Paul: ‘ May the peace of God which surpasseth all understanding fill your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.’ ”¹

This address, it is said, attracted such favourable notice that the priests of Tuam postulated for the appointment of Dr.

¹ “ Castlereagh Correspondence,” I, pp. 172-6.

Dillon to the vacant See of Tuam.² Nor is it wonderful that it should have. It is the work of an able man and of a kindly man who, as a chief pastor should, writes like a father to his children, and with a father's affection and care. In what he says he manifestly thinks more of his people than of himself, protesting in his humility that he is no politician, and does not understand the ways of politicians. What he does understand is that associations such as the Orange Society and the United Irish Society have caused much misery in other parts of Ireland, and he desires that the area of misery and suffering should not be extended to his own flock of Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora. He could hardly praise the laws under which he lived or the ways of the infamous Government then enthroned in Dublin. But it was better to have tranquillity and the frugal fare which was the people's lot than face the horrors which a futile resistance to a powerful Empire would provoke. And he saw and pointed out that matters would not be improved for the people, and especially for the faith they loved, by a French success. For this would substitute for the partial toleration of English rule, the rule of French impiety and irreligion.

Difficult position of the Bishops.

This address is certainly in better taste than the address of the bishops to Lord Camden earlier in the year, to which Dr. Dillon's name was attached, the terms of which he must, therefore, have approved. Nobody would blame the bishops for condemning the horrors brought on by the French Revolution; and it was well that foreign invasion should be repudiated as a means of reform. But it was surely not called for, nor justified, to speak of the candour and honesty of such a man as Lord Camden, who had shown neither candour nor honour in his public conduct. And it was a misuse of language to speak of the Irish Parliament of that day as an enlightened legislature, the Parliament which enacted the Insurrection and Indemnity Acts, and which justified, and

² Feeny MSS.

even encouraged, the outrages of Carhampton and Lake. And it was a disgrace to describe George III. as the best of kings, a bigot and a reactionary, who hated Ireland and Catholicity with all the strength of his narrow-minded nature.

Yet it would be unjust to condemn Dr. Dillon and his episcopal colleagues without remembering the atmosphere in which they had been brought up, and the time in which they lived. But a few years had passed since the highest judicial authority in Ireland had declared from the Bench that the law recognised no such person as an Irish Catholic, that such a one had no right to live. So late as 1772 Catholics were refused the right to obtain the lease of a cabin and a potato garden, and even in 1799 an old Act was revived providing that any pervert priest should get a salary of £40 a year, levied off the county or city in which he lived.³ These bishops had seen the Catholics shut out from every office and every honour, and they themselves had lived the lives of hunted outlaws. To such men the concessions given by the Relief Act of 1793 seemed like creating a new heaven and a new earth. To be able to worship in their churches without hindrance, to be free to set up schools, to serve on all juries, and practise at the Bar, and to be admitted to the corporations; to get the parliamentary and municipal franchise, and finally to have a great ecclesiastical college for the education of their priests, and to have this endowed by Government, was, indeed, a mighty change.

They scarcely ever dared hope to see such a day dawn; and when it did they must have felt like the wearied and harassed traveller when he has left the desert behind him. It is only men who are habituated to freedom who can use with propriety the language of freemen. The prisoner, long immured in a dark dungeon, can scarcely bear the light. The fettered slave, after his chains have been struck off, still feels, even in freedom, the chains clanking on his limbs. And the Irish bishops of 1798 who had seen what they had seen, and passed through such sufferings as they had passed through, cannot be cen-

³ Irish Statutes.

sured too severely if they used such language as they did about George III. and the Irish Parliament.

Early next year Dr. Dillon was again called upon to sign an important episcopal pronouncement. In October, 1798, Lord Clare wrote from London to his friend, Castlereagh, that Pitt agreed with him on the necessity of a legislative union as being the only thing could save "our damnable country." But Clare insisted that this measure should not be encumbered by any emancipation of the Catholics. Mr. Pitt agreed, and both Pitt and Clare also agreed that it was necessary to "establish some effectual control over the Popish clergy." This could be done by allowing very moderate stipends to the clergy, and by compelling every priest to obtain a licence from the Government for performing the duties of his office. This looked like a return to the time of Queen Anne—a retrograde step rather than a step in advance. Clare expected that these proposals would be brought before the Catholic bishops.⁴

The Bishops and the Veto.

This was done, and in January, 1799, the bishops assembled in Dublin agreed to the following resolutions:—

(1) In the vacancy of a see, the clergy of the diocese to recommend as usual a candidate to the prelates of the ecclesiastical province, who elect him, or any other they think more worthy, by a majority of suffrages; in the case of equality of suffrages, the metropolitan or senior prelate to have the casting vote.

(2) In the election of a metropolitan, if the provincial prelates do not agree within two months after the vacancy, the senior prelate shall forthwith invite the surviving metropolitans to the election, in which each will then have a vote. In the equality of suffrages, the presiding metropolitan to have a casting vote.

(3) In these elections, the majority of suffrages must consist of the suffrages of more than half the electors.

⁴ "Castlereagh Correspondence," I, pp. 393-4.

(4) The candidates so elected to be presented by the president of the election to the Government, which, within one month after such presentation, will transmit the name of the said candidate, if no objection be made against him, for appointment to the Holy See, or return the said name to the president of the election, for such transmission as may be agreed on.

(5) If the Government have any proper objection against such candidates, the president of the election will be informed thereof before one month after presentation, who, in that case, will convene the electors to the election of another candidate.

(6) Agreeable to the discipline of the Roman Catholic Church, these regulations can have no effect without the sanction of the Holy See, which sanction the Roman Catholic prelates of this kingdom shall, as soon as may be, use their endeavour to procure.

The prelates are satisfied that the nomination of the parish priests, with a certificate of their having taken the Oath of Allegiance, be certified to the Government.⁵

These resolutions were signed by Dr. Dillon, the three other archbishops, and seven bishops. These were not the whole assembled Irish bishops, but only the Trustees of Maynooth College. As such they had no authority from the Irish bishops to pass these resolutions, and certainly were not authorized by the clergy or by the laity.⁶

Influenced, no doubt, by Dr. Troy, and desirous of remaining on friendly terms with the Government, they agreed both to the veto and to an endowment for the clergy, and they appointed the Archbishops of Dublin and Armagh and the Bishop of Meath to treat with the Government as to the carrying out of details.⁷ But they found that they had gone too far, and in due time retraced their steps. Neither priests nor people wanted either the veto or endowment, and it would be disastrous for the Irish Church if such proposals had been

⁵ Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," pp. 214-16.

⁶ Healy, "History of Maynooth College," pp. 247-9.

⁷ "Castlereagh Correspondence," II, pp. 172-3.

accepted. The old love of the people would disappear if their priests were but the pensionaries and creatures of a Protestant and persecuting Government. And we can easily guess what manner of men would have been given the crozier by Pitt and Clare and Castlereagh—men who were, it may be, no worse than the legislators of William and Anne, but who certainly were no better.

The French in Mayo.

Meantime there was serious trouble in the Archdiocese of Tuam. Mayo and Galway were but little involved in the United Irish Society, and had known nothing of the Ulster Orangemen except the refugees from their atrocities. The people remained quiet while Ulster was disturbed and Wexford ablaze; and when the change came from peace to war, it was not because there was any sudden outbreak among the people, but because a French force had landed at Killala on the 22nd August, 1798. It was not a large expedition, such as had been sent under Hoche in 1796; nor was it such an expedition as the French Directory had planned before Napoleon brought his army to Egypt. It was one of several smaller expeditions intended by France to be sent to Ireland, and keep Ireland disturbed, so as to harass England.

The whole force of 1,036 officers and men was under General Humbert, and sailed from Rochelle, landed at Killala, and captured the town. They set up their headquarters in the house of the Protestant bishop, Dr. Stack, with whom they were soon on very friendly terms. They had arms for 5,500 men, and soon had a number of the peasantry enrolled, though these were of little use as soldiers, and so unused to arms that they put the cartridges in at the wrong end of the barrel. Humbert, however, had no time to train them, and leaving a garrison of 200 men at Killala, and a smaller garrison at Ballina, he pushed on to Castlebar, and arrived there on the morning of the 27th August.

General Lake was in supreme command of the English, with General Hutchinson his second in command. Writers

are not agreed as to the numbers engaged. Plowden says the English had 6,000, and so do Guillon and Teeling.⁸ On the other hand, Hutchinson puts the numbers on the English side as 1,700, and on the other side, 700 French and 500 rebels. It is clear that Guillon's figures must be reduced, for General Taylor had been sent by the English General to Foxford, expecting there to intercept the French, and for this purpose no small force would be sufficient. But Humbert, instead of passing through Foxford, turned west of Lough Conn, and passed on by Barnagee, or the Windy Gap, to Castlebar. A countryman, seeing the French approaching, rode rapidly to Castlebar to give the alarm. General Trench was sent forward, but a mile from the town he met the French, and hurriedly fell back. The whole English force was then drawn out to meet the enemy. They were drawn up in two lines in front of the town, the Kilkenny Militia and the Prince of Wales' Fencibles in the front line, the Fraser Fencibles and the Galway Yeomanry in the second. A little in advance, at the right wing, on the high ground between Staball and the Turlough road, was Captain Shortall with a battery of three guns, and these guns were so well served that they compelled the French to abandon their close formation and advance in tirailleur fashion. General Sarazin, at the head of the French Grenadiers, attacked by the Ross road, and captured Shortall's guns at the point of the bayonet, driving in the English right; while on the left the Longford and Kilkenny Militia fired at long range and fled, panic-stricken, into the town. The artillery and Lord Roden's cavalry made a stand in the Main Street, but they were soon overborne; many of the Longford and Kilkenny Militia surrendered or deserted to the enemy. The remainder fled, the infantry throwing away their arms so as to run the faster. The cavalry galloped through the town to Hollymount and Tuam, nor did they draw rein till they reached Athlone, having covered a distance of sixty three miles in twenty-seven hours. This easy victory, so

⁸ Plowden's "Historical Review"; Guillon; Maxwell's "History of the Irish Rebellion"; Teeling's "Personal Narrative."

glorious for the French and so disgraceful for the English, has been called the " Races of Castlebar."

There was a tradition in the town that, early in the fight, a party of French, guided by their Irish allies, outflanking the English left, crossed the Newport road and the river near the present graveyard, and, coming out on the Westport road, took possession of the high ground near the present county prison, and from this fired into the English ranks in the town; and the English, fearing that a second army was advancing from Westport, threw down their arms and fled. But this does not appear from Humbert's or Hutchinson's narratives, though there may have been treachery on the English side, as Maxwell thinks. At all events, there was demoralization and cowardice.

The losses on both sides in men cannot be ascertained with accuracy. But it is admitted that the French captured all the guns, military stores and provisions. Nor would a man have escaped if the French had horses to pursue. Ten of them only, possessing horses, followed the English for two miles. But at that point Lord Roden faced about, killed five of the pursuing French, and put the other five to flight. The dead Frenchmen were buried by the peasantry where they fell, and the place has ever since been called French Hill.

Humbert set up a provincial government at Castlebar, with John Moore, of Moore Hall, as President. The French General hoped that the peasantry would flock to his standard, but they stayed away, and many of those who got French uniforms and guns went home. Castlebar was then abandoned, and Humbert was soon after taken prisoner. John Moore, of Moore Hall, died in prison while awaiting trial, and the French Provincial Government of Connaught was at an end.⁹

After their defeat at Castlebar the English soldiers, as they retreated, committed all sorts of excesses. The people along the roads to Hollymount and Tuam fled in terror, hiding them-

⁹ Article in " Galway Archæological Journal," giving the various authorities

selves in the potato fields, and the soldiers, entering the houses, robbed, and often set the houses on fire. They shot down the old and infirm and the young who were unable to escape, and often pursued the poor people into the fields and butchered them in cold blood. Similar atrocities followed the departure of Humbert from Castlebar, and the end of the rebellion in Mayo. The rebels were slaughtered without mercy. At Ballina and Killala there was an orgy of executions following a series of court-martials. From Castlebar people were hunted into the mountains and put to death. Father Manus Sweeney, Parish Priest of Lahardane, because he had spoken to one of the French officers passing through his parish, was taken and hanged in Castlebar, after a mockery of a trial. Mr. Moore, if he had not died in prison, would certainly have been hanged. Bellew, O'Dowd, Barrett and other leaders were put to death. Gibbons was tracked to his place of refuge near Killery Harbour, brought into Westport, and executed. McGreal, another leader, wonderful to relate, was pardoned. As for the poor people, many of whom had nothing whatever to do with the rebellion, and probably no sympathy, they had their houses burned and their property destroyed.¹⁰

The question of a Union.

Nor was this partial rebellion in Mayo the only matter which disturbed the Archdiocese of Tuam and the repose of its Archbishop in this memorable year of 1798. Pitt and Clare and Castlereagh had resisted concessions to the Catholics, and had encouraged rebellion so as to facilitate their project of a legislative union. Their calculations were that the Protestants would welcome a measure which would save them from a Catholic majority in the future in the Irish Parliament, and which, by having the Irish representation merged in an Imperial Parliament, would necessarily leave the Catholics permanently in a minority, and thus perpetuate in Ireland Protestant ascendancy. A section of the Protes-

¹⁰ Maxwell, pp. 247-53 : Teeling's "Personal Narrative."

tants were quite favourable to reform, and even to Catholic emancipation by the Irish Parliament. Others opposed the Union because they feared Catholic emancipation from the Imperial Parliament, and they had no fear of such from an unreformed Protestant Parliament in Ireland. Even the Orangemen were not partial to a Union.¹¹ Neither were the Presbyterians. The only non-Catholics on the Union side were the corrupt junta who had the Irish Government in their hands, and their friends throughout the country.

