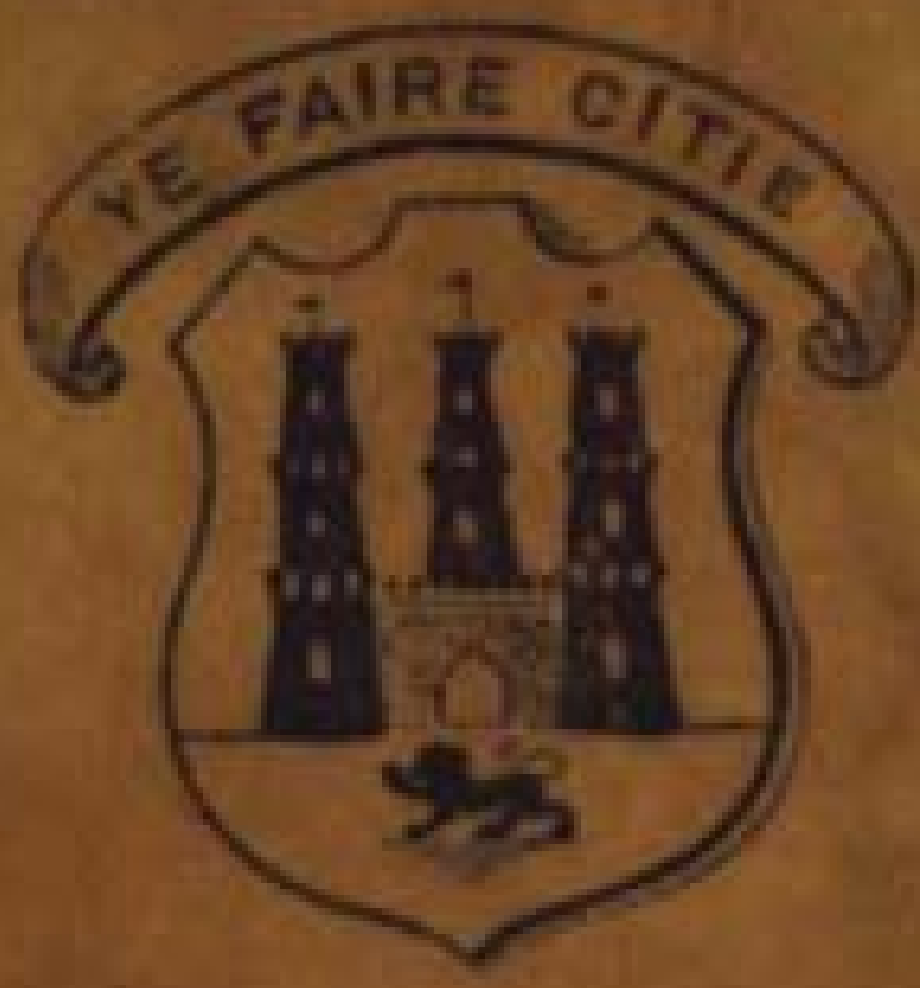
NOOKS AND CORNERS OF COUNTY KILKENNY

BY

PARIS ANDERSON



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PREFACE

Were our influence sufficient amongst our townspeople and the inhabitants of our county, we should be glad to exert it in getting up amongst our young men some purely literary and scientific institution, from which might, perhaps, result the publication of a periodical sheet in Kilkenny devoted to literature alone. Such a sheet is now, we understand, about to be started in the comparatively unimportant town of Carrick-on-Suir, by the young men of that locality. Why should Kilkenny be behind-hand in evidencing the march of intellect and spread of enlightenment? However, on this subject we shall, before long, have to speak more largely, but in the interim we intend publishing from time to time, when our columns are not otherwise occupied, a few jottings which we have made during visits to several of the sacred and interesting localities in this county; and we trust that our humble efforts may awaken a taste in these matters. which are of national importance as relating to the time-honoured monuments and notable memorials of our country. If we succeed in creating and fostering an interest amongst the public in these visits, and rouse a spirit of greater enquiry with respect to our local scenery, antiquities, and traditionary lore, we shall have gained a great part of our design—a design which we feel to be commendable. We now commence a series of papers illustrating

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THE ANCIENT TOWN OF JERPOINT

Towns and cities extinct and absolutely buried in oblivion, forgotten almost by tradition not traceable on any map or chart, are certainly subjects on which human beings may reflect with some advantage and profit to themselves. That haunts of busy men, where had been buying and selling, elections of Provost and Burgesses, heart-burnings and jealousies, petty ambitions, love-makings, speech-makings, and all the common goings on of a jog-trot and commonplace world—the busy heart corrodings of daily existence—where were streets and houses, strong and substantial, too, and shops and town halls, and market-places—that all should have been swept away and absolutely forgotten, is proof indubitable of the perishability of man and all his works. The utilitarian will not deny that such reflections are profitable, and the antiquary who in his researches amidst mouldy parchments, stumbles on some grant or charter that proves the former existence of such places, gives his fellow-men useful and wholesome teaching. But beyond and above these common-place though useful "moralities," there is a sanctity in the past—such is the influence of historical association—the potent spell of imagination in a land where every spot of ground, each vale and hill and river has its records and its history teeming with interest, and giving to the face of nature, with us, a charm which the magnificent prairies, the gigantic mountains, the mighty forests, of the new world can never possess—every step we take is classic ground.

Will the reader pass with us through the wooded glades of Mount Juliet, and wending by the verdant banks of the Nore, stand upon the site of the ancient town of Jerpoint. Around him spreads a quiet pastoral scene, rendered more interesting by the presence of an ivy-covered ruinous church, bearing marks of high antiquity surrounded by a lonely graveyard, crowded with rude memorials of the poor tenants of the peace-

ful homes beneath and where the antiquary may trace out many fragments of older monuments, and of baptismal font and ancient cross strewed amidst the long rank grass. Near the rude entrance of the burial place is a clear bright spring, over whose limpid waters cluster the graceful fern, the creeping lichens and the perfumed woodbine. Some peasant girls are filling their pails with the wholesome water; their dress not picturesque, nor are their faces unpleasing, though deeply embrowned

"With the bronzed livery of the burning sun."

But their clear ringing laughter, their piquant, though homely joke, tell that their hearts are as yet untouched by care or sorrow. Looking down from the well over a few clustering hedge-rows, spreads before us a luxuriant meadow, the grass of unusual richness, studded, too, with magnificent ash trees, one in particular of singularly immense dimensions a perfect giant of the forest. Here and there are large heaps of huge stones, evidently but recently piled up; in one spot rears itself a fragment of the ancient wall of a dwelling-house, and hard-by is a rapid stream hurrying its impetuous waters to the Nore, and on its banks the ruins of an antiquated mill. This is all that remains of Jerpoint, once a flourishing and important "mercant" town. The large ash tree stands in the ancient market place, the heaps of stones and broken walls give some faint traces of the direction of the streets—a short time ago the foundations could have been easily discovered and followed through the windings of many lanes, streets and alleys, but they are now almost eradicated, and all trace of them will be soon entirely obliterated, and even tradition will cease to point to the past, and blank oblivion will pass over all.

"So sleeps the pride of former days,
So Glory's thrill is o'er."

There is a loneliness of a peculiar character about the spot—a pensive melancholy seems to breathe amidst the old forest trees—but there is no desolateness; solemn beauty, rich and abundant loveliness is upon all around, but chastened by the deep and heart-stirring thoughts of the past which the few shattered walls and rude stone cairns call forth. Here but yesterday, in the quick course of time, rushed on the busy tide of human life—now, above the deserted spot the rooks have built themselves a colony—a city poised above amongst the "multitudinous leafed" branches of the ancient trees, and whilst all below is silent, they imitate and caricature the former busy tenants of the broken walls beneath—like them, building and pulling down, and like them, too, ever ready to take advantage of the weak, to plunder the unwary, and to play all sorts of antic tricks upon each other. Oh, potent lesson to proud ambition, to fawning flattery, to cloaked hypocrisy, to petty pride, to griping usuriousness—to passions all that sway the human breast. Ponder with us awhile amidst those forest wilds, where once was busy life, commerce, hard bargains, thrift, selfishness—pause here thou worldly man, who feels not for poor humanity, when famine and distress threatens; pause here you ambitious man who would compass "earth and hell" for fleeting honours, worthless and empty. Here gold was hoarded; here corporate honours were sought for; here, too, no doubt, were mighty "mums" sitting on "pump committees", "street committees", and "fair committees"; here were hard battles fought for the Provostship—for so was the chief magistrate titled—here were old and new Corporations, as years swept past, battling each other for place and power—all is now over, leaving behind no memory so substantial as the shadowy outline of a half-forgotten dream—

"Oh! what is man? even in his brightest day
An insect whom the summer sun gives birth
To bask and perish in the solar ray.
Then sink again into his kindred earth."

In the year 1375 the King granted a charter (Rot. Pat. 49 Ed. III. M. 52) to the "Provost and Burgesses of the town of Jerpoint," empowering them that, for the repair of their bridge over the "Noer" near said town, and of the tower and gate on the southern end of said bridge erected to repel the attacks of "Irish enemies and English rebels," they should demand and receive certain customs from all saleable commodities carried over said bridge, for a period of ten years. This is the only existing record of the corporate town of Jerpoint—the tower erected to repel the Irish enemy and English rebels has with the foe passed away—

"All things must have an end;
Churches and cities which have diseases like to men
Must have like death, which we have,"

but an abutment of the ancient bridge still remains, and, as in most cases where history fails, tradition here comes in with its aid, and the local legendary lore will have it that here King William III. crossed the river when on his march to Kilkenny.

Another curious legend, too, which the aged peasant long resident on the spot loves to detail to the curious visitant, has reference to a memorable event not only connected with the notable memories of the obliterated and almost forgotten town of Jerpoint, but even with our national annals. It is a matter of history that when the gallant and impetuous young Geraldine, "Silken Thomas," son of Gerald Earl of Kildare, rashly though chivalrously threw off his allegiance to the tyrant Henry of England, he offered half the kingdom to the Lord James Butler, the noble and valiant son and heir of Peter, eighth Earl of Ormonde and Ossory, as the price of the Butlers' aid in his revolt. That loyal nobleman having reluctantly refused to "sell his honour," as he himself quaintly expressed it, "for a piece of Ireland," "Silken Thomas" led his army into the county of Kilkenny, wasting and destroying the possessions of the Butlers, and mani-

festing a determination to force the rival family by strength of hand into a co-operation in his rash and ill-matured rebellion. History further informs us that the Ormonde family with their relatives advanced to Jerpoint to oppose the Geraldines, whose troops were encamped at Thomastown, and that in a sudden onslaught made by the rebel force upon the Butlers' army, the latter was completely routed, and driven in confusion from their position.* Here again tradition finds a sequel to the tale which our chroniclers have forgotten to record, and the oral history of the spot still preserved amongst the peasantry proceeds to state that when the young Geraldine, flushed with his victory, was passing through the town of Jerpoint in pursuit of the hereditary enemies of his house and kindred, the inhabitants, wishing to conciliate the conqueror, and in the hope of thereby saving their property from being plundered by the victorious army, cheered for "Silken Thomas," as though they felt gladdened and gloried in his triumph. The fiery but ingenuous young Lord, either misconceiving their object and taking their congratulations as meant to affront, or else struck with the vile ingratitude of the men who could thus stoop for base purposes to welcome and propitiate the bitter foes of their ancient chief and liege Lord, ordered the town and property of the burgesses to be immediately given up to pillage and plunder —an order which was readily carried out by his followers.

On the other side of the stream before mentioned rises the once rich and fair Abbey of Jerpoint, founded towards the end of the twelfth century, and under the auspices of which it is probable that the adjoining town first rose to importance and then, with its desolation, decayed, and finally disappeared. The Abbey, itself, from its sacred character, escaped utter obliteration, and its ruins, noble, picturesque and extensive, remain to bear witness to the piety and architectural skill of our ancestors. Bigot zeal and hands ignorant and sacrilegious have, however, done their work upon it. The tooth of Time has

been there, but the tooth of Time, though he works decay, and with his co-adjutors, damp and storm, lightning and rain, often accomplishes dissolution, yet the strong and iron towers and the well-jointed arch and pillar that stand before his power does the grim tyrant most cunningly and delightfully bedeck with hues most marvellously deep and warm, and rich, of minute and enduring lichen, green and enmantling ivy, and thousands of divers-hued flowers, all beseeming the character of hoary ruins, where

"The beautiful forms of an ancient faith
Are lingering round."

Yes, Time, the beautifier, is not so destructive as man the sacriligious, the ignorant, the brutal, who too often looks upon things sacred as the objects of his peculiar hatred, and of his especial destruction—alas! the shattered monuments at Jerpoint are proof of this.

We know of no place in this county so interesting as Jerpoint, a noble Abbey, an ancient town and church, with beautiful scenery around, are no common points of interest—it will soon, by railroad, be brought within a few minutes' drive of our city, and will well repay a visitation.

NOTE.

*The following is the account of this battle (which took place in 1534), given by "Stanihurst," and retaining the singularly quaint style and spelling of the author—"Thomas being accompanied with O'Neil, dyvers Scotts, James De la Hide his principal counsayloure, John De la Hide, Edward Fitzgerald, his uncle, Sir Richard Welshe, person of Loughsewoy, John Burnel of Balgriffin, James Gernon, Walter Walsh, Rob Walsh, Maurice Walsh, with a mayne army, invaded the Earle of Ossorie, and the Lorde Butler his landes brenned (burned) and wasted ye contry of Kilkenny to Thomastown, the poore

inhabitants being constraintd to shune his force rather than to withstand his power. Fitzgerald his approach towards those confines bruted, the Earle of Ossory and his son the Lord Butler with all the gentlemen of the countrey of Kilkeny assembled near Jeripon, to determine what order they might take in withstanding the invasion of the Rebelles. And as they were thus in parley, a gentleman of ye Butlers, accompanied with sixteen horsemen, departed secretly from the talkmote, and made towards Thomas Fitzgirald and hys armey, who was then ready to encamp himselfe at Thomascowne. When the challenger was ascried, and the certayne number known, sixteen of Fitzgerald his horsemen did charge him; and precently followed them seven score horsemen with two or three banners displayed, pursuing them until they came to the hill where all the gentlemen were assembled, who, being so suddenly taken, could not stand to bicker, but some fledde this way, some that way—the Earl was scattered from his company, and the Lord Butler unawares was hurte; whom, when such of the Rebells knew as favoured him, they pursued him but coldly, and lette him escape on horsebacke, taking his way to Dounmore, neere Kilkenny, where hee lay at chirurgery."

The success of Fitzgerald, however, was but very temporary, as the Earl of Ormonde, or Ossory, as was then his title soon assembled a large army, and advancing against him he did not "stand to bicker," as our old chronicler would say, but prudently retreated from the county of Kilkenny, and shortly after ended at Tyburne the disastroug career of this rash but gallant chivalrous young nobleman, whose early promise was such that his historian states "he would perhaps have exceeded all his ancestors if by laying the too great burthen on his weak shoulders they had not broken his back in the beginning."

THE BARROW BELOW GRAIGUE

The district in the County of Kilkenny called "The Roar" forms a kind of peninsula bounded on two sides by the waters of the Nore and Barrow, and separated from the rest of the county at its northern extremity by the hill of Brandon; so that it may be called with truth the most out-of-the-way "nook" in our county. The inhabitants, too, are themselves a peculiar people, and, being so secluded by situation, retain more of the primitive simplicity and genuine hospitality, together with old habits and manners of the Irish, than other districts of our county have now left us. They do not consider "The Roar" as forming any part of *the County of* Kilkenny, and talk of Kilkenny people as a separate race, while the County of Wexford is only designated as "beyond the river".

The sister streams of the Nore and the Barrow are nowhere throughout their wanderings more beautiful than where they bound the district of "The Roar." The Barrow, in particular, from where it passes the ruined shrines and ancient burying ground of St. Mullins, on the County Carlow bank of the river, to its confluence with its sister Nore, is characterised by scenery of a grand and magnificent beauty which more than justifies the talented writer of "Rosabel of Ross" in remarking that "there are few finer river scenes east of the Shannon than where the Barrow, crowned with the oak-wreaths of Bahanna, comes down from Brandon, like a Priestess of the woods, to welcome the novice Nore out of Kilkenny; and yet there is perhaps no locality within our county of which less is known and which is so little visited. To us, notwithstanding that our researches after the picturesque and antique have been since early boyhood incessant and unwearying, this was a "terra

incognita" until this summer, and as we made acquaintance with it under pleasant circumstances, and had not our fancies excited by any large anticipations, too vividly imaginative to be ever realised, it burst upon us as freshly beautiful as the Spring day by whose glad sunlight we viewed it.

The month was early May, and the sky was a bright as heart could wish as we started from Rosbercon. We soon left behind "the hospitable town" of Ross, its noble estuary, and the fine wooden bridge which connects it with Kilkenny, and found ourselves driving through the district of "The Roar" in the very doubtful company of a Pay-clerk, but the danger of whose propinquity was soon relieved or altogether forgotten in consequence of the presence of his "fidus Achates" in the shape of a most harmoniously inclined and poetical car-driver, who treated us to scraps of legends as we went along, interspersed with the inspirations of his own muse, addressed to Brandon Hill and other prominent objects in the landscape. Our friend the driver was undoubtedly, like Lord Byron's postilion, the antiquary of the locality, and we will be bound that his company was to a Pay-clerk worth the escort of scores of the constabulary in dispelling all unpleasant reflections as to the danger of ambuscades of banditti.

The scenery of "The Roar" between the two rivers presents but little attraction; it is a flat, monotonous district. We passed, however, the romantic and picturesque little bridge of Clodagh over a rocky tributary stream, and caught a passing glimpse of Cluan Castle and the Nore—a spot whose picturesque beauty is well known to every visitant of the beautiful demesne of Woodstock, and which shall ere long form an interesting corner amongst our "Nooks" provided that our readers do not grow tired of our gossip. Clodagh Bridge is an ancient one, and near it on the stream is a small but most romantic cataract, at the foot of

which there are some deep pools, called by the people the "Kerry-holes," and popularly said to be unfathomable. Here our driver was, as usual, loquacious on the locality. "That's the Bridge of Clodagh," said he, "and below is Allen's mill. A quare thing enough happened here, gentlemen. In the strame below is the Kerry-holes—no one ever found the bottom of them yet. A man went to sound it once, and he brought a powerful long rope and four half-hundreds for the purpose from Clodagh mills. The weights which he tied to the end of the rope to prevent it from being washed down with the force of the waterfall had Allen's brand on them. Well, when all the rope was out, an' he had got no bottom, he was tryin' to raise the weights again, but, faith, crack went the rope, and away went the half-hundreds sure enough. In a short time after this very boy was transported for some good he done, an' in course of time was landed at Sidney; an', faith, bein' divartin' himself one fine morning wid a walk on the strand there, convenient to the say, the first thing he seen that he knew was them very four weights on Sidney strand—he couldn't be mistaken, of coorse, as he knew the brand too well; an', faith, that plainly proves what I often heard the schoolmaster say, that Sidney is our antidote (antipodes), the Lord save us! which manes, you see, that if there was a hole through the world, beginnin' in Ireland an' ending at the other side, it's out at Sidney it would come, which plainly proves to the dullest understandin' that the Kerry-holes has no bottom, but goes right through an' through the world—so id's no lie, anyway, to say the're tundherin' deep." Our readers are welcome to form what opinion they please of our driver's story and logic.

At length we shaped our course towards the Barrow, and soon reached a woody locality called "America," from its being so thickly covered with "bush." This was a wild place reclaimed by the late Mr. Foote,

who gave it the name which it bears, and the drive of some miles through its thick cover was unquestionably not the most pleasant road for a Pay-clerk to travel. However, the duties of our official friend having here safely terminated for the day, we left the car and proceeded on foot through a most intricate but beautiful woodland, absolutely paved with the delicate blossoms of the bluebell, and rich in all the wild flowers that love the thick undergrowth of the forest. Here and there we got a glimpse of the Barrow and St. Mullins beneath us, but no distant view from these points could prepare us for the beautiful scenery in store for us. Arrived at the river's edge by many mazy windings through the wood, we were ferried across "the goodly Barrow," and found ourselves soon amidst the ruins of St. Mullins in the County of Carlow, the burying ground for many ages of the ancient and royal sept of the Kavanaghs—a spot of the greatest possible interest, situated on a rising ground over the river. The height upon which this hoary cemetery is situated occupies the mouth of a little valley formed by a rocky mountain torrent which here joins the Barrow. This stream runs brawling along the base of the hill, and above the cemetery is crossed by an ancient and picturesque bridge, which with a rude mill and a background of dark hills and foreground formed by immense rocky boulder stones and groups of ash trees makes a very beautiful picture. It would be impossible to describe our feelings of delight and reverential awe as we stood first in the burying ground of the Kavanaghs—the place of interment of those ancient Kings of Leinster, whose history had for us ever the most romantic associations, and the last resting-place of many a chief of that race from the time that Leinster ceased to be a kingdom to our own days. Besides, the place had in itself a character of peculiarly wild solemnity—the ruins scattered over the extensive graveyard—the many

separate chapels, some of them evidently of great antiquity—the open and now disused vaults—the multitudinous graves with their primitive memorials of rude wooden cross, ruder monumental stone, and here and there a more recent one decorated with a simple garland of cut paper, or the more natural tribute of wild flowers, affection's most innocent and touching offering—the fragments of bygone days scattered on all sides, the baptismal font broken and half buried—the richly ornamental stone cross decorated with rude carvings of intertwined serpents and grotesque human figures, but shattered and lying around in fragments—all told of desolation and decay. The deep bends of the dark river stretching off between its banks of rocky wood to right and left—the dark and sombre little valley, with its bridge and mill, brawling stream, and gracefully grouped ash trees and boulder stones—the stately, ancient and mysterious Moat or Barrow of pagan times adjoining the Christian cemetery, the majestic form of Brandon rising over all the other hills, the monarch of this wild and lonely picture—all exercised over our minds a spell which it took some minutes of silent contemplation to shake off sufficiently to enter upon an inspection of the minute details of the scene.