It was important for Castlereagh to get Catholic support, and for this purpose promises were held out that the priests would be paid by the State, and the endowment of Maynooth would be continued. On the other hand, Pitt would allow no emancipation to be granted by the Irish Parliament; and if Grattan and his friends took the question up the whole resources of the Government would be thrown into the scale to defeat it.¹² Dr. Troy was won over early in 1798, as appears from his letter to Mr. Marsden, the Secretary of Lord Castlereagh.¹³ He was quite satisfied with a Union, provided there was no ban to future concession;¹⁴ satisfied even that the question of Catholic Emancipation should not be raised lest it might embarrass the Government with their Protestant supporters.

But in spite of all the influence he could employ (and he was very active), Lord Cornwallis had to report, early in 1799, that the Catholics were not favourable to the proposed Union;¹⁵ and Lord Castlereagh, at the same time, told the Duke of Portland that "the Catholics are still against us."¹⁶ He accurately described their attitude when he said that "the Catholics, if offered equality without a Union, will probably prefer it to equality with a Union."¹⁷ This was certainly the

¹¹ "Castlereagh Correspondence," II, pp. 46, 48, 128.

¹² "Cornwallis Correspondence," III, p. 55.

¹³ "Castlereagh Correspondence," I, p. 177.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* II, p. 36.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* p. 79.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* p. 84.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* p. 140.

state of opinion in the County of Galway. The Catholics wanted no Union, hoping that emancipation would come when George III. died, or when Pitt was removed from office.¹⁸ The worst that Lord Altamount could say of the Mayo Catholics was that they would remain neutral, though he knew he could get the priests for the measure. And the descendant of the Catholic Browne of Westport added that he was not proud of having the priests as his associates. He had heard that Dr. Dillon, the Archbishop, was also in favour of the Union,¹⁹ and it soon appeared that this information was correct, for in July, 1799, Dr. Dillon wrote to Dr. Troy, giving his adhesion.

The Archbishop's Attitude.

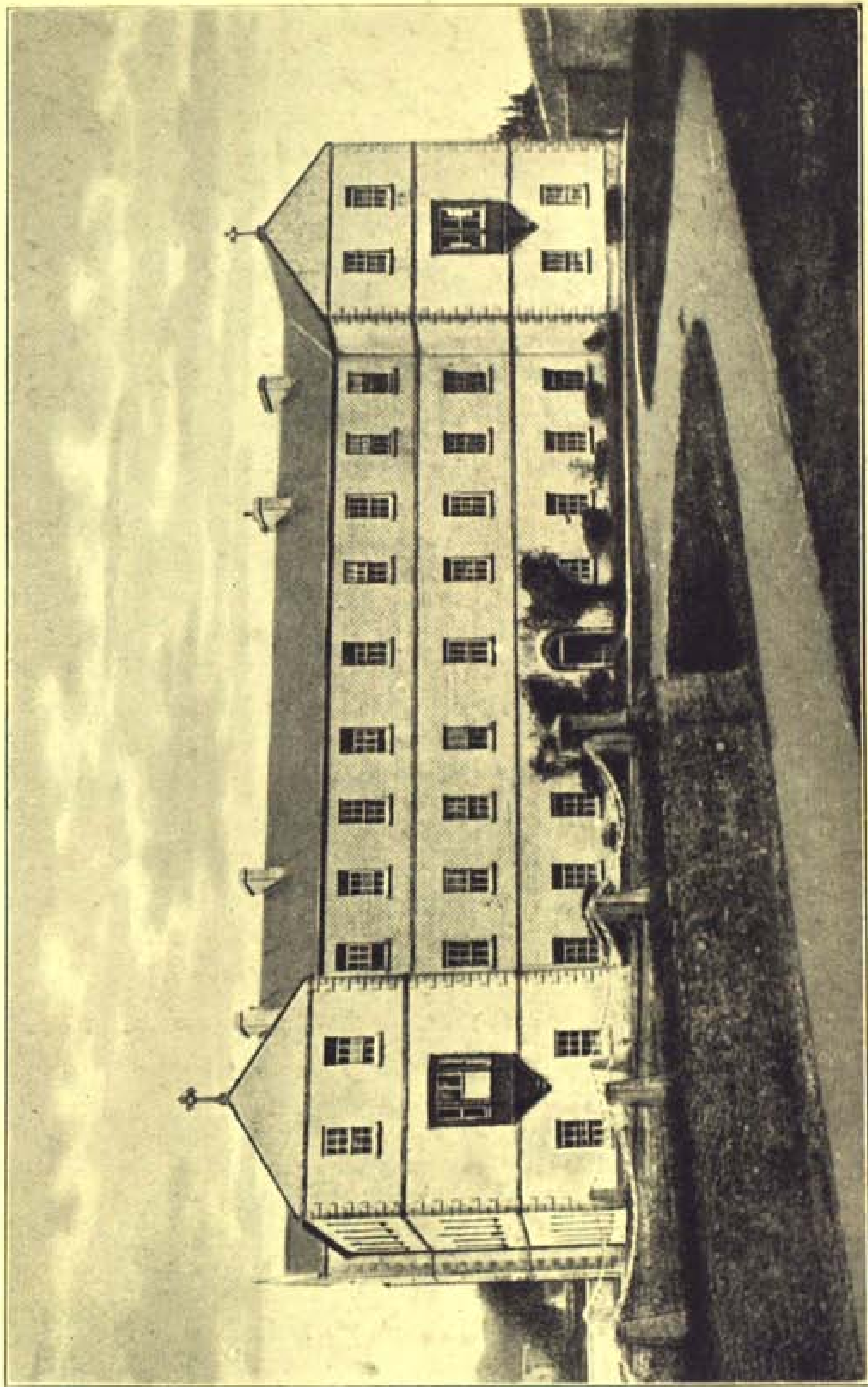
His letter, dated from Cong, is as follows:—

“ Most Reverend and Dear Sir,

“ On receipt of your last letter I wrote to Dr. Reilly of Armagh and Dr. Bray of Cashel, formerly my Metropolitan, whom I am in the habit of consulting on every important occasion, to request their advice. That I, who am the youngest and in every sense of the word the least of our Archbishops, should be the first to sign these resolutions, would, I apprehend, be considered the height of rashness and impertinence. I have waited from day to day for Dr. Bray's answer, but have not heard from him; he is probably employed in visiting some remote parish of his diocese. Dr. Reilly is of opinion that I should sign the resolutions. I presume, however, that by such a step I would draw upon myself the censure of a large portion of the inhabitants of this diocese, and I am certain that our bishops could more effectively promote any great measure which Government may adopt for the benefit of our country, by not appearing so publicly to take an active part in the present political contest. It would also give a handle to the enemies of subordination who have already endeavoured to counteract any little exertions which I may have employed to bring back the people to a sense of their duty by styling me an Orange bishop, the tool of Government, well paid for my services, etc. These considerations, together with the difficulty in which by such imprudence I

¹⁸ “ Castlereagh Correspondence,” II, p. 276.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* p. 328.



ST. JARLATH'S COLLEGE, TUAM.

should probably involve some of our brethren more immediately exposed to the wrath of our enemies than I am, have left me wavering and uncertain for many days. Supported, however, by your sanction and that of Dr. Reilly, I think I may venture to suggest to your Lordship to sign it for me. My Vicar-General and Dean have already signed. I have also since my last letter spoken to some Roman Catholic gentlemen on the subject. Mr. Crane, of ————, tells me that he has signed. Mr. Lynch, of Clogher, refuses to sign, without assigning any motive. Mr. Dillon, of Farm Hill, a gentleman of landed property, requests that his name may be added.

“ I am actually employed in performing a very painful duty, visiting the parishes which have contracted the greatest weight of guilt during the late rebellion.²⁰

This letter, written in January, shows that Dr. Dillon had been urged to support the Union by Dr. Troy, who in this matter was the zealous agent of Lord Castlereagh. It shows that Dr. Dillon was not an enthusiastic Unionist, disliking to be called an Orange bishop, and fully aware that his people wanted no Union. But it would seem that his views and those of his people underwent a rapid change. For, in September, he writes to Dr. Troy from Claremorris, that he was quite willing to support Castlereagh. He had now the strongest conviction that “ this measure alone can restore harmony and happiness to our unhappy country.” Further, he was now satisfied that the people of his Archdiocese were no longer averse to the Union being passed.²¹

It is a matter of history that the Union did pass in the following year, and that it would not have passed, and could not have passed, if the Catholics had actively opposed it;²² and they certainly would have opposed it if they had been led by their bishops. And it is a matter of history that the bishops were shamefully betrayed by Pitt and Castlereagh. These two got the Union they wanted, and yet the Catholics who helped them were denied emancipation for thirty years.

²⁰ “ Castlereagh Correspondence,” IV, p. 348.

²¹ *Ibid.* II, pp. 387.

²² “ Grattan’s Life,” V, pp. 58-9.

Yet Dr. Dillon was not so much to blame. Had he been a far-seeing politician he would have known that such a combination as Pitt and Clare and Castlereagh was untrustworthy; that with the advance already made by democracy, Protestant ascendancy could not be maintained; that, with the Catholics having the vote, reaction and bigotry must yield in time to popular pressure; and that though Catholics could not sit in Parliament, Protestants could be easily secured, in return for Catholic votes, to voice the views of Catholics and fight their battles until the ancient citadel of bigotry had been stormed. Dr. Dillon was not a politician, and did not pretend to be. He was unfamiliar with the tricks of statesmen, especially of British statesmen, and was quite unable to fathom the perfidy of men like Pitt and Castlereagh.

The Union passed in 1800, and before the end of the same year a request was sent by the Government to Dr. Troy for information regarding the state of the Catholic Church in Ireland. Perhaps Dr. Troy thought that emancipation and, it may be, payment of the clergy, were about being taken in hand, that the promises made by ministers were about to be redeemed. At all events he promptly set about obtaining the information sought for, and issued Castlereagh's list of queries to every bishop in Ireland. Information was required about the mode of appointing bishops, what was the gradation of Church preferment from the bishop to the parish priest, what religious orders there were in each diocese, what were the incomes of deans as such, and of parish priests and curates, what were the canons of discipline by which the Irish Roman Catholic Church is regulated, and what were the regulations as to marriages.²³

Parishes of the Archdiocese and Priests' Incomes.

The answers to these various queries in regard to his own Archdiocese were given in 1801 by Dr. Dillon, Archbishop of Tuam. As to the appointment of bishops, deans and

²³ "Castlereagh Correspondence," III, pp. 437-41.

vicars-general, and the position of parish priests and curates, there was, of course, nothing to distinguish Tuam from any other diocese in Ireland. But in regard to the parishes, the incomes of these parishes, the number of curates (if any), and whether the parochial clergy were secular or regular priests, he supplied the following return, giving first the name of the parish, then the number of curates, and finally the income:—

PARISH	CURATES	INCOME
1. Tuam	3	£150
2. Westport	2 R.	140
3. Castlebar	2	130
4. Annagh and Began	2	130
5. Ballinrobe	1	100
6. Newport	1 R.	100
7. Dunmore	2	100
8. Claremorris	2	90
9. Knock and Aughamore	1 R.	90
10. Turlough	1	90
11. Ballinakill and Boffin	2 R.	90
12. Kiltulla	1	80
13. Ross	1	70
14. Crossboyne and Tagheen	1	70
15. Clare Tuam	1 R.	70
16. Cong	1 R.	70
17. Kilmaine	—	70
18. Headford	1 R.	70
19. Partry	1	60
20. Moyrus	1 R.	65
21. Hollymount	1	65
22. Templetogher	1	80
23. Islandeady	1	65
24. Kilkerrin and Clonbern	1	75
25. Kilmeena	—	65
26. Kilmaclasser	—	65
27. Athenry	1 R.	60
28. Balla, Drum and Manulla	1	65
29. Kilconly and Kilbannon	1	60
30. Moylough	2	65
31. Monivea	1	60
32. Annaghdown	1 R.	65
33. Kilgeever	1	60
34. Aran Isles	—	60
35. Moore	—	60
36. Addregoole and Liskeavy	1	65

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	PARISH	CURATES	INCOME
37.	Ballindoon and Omey	—	£50
38.	Ballintubber	1	50
39.	Aughagower	—	50
40.	Mayo and Roslea	1	45
41.	Ballinchalla and Kilmolara	—	40
42.	Donaghpatrick	—	40
43.	Burriscarra	—	40
44.	Kilvine	1	45
45.	Achill	—	40
46.	Killererin	1 R.	40
47.	Abbeyknockmoy	—	40
48.	Kilbannon	—	40
49.	Kilcoona and Kildilver	—	40
50.	Robeen	—	30
51.	Menna	—	36
52.	Gorumna	—	36
53.	Clare Island and Inisturk	—	36
54.	Lackagh	—	45
55.	Kilmeen	—	25
56.	Spiddal	—	36

If we exclude Kilmeen, which is put down as being in the centre of the Diocese of Clonfert, and which in reality belongs to Clonfert, and owes at most but a nominal allegiance to Tuam, the number of parishes is the same as now, more than a century later. But there have been amalgamations and divisions since then, and one parish I am unable to identify. For instance, Annagh and Began, then united, are now separate parishes, and so are Knock and Aughamore. Turlough and Kildacommoge, that is, Keelogue, have been divided, then united, and are now divided again. Boffin has now an administrator, and is no longer subject to Ballinakill. Moregaga, added on to Kilmaine, I am unable to identify. Hollymount, then a separate parish, has now absorbed Robeen, and Kilmeena has absorbed Kilmaclasser, as Ballintubber has absorbed Burriscarra. On the other hand, Templetogether and Bayounagh are now separate parishes, the latter more usually known as Glenamaddy. Ballinchalla and Kilmolara from the modern parish of The Neale, which has been absorbed by Cong. Kilcoona has been added to Headford, but I am unable to recognise either Kilkilvery or Menna.