St. Moling, from whom the place derives its name, and who was Bishop of Ferns, A.D. 632, is said by Colgan to have been born in Hy Kinsella; however, local traditional lore ascribes his birth to Listerling, in our own county. In that parish he erected his first church, called to this day Mullin-a-Kill, and where his anniversary is still kept by a patron. Here he carved out for himself a chamber in the face of the rock, still shewn, where he resided whilst erecting his monastery, and there intended to dwell for life till driven away in disgust by the pilfering propensities of the people, who did not even scruple to lay their sacrilegious hands upon

the Saint's own property. He next betook himself to the sweet little valley of St. Collumkill, near Thomastown, but could not reconcile himself long to sojourn there in consequence of the impertinent curiosity of the inhabitants of the locality who would not permit him to have that seclusion for which he longed. At length he found the spot which suited his every purpose on the lonely hillside by the goodly Barrow's tide, where the memorials of his fame and sanctity still remain. Here he died on the 17th June, 697, and was interred within the sacred precincts of his Abbey. Deeply secluded, however, as was his retreat, it did not escape the troubles of the civil wars and turmoils which so long distracted our unfortunate land, and thus in 951 was Tegh-Moling, as was his ancient appellation, plundered in an inroad made by the hostile Irish Chieftain, and in 1138 it was burned and destroyed by the ruthless Danes. Subsequently to the English conquest the canons of St. Augustine obtained a settlement here, and the ruins of their church and cloisters still exist amidst the more ancient remains of the cell and chapels of St. Moling. At what time this place became the cemetery of the Kings of Leinster is uncertain, but from the presence here of the tall Moat or Barrow, which is generally believed to be a remains of Pagan sepulchre, it may be presumed that this romantic spot was chosen as a fitting resting-place for the bones of the MacMurroghs even before the light of Christianity was shed upon it. Amongst others of the ancient members of the family here interred two are particularly famous, but for far different deeds renowned—Dermidh McMurrogh, the renegade prince and betrayer of his native land to a foreign power, and the valiant chieftain Art, according to the Saxon Chronicler, a "canker in the heart of Leinster," who so long and stoutly and successfully battled against the English interests in Ireland in the fourteenth century. The exact locality of their

rest, however, is unknown and forgotten even to tradition—

"Unmarked by mournful yew,
Unchronicled in stone."

But a simple tablet points out where lies, in a little chapel remote from the rest, the dust of a more modern but no less chivalrous descendant of their great house, Brian Na Stroakee," or, of the Scar, a sobriquet which he earned from a wound in the face received at the field of Boyne of Aughrim, in both of which battles he signally distinguished himself fighting in the cause of the last unfortunate monarch of the Stewart race. The monuments of the Kavanaghs of Borris are also to be found in an extremely ancient chapel, beneath which is their family vault, and, in fact, the entire burying ground and the ruins are filled with the grave-stones and other memorials of the McMorroghs, Kavanaghs, and Kinchelas, all originally the same stock and lineage.

Besides the ruins of the Augustinians' church and cloisters there are seven little chapels, more or less dilapidated, scattered over the burying ground—some of them of the greatest antiquity, as their flat-headed doorways and curious diamond-shaped windows of rudest construction testify. Beneath some of them are open vaults, now tenantless, but which, we were told, at a comparatively recent period, were full of the oaken coffins of the Kavanagh family. These, it is said, the neighbouring country people have, with strange and uncommon want of reverence for the dead, seldom found in this country, carried away piecemeal and formed into various articles of household furniture. as many a stout oak chest and table could testify, according to our informant, in the farm-houses adjacent— what a lesson to pride and vanity! What a commentary upon the deep reasoning of Hamlet over the

grave of Ophelia, who, after all, did not reason to curiously when he said—

" May we not trace the dust of Alexander
'Till we find it stopping a bung-hole? "

Little thought the proud Kavanaghs as they followed the oak-enclosed corpses of their fathers to the grave that the very ecasements of the once brave, renowned and noble race would be dragged away by rude and impious hands to form the mean receptacle for the household wealth, or the board for the humble repast of the neighbouring rustic—or, mayhap, to form the door to his miserable hovel or his pig-sty—yet so it is—

" Imperial Cæsar, dead and turned to clay,
May stop a hole to keep the wind away."

In another roofless and almost entirely prostrated chapel we perceived by the side of the grave of Brian na Stroakee a rude stone altar, on which lay two simply constructed candlesticks formed of oak blocks with iron sockets therein inserted; here, we were told, at the time of the pilgrimage on the festival or patron day, 17th of June, Mass is still celebrated, and the keene is frequently raised over the tomb of the warrior Brian. The stations or pilgrimages which take place here on such occasions commence at a spot of great beauty—an ancient well, we are sure as ancient as there is amongst the Holy Wells of Ireland. It is situated near the stream's side, a little below the bridge, and its enclosure built of ponderous and almost undressed stones of granite. The entrance doorway is square and the interior is paved with large rocky flags, most likely the original flooring of the place. The water pours into the basin beneath through two square orifices. This rude and sacred structure is richly covered with ivy and lichens, and overhanging it is a perfect coronal of most beautiful ash trees. Here, the simple pilgrims commence their toilsome journey, which they end in one of

the chapels, the smallest and apparently the most ancient, near the cross, and which is said to have been the cell of the Saint himself.

We believe there is no earthly pleasure without alloy, and we confess that the effect of the wild solemnity of the scene and the hallowed associations called up by the peculiar character of the spot we trod were seriously invaded and broken in upon by the presence of one foul eye-sore which reared itself amongst the glorious relics of ancient architecture and sculpture, and forming with these beauteous remains of early art a most unsightly contrast, gave the whole scene an air of absurd and garish incongruity. The solemn grandeur of the ruin and mausoleum crowned hill of St. Mullins is indeed frightfully marred by an abomination of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, in the shape of one of their hideous and stereotyped disfigurations embodied in a modern church of the true pepper-caster proportions and bricklayers' order of architecture, which rises amidst the noble though shattered remnants monster. To erect this paltry petty-larceny structure half the ancient remains must have been ruthlessly plundered in order to forward economy on the part of the griping Commissioners and to perpetuate in more glaring colours their Gothic propensities and vandal-like taste. A committee of Huns and Picts would have shrunk from such enormous desecrations. The considerate gentlemen of this barbarous Commission, too, have a fashion of leaving means of enlarging their "churches" in case the congregation should increase, and in the present instance an arch is constructed in such a position that if the addition is ever carried out, an ugly modern side-aisle or transept will be forced right across the chancel of the ancient church, thus obliterating its existing feature and destroying its beautiful proportions—good Protestants as we boast ourselves, we sincerely hope that under such circumstances

a single convert or other increase of any kind may never be added to the congregation of St. Mullins! On every side as we turned this shocking abomination of taste met our eyes, and we could not obtain a position in which a view of the ruins might be had without showing forth the "beastly barn" as the most prominent object in the landscape —sick at heart with the sight of this ever-pursuing and most hideous phantom, we took our departure from the otherwise glorious scene of St. Mullins with feelings somewhat akin to disgust.

We were again ferried across the Barrow to the Kilkenny side, and thence we took the wild pathway along the rocky heights that overhang the river—a pathway which led us through scenes of beauty such as we had by no means any anticipation of. Every step we took opened some new and lovely prospect. Here before us we saw the river bending between the lofty rocks which rose majestically at either side, clothed to the very summit with ash and oak and ivy, and varied with a thousand beautiful and luxuriant views—now and again at a turn of the winding and precipitous pathway, where one false step or one slight spring would have sent us a hundred feet or more into the stream beneath, we caught a view of the river, deep and dark, seen through the tall crags in the foreground, which bore the likeness

"Of Castles clad in ivy green,"

the ruin crowned hill of St. Mullins showing dark in the slanting sunlight that was bursting through the valley, the rugged and precipitous side of Blackstairs, even through the fleecy mists, rose majestically over the bold rocks and woodlands on the opposite side of the water; whilst Brandon, clothed in a rich livery of dark purple, formed a fitting background to the entire picture. But it were as vain to attempt to describe the infinite variety of this most romantic path-

way as it would be to shadow forth by painting the innumerable and glorious tints of those magnificent rocks which rise so proudly and tower-like over that noble stream.

Where there is a bend in the river and our path leaving the rocky and precipitous woodlands, traversed a grassy inch, the river yet preserving its bold character on the opposite side, we caught sight of Coolkill Castle, and each step as we approached gave us assurance of its beauty and situation. At length, getting into the shadow of umbrageous foliage again, we reached where a rocky stream comes quickly and steeply down a narrow valley to join the Barrow, and here the woodland opening, we got the first perfect view of the Castle. Proudly and grandly seated on a bold but richly wooded rock, and overhanging a noble reach of river, nothing could exceed the beauty of the situation. The Castle, morever, a tall round keep of immense antiquity, had all the genuine hoariness and right nobility which fitted it for an eyrie such as it enjoyed. A few paltry modern imitations of battlemented out-works which had been injudiciously placed by some modern "improver" round the base of the tower on the edge of the rock and two barbarous imitations of square flanking turrets alone spoiled the effect. But as the battlemented wall was ivy grown, we did not so much fall out with it, swearing vengeance only on the flankers and wishing for some "villainous salt-petre" to be digged—

"Out of the bowels of the harmless earth,"

not to slay any "fine tall fellows," but to blow up and eradicate those abominations of modern flanking towers, although their "architect" (save the mark!) no doubt considers them vast and tasteful improvements.

Coolkill was the feudal fortress of the family of De La Rupe or Roach, who early received a grant of "The Roar" after the Saxon conquest of Ireland. They soon, how-

ever, became "Hibernis ipsis Hiberniores," and in Glyn's Annals we have many accounts of the hostings held by the Lord Arnold Power, the Seneschal of the County of Kilkenny, to punish the forays and inroads made upon the king's peaceful lieges by "The Roaches of the Roar and divers others, felons and robbers as well Irish enemies as English rebels," and the Close and Patent Rolls of the kingdom contain sundry allowances made to the Constable of the Castle of Kilkenny, which was then a State Prison, for the safe-keeping and maintenance of many of the Roaches and other turbulent chieftains therein confined. Subsequently this family was totally eradicated from its fastnesses here, and Coolkill became a possession of the house of Mount Garrett. In the first rebellion of the third Viscount, in the latter end of Queen Elizabeth's reign, it was garrisoned and held against the Crown, though in our day it would appear extraordinary how a single small town, undefended by out-works of any kind, could be made tenable against twenty men, to say nothing of a royal army.