As to his own income, the Archbishop gives it from May, 1799, to May, 1800, as £497, being £100 more than it was in the preceding year. It appears he had then only one mensal parish, as he only mentions among the constituent items of his income "a share of the emoluments of the parish of Tuam." In reference to the incomes of the priests, the Archbishop says: "Were the clergy duly paid, their incomes would be more considerable than the sum specified above; but the yearly salary of two shillings and two pence, which they are supposed to receive from each family, and which forms the chief support of the parochial clergy in this province, is collected with much difficulty, and is attended, particularly since the late troubles, with considerable insolvency."²⁴

Certainly the incomes were poor, especially when it is remembered that out of this sum—which was the total amount received for all the priests, not the separate income of the parish priest—the upkeep of the church, such as candles, wine and other such necessities, had to be deducted.

As to the regular clergy, there were at Ballyhaunis three Augustinians; at Ballinsmale, one Carmelite; at Kilroe, three Franciscans; and at Murrisk, one Augustinian. Those at Kilroe were, no doubt, the remnant of the old Franciscan house at Ross-Errilly. These have disappeared, and so have the Augustinians at Murrisk, and the Carmelites at Ballinsmale, so that nothing remains but the Augustinian Convent at Ballyhaunis. The Archbishop added that there were several other regular priests in the Archdiocese, not attached to any house, nor employed as parish priests or curates. In Ballinakill, Ross, Moyrus, Ballindoon, and Burriscarra there were Canons Regular of St. Augustine, though their other houses, such as those of Cong and Ballintubber, were in ruins. At Cong a representative of the foundation remained, and had charge of the surrounding parish.

A Diocesan College.

A much-needed requirement of the Archdiocese was a

²⁴ "Castlereagh Correspondence," IV, pp. 161-4.

diocesan college, which would train candidates for the priesthood in preparation for Maynooth. A beginning was made in 1800, when the Archbishop designated Rev. Oliver Kelly to be president of the proposed college, and deputed him to obtain the necessary licence from the Protestant Archbishop, Dr. Beresford. In spite of the relaxation of the Penal Laws, this was still a necessary requirement before a Catholic college could be set up. This was, however, no serious difficulty with Dr. Beresford, and on the 13th October, 1800, the licence was issued. He declared he was satisfied of the abilities and qualifications of the Rev. Oliver Kelly, and therefore granted and confirmed to him "the office or employment of schoolmaster of the said preparatory school for Maynooth; with all the rights, profits and emoluments to the same belonging." And he recognised Oliver Kelly as schoolmaster "so long as you shall continue to behave yourself well."

Mr. Burke grows enthusiastic about the good Archbishop Beresford, who afterwards became Lord Decies; and thinks it wonderful that he should be on friendly terms with Dr. Dillon, the Catholic Archbishop of Tuam. No doubt he was not so objectionable as his namesake and kinsman, who was the main cause of the recall of Lord Fitzwilliam, followed by the exasperation of the Catholics. Nor was he so objectionable as that other Beresford, who flogged so many at his riding-school in Dublin in 1798. But he would have shown better taste if he had given Dr. Dillon his proper title, and not have written of him as Rev. Edward Dillon.²⁵

Dr. Dillon's Death and Character.

The remaining years of Dr. Dillon's episcopate were uneventful. After the Union had become an accomplished fact, he and Dr. Troy soon found out that they had been betrayed by the King's ministers, English and Irish. In 1805, Cornwallis, who had evidently given an assurance that Pitt, in resigning office in 1802, had pledged himself never again to take office unless emancipation were granted, was compelled

²⁵ Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," pp. 218-19.

to explain that he only meant that Pitt's resignation of office was a proof of his friendliness for the Catholics. He could not have said more, as Pitt had actually resumed office in 1804; and there was no emancipation.²⁶ And so little chance was there of granting emancipation, that George III., in 1807, declared to his ministers his unalterable resolve never to concede anything to the Catholics.²⁷

In 1808 there was a renewed hope of emancipation, and to smooth its passage through the British Parliament, Grattan and Ponsonby proposed that a veto on episcopal appointments should be given to the King. But Dr. Dillon here separated himself from Dr. Troy. He had had enough of broken promises, and he felt, as nearly all the Irish bishops did, that such interference on the part of the King and his ministers would spell ruin for the Catholic Church in Ireland.²⁸

The next year Dr. Dillon died, being the first of the Catholic Archbishops for more than a century who had a residence at Tuam.

A writer who belonged to Tuam thus sums up Dr. Dillon's character: "In the long succession of Comharbs of St. Jarlath we meet no prelate occupying a more unworthy and undignified position . . . an object of distrust and dislike to his flock, he was looked down upon with contempt and disdain by the insolent ascendancy that were ready to sell their country at the beck and call of the English ministers."²⁹ This is a harsh judgment, and not justified by the facts of Dr. Dillon's life.

²⁶ "Castlereagh Correspondence," IV, pp. 373-4.

²⁷ *Ibid.* p. 390.

²⁸ Plowden's "Historical Review," III, pp. 644-77, 700, 810-25.

²⁹ "Feeney MSS."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

St. Jarlath's College.

THE Diocesan College which was set up by Dr. Dillon in 1800 was, as we can see from the licence of the Protestant Archbishop, intended to be a preparatory school for Maynooth. This would suggest an intermediate school, where boys would spend some years after leaving the primary schools, and where a knowledge of the ancient classics, of the English and French languages, and of some mathematics would be imparted. But even in the early stages of its existence we find that the college curriculum went beyond these subjects. For in 1817 we find it recorded that Father Thomas Feeny was appointed Professor of Philosophy and the Higher Classics; but the Archbishop in appointing him allows him to exchange that Chair for the Chair of Theology, if Father MacHale, who then taught Theology, was willing to make the exchange.

The location of the new college was in the Mall, not far from the old church, which stood in Church Lane. The building has disappeared, and probably was not very commodious. It was situated in the town itself, surrounded by other houses—it might be said, hemmed in by other houses—and there were no recreation fields such as any college, no matter how ill-equipped, ought to have. In 1817, however, this unsuitable building was exchanged for the present old college.

The new building was situated in Bishop Street, and had been used as an agricultural bank. But the bank fell on evil days, as banks sometimes do, and when its doors were closed

the building passed into the hands of the Catholic Archbishop, and henceforth was used as the Diocesan College for the Archdiocese of Tuam. From an old account book of the College we learn that for the purpose of procuring this building a public meeting was held in Tuam on the 10th January, 1817. The declared object of the meeting was to establish "a seminary for the education of the community at large, and particularly to facilitate the education of zealous and enlightened missionaries."

The chair was occupied by John Bodkin, Esq., and the following resolutions were passed:—

1. "That the following gentlemen constitute a Board for the management and direction of the seminary.

2. "That the Archbishop, Most Rev. Dr. Kelly, be requested to act as President of the Board of Management of the Seminary; Mr. John Blake as Treasurer; and the Rev. B. Fitzpatrick as Secretary; and that both clergy and laity were appealed to for funds."

There were on this Board of Management eighteen priests, and the Archbishop and fourteen lay gentlemen. The priests were:—Rev. Malachy Kelly; Dean Egan, P.P., Dunmore; Reverends Peter Burke, Peter Heverin, P.P., Claremorris; Paul McGreal, Laurence Waldron, P.P., Kiltulla; Bartholomew Fitzpatrick, Bernard Burke, John Loftus, Redmond Haddican, Annaghdown; Thomas Kean, P.P., Islandeady; John Burke, P.P., Newport; Patrick Nolan, P.P., V.G., Balla; Peter Griffin, P.P., Mayo; Patrick Gibbons, P.P., Louisburg; Michael Greene, P.P., Ballinrobe; John Molloy, Patrick Killeen. The lay gentlemen were:—Lord Ffrench, Sir C. Bellew, John Bodkin, Martin J. Blake, Isidore Blake, Maurice Blake, Ballinafad; Maurice Blake, of Towerhill; Henry Lynch, Francis Lynch, Robert Kirwan, John Browne, Matt McDonnell, John Egan, John Clarke.

There is no great difficulty in identifying the laymen as the representative Catholic landed gentry of the Archdiocese. Most of them are still represented in the Archdiocese by their

descendants. There is, however, some difficulty about identifying some of the priests, whose addresses are not given. But the subscribers' lists in the same account book in nearly every case fills in what is wanting. B. Fitzpatrick, for instance, was then Administrator of Tuam, and later Parish Priest of Mountbellew. John Loftus was Parish Priest of Moylough. Bernard Burke, later Parish Priest of Westport, and Dean of Tuam.

By further resolutions passed at the Tuam meeting it was agreed that eleven would form a quorum of the Board of Management; that each member would solicit subscriptions in his neighbourhood; and that the President, Dr. Kelly, would ask the clergy of the Archdiocese to subscribe. Further, we have at later dates an entry of what the subscriptions were. The Archbishop and Mr. Redington, of Rye-hill, gave £100 each; Mr. Kirwan, of Gardenfield, and Mr. Burke, of Curraleigh, £50 each; and others gave £20 and £10 and lesser sums. The priests were poor, and the amount of their subscriptions was spread over a number of years. We have the amount of their instalments given. For instance, Dean Egan, of Dunmore, gave £11 7s. 6d.; Rev. Denis Egan, P.P., Castlebar, £10; Rev. Paul McGreal, Began, £5 13s. 9d.; Rev. Nicholas French, Ballydangan, £2 5s. 6d.; and an interesting item is, Rev. John McKeal, Maynooth, £1 2s. 9d., none other than the famous John McHale, Archbishop of Tuam.

The landlord of the new college building was Lord Ffrench, of Castlefrench, a Catholic, and in 1819 he gave a lease of the place to Dr. Kelly, Archbishop of Tuam, at a rent of £80, a lease for twenty-one years, with a covenant for renewal. Subsequently Lord Ffrench's sister became possessed of Ffrench's bank, and also a lodge and garden at the rere, formerly possessed by Mr. Bermingham, and the rent of house and lodge and plot was £91 a year, until 1828, when Mr. Whitehead sold his interest to Dr. Kelly for £500. In 1856, under Dr. Kelly's successor, the college field was acquired for £1,200, with an annual rent of £14 5s. od. And this in-

cluded the college field of later days, the site of the Archbishop's house, of the Christian Brothers' establishment, and of the Convent of Mercy. It was called before its purchase by the Archbishop, Keaghrey's Park.¹

In the early years of its existence the college was struggling against financial difficulties. It was easy enough to hold a public meeting in 1817, and to get an imposing array of names, lay and clerical, and a board of management. But the following letter will show that there was considerable difficulty in getting subscriptions. It is dated from Hollymount, November 29th, 1822, and was written by Father James MacHale, Parish Priest, who had evidently been requested by the Archbishop to solicit subscriptions from the priests of the Ballinrobe deanery, to which he belonged :—

“ All my applications for the college subscriptions have as yet been fruitless, with exception of one half-year's subscription from the Rev. Mr. Green, viz. :—11s. 4½d., and ditto from the Rev. Mr. Joyce, Partry, which I send per bearer, and for which I hope the Rev. Mr. Feeny will send me an acknowledgment. Mr. Gavin is to pay Dr. Kean, so that you will be no longer annoyed by that gentleman. I am to make another effort to procure subscriptions for the college from the dignitaries of our deanery, from whom I must profess I don't expect much in the way of liberality.²

Subsequently the rent could not be paid, on more than one occasion in cash, and on other occasions in promissory notes from Dr. Kelly. And in 1828 the Archbishop was compelled to borrow £100 from the Very Rev. Dean Burke, of Westport, and £107 10s. from Mr. Matthew McDonnell, of the same town, the united amount being part of the purchase money.³

The first teachers in St. Jarlath's College were the Reverends Oliver Kelly, John Molloy, Paul McGreal, and John Hughes, and to these succeeded James MacHale, Michael Waldron, and Thomas Kielty. These were all in the

¹ “ Feeny MSS. : Leases.”

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

college at the Mall. In the new college in Bishop Street, Father MacHale and Father Kielty also taught as its first professors, and in 1817 the staff was added to by the appointment of the Rev. Thomas Feeny. The Rev. Oliver Kelly was the first President, and filled that position until 1806, when he was appointed to the parish of Kilmeena. His successor as President was Paul McGreal, who in after years became Parish Priest of Began, and later of Turlough. Then came James MacHale, who got charge of the parish of Hollymount about 1821. He was the first President of the new College in Bishop Street, and when he went to Hollymount his place was filled by the appointment of the Rev. Thomas Feeny. The latter ruled as President until 1831, when he was succeeded by the Rev. Martin Browne.⁴

Most of the presidents and professors filled prominent positions in the Archdiocese in after years. Oliver Kelly, the first president, became Archbishop of Tuam. He was born at Curramore, County Galway, in 1777, educated at Salamanca (then having as its president Dr. Curtis, afterwards Archbishop of Armagh). Ordained priest in 1800, he was appointed the first president of the Diocesan College, and at a remarkably early age was charged with the administration of a parish, and later became vicar-general. Father Paul McGreal went from the college to be parish priest of Began, and then became parish priest of Turlough, where he died. He was a big man, genial and kindly, with a ready wit and a bitter tongue, and greatly liked by the people among whom he lived. Rev. John Hughes was at a later date in Claremorris, but where the Rev. John Molloy ended his days does not appear. Father Michael Waldron was the only one of them who died in the old college on the Mall. Father Kielty was all his lifetime a professor, at first in the Mall, and then in Bishop Street. He lived to a great age, and stories of his kindness and simplicity long survived him. For whole

⁴ "Feeny MSS. : Leases."

generations of students, who subsequently became priests, were at one time in his class. The third president, Father James MacHale, left the college about 1821, and after spending many years in Hollymount he was promoted to the parish of Castlebar, and was also Archdeacon of Tuam.

The Veto Again.

When Dr. Dillon died in 1809, Father Oliver Kelly was elected by the priests Vicar-Capitular; and at the selection of candidates to fill the vacancy in the Metropolitan See he was placed first on the list. These were the days when Napoleon dominated Europe, and, as is well known, Pope Pius VII., not being sufficiently obedient to the great conqueror, was imprisoned in Fontainebleau, and remained there till Napoleon was overthrown. No sooner had this happened than the vacancy in the Archdiocese was filled by the appointment of Oliver Kelly. He had the very unusual experience of governing a diocese as vicar-capitular for the long space of five years. His consecration took place in 1815, the memorable year of Waterloo.

At that date the question of the Veto had been revived, and had become a matter of public and acrimonious controversy. The British Parliament, little influenced by Irish opinion, would make no concession to the Catholics, and in 1808 Grattan, then representing an English constituency, presented the petition of the Catholics, and was powerfully supported by another eminent Irishman, Mr. Ponsonby, the leader of the opposition. Lord Fingal, the delegate of the Irish Catholics in London, and Dr. Milner, an English bishop, went so far as to authorize Grattan and Ponsonby to assent to a government veto on Irish episcopal appointments in return for emancipation. But Fingal exceeded his instructions, and Dr. Milner had no authority from the Irish Catholics to assent to the veto. And when the Irish bishops met at Maynooth, in 1808, they resolved by 23 votes to 3: "That it is inexpedient to introduce any alteration in the canonical mode hitherto observed in the

nomination of the Irish Roman Catholic bishops, which mode long experience has proved to be unexceptionable, wise and salutary.'"⁵

But the mischief caused by Fingal and Dr. Milner did not end here. In 1813 Grattan introduced a Catholic Relief Bill, and was supported by Canning and Castlereagh, but only because he conceded the Veto. In the next year Grattan's Bill was approved of by no less a person than Monsignor Quarantotti, Prefect of the Propaganda, who declared "that the Catholics might accept the measure with satisfaction and gratitude; that the King's claim to be satisfied of the loyalty of such as are to be promoted to a bishopric or a deanery in the manner set forth in the Bill is a matter that may well be tolerated in the interest of all concerned."⁶ If Quarantotti had been merely Prefect of the Propaganda he might have issued his rescript without doing harm. But the Pope was then in captivity, and had given Quarantotti extraordinary powers, and when the Pope himself returned to Rome he approved rather than disavowed the offending rescript. Among the Catholic laity, headed by O'Connell, there was fierce indignation, and the bishops were so alarmed that they sent two of their number to Rome to remonstrate with the Pope. And on their return, the bishops resolved at their meeting in Maynooth: "Though we sincerely venerate the Supreme Pontiff as Visible Head of the Church, we do not consider that our apprehensions for the safety of the Catholic Church in Ireland can or ought to be removed by any determination of his Holiness, adopted or intended to be adopted, not only without our concurrence, but in direct opposition to our repeated resolutions and the very energetic memorial presented on our behalf, and so ably supported by our delegate, Dr. Murray, who in that quality was more competent to inform his Holiness of the real state and interests of the Roman Catholics in Ireland than any other with whom he is said to have consulted." The

⁵ Healy's "History of Maynooth College," p. 253.

⁶ Wyse "History of the Catholic Association," Appendix IX.

English influence was evidently active in Rome, and excited the ire of the Irish hierarchy.⁷

Discontent and Disturbance.

This was the first meeting of the bishops attended by Dr. Kelly, Archbishop of Tuam. Unlike his predecessor, he was no friend to a veto in any shape or form. He voted for this strong resolution of the bishops, and when he returned to Tuam he denounced the Veto in unmeasured terms, and had it denounced from every altar in his Archdiocese.⁸ Yet he had little share in discussions on the public questions of the day, and took but an unobtrusive part in the long fight for emancipation waged by O'Connell.

His whole attention was given to the administrative work of his Archdiocese, and in this there was a wide field for his activity. There was discontent and disturbance. The tithes payable to the Protestant clergyman pressed heavily on the poor people, and the tithe-proctors who collected the tithes made matters worse by exacting more than the law allowed, and by the harsh and unfeeling manner in which they treated the people whom they were plundering. Driven to desperation, the farmers combined secretly, calling themselves the Threshers. Like the Whiteboys of the previous century, they went about chiefly at night, sometimes dressed in white shirts, and usually disguised, and they wreaked vengeance on the tithe-proctors. The British Parliament, which, according to Pitt and Castlereagh, was to right all the wrongs of Ireland, was enraged. But its anger was not for the tithe-proctor but for his victims, and especially for the Threshers, who, in their own lawless fashion, had become the champions of the oppressed. Instead of concession there was coercion. Even the ordinary law was not considered sufficient to deal with such law-breakers, and in 1807 an Arms Act was passed, and an

⁷ Healy's "Maynooth," p. 266.

⁸ Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam."

Insurrection Act, and these laws were savagely enforced against the Threshers.⁹

Discontent can be driven beneath the surface for a time, but if the same wrongs continue there will be further explosions. Hence the disturbances of the Threshers were followed by other disturbances in subsequent years, and in 1820 by the disturbances of the Ribbonmen. In 1808 there was a revival of Orangeism in Ulster, and Orange Lodges were for the first time in Donegal, as if to be a menace to the Catholics there. The latter retorted by establishing the Ribbon Society, oath-bound and secret, and modelled as to its organisation on the Orange Society, which it was called into existence to oppose. Gradually the Ribbonmen spread to Connaught, and into the Archdiocese of Tuam; and in 1820 there were serious disturbances in Mayo and Galway. Dr. Kelly was then Archbishop, and in his evidence before a Parliamentary Committee in London he gave as the causes of these disturbances, "tithes, taxes, grand-jury cesses, vestry cesses, and payments to the priests."

Dr. Kelly's Evidence in London.

His evidence was given before a Select Committee of the Houses of Lords and Commons, which sat in London in 1825, and is extremely interesting, and sheds much light on the state of the Archdiocese over which Dr. Kelly ruled. Asked the usual questions which prejudiced, though educated, Protestants so often have asked, and ask still, about the Pope's authority, about Catholics and their duty to the State, about praying to the Saints and the Blessed Virgin Mary, and about images and indulgences, Dr. Kelly explained very clearly what was the extent and what were the limits of Papal authority, and that obedience to the Pope on the part of Catholics in no way conflicted with their duty towards the State as good citizens.¹⁰ He was easily able to dispose of the

⁹ Plowden's "History of Ireland since the Union," III, pp. 405-8; II, 521-38.

¹⁰ "Evidence," pp. 435-6.

implication that Catholics, in venerating images and relics, were guilty of idolatry, and he vehemently repudiated the statement that Catholics were taught to keep no faith with heretics.¹¹

He was also asked what was the amount of his income. "Would you have any objection to state to the Committee generally what the value or amount of revenue received by the bishop and clergy of your diocese may be?" "I can safely answer, I should think, though I have never made an exact calculation, my receipts within any one year never amounted to £700, and I do not suppose that in general they ever much exceed £500."

"With respect to the clergy of your diocese, what is the average income of a parish priest?" "There may be three or four parishes in the Archdiocese of Tuam where the receipts of the priests amount to, perhaps, about from £250 to £300 per annum." These figures show an increase on those figures given by Dr. Dillon twenty years earlier. And yet, £500, or even £700, was a very small income for the Archbishop, when we consider what was the bloated revenue of his Protestant colleague in the episcopacy of Tuam.

The revenue of the Westport parish he put at £300. He made this a mensal or episcopal parish in 1822, partly that he might have some more money for the college in Tuam, and for the erection of schools and churches throughout the Archdiocese, and partly because, as he said himself, "I did apprehend that perhaps if I were to send another priest to the place he would not be very kindly received by certain individuals there, and I thought that an unpleasant difference would be avoided by taking the parish in charge myself."¹² A few years later, however, it ceased to be a mensal parish, for it had, at Dr. Kelly's death, a parish priest in the person of Dean Burke.

¹¹ "Evidence," p. 441.

¹² *Ibid.* p. 447.

The Priests' Revenues.

Dr. Kelly added that for the three years he held Westport he did not get from it even £100, and he gives the reason. The poverty of the people was so great that he directed the priests not to be very exacting in the collection of the usual dues. This was no isolated case, nor could it be because of all the burdens placed on the shoulders of these poor people, living in hovels, dividing and subdividing their holdings, until they were no more than cottiers. And the wretched holding was held at a rack-rent, for Dr. Kelly says that the tenants generally complained of their landlords. The tithe also, especially the tithe on corn and flax, was felt to be oppressive. There was, further, the vestry cess levied by the Protestants of the parish on the Catholics, and for the upkeep and repair of the Protestant church. So heavy was this, that in one instance the sum of £1,500 was assessed on the parish of Tuam for repairs to the Protestant Cathedral.¹³ A member of the Parliamentary Committee, anxious to show the liberality of the Protestants, asked did not these vestries sometimes tax the parish for the repair of a Catholic church; but Dr. Kelly never knew of any such case except one. That was in Athenry, where £10 was levied on the parish for repairs to the Catholic church, not a very generous subscription surely.

As to monies paid to the priests, Dr. Kelly informed the Committee that the people in the recent disturbances "considered that, oppressed as they were, they could not afford to be giving the priest half-a-crown for baptisms, a guinea for a marriage, money for building a chapel, money for establishing a school; that, in short, the demands of the priest upon them were so many that they could not answer them." Therefore, in some instances they bound themselves by an oath not to make these payments, and in other cases they took an oath not to go to Confession.¹⁴

Dr. Kelly himself went to the different parishes and advised the people against these extreme measures; but he found that

¹³ "Evidence," pp. 474-5.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* p. 469.

with some at least his advice was unheeded. The people said that the Archbishop's advice was well meant, but it brought them no lightening of their burdens; their distress and poverty remained. Yet these harassed Catholics wanted no pensioned priests; they wanted no veto; and when a member of the committee asked if an arrangement were made for paying the priests by a State salary, thus relieving the poor Catholics of so many burdens, would it be welcome, Dr. Kelly replied: "However much the people may have complained, I think they would prefer, notwithstanding, to support their own clergy to seeing them paid by the State." And this was also the Archbishop's own view.¹⁵

The Churches of the Archdiocese.

At that date the Census showed that in the parish of Tuam the population was 6,000, and of this number only 380 were Protestants;¹⁶ and it is quite certain that in most of the other parishes of the Archdiocese the proportion of Catholics to Protestants was much greater. Yet the Protestants, who were the rich, had tithes paid to their parsons by the Catholics, and vestry cess paid by them for the repairs of the Protestant churches. No wonder that their own churches were of the poorest. Dr. Kelly, in answer to the committee, described them as very wretched. There were but fifteen or eighteen "slated chapels," and eight or ten in progress of construction. In all there were 106 places of public worship in the Archdiocese. With the exception of the few mentioned, they were all thatched houses, none of them large enough to accommodate the congregation, and "in many instances the public prayers are celebrated in the open air, having no covering but the canopy of heaven." Asked to describe one of these churches, or chapels as they were more usually called, he said: "I have seen some of these edifices where the walls of the house were not above eight or ten feet high, twelve or fifteen in breadth, and forty or fifty in length. And they were asked

¹⁵ "Evidence," p. 471.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* pp. 453-4.

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to contain 1,000 persons, the necessary result being that the larger part of the congregation had to remain outside, sometimes in the rain or snow." Very many of these poorer chapels were used as schools during the week, for there were no other buildings available. Dr. Kelly gratefully acknowledged that the Protestants throughout the Archdiocese usually contributed to the erection of the new slated churches which he and the clergy were building. But the difficulty of getting funds from the Catholic people, who were so poor, must have been great. Nor was it to be wondered at that the sorely-tried people sometimes complained, for their burdens were hard to bear. In spite of all difficulties, however, Dr. Kelly persevered, and in his time many schools were built, and many slated buildings replaced the wretched thatched ones of the days that were gone.

St. Jarlath's College.

St. Jarlath's College the Archbishop watched over with special solicitude. As its first president he saw how inadequate for its needs was the old building on the Mall; and it was he as Archbishop who, with great difficulty and with borrowed money, secured the Agricultural Bank in Bishop Street. In 1820 he drew up the following college statutes, and had them enforced :—

1. The students never to be allowed to go upstairs during study hours. Each of the boarders to leave his linen marked and numbered on his bed each Monday morning between 9 and 10 o'clock to be taken to the wash, and to be returned at an hour appointed. Notice of this regulation to be given to the servants, and the hours so regulated as to preclude the necessity of any intercourse between students and servants.

2. The Professors to attend the morning studies and the classes precisely at 10 o'clock, and to say Mass day and week about in turn; and when a Professor sits in one hall, the door of the adjacent hall is to be left open in order that attention to studies and silence may be observed. The monitors appointed

to teach the under classes to make a written report each day to one of the Professors of the conduct of the students committed to their care.

3. Any scholar who shall be detected in conversation with or in the company of a servant is to be punished.

4. A slender rod the only instrument to be used in inflicting punishment.

5. The conduct of boarders on Sundays and holydays at chapel to be closely watched. They are each of them to read a prayer-book during Mass, and they are to kneel inside the rails, and no other boys will be allowed to occupy that space; and instead of going to chapel at night during Lent, the Rosary is to be recited after supper in the College, at which all the inmates are to assist.

6. The Professors are earnestly recommended to commune frequently and familiarly with each other as to the best mode of enforcing the observance of the statutes, and no vacant days and nights are to be given.¹⁷

Those who have once been students can readily sympathise with the young students who were to have no vacant days or nights; and assuredly the lot of the monitors was a hard one, as they had to give in to their superiors each night a written report on the conduct of those who studied under their supervision.

In spite of these things, or perhaps because of them, the college was resorted to by students, not only from the Archdiocese itself, but from far beyond it. There was, for instance, a certain James Kerins from Westport, who was destined for a mercantile life, and who was described as "wild and foolish." There was a James Cahill, whose uncle, Major Staunton, would procure for him an appointment as soon as he had attained a sufficient degree of education. There was a student from Galway, evidently not giving satisfaction; a boy named Lyndon from Dundalk; and there was a certain

¹⁷ "Feeny MSS."