Here then ended our first day's ramble by the Barrow. We had been absolutely intoxicated by the beauty of the scenery all the way from St. Mullins, and being, morever, very warm with walking, when we got to Coolkill we indulged, by the advice of Walsh, our driver, in a drink of water "with 'something' in id," as our facetious Jehu termed the mixture, vulgarly designated grog, and it was probably aided by the inspiration of this libation as well as the impressions that were fresh in his thoughts and partially still within his view that the poet of our party (we do not mean the car-driver) composed the following lines, which, if they have no other merit, possess this at least, that they were written on the spot, and we think we describe truthfully, though perhaps with not sufficient grace or power, a scene which shall never be effaced from our memory—

I

I stood upon the river bank—the Barrow's
verdant shore—
I gazed on all the grassy graves that spread
St. Mullins o'er—
The last home of an ancient race, who long
ruled hill and curragh,
But are resting here, forgotten now, the
children of McMurrogh.

2

Oh! Art, he was a famous Prince, and he is
buried there,
And Brian—brave "na Stroakee"—a stout
and valiant pair,
And other chiefs of that old race, who fought
for Leinster's right,
And proved themselves sore "cankers"
'gainst the Norman ruler's might.

3

How full my heart was teeming then with
"thoughts too deep for tears"—
With most mysterious ponderings on all the
buried years
That faded o'er this sacred shrine in
Barrow's deep ravine,
Since first, o'er a McMurrogh's corpse, was
raised the wailing keene.

4

There's many an ancient chapelry in ruins
on the spot,
Where, underneath, in vaults of stone, the
bold McMurroghs rot—
And shattered cross, and broken shrine, and
desecrated altar—
Around are lying Kavanaghs, by falchion
slain—or halter!

5

For cursed Saxon policy as in this sordid
hour,
Brought blighting bane on Celtic chiefs who
spurned that foreign power,

But England's wrath, from Leinster's glens,
I ween, could never stir
The gallant race of Cahir More—descendants
of McMurgh.

6

But, oh! the deep vale lying off, adown that
blissful river—
In memories most sacred shrine, I'll treasure
it for ever!
The rocky heights that tower above, with
hues of thousand dies—
No purer green, or darker brown, spread
forth beneath the skies.

7

The graceful bends which Barrow makes,
'mid beauties spread around,
The woodlands sweeping over it—all bright
enchanted ground!
The cliffs that rise impending, the poet's
heart enriching
With joy, that nature vested them so rife
with bright hued lichen.

8

And decked them, too, with ivy green and
graceful rowan trees,
Waving all wildly in the gale, or trembling
in the breeze,
And yellow furze, for contrast there, by
nature surely sent,
Its rich perfume with May's hawthorn, so
delicate is blent.

9

And there spread out a thousand views o'er
that deep vallied stream,
And mountains darken in the storm, or in
the sunshine gleam,
The Blackstairs looms on one side, high
Brandon backs this scene
Of stream and rock and greenwood wild, and
ruined fane between.

10

And where a brawling mountain stream
comes rushing down the hill,
On a towering cliff proud rising, I first saw
thee, Coolkill!
A castle of most ancient date—Mountgarret's
lordly dwelling,
Where now, alone, the ivy clings, of bygone
glories telling.

11

But e'en before Mountgarret's sway "the
Roaches of the Roar,"
"More Irish than the Irish," 'gainst Norman
rulers swore—
And pushed their forces through the glades
of old Coolrany wood,
Their Gallowglass, their Kerns fierce, their
Hobblers stout and good.

12

Oh! I will ne'er forget the day of exquisite
delight
When first I trod that river bank and all
those pathways bright —
A white day 'midst the gloomy days of weary
earthly life,
And green, as May's own bursting green—
with hopes as richly rife!

A few days after, being still sojourning in Rosbercon, by the kindness of a friend, who placed a good boat, with skilful crew, four oars, and "all appliances and means to boot" at our disposal, we rowed up again through this enchanted valley, and once more trod the sacred ground of St. Mullins. We reviewed with rapture that calm and tranquil scene where "the Nore slides into the embraces of her elder sister with a gush of gentle and subdued emotion," and pulling again into the deep valley of the Barrow, we saw more lovely still from the water the tower- crowned cliff of Coolkill, and all the

beautiful rocky woodlands which had burst upon us, for the first time, so shortly before. That evening as our barque glided softly beneath Coolkill in the calm and luxury of the golden sunset, and whilst the castle and its rock, and the dark ravine, and solemn woods, looked as if a moving panorama of painted scenery—its effect heightened by the strains of the sweet melodies of our native land, from music which our kind friend had considerately provided for us, we felt that our county holds, almost unknown, within her, scenes which foreign lands may exceed only in their extent, but certainly not in beauty of detail or infinite variety of colouring.

The moonlight beamed brightly on the noble estuary of Ross, and threw its silvery rays on the picturesque stretch of bridge and the tall masts of the shipping, and the fair town and the hills behind it, and strains of mingled music of voice and instrument, came from an Italian ship in the harbour, whose crew were worthy children of that land of song—and with feelings of fondest recollection of two most pleasant excursions, we leaped upon the shingly river bank, and once more sought our repose in the pleasant little suburb of Rosbercon.

THE OLD CHURCH OF KILFANE

Treasured amidst the memories of the halcyon days of our boyhood, and they were neither few nor unfrequent, there is one marked as possessing a character of more than ordinary blissfulness. Thinking upon that day, what a heart full of thoughts, whirling and changing and mingling gay and sad, come across our breast! Looking back upon such happy hours, how is our heart startled to think of the future, which surely cannot be like the past—the sunny past—it is like a sweet dream that one lies in bed to think of, even till the morning goes by, bringing it up again and again; for holy and airy are its colours and heaven-like its happiness!

It was a bright day in summer time; a quiet and blissful luxury seemed to enwrap all nature—it was, indeed, "the leafy month of June," a month sacred to green woodlands, the forest shaded bower, and the bright and mossy wells which lurk 'neath the wooded cliffs. We do not remember that of later years we could point to any day when the sky was so bright and cloudless the trees so rich in their "multitudinous" leaves, or when such gorgeous summer insects flitted past; and yet Nature seemed to sleep, and her sleep was lulled by the song of the wild bee and the humming of a thousand creatures that love the bright sun and the warm air of the summer. But days such as it was come still, though the heart more sacred by rough contact with the world may look upon them with a clouded eye, which tells of joys vanished, and teaches us the stern lesson that glory and brightness which shed a halo over our boyhood has departed from us for ever.

It was then a summer's day when a schoolfellow, now in another land, and ourselves, stood upon the hill which overlooks the valley and stream of Kilfane, and comtemplated

with that buoyant rapture which is the privilege of youth a scene of no common loveliness. Below us spread the richly wooded valley, including the splendid demesne of Kilfane, whilst beyond this rich woodland the heath-covered hills of Coppena and the mountain of Brandon in the distance raised their heads in the bright sunshine. In the valley also, and within sight was an object that possessed for us, young enthusiasts and of slender knowledge, a charm every whit as potent as wooded vale or healthy mountain—an ancient ruined church. For beside the love of nature, the reverence of all things made hoary by the magic touch of time was our next ruling passion, and this walk to Kilfane, so early made and so lovingly recollected, was but one of—

"Many a pilgrimage on holiday
We made to them, old church or castle pile
Or tall round-tower, or ancient abbey aisle
Or monumental cross, or sainted well—
Full many a weary mile o'er field and fell,
We journey made in quest of these old
things,"—

and great joy, too, had we when our mission was a successful one.

Pushing down the hill and along the road by the little hamlet, and ascending again towards the ugly modern church of Kilfane—an abomination, of course, of those Gothic confreres, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, but which fortunately occupies the opposite side of the road from that on which the demesne of Kilfane and its ancient church are situated—we entered by a wide gateway, a beech shaded avenue, the trees overhead forming such a sylvan arch as may be presumed to have given the model for the "high embossed roof" which our pious and tasteful ancestors loved to rear with "antique pillars, massy proof" over the sacred aisles of their beautiful Cathedral and Abbey Churches, and this noble avenue led us dir-

ectly into the quiet graveyard which encloses within its boundary the ruined church of Kilfane—

"With gables ivy grown"—

a sacred and blissful solitude—such indeed as the—

"———— quiet eye
Which broods and feeds on its own heart"

would choose as fitting place for such reverie. The little graveyard, crowded as it is with tombstones, presented a most lovely picture, enclosed and circled round with forest trees, and, within its precincts, rich in profusion of the sombre fir, the lush elder, now loaded with its pale yellow blossom, the wud ash displaying its graceful and tender foliage; and the deep shade formed by the veneraòle trees drawn round, throwing the whole scene into most delicate and touchingly subdued light, save where here and there the midday sunbeams penetrated throwing a ray upon the grassy graves and brightening the wild flowers that grow over them. The ruined church, too, decked with the brightest ivy, which enwreathed the tower and insinuated itself round the window arches was an early English structure that had been not very long since used as a place of worship the consequence of which recent occupation was, that its general features had been somewhat disfigured in an attempt to suit it to absurd ideas of modern taste and comfort; but nature was rapidly taking the now abandoned structure into her hands, and decking the ruin with many hued lichen and green ivy and a thousand creeping plants, and making all lovely about it and in keeping with the place. Inside the walls of the church there grew young ash and alder trees, and the eastern window was filled up with a large specimen of the latter shrub; whilst the grassy walltops could boast both ash and larch saplings growing wild. The early English Sedilia and Piscina, and singular stone

reading desk, the curious tower with its quaint belfry and ivy-clad battlements, we. each in turn, gazed upon with deep interest. But the pleasure conveyed by our visits to such places, much as we admired the mouldering walls of ancient fanes when so beautifully bedecked by nature, was always on such occasions much enhanced—

"———If on some ancient tomb we lit,
Whereby we studiously would kneel or sit,
Straining our boyish lore of classic tongue
On the inscription, rudely cut and long,
Beyond our antiquarian powers to test—
Or the quaint blazonry of shield or crest"—

and here in this old church of Kilfane; were for in one corner of the ruined church, half covered with rubbish and stones, which seemed to have been rudely heaped upon it we singularly successful in our researches, for the purpose perhaps of concealment or of its preservation from injury, lay the recumbent effigy of a warrior, represented as when in life—

"All sheathed in steel
With belted sword and spur on heel,"

cross-legged also, and bearing a triangular shield upon his left side. We had even then sufficient antiquarian knowledge to be able to understand that the crossed legs were presumed to betoken that a Knight whose effigy lay before us was a Crusader, or at least at the period of his death, under a vow to engage in the Holy Wars. Our heraldic skill was sufficient to tell us that on the shield were sculptured the arms of the Cantwell family; and the entire suit of chain armour and surcoat in which the figure represented as well, even, as the absence of an inscription on the monument, sufficiently indicated its very great antiquity. We had here much to pause and wonder at. The comparatively rude and generally ungainly effigies in our

own Cathedral, were as yet, the only works of this description we had ever seen. Here to meet our astonished gaze in this rude and crumpling old country church was a statue sculptured in a manner as different and in a style as superior to those, as the paintings of a Raphael or a Rubens to the daublings of a Tinto. The crossed legs, the flattened helmet, the complete suit of mail and surcoat, we had read of to be sure, as belonging to the early days of chivalry, but here we for the first time saw them sculptured upon the tomb of a veritable knight of the period.