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

Master Fitzmaurice from the neighbourhood of Enfield in Meath, who in 1825 sailed for Barbadoes.¹⁸

These students would be classed as lay boarders, who got some better treatment than the ecclesiastical students. There was, in fact, a lay house and an ecclesiastical house, and while the lay boarders paid a pension of £28 per annum and an entrance fee of five guineas, the ecclesiastical students paid but £14 a year. Perhaps there was also an entrance fee, but the account books do not show this.¹⁹

Among the ecclesiastical students some finished their course in St. Jarlath's, and were ordained there. Others were sent to Maynooth, and we find it recorded that in 1829 Antony O'Regan and William Cullinane were sent to Maynooth. Both of them were in the foremost rank in their classes in Maynooth, and both became in after years presidents of St. Jarlath's College.²⁰

Even at an early stage in its history the Archbishop was well pleased with the progress the College was making, as the following entries show :—

“ St. Jarlath's Seminary, Tuam, February 8th, 1821.

“ For the last three weeks I have given my undivided care and attention to the concerns of this establishment, its plan of studies reduced to writing and posted up on the walls of the halls. In forming this plan of studies and distribution of time, I am signally indebted to the zeal and indefatigable exertions of the professors. To enforce the observance of discipline, to forward the literary improvement of their pupils and strictly to adhere to the rules and regulations of the seminary (so far as they have been communicated to them) are objects that have been most sedulously and most successfully attended to by each of the professors and entitle them to the marked thanks of the patrons of the seminary.

“ OLIVER KELLY.”

And again :—

“ I have very frequently visited the seminary during the last month, and have always been delighted in observing the unabated zeal and unanimity of the professors in promoting

¹⁹ “ Feeny MSS.”

²⁰ *Ibid.*

order, discipline and study. I have also witnessed with pleasure the literary proficiency of the students, and their general good conduct.

“ Tuam Seminary, March 15, 1821.

“ OLIVER KELLY.”²¹

Tuam Cathedral.

At Westport, while he was parish priest there, Dr. Kelly built a much-needed church, and also a house for the parochial clergy. And in Tuam he acted similarly, and built the presbytery in which the clergy of the parish have ever since resided. But the greatest task he undertook—and it was a herculean task in these days—was the building of a cathedral at Tuam. The first practical step was taken in 1827, when on Sunday, March 18th, a meeting of the inhabitants of the town and parish was held in the old chapel. Mr. John Egan was in the chair, and Mr. John Blake, of Birmingham, acted as secretary, and the following resolutions were adopted:—

I.—“ It is the unanimous and decided opinion of this meeting that the erection of a spacious and commodious Catholic Cathedral in the Metropolitan See of Tuam is expedient and necessary, not only as a tribute justly due to our religion, but also with a view to the comfort and convenience as well of the parishioners as the numerous strangers who occasionally attend at the celebration of the Divine Mysteries in this town.”

II.—“ That the zeal, activity and disinterestedness evinced by the faithful in other less favoured parishes of this Archdiocese, where respectable chapels have been built without aid from any public funds and solely by the resources derived from the scanty means of the poor, and the voluntary contributions of the benevolent, are exertions deserving our praise and examples worthy of our imitation.”

At the meeting a committee was appointed, the members of which were to act as supervisors of the work as it progressed. It was considered more economical to have contractors for the separate parts of the work rather than one contractor for the entire work. On the 24th April the committee appointed Mr. Dominick Madden as architect, and a certain Mr. Murphy

²¹ “ Feeny MSS.”

was commissioned to make a model of the proposed new cathedral from Mr. Madden's designs. For this design he received £30, and when Mr. Madden ceased to be architect the committee themselves superintended the work, unaided by any architect. On the 30th April, 1827, the foundation stone of the cathedral was laid.²²

The site formerly belonged to the college, as the following document shows :—

“ A return of the field in which the new Cathedral is building, together with the garden formerly belonging to the College of St. Jarlath's, surveyed in March, 1828, for the Rev. Mr. Feeny, containing 1 acre, 0 roods, 17 perches, late Irish plantation measure, including half mearing walls and ditch.

“ Signed, PATRICK REDINGTON,

“ Registered Surveyor of Lands.”

This ground was not the fee-simple property of the college, but was rented by the college from a Mr. William Henry Handcock, for we find that Dr. Kelly became his tenant for just that amount of land, and by an Indenture, dated 10th February, 1830, Dr. Kelly got a lease for three lives at the yearly rent of one shilling. One of the three was still living as late as 1897, and in that year the Archbishop, Dr. MacEvilly, got from the then owner of the Handcock property—a gentleman named Captain Quinton Dick, of Grosvenor Crescent, London, a lease for ever of these same cathedral grounds at the annual rent of one shilling.

Dr. Kelly himself contributed liberally, and so did his priests, so liberally, indeed, that some of the curates gave as much as £100 as a first instalment—a large subscription when we remember how small the income of the ordinary curate was in these days. Dr. Feeny adds : “ I feel proud to record that among the curates who so contributed was an uncle of mine, Rev. John Griffin, a priest who was remarkable for his deep and accurate knowledge of the classics, and who was soon

²² Most Rev. M. Higgins, D.D., Article in the “ Irish Rosary,” April, 1908.

after appointed to the extensive and important parish of Ballinakill."

The laity of the diocese subscribed as well as the priests, and there was also an appeal to the Catholics of England and Scotland. For this purpose Dr. Kelly gave a commendatory letter to Dr. Francis Nicholson, a Carmelite, formerly a student of St. Jarlath's College. It is dated 1828, and commends Dr. Nicholson as a pious and honest priest, to whom the faithful might give any subscriptions they were disposed to give.²³ Another priest, the Rev. James Browne, was sent to collect in London, and there were collectors in every church in the Archdiocese.

Dr. Kelly himself constantly supervised the work, even when absent, as he was at Leamington in 1828, and when his health was bad his thoughts were with the cathedral work.

"Notwithstanding my distance from the new Cathedral my thoughts were often turned towards it; and you will be pleased to mention to the Committee that I have great reliance on their exertions during my absence. For my part, I will, God willing, work double tides on my return."

(Letter to Father Feeny, July, 1828.)

There is a report of the committee giving details of the progress of the work for the year ending 1st February, 1832, and a hope is expressed that the cathedral will soon be completed. The contract for the roofing, slating, plumbing, ceiling, plastering, and oak doors was being executed by Mr. Denis Clarke for £2,950. At that date the secretary of the committee was Rev. Martin Loftus; the treasurer, Mr. Thomas Browne; the clerk of works, Mr. Murray, and the architect, Mr. Bernard Mullins. Apparently it had not been found feasible for the committee to carry on without an architect. During the year subscriptions of £25 had been received from the Marquis of Anglesey, and bequests left by Andrew Kirwan, Father Prendergast, of Clifden; the Lord Abbot of

²³ "Feeny MSS."

²⁴ Report of Committee.

Cong, and a bequest of £50 from Father Green, late parish priest of Ballinrobe. Funds were low, and many subscriptions in arrears.²⁴

Meanwhile serious financial embarrassments had arisen. In 1830 the funds were exhausted, and it seemed as if the work could not be completed. A meeting of the inhabitants of Tuam was then held on May 14th, and a proposal was made and carried that a sum of £2,000 should be borrowed at 5 per cent., in sums of £25, £50 and £100. The money borrowed was borrowed in the name of Dr. Kelly, and the two others associated with him in the Indenture of Lease. To secure their position, they insured their lives for £200 with the European Insurance Co., but the company failed in 1872, and all the loans or debentures have not yet been paid off. Every year the priests of the Archdiocese pay £1 each to the cathedral, but this sum is only just sufficient to pay the interest on the cathedral debentures.²⁵

It might be added here that the cathedral was roofed in and all but finished when Dr. Kelly died in 1834, and that the tower was finished by Dr. MacHale, and the cathedral dedicated by him on the 18th August, 1837.

Distress in the Archdiocese.

In 1821, and again in 1822, there was a serious failure of the potato crop. The early summer of 1821 was cold, in June there was frost; the autumn was wet, when low-lying potato fields were under water. In December the Shannon was described as resembling the ocean itself, so far extended were its waters. The next year was similar. The potatoes saved rotted in the pits, and became useless. Great numbers of the poor were without labour, and having no wages to get, were unable to buy meal. This left large districts in Galway and Mayo in the grip of famine. In default of any other food, the people often ate unripe and diseased food, and many deaths occurred from hunger, typhus and dysentery. In Achill

²⁵ All this information I have got from Rev. J. S. Walsh, M.A., Archbishop's Secretary, to whose kindness I am much indebted.

Island the roadside was littered with corpses, and in many cases the living were unable to bury the dead.²⁶

It is pleasant to recall that the Protestant Archbishop of Tuam, Dr. Trench, joined with the Catholic Archbishop in the good work of relieving this distress. Both served on the same relief committee, and Dr. Trench, out of his own large resources, gave employment to many, and without distinction of creed. The grateful Catholics in return saved Dr. Trench's turf, and brought it home; and when the relief committee met in Tuam for the last time, with the Catholic Archbishop in the chair, the following resolution was unanimously passed:—

“ That the judicious, unwearied and efficient exertions of his Grace, the Archbishop of Tuam, call for the warmest sentiments of admiration, and we beg to offer him the humble tribute of our sincere gratitude, hoping that his benignity of character and his well-directed benevolence, qualities worthy of our admiration, may long continue to shed their influence upon us.”²⁷

Protestants and Catholics.

Dr. Trench did not, however, continue to merit the esteem of the Catholic body. In 1824 the Catholics of Tuam presented a petition to Parliament against the exactions of the vestry cess. They had, indeed, much reason to complain. The Protestant Archbishop wanted some improvement in his cathedral, and the law allowed him to tax the Catholic people of Tuam to the extent of £1,800. Nor was this all. By courtesy the Catholics were called to the vestry meeting at which this tax was agreed on, but they had no vote—that was the privilege of the Protestant vestrymen—and when they suggested to have a capable contractor for the work their advice was rejected. It was then given to an incompetent contractor, with the result that the work was badly done, and it seemed likely that an additional sum of £1,500 would be required.

It was quite right that the Catholics should petition Parliament for relief from such an oppressive cess. A petition was

²⁶ O'Rourke's "Irish Famine," pp. 30-33.

²⁷ Sirr's "Life of Archbishop Trench."

accordingly prepared, but at the next meeting of the vestry, Dr. Trench attacked both petition and petitioners. It was, he said, an ignorant production, a tissue of calumnies and lies, its authors a Popish cabal, the members of which were rebels, defrauders and perjurers. And such was the power which the Archbishop had, and such was the cowed spirit of the Catholics, that, intimidated for the moment, they were afraid to send the petition to London, though a prominent member of Parliament was willing to present it.²⁸

Dr. Trench also lost in popularity with the Tuam Catholics by the fact that he lent his patronage and active assistance to the New Reformation which commenced about this time. It was an organised attempt by the more bigoted among the Protestants to proselytize the Catholics. O'Connell, in one of his public letters in 1826, made a scathing onslaught on one of these bigots. His name was Daly—Parson Daly, O'Connell called him.²⁹ He was a Galway man, a brother of Lord Dunsandle, and an uncle of Lord Clancarty, and although O'Connell predicted that he would never wear a mitre, he really became Bishop of Cashel and Waterford, and lived till 1871.³⁰ In spite of the severe handling he received from O'Connell he still continued his attacks on the Catholics, and in 1830 we find him publicly disputing in Tuam with Father Feeney, then President of St. Jarlath's College. His chief contention was that the Bible should be put, without note or comment, into the hands of the laity, leaving to each one's own judgment to discover the meaning of the text. Father Feeney replied to this at some length, marshalling his facts and arguments so well that when Mr. Daly rose to reply he had really nothing to say. And all this so delighted the Catholics in the audience that Father Feeney, on emerging from the hall where the discussion had taken place, was carried in triumph through the streets of Tuam.³¹

Engaged in the visitation of the various parishes of the

²⁸ Dr. Kelly's "Letters" in the "Tuam Herald."

²⁹ "O'Connell's Letters and Speeches," II, p. 339 *et seq.*

³⁰ "Feeny MSS."

³¹ *Ibid.*

Archdiocese, in the building of churches and schools, in the erection of the cathedral, and in watching over the fate and fortunes of St. Jarlath's College, Dr. Kelly had little leisure for political matters. But he was not indifferent to the agitation controlled and directed by O'Connell. This is shown by his letters to Mr. Eaneas McDonnell, then agent in London for the Irish Catholics. And when O'Connell, in 1828, determined that simultaneous petitions in favour of Catholic concession should be presented to Parliament, he addressed a letter of request to Dr. Kelly. "I am sorry," he said, "to trespass on your Lordship's time, but I am so persuaded of the vital utility of the measure of simultaneous petitions, that I venture in the most respectful manner to urge on your kind consideration the propriety of assisting in such manner as you may deem best to attain our object." The Archbishop resolved to have meetings in every parish in the Archdiocese, and had petitions forwarded, and in a short time from all Ireland petitions signed by 800,000 persons were presented to Parliament.²²

Wardenship of Galway abolished.

Meantime the peculiar system of ecclesiastical government in Galway was causing trouble both in Galway and in Tuam. The Warden was elected annually by the tribal families, and these confined the office to priests of their own families. The Vicars were elected for life, having the status and authority of parish priests, and these, too, were selected from the tribal families. Further, the Vicars had the right to institute the Warden after his election, and if the Warden elected happened to be a regular rather than a secular priest, they might refuse to institute him, as, in fact, they did in 1813, in the case of Dr. French, a Dominican. But Dr. French, who was of the tribal families himself and had influential lay friends, appealed to Rome, and the Vicars were beaten. Under such a system popular favour and family influence went further than personal merit. There was room for wire-

²² Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," pp. 235-6.

pulling and intrigue, for canvassing and for bribery. In 1782 Dr. Egan, then Archbishop of Tuam, suggested that the Wardenship should be abolished, and that Galway should be annexed to Tuam. But this proposal was rejected at Rome, though it was re-affirmed by the Pope, in 1783, that the Archbishop of Tuam had a right of triennial visitation in Galway, and also of hearing appeals from the Warden. It was also decreed that henceforth the Warden should be elected for three years instead of one.³³

In Dr. Kelly's time fresh causes of trouble arose, and he was deputed by Rome to settle these. The regulars and the seculars—that is, the Vicars—disagreed about the offerings made at High Masses, and also at funerals. The regulars pleaded a right to such offerings as were guaranteed by prescription as well as by formal agreements with the seculars in 1788, and again in 1790.³⁴ The seculars pleaded prior possession, and that it was only in the Collegiate Church, which was their own church, such offerings were made before the Reformation. Dr. Kelly reported to Rome in 1828 that all such offerings should henceforth be equally divided between seculars and regulars, and this proposal was adopted at Rome and decreed.³⁵

Dr. Kelly also proposed to Rome in the following year (1829) that the Warden should be elected for life, and that the parishes should be given by merit. The authorities at Rome, however, were satisfied that a more drastic change was required, and in 1830 Dr. Kelly, Bishop of Dromore and Coadjutor Archbishop of Armagh, and Dr. Crolly, Bishop of Down, were sent by Pius VIII. to investigate the disputes between the seculars and regulars at Galway, and especially in reference to the Wardenship. Both Bishops visited the Archbishop of Tuam before going to Galway, and again on their return. They were able to induce the tribal families in Galway to abandon their ancient privilege of electing the

³³ "Feeny MSS."