Whilst gazing upon this monument with feelings of the most delighted wonderment, it struck us that something of traditionary lore might still exist in the neighbourhood relative to so remarkable a relic. We had already in the course of our summer saunterings lighted upon one or two legends which we treasured in our hearts as the very pearls of romance, as we had ourselves found them and gathered them into the repertory of our imaginations, as we were never slow in searching for new stores to add to our slender treasury. Accordingly, when we had exhaused all our first feelings of delight and wonder at the, to us, strange and interesting monument, we departed rejoicing along the beautiful valley, whose meadowy bottom is intersected by the calm flowing little rivulet of Kilfane, its banks rich with fine forest trees and decked with some rarely beautiful hawthorns and laurels of prodigious growth, trusting to chance to bring us some legend-loving wight. Passing out at the avenue gate we were again in the little hamlet of Kilfane.

Since that day we have wandered through many a paradisaical English village, boasting of real Elizabethan cottages and oak-beamed dwellings, all of undoubted antiquity—we have seen the clustering of roses and woodbine round portals over which centuries had passed but to beautify—we have seen the peasant's land as tasteful, though more humbly so, as the lord of broad lands near him, which

many a cheerfully blossomed cottage garden with fruit and flowers, and bees and birds, has testified—we have entered many an ivy-porched village "public" whose clean door benches and cool portals have invited the way-farer to stop and rest, wanting no grotesque sign and simple legend to help their mute solicitations-but we never viewed all these means and appliances of comfort and pleasure with half the delight with which we surveyed the humble cabins of Kilfane hamlet, because that the roses grew on their walls and some simple shrubs and flowers decked their gardens—how unwonted in poor Ireland! but betokening that here, at least, taste and comfort were fostered and growing beneath the hand of a beneficent and resident proprietor. And never in happy England did we enter the village ale-house more thirstily, wearily, or happily, than on that day we entered the plain, staring, whitewashed hostelry of Kilfane, which boasted to its front elevation neither ivy nor rose-bush, woodbine or porch, bench or garden seat, but only a bare piece of ground reclaimed from the road, a haggard and pig-stye flanking it, a garron tied to the hook near the door and very drunken and obstreperous voices sounding from within.

On entering this simple caravanserai we found a group of peasants sitting in the kitchen over a "drop", one of whom, a gossipy old man, arrived indeed to a patriarchal age, regaled us with several Irish songs most energetically chaunted in the vernacular, and afterwards, on our joining in chat with him told us that "the image" we had seen in the church was "one Cantwell," a powerful Baron of the olden time, whose family had for centuries resided is the now obliterated Castle of Kilfane; and, singularly enough, the legend ran that this particular chieftain had gone to "furrin parts"—authenticating by tradition the theory of the cross-legged figures having represented crusaders—and that he brought home with him a lady

from the far-off country, "beautiful exceedingly," who was not ever married, but lived with him as a Leman; that after a time the foreign dame grew jealous of the knight, and, as the legend went, in some paroxysm caused by "the green-eyed monster," she murdered her paramour by stabbing him with a "golden bodkin" round which she was wont to twine her long dark tresses. This was the simple tradition, but it has often struck us since that the wild tale was authenticated most strikingly as belonging to the period which might be ascribed to the sculptured figure we had beheld in the old church both as regarded effigy, being cross-legged, and the fact that it was the fashion for ladies of that era to use bodkins of either gold or silver in their headgear, and round which their hair was gathered.

The Cantwell family were of Norman extraction, and their founder in Ireland was Hugh de Cantaville, or de Gundeville, one of the followers of Strongbow in his expedition against this country. The descendants of this adventurer were settled in many parts of the South of Ireland, but more particularly in Tipperary, where the family possessed a large property. However, the County of Kilkenny branch of the Cantwells would seem to have been founded by the "Lord Thomas de Kentewalle," * who appears as a subscribing witness to a grant made to his town of Gowran by Theobald Walter, appointed chief Butler of Ireland by Henry II. about the year 1177. The tomb in Kilfane Church probably was the monument of that Thomas, as the armour, posture of the figure, and other characteristic marks of the sculpture, clearly belong to the period in which he lived. The tradition of the county represents the monument to be the work of a foreign artist, which is by no means unlikely, but, from the material used, it must have been executed on the spot. The effigy is well sculptured in the fine grained limestone marble of Kilkenny. The body of the

figure is clad in a long sleeved hauberk of mail, the legs covered by chausses or hose, and the head and throat by a chaperon of the same material. The shield lies on the left side, supported by a belt passing over the left shoulder, and the family arms carved upon it are on a field "gules," a canton "ermine," and four annulets "or"; a surcoat is worn by the knight, over the hauberk and confined at the waist by the sword belt, and on the heel is a spur with an immense rowel. The contour of the whole figure is strikingly noble and elegant.

It is singular that a monument of such paramount interest should be so little known even to those possessed of antiquarian taste in our county. We believe that its discovery was effected by the removal of the flooring of the church, when its services were resigned for the use of the modern erection on the other side of the road, and to its long abode under ground its admirable preservation must be attributed. Yet is is, nevertheless, strange that so little is known of a monument of so much interest, and, stranger still, that nothing has been effected for its preservation. The friend who accompanied us upon the occasion of our first visit has since placed at our disposal a sonnet, suggested by the discovery of that day, and which we think will be found of interest as describing forcibly the state of neglect to which this rare memento of ancient piety has been abandoned:—

SONNET:

A-wandering once in boyhood's blithsome hour,
When everything that earth contained was fair,
And seeking what was beautiful and rare,
I sped, amidst a grove, an ancient tow'r
Furrowed by angry blast and beating show'r.

Yea, Time, whose hand is little wont to
spare,
Was busy with it—I, with heart aware
That things of old possess a holy power,
Drew near to that grey pile, and lo! I
found
'Neath it the tomb of a Crusader bold,
Half hidden in the ruin cumbered ground.
Ah me, said I, men's hearts are coarse and
cold,
Else would they move the rubbish
gathered round
And cherish this, the piety of old!

Leaving again the village of Kilfane behind us, we sauntered through the demesne, by the hospitable mansion of Sir John Power, Bart., and along the margin of the water, and through the graves thus characteristically described by Felicia Hemens in one of her letters from Kilkenny—

"I visited yesterday another lovely place, some miles from us—Kilfane; quite in a different style of beauty from Woodstock—soft, rich and pastoral-looking. Such a tone of verdure, I think, I never beheld anywhere; it was quite an emerald darkness, a gorgeous gloom brooding over velvet turf and deep silent streams, from such trees as I could fancy might have grown in Armida's enchanted wood. Some swans upon the dark waters made me think of the line of Spencer's in which he speaks of the fair Una as

'Making a sunshine in the shady place.'"

Passing those sylvan scenes, we came upon a bleak hill-side, where, after encountering a few scattered mountain cottages, we reached the meagre remnants of the Castle of Cloghscreeg, consisting now of not much more than the basement story of the keep. The situation of this remnant of feudal power is particularly wild and desolate. Removed apart from the dwellings of man, it raises its diminished head on the bare shoulder of Coppena

hill, exposed without shelter to the blast and breeze, and whatever of park, chase, or forest, once might have surrounded it, is now obliterated. Yet here in the days of yore feudal tyranny held unbounded sway, and the following legend, related to us by a hoary headed sire, shows that the iron times are not yet forgotten by the simple peasantry, when prevailed—

"The good old rule, the simple plan,
That they should take who have the power,
And they should keep who can."

At the Castellan of Cloughscreeg a junior member of the Cantwell family was, with the aid of a servant, "ringing" a young grey horse in a paddock adjoining the Castle, a boy happened to pass by and look in over the fence. Cantwell asked the wayfarer if he had breakfasted, to which he was assured in the negative. "Well, then, I will give you your 'breakfast,'" said the hopeful young member of the ancient aristocracy, and so he took a halter and hung the boy up on an adjoining tree. The Castellan's uncle, who resided at Kilfane or Stroan, happened to come up at the time, and he being, as our informant said, "a good man," immediately cut the halter with his sword, and, letting the boy go, in a rage pursued his nephew, who ran for life, and fled into the Castle. A blow of the sword aimed at him by his angry uncle caused a deep incision in the sill or stone which covered the doorway, and which it is said was to be seen till a man named Murphy, about forty years ago, threw down that part of the Castle for the sake of the lime and sand; and the peasantry relate that as a just judgment for the profanaton he lost his reason soon after. However, be this as it may, the half-hanged boy, so saith the legend, as soon as released from the tree, ran for life, and never stopped till he reached Dobbin's mill near Inistioge,

and so great was his fright and hurry that he did not delay to take off his neck the remnant of the rope which the interposing sword had left there. Our informant, who was upwards of ninety years old, said he saw the tree on which the boy was hanged, a sycamore, cut down and formed into the middle piece of a "block wheel," and after such evidence who can doubt the truth of his tale?

And thus our youthful summer ramble terminated. Another and a very different pilgrimage we made to this spot when we nearer approached to mature manhood. We well remember the morning—the surging of the rain against the windows of our chamber awakened us to the recollection that that day we were bound on an expedition to remove the Crusader's monument to the peaceful sanctuary of our Cathedral. The good taste of the present Dean of Ossory had just then commenced restoring the aisles of St. Canice's from the barbarous innovations which gothic hands had been for centuries making, and it having been, as we understood, fully arranged and settled, between "high contracting parties" therein concerned that Cantwell's monument was here to find a sure asylum against further injury, we, in the excess of our antiquarian zeal, volunteered our services in overseeing the work, lest ruder and more careless hands might rather damage than preserve the precious sculpture. We are adverse, by the way, to any removal of the sanctified relics of the past from their abiding places, where only are the interest and associations attaching to them preserved in all their purity and beauty, but on this occasion we deemed that any movement which would preserve the relic from the sure destruction to which it lay exposed would be advisable as, as least, a temporary measure. Accordingly, provided with the necessary paraphernalia for such an expedition, we started on our journey with a few enthusiastic friends;

but after "biding the pelting of the pitiless storm" we found on reaching the shrine of our pilgrimage that by some misunderstanding between the

"Potent, grave and reverend Seigneurs" who had corresponded on behalf of our cause we were forced to return without achieving our object—

"Bootless home and weather-beaten back;" and the stalwart Crusader of the Cantwell family still lies in the ancient church of Kilfane, liable to destruction by the fall of ruinous wall and subject to the action of the weather and the tender mercies of the stone-throwing urchins who so ruthlessly disfigure the ancient records of the piety and good taste of our ancestry, of which every day we have painful illustrations.

Perhaps our most powerful motive for selecting Kilfane for the third of our "Nooks and Corners" was a hope that by so doing we might direct the attention of Sir John Power to the preservation of this most interesting and valuable monument of an age long passed, which lies upon his estate. Should we have succeeded in bringing that gentleman's knowledge, good taste, and liberality to cognizance and consequent preservation of this precious memento, neither our summer ramble nor our winter pilgrimage will have been made in vain. He could not do a more worthy or liberal act than causing to be erected, enclosed, or railed in, and preserved in the burial ground of his own family (adjacent to which it lies) the highly valuable monument of a knight who held those rich woodlands in the days of hoary antiquity, and to whose feudal sway in the iron days of oppression their present beneficient proprietorship makes so marked and happy a contrast.

NOTE

*The legal and other records of the kingdom contain many interesting notices of the

family. On the 1st September, 1318, Thomas de Cantwell was licensed by Edward II. to hold treaties with the O'Brennans "and other felons of the Cantred of Odagh" (Rot. Pat II., Edward 2, 129). Odagh or Idough embraced a considerable portion of the Barony of Fassadineen. This Thomas was then an old man for it appears by a patent roll of the year 1319 that he was exempted from appearing at the Assizes, "being worn out with age." He was probably the grandson of Thomas de Kentewalle mentioned above. In 1381 licence was granted from the Crown to Walter Cantwell, "living in the marches of Ballygoeran (Gowran) in front of the Irish enemies, McMurrough and O'Nowlan, to treat with the Irishry for the safety of himself, his tenants and followers against the depredation." (Rot. Pot 5, Ric. 2, 192). The Castles of Kilfane. Stroan, Cloughscregg, and Cantwell's Court (now called Sandford's Court), which belonged to this family, and portions of the three former of which yet exist, were situate in the Marches of the English district bordering on the County of Carlow, possessed by the Irish septs of Cavanagh and O'Nowlan, between whom and the settlers of the Pale a constant warfare was maintained. In the year 1409, on the 18th March, the custody of the lands and castle of Robert, son and heir of Walter Cantwell, in Rathcool and Stroan, was committed, rent free, to his uncles Richard and Thomas Cantwell; and on the 16th December following on this Robert coming of age, all his property in the County of Kilkenny, then in the King's hands, was released to him. By an inquisition taken at Kilkenny in the year 1618 it was found that in the year 1566 Geofrey Cantwell of Kilfane was resident at Ballylinch, that on his death in 1595 William Cantwell, his son, succeeded to his possessions, and that at the death of this William, in 1604, his son and heir, Edmond Cantwell, of Cloughscregg, became possessor of his pro-

property. By another inquisition taken 8th September, 1637, it appears that John Cantwell, of Cantwell's Court had just then died, seized of the Castles of Kilfane, Stroan, Cloughscregg, and large possessions to them belonging. Many of the Cantwells also held high offices in the Church—one of them was a distinguished Bishop of Ossory in the fifteenth century, and at the period of the suppression of religious houses, the Prior of St. John's Abbey and the Abbott of the Dominican Convent of our city, were members of the family. During the Rebellion of 1641 Thomas Cantwell, of Cantwell's Court, the representative of the family, was appointed Provost Marshal of the Supreme Council of Confederate Catholics at Kilkenny; and if we can trust such one-sided evidence as the depositions in Temple's History, he exercised great cruelty towards the Protestants, many of whom he is accused of having put to death by the most cruel tortures. However, whether the testimony against him were true or false, it led to the ruin of his family, for we find Cromwell writing in his despatches to the English Parliament (vide Carlyle's Cromwell) an intimation of his having sent a party from Kilkenny to storm Cantwell's Court, near Kilkenny (Sandford's Court), and the stern Puritan mentions with the greatest apparent unction, that two friars found in the castle were brought by his command and hanged in the Market Place of Kilkenny—the execution of the monks is related with such coolness and self-gratulation as if the writer fully believed that the spilling of their blood was an acceptable offering in the sight of Heaven. John, the son of Thomas Cantwell, was driven by Cromwell into exile, but we find him returning after the Restoration and with the rest of the officers of Colonel James Dempsey's regiment, vainly petitioning the luxurious and ungrateful monarch for a restoration to their estates on the grounds that "on laying down their arms

in Ireland they served under the Prince of of Conde, and offered their services to the present King whenever he should require them." It is needless to add that the estates were not restored, and poor Cantwell saw pass to a stranger those broad acres where—

"——————His sires of old
Had wielded lance and sword, and helmet worn,
Crafty in council and in combat bold."

KELLS—PART I

There is not within the confines of our county any "nook" more worthy of notice than Kells, with its stern and romantic monastic ruin, the soft wave of a gentle stream murmuring under its dismantled walls, its ancient and picturesque bridge, its tree crowned moat with the hoary ruins scattered at its base—higher up, too, the same placid river, calm as the sunny sky which summer brings over it to see its beauty in the stilly waters, with here and there a tufted island sleeping on the liqaid mirror, and the swelling slopes that come down to the soft stream, meeting it in low green grassy banks that stoop, verdure-clad, to the very waters. We, for whom this lovely spot all the charms that youthful memories can conjure up, never think of it without associations of happy days long ago spent whenever time had spared a relic of the past.

The King's River so-called from a romantic historical incident, the recounting of which we must defer to a future occasion—is the largest tributary stream that adds to the volume of the Nore, and we trust soon to have an opportunity of gossiping with our readers on the many objects of interest which it passes in its course from its source beneath the mountain of Slievenamon to its confluence with the "grey" waters of the

"stubborn" stream, immortalised by Spencer's lay, at Ballylinch. Many, indeed, are the scenes of rich sylvan beauty which line its banks, and not few or unpicturesque are the hoary ruins of Castle and Abbey pile that stand upon its margin—some "bosomed high in tufted trees," others placed amidst pleasant meadow lands—but nowhere does it boast of more lovely sylvan scenery or greater antiquarian interest than where it passes the village, bridge, and priory of Kells; and the visitor to Kilkenny, be he or she lovers of the picturesque, or only the more prosy grubbers into matters of antiquity, will do well to visit this locality—not after the fashion of the Mrs. S. C. Hall school to "do it" at a racing pace, but to spend there the dreamy hours of a long summer day in quiet and blissful meditation.

The Priory of Kells is by far the most extensive if not the most magnificent ancient ruin of which our county can boast. Seated on the slope of a hill, a vast group of embattled towers and parapetted curtain spread to the river's brink over many acres, and by their stern warlike appearance give the structure at the first view more the character of a military stronghold than the peaceful abode of the cloistered religeuse. The Priory was originally comprehended within a large oblong square, divided by a moat and tower-flanked wall into two large courts. Of these the Southern, or, as it is generally termed—from what circumstances we are unable to say—the Burgher's Court, is about four or five hundred feet square, and though strongly fortified by curtain walls flanked with four large towers, the space contained within it seems never to have been occupied by buildings, but was probably used as the bawn wherein to drive at night the cattle belonging to the community for protection against the prey-taking Norman baron's inroads, or the predatory incursions of the "Prowling Irishry." Within the other Court, which was as strongly fortified

and nearly as large, but of more irregular outline, are contained the church and cloisters with all the usual appendages to a regular religious establishment. The church, which is much dilapidated, consisted of a nave, choir, south transcept, and lady chapel, with a belfry tower rising upon a stately arch between the nave and choir. The cloisters, refectory, kitchens, etc., though clearly traceable, are almost destroyed, and lie in immense heaps of confused ruins, scattered through the area. Attached to the south-east wall of the choir is also situated the largest and most modern tower amongst the ruins, which seems to have been the residence of the Superior of the house, and may be termed the keep of this once strong and well defended religious fortress, the whole of which is constructed in a style of the rudest simplicity, the builder's design being evidently strength and security rather than architectural beauty.

Standing in the Burgher's Court of the Priory, what a subject for thought presents itself in the scene around. Here you are surrounded by the ruins, some parts of which are in such excellent preservation that they remain almost as if yesterday deserted, others in a shattered and dismantled state, some of the many towers fearfully dilapidated and threatening—whole sides of some torn away, others clad in most luxuriant robes of ivy—whilst on every side are scattered large masses of the iron-cemented mason work, built, one would say, for eternity, yet overthrown by the violence of man, or the not less sparing tempest. How curious, too, appears the combination of domestic edifices, religious buildings and military fortifications thus grotesquely grouped together—the ivy-clad walls of the Abbey mill which with the course of its now dried mill-stream may be discovered amongst its domestic appliances, contrasting strangely with the frowning embattled towers and the tall gables, gothic arches, and slender win-

dow-mullions of the ecclesiastical buildings, all now broken into confused masses and stern and sombre in their ruin and desolation. How silent is all here—cattle grazing amongst the ruins, the whispered melody of the breeze and river's rush beyond, alone telling of change and motion. The centuries that have passed over all in silence are evidenced by the lichen and ivy, by crumbling wall and broken window, and by many an ancient tomb, where sleep together the belted knight, mitred prior and humble peasant, now all alike forgotten—

"————————Underground
Precendency 's a jest—vassal and lord,
Grossly familiar, side by side consume."

We have not space, nor would we perhaps sufficiently interest the majority of our readers, to enter into minute description of this fine ruin. Those who are possessed of any antiquarian enthusiasm have already, no doubt, seen it for themselves, but we devote a nook to the notice of the spot in the hope that it may induce the mere seekers after pleasure to take a ramble by the river side of Kells, and over ground so romantic and amidst scenery so delightful.

The village of Kells—anciently termed Kenlis-in-Ossory, to distinguish it from the then scarcely more celebrated seat of religion and learning of Kells or Kenlis in Meath—is now a poor place containing only a couple of dozen houses, and, to say the truth, deficient even in the creature comforts. Its Head Inn, save at the time of the Fair or Holiday, affords no better accomodation than the "Lenten entertainment" of bread and beer, so that the tourist, if he cannot count on the hospitality of some person "native" there, had better provide himself before starting. Yet was this mean village once a walled town, boasting, besides the splendid Priory, of a Castle, the lordly residence of a Chief Governor of Ireland and a Seneschal of Leinster, and also

a College or Seminary. Even tradition current in this county vouches for the ancient respectability of the place, for what Kilkennyman knows not the local proverb or prophecy—

"Kells was, Kilkenny is, but Callan will be
The finest city of the three."

Although we doubt very much that Kells was ever as "fine" a town as Kilkenny, which, moreover, proberbially

"Shines where it stands,"

yet it doubtless was once a place of importance and consideration, and we can easily imagine in its days of prosperity, in the time of old romance, when the ringing of its bells ushered in the passing holiday, when Monk and Student, Knight and stalwart Yeoman, fair lady of high degree and lowly Burgher's dame, mingled together, with garments "dight," of various colour, in romantic contrast, in its streets—the sombre cowl and cope of the Monk, the plaited mail and flowing mantle of the Knight, the plumed page, the dainty Kirtle of highborn dame, the russet gown of the good wife, mingling together, grave, martial or gay, enlivened the scene, whilst

"Along the stream and the meadows by
Sweetly and softly swells,
Borne on the breeze, the vesper chimes
From the Priory Church of Kells,"

and evening came softly and slowly stealing from the fading, though yet rosy, tints of Cloudland down upon the calm river, and the dark line of walls and the many battlemented turrets of the Priory, where the Augustinian Monks are raising with sonorous chant, in their pillared aisle, the vesper song. Monk and knight, page and lady, burgess and portly dame, have all long since vanished from the stage of life with their manners, customs, costume and "doings",

gentle in love and fierce in war, and the simple people who now inhabit the humble village scarcely dream that such things were.