³⁴ "Hibernia Dominicana," p. 323.

³⁵ "Feeny MSS."

Warden, and they induced the Warden, Dr. French, who was also Bishop of Kilmacduagh, to resign the Wardenship. In return he was given, as pension for life, one-third of the revenues of the parish of Ragoon, and henceforth he was to reside in his own diocese of Kilmacduagh. This done, the two Bishops, in consultation with the Archbishop, recommended that Galway should be made a diocese. This report was sent to Rome in October, 1830, and in the following March Pope Gregory XVI. appointed Dr. Nicholas Foran first Bishop of Galway. But Dr. Foran fell ill, and never recovered, and Dr. Browne, an Elphin priest, was appointed, and was consecrated by Dr. Kelly in October, 1831. Thus were all the disputes connected with the Wardenship of Galway finally ended.³⁶

The Archbishop's Death.

Dr. Kelly's health could ill bear the strain of all the work he had on hands. In 1824 he was compelled to take the waters at Cheltenham, and in 1827 he was taking the waters at Leamington.³⁷ The next year he was again at Leamington, this time with the famous J.K.L. and Dr. Murray of Dublin.³⁸ In 1829 he wrote from Rome that his health, which had not been good, was then excellent. Returning to Tuam the same year, the Archbishop began and soon carried to completion a suitable archbishop's house, next door to the college, and near the new cathedral. It was much needed, as the old thatched house in Church Lane was utterly unsuited for an archbishop's residence.

The next few years were years of anxiety. In 1831 there was a failure of the potato crop, involving great distress. There was the new cathedral to be finished, with the worry of lack of funds. All these things weighed heavily on him, and were certainly not calculated to prolong his days.

In 1834 he was again in Rome, and there procured for the

³⁶ "Feeny MSS."

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ "Life of Dr. Doyle," II, pp. 85-6.

new cathedral the high altar and canopy, which still stands in the cathedral. But the end of a busy and fruitful life was nearing its close. Dr. Kelly's health began seriously to fail, and in the hope that a cure would come in the milder air of Albano, he retired there, and there he died on the 18th April, 1834.

By the desire of the Pope his remains were interred in the Church of the Propaganda, and in the Cathedral at Tuam, when completed, a marble slab was placed, with the following inscription :—

“ Oliver Kelly, Catholic Archbishop of Tuam, consecrated in 1814, founded the Cathedral 30th April, 1827. His pious zeal and unwearied exertions nearly completed it, solely by the aid of gratuitous contributions from all denominations of Christians. But his hard labours and anxieties to finish with such uncertain means his Heavenly Master's house, tended much to terminate his valuable life in his 57th year, at Albano, on the 18th April, 1834. His precious remains were, by the particular desire of the Holy Father, deposited with due solemnity in the Church of the Propaganda, Rome, and by his last will he requested a tablet to be placed here requesting the prayers of the faithful that the Lord may grant eternal rest to his soul.” ²⁹

²⁹ Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," p. 239.

CHAPTER XVIII.

JOHN MACHALE.

MacHale's Early Years.

IN a country which contains so many beautiful glens it is only the partiality of a Connaughtman that would stand sponsor for the statement that the three most beautiful glens in Erin are Glenglosh, Glentreige and Glen-Nephin. The two first-named are in the County of Galway, in the bosom of the Joyce Country. The last-named, Glen-Nephin, is in Mayo. It begins in Ballina, and ends on the shores of Lough Conn, with Nephin Mountain and its lesser attendant peaks sheltering it from the north-west, while to the south-east are Massbrook and Pontoon. Nor can it be denied that the whole glen has a wild beauty all its own. It is a picturesque medley of lake and bog and mountain and river, and of rocky and heather-clad hills. In this plain, at the village of Tubernaveen, situated at the very feet of Nephin, John MacHale, Archbishop of Tuam, was born. His eloquent pen brought him fame in after years, and a description which he has given of his native glen is worth giving :—

“ Tubernaveen is situated at the base of Nephin, second among all the mountains in Connaught in elevation, and inferior but to few in Ireland. The south view is bounded by a portion of the Ox Mountains, stretching from the Atlantic in the form of an amphitheatre. They are called Bearnageeha Mountains, from a narrow and precipitous defile where the storm rules supreme, and rendered famous by the passage of the French in 1798 on their way to Castlebar. Round the base of this circuitous range of hills is seen, as if in sleep the

beautiful lake of Lavalla, bordering on the woods of Massbrook. Directly to the east the large lake of Conn stretches from Pontoon to the north-west, the lofty hill of Knocknaria intercepting the view of its surface, and again revealing to the eye on the north side of the hill another portion of the same sheet of water. Beyond the extremity of the lake you can contemplate some of the most cultivated and picturesque portions of Tyrawley, stretching along in the distance as far as the hill of Lacken, of which the view is animated by a fanciful tower of modern construction."¹

John MacHale's father was Patrick MacHale, called by the people Padraic Mor, or Big Patrick, from his great stature. His mother's name was Mary Mulkerrin. In after years, when John had acquired fame, and made enemies, as famous men will, he was often sneered at as a poor peasant's son who began life as a barefooted boy in the bogs of Tyrawley. It is true, indeed, that his father was a peasant, and that John belonged to the peasant class, and it is probably true also that in his early days he often ran about barefooted, like other boys in Glen-Nephin. But his father was not so poor as to be unable to put boots or shoes on his children. On the contrary, Patrick MacHale was a substantial man. He had land, and kept a shop; he went with his horses across the country to Dublin for goods; he purchased the woollen homespuns from the surrounding peasantry, and sold them at a profit; and he dealt in the linens then woven in Tyrawley, and sold them at the Linen Hall in Castlebar. A man who did these things might, no doubt, be described as a peasant, but it would be inaccurate to describe him as very poor.²

Young John, who was born in 1791, got the first rudiments of learning at a hedge-school in Lahardane, about a mile from his birthplace at Tubernaveen. In these days Irish was the spoken language of his home. But John's father knew English, else he would have been at a serious disadvantage on his journeys to Dublin; and the father taught his son, making him learn English at the hedge-school at Lahardane. He learned also to serve Mass, and when but seven years old he

¹ MacHale's "Letters," pp. 516-17.

² O'Reilly's "Life of MacHale," I, pp. 8-9.

often served Mass for the parish priest of Lahardane, Father Conroy.³

Not for long however was Father Conroy allowed to say his Masses in peace. In 1798 the French, on their way to Castlebar, passed by Lahardane. Father Conroy had been educated in France, and had seen the horrors of the French Revolution, and told his people of them, and with such effect that the peasants in great part fled at the approach of the invaders. The MacHales hid themselves in the mountains, and buried their property in deep pits, believing that neither persons nor property were safe at the hands of the atheist French. Father Conroy did not fly like the frightened people of his parish, and in his house was visited by some French officers, with whom he could converse in their own language, and whom he treated with ordinary civility and nothing more. For this crime he was arrested by order of Denis Browne, a bigot and a tyrant, then all-powerful in Mayo. A courtmartial ordered to sit by such a man, and with passion inflamed as it was in 1798, wanted no evidence to condemn, and Father Conroy, though quite innocent, was sentenced to death. He was hanged from a tree in the Mall at Castlebar, within a few feet of where the Wesleyan Church stands. The tree was an object of curiosity to succeeding generations, and weathered many a storm, until in 1918 it was blown down and disappeared. The corpse of the martyred priest was brought home for burial, and at Tubernaveen and at Lahardane was heard the wild wailing for the dead.⁴

John MacHale had seen the French soldiers pass on to Castlebar and later had seen the mournful procession of the people who followed the martyred remains of the priest for whom he had so lately served Mass. And thus was he brought into contact with English injustice and Irish wrong. An inquiring mind such as his wanted to know why these things should be, and soon, under the guidance of one Martin Callaghan, he was groping his way through Ireland's past.

³ O'Reilly's "Life of MacHale," I, pp. 17-18.

⁴ *Ibid.* pp. 24-26.

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Callaghan had more than a local reputation for a knowledge of Irish history and antiquities. And little MacHale listened greedily to his story of Irish legend and song, the story of the Fenians and the Red Branch Knights, understanding for the first time what was the meaning of the cromlech and the holy well and the ruined abbey. Callaghan, no doubt, told the child what wars the Irish had waged for their rights, what battles they had fought, and how they had been persecuted by a foreign race who despised them and hated their faith, and had inflicted on them the horrors of the Penal Laws. The outrages of 1798 and the perfidy of the Union passed before John MacHale's eyes; and while the new century was yet in its infancy the young lad from Glen-Nephrin had acquired a knowledge of Irish history which would have done credit to a grown-up man who had spent many years in college.⁵

Meantime he had long outgrown the curriculum of the Lahardane hedge-school and the capacity of its teacher. John MacHale's uncle was Father Richard MacHale, parish priest of Addergoole. The boy wanted to be a priest, like his uncle, and for this purpose he was sent to a classical school at Castlebar. It was kept by Patrick Staunton, who at the close of the century took advantage of the partial relaxation of the Penal Laws, and opened a classical school at Castlebar. He trained many in MacHale's time and subsequently, and left a reputation for successful teaching of the classics which long survived him. John MacHale attended this school for several years, at first lodging in the town, and afterwards at the house of a friend four or five miles outside the town. His progress was considerable, and when Dr. Bellew, Bishop of Killala, appointed him to a bursarship at Maynooth in 1807, John MacHale was not only able to pass his entrance examination with credit, but was able to compete successfully in all branches with the ablest of his class-fellows.

MacHale in Maynooth.

For the next seven years he was a student at Maynooth.

⁵ O'Reilly's "Life of MacHale," I, pp. 28-30.

There were no trains in these days, and when he went to Maynooth, or returned, it was either by the old stage coach or on horseback. But he did not always return home, even for his vacation. Studious and book-loving, he loved to frequent the college library, or go to Dublin, where other libraries were open, and other books could be consulted than those available at Maynooth. He worked hard, and in every class got the highest distinctions. Nor did he confine himself to the merely professional subjects, such as Theology and Scripture and Church History; he mastered the languages as well, and when he was ordained priest in 1814, he had a good knowledge, even a scholar's knowledge, of Irish, English, Latin, Greek and French. Hebrew he also knew, and Italian and German he studied and mastered in later years.⁶

In Maynooth College a story was circulated and handed down, that John MacHale, wishing to model his style on that of Gibbon, copied out the whole of "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," and this story was believed sixty years later and more. But it was a legend and nothing more. John MacHale himself told his Administrator in Tuam, Father Prendergast, that there was not a particle of foundation for the story. He liked Gibbon, he said, and had read "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" carefully, but he never copied it, fifteen times, as it was sometimes said, or even once. But the fact that he liked Gibbon's work, and had read it carefully, would, to some extent, account for MacHale's style, in which a resemblance to the style of Gibbon can be traced.

The year 1814 was crowded with important events for him. His bishop Dr. Bellew died and was succeeded by Dr. Waldron as Bishop of Killala. John MacHale himself was ordained priest by Dr. Murray, Archbishop of Dublin, and immediately after his ordination he was appointed Lecturer of Dogmatic Theology at Maynooth College. The Professor of that subject was Dr. Delahogue, a priest and canon of the Archdiocese of Paris, and a Fellow of the Sorbonne. He was a learned man, and wrote for his class a Dogmatic Theology,

⁶ O'Reilly's "Life of MacHale," I, pp. 39-40.

in five small volumes, which Dr. Healy places in arrangement and method and clearness on a higher level than Perrone, which became the class-book in Maynooth in later years. There was, however, one drawback in Dr. Delahogue's work. It was tainted, though not seriously, with Gallicanism. This might be expected from a student and professor of the Sorbonne, where the four Gallican Articles of 1682 were held in such esteem. Man is largely the creature of his training and of his surroundings, and one who had lived for so long in the atmosphere of the Sorbonne would be inclined to elevate and extend the royal and episcopal at the expense of the Papal power. Dr. Delahogue was not, however, an aggressive Gallican. His change of residence, if it did not moderate his opinions, at least moderated his zeal to propagate them. He knew that the plant that would grow and flourish in the Sorbonne would find in Maynooth an uncongenial soil. It was certainly held in France that the Pope's infallibility depended on the consent of the Church, but this was not held in Maynooth. Neither was that other Gallican proposition, that a General Council was above the Pope.

Dr. MacHale's testimony is emphatic on these points, and he ought to know, as he was assistant to Dr. Delahogue from 1814 to 1820; and when Delahogue resigned his Chair in 1820, Dr. MacHale, or MacKeal, as he is called in the college records, took his place. This Chair he held until 1825.