The Manor of Kells appears to have been granted by Strongbow immediately after the Norman invasion of Ireland to Geoffrey Fitz-Robert de Maurisco. This Geoffrey was brother to Harvey de Maurisco who founded the splendid Abbey of Dunbrody in the County of Wexford, and seemed determined not to be outdone by him in such an exhibition of pious feeling, as in the year 1195 he built and endowed the Priory of Kells, "for the health of the soul of Earl Richard his patron," and subsequently made further grants to it for the good of the souls of William Earl Marshall and his Countess, and of his (Geoffrey's) own wife, Eva de Birmingham. The Priory was dedicated to the Virgin, and as there were not any regular canons of St. Augustine of the English Nation then in Ireland, the founder caused the church to be served by priests till he could procure from the Priory of Bodmin in Cornwall four Monks named Reginald de Aclond, Hugh de Rous, or Rufus, Alured and Algar. Of these Reginald was the first Prior of this house, and at his death was succeeded in that high office by Hugh, who was subsequently created Bishop of Ossory, and was the first Englishman called to the Episcopal Chair in this diocese. He was buried at Kells in the year 1218 under a splendid monument, long since destroyed. Alured was made the first Prior of Inistioge Abbey, and Algar having been sent to Rome on business concerning the Priory, obtained a Bishopric in Lombardy. Besides Hugh, two other Canons of this house were elevated to Episcopal honours—Peter Barret, Bishop of Ferns, who was interred at Kells in 1415, and John Mothell, called to the Bishopric of Limerick in 1426. Amongst other possessions Geoffrey granted to this Priory all the ecclesiastical dues which should arise out of

the chapel of his Castle of Kells. The large possessions and right thus obtained by the house were frequently acknowledged and confirmed by Papal bulls and Royal Charters, still extant, and the Prior had the honour of being a Peer of Parliament. As we cater for the amusement of the general reader and not of the mere antiquary, we will not transcribe the annals of this great house, but content ourselves with a notice of the most interesting events therewith connected. As a curious circumstance we may mention the extraordinary position which as a religious dignitary we find the Prior Stephen filling in the year 1355. It appears that this unworthy servant of the Church was committed to prison upon a charge of having feloniously robbed John, the Prior of Inistioge, and also of having stolen from one Richard Lancy a scythe, value 20d. Upon his trial the case was fully proved, but "through the special favour of the court," so says the chronicler, "he was admitted to a fine of 20s., which sum having been paid to the King's treasurer, his Majesty granted a full and free pardon to the Prior." Thus it will be seen that the poet's description of a monastic life, however poetically beautiful, is soon discovered by the searcher of our ancient records, not to be in all cases exactly literal truth—

"I envy them, those Monks of old,
Their books they read, and their beads they told,
To human softness dead and cold,
And all life's vanity.

They dwelt like shadows on the earth,
Free from the penalties of birth,
Nor let one feeling venture forth,
But charity."

In the year 1468 the Prior, Nicholas, was again involved in a legal suit, in consequence of an unjust attempt on the part of a brother

churchman to deprive him of his rights and dignity. It appears that William O'Hodian, Bishop of Emly, who would seem to have been anything but "dead to all life's vanity," procured by stratagem a provision from the Pope appointing him to the superiorship of this house, notwithstanding that Prior Nicholas was alive and lawfully seized thereof. But the Parliament took up the case, and the avaricious Bishop having been cited to the Queen's Bench, was punished for his misconduct, and the Prior's right fully acknowledged and confirmed. However, a continuation of this good fortune was not vouchsafed to Father Nicholas's successor in the office, for soon after followed the troubles consequent upon the introduction of the Reformation into England and the general suppression of monastic institutions which heralded the movement. In the year 1538 a report was made of a Government Commission for the suppression of all the Irish Abbeys, which, as appears from the State Papers, drew forth a recommendation to the King from the Lord Deputy, Gray, and the Privy Council of Ireland, that 6 monasteries there specified should yet be suffered to exist in this country. Amongst the favoured six is included "Kenlys in the County of Kilkenny," and the following are the reasons given for the Council's interference in their behalf:—"For in these houses and other such like, in default of common innues which are not in this land, the King's Deputy, and all others his Grace's Council and Officers, also Irishmen, and other resorting to the King's Deputy in these quarters, is and hath been most commonly lodged at the costs of said houses. Also in them young men and children, both gentlemen's children and others, both of mankind and womanhood, be brought up in virtue, learning, and the English tongue and behaviour, to the great charges of said houses." Nevertheless this pleading even from so high a quarter, was in vain; no notice would appear to have

been taken of it, for in the following year we find Philip Howlegan, the last Prior of Kells, compelled to surrender up the entire property to the King. From an account of "the sale of the gold and silver plate, jewels, ornaments, lead and bells of the suppressed Abbeys and Monasteries for the use and behoof of our lord the King," under a commission bearing date 3rd February, 1539, and preserved amongst the Rolls, it appears that the plate, jewels, etc., in Kells Priory were of the value of £191 1s. 8d.—a large sum in those days. Henry VIII. granted all the possessions of the Priory in lands, houses, tithe, etc., a most extensive property, to James, ninth Earl of Ormonde, and that nobleman's descendant, the first Duke of Ormonde, appropriated the Rectorial tithes of Kells, amongst other of the former revenues of that religious house, to the support of his Grammar School, known at this day as the College of Kilkenny.

So much then for the more remarkable features of the history of Kells Priory. As for the other objects of interest in that ancient town, and the notable memories therewith connected, we shall most willingly return to the charge immediately if, indeed, our readers do not tire of our antiquated gossip, and vote for the confining of our space to political diatribes, from which we would gladly escape for occasional recreation to the "Nooks and Corners of our County."

KELLS—PART II

That the town of Kells owes its principal interest to the extensive ruins of its magnificent Priory there can be no doubt. But for it the present mean and insignificant village would present few beyond the natural attractions of its placid litte river, and the umbrageous and pastoral valley which forms its bed. We should yet, however, be struck by its curious antique bridge, the ancient

wooded moat, which, in days long past, was probably the defence of the river ford, and the very early constructed and nondescript octagonal ruins, traditionally said to have been a College of Culdees, situated at its base, as well also, as by a few other objects of interest which we have not as yet glanced at, but which are not altogether unworthy of attention. Amongst these we cannot now, we regret to say, thanks to the barbarous innovations of tactless man, number the former proud baronial castle, which must have vied even with the Priory in splendour. Of this structure not a trace is now discoverable but its extent and importance may be judged by the rank and consequence of the nobles of whom it was the residence and feudal fortress, and a slight glance at whose history, in connection with their Manor of Kells, may not prove uninteresting to the reader.

In our first notice of this subject we mentioned that Geoffrey FitzRobert de Maurisco was the original grantee of Kells after the Strongbownian invasion. This Geoffrey was created Baron of Kells and Seneschal of Ireland, and in the year 1223 was also raised to the supreme dignity of Chief Governor of this country. His first wife, as we have seen, was Eva de Birmingham, but after her death he married Basilia de Clare, sister of the redoubtable Strongbow, and widow of the scarcely less famous Raymond Le Gros. Geoffrey seems to have been of a crafty and intriguing disposition, and though we find him granting lands to the Monks of Kells for the repose of the soul of William Earl Marshall, we soon after discover him leagued with other lords in a conspiracy against the life of that nobleman's son and representative—Richard, Earl Marshall. Through this machinations the young lord was driven to rebellion, and the conspirators made a virtue to the Government of their efforts to ruin him. He was finally slain at Kildare in the year 1234, having been betrayed into the

power of his enemies by Geoffrey, who had falsely pretended to be his friend. The old chronicler, Hanmer, asserts that a curse fell upon de Maurisco for his wickedness, and relates that as a retributive justice he "perished miserably." The curse which had fallen on Geoffrey seems to have descended to his son, William de Maurisco, who, having been outlawed and exiled for rebellion, betook himself with his followers to the Island of Lundy, near the mouth of the river Severn, where he became a robber and a pirate, and is termed by Camden "a most leud and mischievous rover, who from thence invested these coasts in times past."

After the fall of the de Marisco family, Kells came into the possession of the Lord Arnold Le Poer, a nobleman who played a conspicuous part in the history of Ireland during the reign of King Edward II. He is, however, particularly remarkable for the opposition which he gave to Richard Ledrede, Bishop of Ossory, and the favour and support which he bestowed upon certain persons accused by that prelate of heresy and witchcraft. The chief parties thus accused were Dame Alice Kyteler, and her son, a rich merchant of Kilkenny, named William Outlaw, a near relative to Roger Outlaw, Prior of Kilmainham, and a Lord Justice of Ireland. The witch Alice fled the country and escaped, but her son remained, either trusting to his innocence or the power of Lord Arnold le Poer, who was enlisted in his cause, as some state, by the payment of a large bribe, or, as others affirm, because he was himself favourable to "the sect and doctrines of the said Alice." Be this as it may, Arnold being the Seneschall, or chief officer of the county Kilkenny, and being therefore endowed with great authority, so warmly espoused the cause of the accused parties, that he even proceeded so far as, in the feast of Lent, 1333, to seize upon the person of the Bishop when passing through the town of Kells from holding his usual annual

visitation of the Priory of that place—for in those days a Bishop's visitation would appear to have been more than a visitation in name—in fact a personal inspection of all the churches and religious buildings in his Diocese. The Bishop was laid up for some time a close prisoner in the Castle of Kilkenny, then a State prison, but he ultimately had sufficient power to turn the tables on the Seneschal, to whom he extended his charge of implication in sorcery and magic "and other hereticall naughtinesse." Arnold was accordingly seized by the King's order and committed to the Castle of Dublin, where he died before the day appointed for his trial arrived, and having thus departed uncleansed of the "perverse heresie" of which he had been accused, it was deemed improper to inter him immediately in a Christian sepulchre, and his body was accordingly long detained above ground in St. Dominic's Abbey, in Dublin, founded by his family, and in return for which favour the Monks would appear to have undertaken the task of interceding for his soul and rendering his body fit to be buried with Christian rites.*

Eustace Le Poer, the son of Arnold, who next succeeded to the Manor of Kells, was not more fortunate in his fate than his father, as, having taken part in the Earl of Desmond's rebellion in the year 1346, he was made prisoner at the Siege of Castle Island, in Kerry, and hanged, drawn and quartered for high treason. It would appear that the family of de Birmingham, who were allied by marriage to Geoffrey de Maurisco, considered themselves as having a claim to the property of that nobleman, and they made frequent attacks upon the Le Poers, and attempted to recover Kells out of their possession. In 1252 the Lord William de Birmingham besieged and burned this town; and again in 1327, on the first Sunday in Advent, the whole town was burned by the same Lord William, who joined the Earl of Desmond against Arnold Le Poer, in a petty war be-

tween those rival chieftains, which arose from the offence which Desmond took at Arnold's having contemptuously called him a "rhymer." Ultimately the family succeeded in getting possession of the property, as after the attainder and execution of Eustace Le Poer a grant from the Crown was received by the Lord Walter de Birmingham of the Manor of Kells, comprising the Castle, a water mill, two carucates, and ninety acres of arable land, seven acres of meadow, a turbary, the sum of £3 11s. 8d. burgage rents, £7 16s. 6½d. of the freeholders of Kells, and a right to all toll in the town, with the pleas and perquisites of the Manor Court there (Rot. Pat. 20 Ed. III. m. 70). The Manor subsequently, but at what period we are not aware, passed into the possession of the Butler family, and we find the title of Baron of Kells, in Ossory, conferred on Richard Lord Mountgarret when called to the peerage in 1550. By an inquisition taken on the 30th October, 1621, it was found that the third Earl of Mountgarret was then possessed of the Manor of Kells, which he held from the Crown "in capite" by knights' service, and which consisted of the fortalice of Kells, the burgage rents there, twenty messuages and gardens in the town, and also 200 acres, and one garden there which formerly belonged to the Priory of Kells, the Court Baron and Court Leet, suit of court due by all the Burgesses and inhabitants of the place residing between the Cross and Godings' Court, together with a commuted custom of 6s. per annum in lieu of the toll chargeable upon all ale brewed by the inhabitants of the town.