What manner of lecturer and professor MacHale was during the eleven years that he taught Dogmatic Theology at Maynooth we learn from one of his pupils who wrote his estimate in 1825. He was not from Killala, or even from Connaught, so that he did not speak as one expectant of favours to come. "You and I, my Lord," he said, "know that there are men who, wandering into the high latitudes of scholastic theology, would willingly place the sacred temple of truth amid the ice of the pole. They would exclude from its venerable vestibule the thirsty votary, till he had been pinched with the cold and hoared with the frosts of the Arctic regions. We know that there are men who would banish science and literature from

the society of theology, and who, by stripping it of half its usefulness, would rob it of half its interests. But sweets only become delicious by comparison. 'The days of my sojourn in the land are few.' Whatever be my future destiny, I shall look back on the hours spent under the immediate direction of your Lordship as upon the happiest of my life." This estimate is ornate enough, but it is certainly enthusiastic.

But during these years at Maynooth Dr. MacHale did not confine his intellectual energies to Dogmatic Theology. The scandal of denying to the Irish Catholic masses the right to be educated in accordance with their religious convictions continued to the nineteenth century. They might get education, no doubt, at the expense of the State, but it could only be in schools controlled by Protestants, manned by Protestants, and in which the whole atmosphere was Protestant. In 1811, however, some liberal-minded Protestants established the Kildare Street Society, their purpose being to give education to the poorer Catholics, and without endangering their faith. Schools were set up in which Catholic and Protestant children might be educated together, and in which there would be no attempt made to teach religion; nothing except to have every day some portion of the Bible read without note or comment. Outside of this the religious training of the children was to be left in the hands of the ministers of their own creed. This was not exactly the sort of education the Catholics should get who paid taxes as well as their Protestant fellow-subjects. Yet such was the thirst for knowledge of the Catholics that they frequented the Society's schools. O'Connell approved of the Society's work, and while he and such liberal-minded Protestants as the Duke of Leinster and Lord Cloncurry were members of the Board of Management the Catholics were satisfied that no proselytism would be attempted. A Parliamentary grant was then obtained, and continued from year to year, and with this the work of the Kildare Street Society was extended.

But in 1819 bigots and fanatics obtained a commanding position on the Board. Fair play and non-interference with

Catholics then ceased; the bread of knowledge was henceforth steeped in the poison of proselytism; and as the bigots insisted on handing over a part of their Parliamentary grant to the London Hibernian Society, the Society for Discountenancing Vice, and the Baptist Society, all avowedly proselytising societies, the Catholics could no longer trust the Kildare Street Society. In these circumstances O'Connell retired from the Board, as did the Duke of Leinster and Lord Cloncurry, and Catholic children were withdrawn from the schools. The Parliamentary grant was still continued; but the Catholics would have none of it as long as it was administered by the bigots of the Kildare Street Society, and in 1819 O'Connell attacked the Society.⁷

The Letters of "Hierophilos."

In the following year the Society and its work was attacked by John MacHale. Recognising that the reading in the schools of the Bible without note or comment was not in accordance with Catholic practice or Catholic principles, he distrusted the Society from the first. But while O'Connell was on the board and tolerated, if he did not approve, MacHale held his hand. Nor did he attack until O'Connell had left the board, and even attacked it. Then, from 1820 to 1823, he poured forth a series of letters, in which the Society was vigorously assailed. They were dated from Maynooth, and written over the pen-name of "Hierophilos," but the writer soon came to be known as the young Professor of Dogmatic Theology at Maynooth.

In one of his letters, addressed to the English people, MacHale himself tells us what his object was:—

"To check the career of the Gospellers; to vindicate our clergy against unmerited aspersion; and to justify the line of conduct adopted by them, was the first object of Hierophilos. On the sincere believers of Christianity I wished to impress the irreligious consequences with which the system was preg-

⁷ Barry O'Brien's "Fifty Years of Concessions to Ireland," I, pp. 117-120; Kingsmill-Moore, "An Unwritten Chapter in the History of Education," pp. 29-31, 52-3, 76-82.

nant; and to those who felt a zeal for the public welfare I was anxious to point out the impolicy of irritating a whole people, who feel the strongest suspicions that some treacherous hostility was meditated against their religion.

"Our long silence was abused by their presumption; and a forbearance, dictated by discretion, they failed not to attribute to the weakness of our cause. . . .

"A candid and necessary defence, after such long silence, disconcerted the plans of the Societies. The exposure of their designs alarmed their apprehensions, and I was accordingly saluted with the courteous but bold defiance of an adversary who laboured to enlist in their support the combined authorities of the Scriptures and the Fathers. In the necessity I was under of following in his footsteps, and of replying to his arguments, or unmasking his sophistry, the controversy expanded beyond my original intention, by embracing those general principles of Church government, and the exercise of private judgment, which are applicable alike to all time and countries."⁸

Though a very young man in 1820, MacHale was well equipped for the task he undertook. With Theology and Scripture and Church History a Professor of Theology in Maynooth might be expected to be familiar. But MacHale's knowledge ranged far beyond these subjects. He was quite familiar with the Greek and Latin classics, and with the masterpieces in the French and English tongues. He knew the writings of the Fathers of the Church, the writings of Origen and Clementine and Basil and St. Augustine and St. Chrysostom, and he could aptly quote them all. English and Irish history he knew; and he was as familiar with the writings of Blackstone and Gibbon as he was with the character and conduct of Cranmer and Cromwell, those twin pillars of the English reformed creed. He knew no fear, boldly attacked the Kildare Street Society for its bigotry and hypocrisy, and told all such societies that their work with Irish Catholics would be vain in the future as it had been in the past; that "though they distributed their Bibles until doomsday their efforts will be still as unprofitable as the labours of Sisyphus."⁹ He laughed to scorn, and proved as utterly false, the conten-

⁸ MacHale's "Letters," pp. 117-118.

⁹ *Ibid.* p. 81.

tion that each one could interpret the Scripture for himself, and did not require an authorized interpreter. Nor could anything be more ridiculous than insisting that the Bible must be read in each Kildare Street school. For in one case the priest having only Catholic scholars, read the Bible each day himself, but he read it in the absence of the scholars.¹⁰ In these letters MacHale's style might be described as ponderous, but it was trenchant and vigorous, and though the sentences are sometimes long and involved, they are not inharmonious, and fall pleasantly enough on the ear.

In 1823, MacHale, still writing as "Hierophilos," addressed a series of letters to Mr. Canning, who was known to be friendly to Ireland. He told Canning of the wrongs of Ireland, and how they loudly called for redress. He told him of tithes and rents, of absentee landlords, grasping parsons and unfeeling land agents, of want and cold and hunger and nakedness; reminding him that if the Catholic masses were ignorant the fault was not theirs but that of the alien Government which denied them education. In two sentences he describes a state of things which is reproduced almost exactly a century later: "As long," he says, "as Ireland remains in her present condition, the interference of Britain in the concerns of other countries will be deemed less an evidence of her humanity than her ambition. If she interposes in the defence of an injured people, her policy will be considered the result of a selfish wish to secure her distant possessions, in which justice has no share; nor can she ever claim the proud distinction of being the avenger of freedom, while the slavery of the Irish people exposes in the eyes of mankind the injustice of her pretensions."¹¹

Dr. MacHale, Coadjutor of Killala.

These letters brought fame to John MacHale. He was now held in high esteem throughout the whole Irish Church, and especially in his own diocese; and when Dr. Waldron wanted

¹⁰ Cloncurry's "Personal Recollections," pp. 376-7

¹¹ MacHale's "Letters," p. 155.

a coadjutor in 1825, he asked for John MacHale. His request was granted by Pope Leo XII., and by a Bull dated March 5th, 1825, John MacHale was appointed Bishop of Maronia and Coadjutor Bishop of Killala. He continued the work of his class until the end of the academic year, and on June 5th was consecrated in the college chapel by Dr. Murray, Archbishop of Dublin, who, only eleven years before, had ordained him priest. The assisting prelates were Dr. Oliver Kelly, Archbishop of Tuam, and Dr. Patrick Mac Nicholas, Bishop of Achonry, and this, in the handwriting of Dr. Murray, is recorded on the back of the Bull of appointment :—

“ Nos testamus quod sub die quinta Junij An 1825 in Sacello Colegii Sti Patritii apud Maynooth R. P. Joanni Mac Hale Electo Moroniensi munus consecrationis episcopalis impertiti sumus servatis omnibus quae in retrospectis litteris Apostolicis praescripta sunt assistentibus Renis D.D., Olivero Archiepiscopus Tuamensi et Patritio Epo Achadensi, presentibus Roberto Epo Tremitensi et Thoma Epo Milevitano, item Preside Magistris sociisque prefati Collegii aliisque permultis.

† DANIEL, Archiepus. Dublin.”¹²

The students of his class presented Dr. MacHale, on the occasion of his consecration with a silver cup; and with them and with the great college where he had spent eighteen happy years, he parted with regret. In his farewell address to his class he said :—

“ After having long sojourned here with you, we shall also engage together in ecclesiastical labour. The College shall not have a sincerer worshipper nor one more interested in its prosperity; and I can say with truth that there are no hours of my life to which I shall turn with a fairer retrospect than those which I have spent in cheering the literary labours or sharing the innocent relaxation of the children of the College.”¹³

Three years earlier Dr. Waldron had appointed Dr. MacHale as Parish Priest of Crossmolina, expecting, no doubt, that the Professor would remain at Maynooth, and be dis-

¹² O'Reilly, I, p. 90.

¹³ *Ibid.* p. 89.

pensed by the Pope from residence at Crossmolina. But it does not appear that Dr. MacHale ever applied for such a dispensation, and while at Maynooth he did not receive any share of the revenues of the parish. It remained, in fact, a mensal parish until 1825, when it was conferred on the new Coadjutor-Bishop.

Dr. MacHale soon plunged into work in Killala. The year 1825 was a year of jubilee, and as Dr. Waldron was old and feeble, the work of publishing the jubilee and explaining it to the people devolved on the Coadjutor. This he did, telling the people what a jubilee was, what indulgences were granted by, and how these indulgences could be obtained. Nor did he confine his exertions to Ballina or Crossmolina. He went himself into every parish in the diocese, bringing fifteen priests with him, and spending with them ten days in each parish. The ignorant were instructed, the careless were made good, the sinners were converted, the weak were confirmed and strengthened, and the blessings and graces of the jubilee were brought home to each home and to each individual in Killala. His great anxiety, he said, during all these days, was about the poor people who came from far and near to receive the sacraments, without having tasted food, and who, he feared, might faint on the road. . . . "These were the daily spectacles which filled us with joy and sadness—with joy at beholding the abundant harvest, with sadness because of the small number of the reapers." The Catholics of the diocese were thus consoled, but the Protestants also were edified, and not a few were converted.¹⁴

Dr. MacHale and Dr. Trench.

This provoked the wrath of Dr. Trench, the Protestant Archbishop of Tuam, and in an ill-tempered address at Killala he denounced "the damnable doctrines of the Catholic Church." With language of this kind, intemperate and un-Christian, there was no room for forbearance, and Dr. MacHale replied in a letter which was scathingly severe. There was

¹⁴ O'Reilly, I, pp. 104-5.

learning and argument in plenty; there was impatience at the Archbishop's want of charity, indignation at his intolerance, disgust at his insolent bigotry; an admonition to remember the character of the reformers. And if he should feel mortified at Dr. MacHale's letter, he was advised to put it down to his own wanton and intemperate aggression.

"If the country is torn by religious discord, put your hand to your breast, and declare to whose account should its wounds be laid. Who are the people that are keeping a body of strolling auxiliaries in pay, to prop the declining cause of the establishment, by pouring their vapid abuse on the Catholic Church? . . . From the effects of your intemperance, your colleagues will, I trust, learn a wise forbearance; and should your Grace ever repeat your triennial visitation, and be disposed to indulge in a feast of triumph against a religion to the service of which the church in which you spoke was once consecrated, doubtless the present sketch, which you will not easily forget, will make you apprehend lest some mysterious hand should draw more fully the character and destiny of your Church on the walls of the Cathedral of Killala."¹⁵

Some of his episcopal brethren, as well as Dr. Trench himself, forgot, or ignored, this salutary admonition. This letter was written in 1826. In the following year the proselytisers were insolent and aggressive in Cavan, and under the patronage of the Bishop of Kilmore.¹⁶ And in 1830 Dr. Trench brought upon himself a fresh and well-merited castigation from Dr. MacHale. Untaught by his former errors and by his repeated failures to win over the benighted papists to Protestantism, he was again trying to evangelise, and had been urging on his clergy to carry on a mission among the Catholics. Again Dr. MacHale spoke out, and in language of great vigour and felicity covered the campaign of proselytism with ridicule and scorn. Dr. Trench was cowed, and at last seems to have learned the advantages of discretion.¹⁷

¹⁵ MacHale's "Letters," pp. 214-225.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* pp. 225-39.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 259-263.

Evidence before a Royal Commission.

The year after he became bishop, and immediately after his exacting labours during the jubilee, Dr. MacHale was called upon to give evidence before a royal commission at Maynooth. Protestant bigotry was then common enough among English public men, and a Protestant Parliament, reluctant to grant Catholic emancipation, readily assented to an inquiry into the teaching and government of Maynooth College, hoping to discover something injurious to the Catholic cause. But if the Commissioners expected to get damaging admissions from Dr. MacHale, they were disappointed. He told them that Maynooth was neither Gallican nor Ultramontane. Its students were not taught, on the one hand, that the Pope could depose princes, nor, on the other, that a general council was above the Pope. Pressed to say if the Pope, who could dispense in oaths and vows, could dispense subjects from the Oath of Allegiance, as in fact Pius V. did the subjects of Elizabeth, he answered that, in such a case every man would be free to judge whether or not the dispensation would infringe on higher obligations, and, if so, he need not recognise the dispensation of the Pope.

Asked to explain why he wrote the letters of "Hierophilos" without first obtaining, in accordance with the College statute, the permission of his President, he answered that the statute had reference only to the publication of improper or dangerous books. The President did not know that "Hierophilos" and John MacHale were the same person. He wrote because his Church and its accredited ministers had been foully assailed. The Fellows of Trinity College were free to abuse Catholics, and he ought to be free to defend, and if he were restrained from doing so, he would not hold his Chair for one hour.

He withdrew nothing, and apologised for nothing he had written, and to the disgust and even horror of the Commissioners, he maintained that the Bible Societies were mere commercial speculations, got up for the purpose of making money. Nor had he any hesitation in maintaining that the Established Church was a human, not at all a divine institu-

tion, and that he did not know what fixed creed a Protestant had except to believe in private judgment and to reject the authority of the Pope.¹⁸

Dr. MacHale was sharply criticised in the pages of the "Quarterly Review," and just as sharply replied. Haunted by the spectre of the Pope's dispensing power, the reviewer threw charges under this head at Dr. MacHale. He replied by quoting the Commissioners' question and his own reply. If a person took an oath, the fulfilment of which would be injurious to the temporal interests of the Church, would that be held so far to militate against the utility of the Church as to be a sufficient cause for dissolving the obligation of it? The answer was that it would not, "because the temporal interests of the Church is a matter of secondary importance, compared to the obligation of an oath, which binds us to the Almighty."¹⁹ To the charge that he published his letters of Hierophilos without the President's permission, he replied that he never took an oath to observe the statute in question, nor had he been asked. He calls attention, and in strong language, to many misstatements of the reviewer, and especially to his ignorant observation, utterly unworthy of an educated man, that Catholics believed in the *inspiration* of General Councils.

"The Evidences and Doctrines of the Catholic Church."

All this time Dr. MacHale was preparing a work for the Press which must have occupied much of his time. It was published in 1828, and was entitled, "The Evidences and Doctrines of the Catholic Church." Its object was declared by the author himself: "To deduce the evidences of the Catholic Church from the primitive sources of revelation, and illustrate the speculative truth of its doctrines, as well as their

¹⁸ Report of the Commissioners of Education regarding the College of Maynooth; Healy's "Maynooth," pp. 383-386.

¹⁹ MacHale's "Letters," pp. 239-49.

practical influence on the happiness of society is the object of this volume.

“ I have, therefore, extended the evidences of religion beyond former examples, in order that the reader may perceive the identity between the Catholic Church of the nineteenth and the Catholic Church of the first century; as well as the identity between that Church and the primitive revelations of which it has been the development and perfection.

“ The Catholic who recites the Apostles’ Creed to-day, believes in the same Catholic Church as he who repeated it in the age in which it was composed. . . .

“ It has been my aim to show that, not only these institutions, which are the themes of general eulogy, but others, which are the objects of censure and abuse, have had an immense influence on the happiness of society.

“ Among the tenets which are represented as most obnoxious in their effects is the supremacy of the Pope. In opposition to some of the most popular historians, I have undertaken to establish, that in the ages when it is supposed to have been most disastrous, the supremacy of the Roman Pontiff was favourable to the liberties as well as to the virtues of mankind.”

The full title of the work was “ The Evidences and Doctrines of the Catholic Church, showing that the former are no less convincing than the latter are propitious to the happiness of society.” It is but little known now, for other works have taken its place. But it was favourably received by the public when it first appeared, and this high estimate of its merits appeared. It was translated into German, and it was in 1854 approved of as a manual for the students of the newly-founded Catholic University. And when a new edition appeared at a later date, even “ The Times ” had a good word to say both of the work and its author. “ When we look to Dr. MacHale’s works, such a book as his ‘ Evidences and Doctrines of the Catholic Church ’ is a marvel. It shows great reading, a ready command of materials, some thought, and a style quite

equal to that of many theological writers who have enjoyed much greater advantages.''²⁰

Ballina Cathedral.

In the meantime Dr. MacHale had undertaken the seemingly impossible task of building a cathedral for the diocese of Killala. The churches throughout the diocese, as well as the Cathedral of Ballina, had been forcibly and sacrilegiously taken from those who owned them, and were now in Protestant hands, and in many parishes there were only thatched hovels for churches. It seemed hopeless to expect that a people harassed by tithes and rack-rents could furnish means to build a cathedral. But Dr. MacHale was hopeful. He went round from parish to parish, appealing in person for funds. The people he found were poor, but they were generous; the merchants in the towns, and especially in Ballina, gave largely; and subscriptions also came from outside. Dr. MacHale had soon in hands a sum of £1,800, and felt he might begin. Plans were then obtained from Mr. Madden, the architect of the new Tuam Cathedral; and in 1827 the first stone of the Ballina Cathedral was laid by Dr. Kelly, Archbishop of Tuam. In 1831 the building was roofed, and Mass was said, but its walls were still naked and bare; "and the means of our people, after the contributions already made by them, and because of the tithes which they are rigorously compelled to pay each year to the Protestant parsons, are so exhausted that we are unable either to adorn the structure or even to complete it."'²¹ Within three years further large subscriptions had come in, and such progress had been made that the interior was finished, and the tower had attained a height of 100 feet.²²

Dr. MacHale's Visit to Rome.

In the summer of 1831 Dr. MacHale was feeling so unwell that a change of air was prescribed, and he resolved to make a

²⁰ O'Reilly, I, pp. 123-131.

²¹ Dr. MacHale's Letter to Rome in 1832, quoted by O'Reilly.

²² O'Reilly, I, p. 116.

pilgrimage to Rome. It would be good for his health, and it would enable him to lay before the Pope the condition of Killybegs, which Dr. Waldron, the Bishop, was unable to do owing to infirmity and age. Leaving Ballina in August, Dr. MacHale crossed to London, and thence through Paris, Geneva and Milan, until he reached Rome in the first week of November. After a stay in Rome he visited Naples and the southern shores of Italy, and then returning to Rome, he travelled by way of Venice, Trent and Munich, and reached Ballina in the end of 1832.

What he saw and did he told in a series of interesting letters, written during the various stages of his journey. He travelled by diligence or stage coach, noting the scenes through which he passed with an observant eye, the eye of a scholar and a student. In London he was present at the Coronation of William IV., but was little impressed, and least of all by the religious part of the ceremony. In France he could see no scenery to compare with that of his native Mayo. Nor would it be easy, indeed, to match the changing beauty of lake and wood and purple heather that lies so close to the feet of Nephin. At Auvergne he thought of St. Patrick; in Switzerland, of St. Gall; he remembered that St. Donatus was once Bishop of Fiesole, and at Bobbio he saw the home and the resting-place of St. Columbanus. As all travellers are, he was impressed by the sight of the Simplon Road, and of the great Cathedral of Milan. At Naples he saw the liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius, and near Naples he looked into the fiery furnace of Vesuvius. Always thinking of his own country, when he saw the beauty of the Bay of Naples he was reminded of the striking beauty of the Bay of Dublin. With Venice he was specially charmed—that curious blending of the east and west, of the water and the land—Venice, the bride of the sea.

But it was Rome above all which excited his admiration. The enthusiasm of the fervent Catholic and of the classical scholar were equally stirred, and much of his leisure time was spent in visiting famous churches and classical scenes. He

was present at the Pope's Mass on Christmas morning, and he saw the ceremonies of Holy Week and Easter in St. Peter's. Nor did he forget to visit, as a good Irishman should, Luke Wadding's College of St. Isidore, and the tombs of O'Neill and O'Donnell in the Church of St. Pietro in Montorio, on the Janiculum Hill. At the Irish College he was welcomed by the Rector, Father Boylan, an old colleague at Maynooth, and by the Vice-Rector, Dr. Cullen. And Dr. Wiseman, the Rector of the English College, was also his friend.

Pope Gregory XVI. he saw on several occasions, and his reception was most kind. He requested Dr. MacHale to preach a course of sermons to the English-speaking colony at Rome. The Bishop did so in the Church of the Jesu on the Corso, and with such success that the sermons were almost immediately translated into Italian. The farewell interview with the Pope was on the 15th of August, and on that occasion the Pope presented Dr. MacHale with a magnificent gold chalice of exquisite workmanship, which, in 1868, Dr. MacHale presented to the Cathedral of Tuam.²³ On this occasion, "in my own name, as well as in that of many of the bishops of Ireland." Dr. MacHale drew the attention of the Pope to the old designs of the British Government to pension the Irish hierarchy, and he represented the disastrous effects that would surely follow. "His Holiness left me quite at ease on the subject, assuring me that he sympathised in our disinterested views . . . that he would never give his sanction to that or any other diplomatic measure which would be in opposition to the sentiments of the hierarchy of Ireland."

Distress in Killala.

In these years there was terrible distress in Killala. Early in 1831 Dr. MacHale had called public attention to the matter in a letter to the Prime Minister, Lord Grey. Already there had been deaths from famine. The potato crop had partially

²³ It bears the following inscription:—"A Gregorio Papa XVI Anno 1832 Joanni MacHale Episcopo-Coadjutori Alladensi donatum, ipse Anno 1868, Ecclesiae Suae Metropolitanse Tuamensi, cleri et populi suffragia, exorans, redonavit."

failed, the oats was pounced upon for county cess and vestry cess and tithes, and if the landlord protected the tenant against these exactions it was only because he wanted all for himself. The rent must be paid, though the heavens might fall; and in not a few cases the tenant's cattle and corn, and even his potatoes, had been seized for rent. The public roads were covered "with thousands working from morning till night for the wretched pittance of sixpence or sevenpence worth of meal for an entire family." In 1832 the cholera appeared, and struck down many. Relief came from Dublin and from the charitably disposed in England, and for this Dr. MacHale was most grateful; but he pointed out to the Premier that private benevolence was unable to cope with such widespread misery, and he urged that legislation should be passed to relieve the people from the intolerable burden of arrears of impossible rents.²⁴ But the Whig Premier was obdurate, and the Whig remedy was a new and savage Coercion Act. The people might die of hunger and cholera; but they must not resist the law, and if they did, they would get fetters rather than food, coercion rather than reform.

Dr. MacHale appointed Archbishop.

In April, 1834, Dr. Kelly, Archbishop of Tuam, died, and on the 20th of May, Dr. Waldron, of Killala, died, and thus Dr. MacHale became Bishop of Killala. Archdeacon Nolan, P.P., V.G., of Balla, was appointed Vicar-Capitular of Tuam, and on the 4th of June he called the Canons and Parish Priests of Tuam together to select three names to be submitted to Rome for the vacant Archdiocese. The three selected in the order following were: Dean Burke, P.P., of Westport; Dr. MacHale, and Archdeacon Nolan. What votes the last-named received we do not know, but Dean Burke received only one vote more than Dr. MacHale.

The Archdeacon was a man of superior ability and fine character, and had he been in middle age would have been fully qualified to wear even the mitre of Tuam. But he was

²⁴ MacHale's "Letters," pp. 487-8.

then eighty-five years of age, and had he been first on the list, instead of being last, his appointment on the score of age could not have been made. Dean Burke was much younger—a cultured, refined, scholarly man, with attractive manners, and popular with Protestant as well as with Catholic.²⁵ But he was clearly outclassed by Dr. MacHale, a man with a national reputation, so prominent among the bishops that he could scarcely be said to have an equal except the famous Dr. Doyle, of Kildare. Deeming his claims superior to all others, the Bishops of the Province unanimously recommended his appointment, and, no doubt, took it for granted that he would soon be the new Archbishop of Tuam.

But there was trouble at Rome. The English knew him and disliked him, and English influence at Rome was thrown into the scale against him. During his visit to Rome, in 1832, he had to complain of the discourtesy of an English ecclesiastic who held a position in the Vatican Library.²⁶ The fact was that the fearless Irish bishop provoked the wrath of the English, both at home and abroad. He was too Irish, too bold, too uncompromising for their tastes. His attacks on the English Bible Societies and on the Established Church irritated the Protestants, and, above all, the bigots, of whom England has always a good supply. Dr. MacHale was also unpopular among the higher ranks of the English Catholics. They were usually conservative, and usually unfriendly to Ireland, and they disliked his attacks on Irish landlordism, his denunciations of coercion, and his repeated demands for reform.

Lord Melbourne, who was then Prime Minister, was so anxious about the appointment to Tuam, that he sent a Government agent to the Vatican, asking the Pope not to appoint MacHale—anybody but him.²⁷ It appears this was the usual practice, and though British Ministers were ready enough to attack the Catholic Church, they were equally

²⁵ Feeny MSS.

²⁶ MacHale's "Letters," p. 401.

²⁷ "The Greville Memoirs," V, p. 221.

ready, on the Pope's own testimony, to seek favours from the Pope, and especially in the appointments to Irish Sees. Dr. Wiseman told Dr. MacHale that some Protestant gentleman had intrigued against him, and with such damaging effect that the Prefect of the Propaganda had written privately to Dr. Murray of Dublin, expressing uneasiness that Dr. MacHale "was fond of political agitation, and of schemes which tended to imperil the civil power." Dr. Murray was able to reassure him, and, as he says himself, "I united my humble testimony to the unanimous suffrages of the Provincial Prelates." The Pope, however, had taken the matter into his own hands. He knew Dr. MacHale personally, and liked him; he would have no interference from the British Government, and was displeased with the Prefect of the Propaganda for having written to Dr. Murray.²⁸

On the 8th of August the appointment was made and the Bulls issued, and on the 31st of the same month, Gregory XVI. himself sent the following letter of notification to the new Archbishop:—

"Venerabilis Frater, Salutem et Apostolicam Benedictionem. Praeclara doctrinae tuae fama tumque religionis Catholicae propugnandae studium impulerunt Nos ut Te ord Archiepiscopalem Tuamensem Sedem, suadentibus etiam Provinciae episcopis totoque clero, perlibenter promoveremus. Porro non dubitamus quin Tu in omni regiminis Tui ratione singularem prudentiam, moderationem animi summam que pacis ac salutaris quietis curam prae Te feras. Decet enim episcopum quae Dei sunt quaerere, et populi sui tranquillitati et saluti invigilare. Qua Nos merito fiducia freti, Apostolicam Tibe impertimur benedictionem.

"Datum Romae apud Sanctam Mariam Majorem, die 31 August, 1834. Pontificatus Nostri anno quarto. Gregorius, P.P. XVI.

"Venerabile Fratre Joanni MacHale Electo Archiepiscopo Tuamensi."

1037.

²⁸ O'Reilly's "MacHale," I, pp. 244-8; Feeny MSS.