From these records we may perceive of what importance was the Burgage town of Kells—now all that is mighty of the past is gone—

"And grey walls moulder round, on which dull time
Feeds, like slow fire upon a hoard brand."

There are, however, two remarkable events contained in the annals of Kells which identify it with the history of Ireland. In the year 1327 Edward Bruce, whilst engaged in his celebrated expedition, having for his object the assumption of the Irish Crown, took possession of this town, on Palm Sunday, and rested there immediately previous to the Battle of Ascul, in the County of Kildare, where he overthrew the army brought against him by the Lord Justiciary, Edmond Le Botiler, and Arnold Le Poer. In 1398 Roger Mortimer, Earl of March, grandson to King Henry III., was slain at this town on a battle fought with the O'Byrne's, whom he had pursued hither from their fastnesses in Wicklow. In a field adjacent to the village a quantity of bones, antique horse-shoes, and other similar remains are from time to time turned up by the spade or ploughshare, which would seem to mark the spot

"Where Roger Mortimer at Kells
Fell in the fiery fray."

The other objects of interest in Kells at which we have not glanced are the ancient base of a cross, called by the country people, and in all probability correctly so, the Market Cross, and the old Parish Church. This latter structure is an exceedingly plain but venerable building. To our mind there is a peculiar melancholy interest connected with it from the fact that many a dear departed friend sleeps beneath its shade, and we may therefore be not altogether unprejudiced critics; but most assuredly there are few who will not agree with us in thinking that this old structure, though barbarously modernised and deprived of its ancient features, yet possessing an unpresuming simplicity of exterior, is still withal far superior in architectural beauty to its successor, the miserable abortion with its paltry ginger-bread decorations, which, with something more of a pretension but nothing less

of ugliness than the other abominations of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, called Churches, stands near, in a conspicuous situation, and marring by its unsightliness the beautiful features of the quiet and ruin-covered landscape. The Incumbent of the Parish, a gentleman of sound antiquarian taste and a scholar of deep and original research, we believe did his utmost to procure a religious building more in consonance with true architectural taste for the locality, but the potent sway of the Gothic Commission succeeded in establishing here another example of their stereotyped incongruities, and there it stands, a strange contrast, indeed, with the beautiful relics of ancient art scattered around it. We may here perhaps be permitted to point the attenion of the Reverend Mr. Darby to the remains of an ancient font which lies in his farmyard exposed daily to injury. This piece of antique ecclesiastical furniture no doubt originally belonged to the old church, and we would rejoice to see it restored and placed in its original depository, both for its restoration and where it may be most fittingly viewed as a characteristic relic.

Kells is of interest also in a literary way as being the scene of Banim's tale of "Peter of the Castle." Within the large tower adjoining the Priory Church that author's eccentric hero lived, whose real cognomen, or at least that by which he was known to the people around, was Philip na Moul, or Philip of the Tower. A mystery hangs over this poor fellows life, but whatever he may have been originally, from the period of his first arriving at Kells he was a genuine recluse, and held in great reverence. Such of our readers as have read Banim's novel, and we presume that is everyone for whom we are humble caterers, will be interested in the following quotation from the letter of a touristt who visited the ruins whilst they were the sheltering place of Philip, the real Simon Pure, as from the description there

given of the mysterious tenant and his "location," it is manifest that our highly talented and gifted townsman took the hint for his tale of Peter:—

"I counted twelve towers, very perfect, in one of which, while we were employed in examining an antique apartment, whose ponderous chimney-piece and other ancient fixtures caught our attention and gave rise to a long train of the wildest speculations as we approached a small low door, within which all was darkness, we were roused from our reveries by a strange indistinct sound. Presently we were encountered by a tall maciated figure, which, stooping through the low arched door, quickly passed us and descended the spiral stairs by which we had come up. He had on a long coat reaching down past his knees and on his head a kind of cap. From the glimpse we got of his face it appeared pale and ghastly. You may easily form an idea of the effect produced by such an adventure on our minds which, from the surrounding objects, were prepared to receive the most romantic impressions. From a window we observed him stalking among the ruins, sometimes with a measured pace and at times urged on by sudden starts; his hands locked in each other and his eyes fixed on the sky. What a subject was here for one of our modern romancers, who deal so largely in mysterious figures, noises, etc., who by raising some 'white mist hovering in the air.' with the help of a few uncertain rays of the moon which might fall upon a rusty dagger, and a drop or two of blood upon the pavement, might produce as excellent a ghost of this poor lunatic as ever was made.

"Our surmises were justified, for we found he was mere flesh and blood, and had inhabited that tower for these eleven years past, subsisting on the bounty of Dr. Madden, who holds the living. He comes regularly up top of this sloping lawn, and receives his to the Parsonage house, which stands on the

meals, which he carries down to his cell and there deposits; this place he fortifies ingeniously against the winter blasts by matted straw and hay, and renders it really a warm and comfortable abode. Amongst the country people he passes for a person of some influence among the fairies, with whom they frequently hear him in earnest conversation. Sometimes he is seen with his legs dangling out of a high window in the tower, making long speeches to the moon; and when the goddess veils her face behind a cloud he exhorts her to re-appear in a strain of tremendous vociferation."

Before quitting Kells we once again return to the King's River in order to redeem our pledge of mentioning something about the origin of its name and the traditionary lore connected with it. This river takes its present appellation from the death of Nial Gaille, King of Ireland, A.D. 859. The historians relate that this king had the post-fix of "Caille" added to his name in consequence of a prediction, in early life, that he would be drowned in the River Caillain. We are also informed that this augury was verified, for after ascending the throne, in one of his warlike excursions, his march was intercepted by the waters of that river swollen to a torrent from recent rain. The foredoomed monarch ordered one of his attendants to try if the ford was practicable, and this person's horse having been swept away by the angry ford, the King in vain commanded his followers to extricate him, and finding all unwilling to venture, he plunged himself into the river, and both were drowned. (Vide Keating's History, Part 2, Page 53). The river has long since ceased to be called the Callain, and the great historical fact in connection with it has caused it since that remote period to be better known as the Oonreigh—in English, the King's River; but we have yet traces of its ancient appellation in the name of Callan, the largest town upon its banks. Tradition also

bears out the annalist in those particulars; for after a lapse of a thousand years the neighbouring people yet tell the story of the heroic King who so nobly sacrificed himself in this inland water, and, going farther, even point to his burying place in the hoary precincts of the not far distant graveyard of Killree—Anglice, the King's Church. Of this spot we may here briefly speak. In an elevated situation about a mile from Kells, stand the ancient church, monumental cross and venerable Round Tower of Killree, the latter a prominent object for many miles around, enclosed in a quiet little graveyard crowded with many a quaint memorial telling of the narrow beds where "the rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep," and ornamented with tall trees and low matted shrubs. The church is a building whose architectural peculiarities and its rude and ponderous material speak of very high antiquity‡ and is now almost covered with rank grass, wild herb, prolific lichen—

"And the dark linked ivy tangling wild."

The cross is curiously sculptured from a ponderous block of granite, and is about ten feet in height, the arms enclosed in a circle, and the whole curiously carved and ornamented. This, says the prevailing legend of the countryside, is the memorial raised a thousand years since over the resting-place of the brave and hapless monarch, whose fate shadowed in the hoar mist of antiquity, gives still the tinge of romance to all around.

Our sketch of this highly interesting locality is brief, considering the quantity of material for the subject at our disposal; nevertheless it will convey some idea of Kells and its ruins, and if it meets the eye of anyone who has not visited the place, it may induce him to hold converse there with the spirit of the past. In the slanting sunshine of a summer evening

"When daylight on its last purple cloud
Is lingering grey,"

and the dark ivy is lighted up with transient gold, and the rich sienna coloured lichen looks gorgeous all over the broken towers—when the calm whimpling of the river and the scarcely seen kissings of the evening zephyr, raising the light foliage that overhangs its margin, are the only sounds, and a luxury of magic and softening influence is thrown upon all things earthly, no sweeter scene ever gladdened the eye of the enthusiastic searcher after the beautiful in nature. Even in the garish blaze of noon the place is so startling in its ruined grandeur that it sways the heart with a most wonderous potency. And we have seen it, too, by the pale moonshine of as soft a midnight as ever lighted up the peaceful little valley, when the ponderous masses of ruin looked ghost-like through the thin mists rising from the placid river, and when, from a sombre grove above the bridge, a night-singing bird, often heard there, rendered the scene

"Most musical, most melancholy."

At all such times the place has its own peculiar charms, and at any time will the hours expended be well laid out and richly repaid by pleasure of the purest kind to him who will pass a day amidst the ruins of the ancient town and Priory of Kells.

NOTES

* The result of Bishop Ledrede's prosecution of Outlaw is, we presume, well known in Kilkenny; however, we may mention it briefly here. Outlaw abjured his heresy and compounded with the Church for the roofing of the choir of St. Canice's Cathedral with lead as a penance expiatory of his guilt; but a servant of his mother's named Petronilla, included in the accusation, having no money to roof churches, and thus wipe away her sins, was burned at the market cross of

Kilkenny for witchcraft. What a pity it is that newfangled ideas have crept in which render it utterly hopeless that in the present day the Dean of Ossory could procure funds to complete the tasteful restorations at St. Canice's, or Dr. Walsh obtain the means of roofing his new Cathedral, by the simple plan of pouncing on a rich merchant and compelling him to do penance for witchcraft?

† Holmes' Tour, published A.D.1801.

‡ One of these architectural features, the ancient door in the western gable, with curious flat architrave and inclined sides, the true index of remote antiquity is, we regret to say, blocked up by an ugly modern buttress—if we might be pardoned making one other suggestion to the Rev. Mr. Darby, it would be the propriety of immediately removing this unsightly and unnecessary addition

FRESHFORD

In our former "Nooks and Corners" we have described localities in our county of the greatest interest in scenery and antiquity, and there are yet before us many "sweet waters and pleasant places" to which we shall by-and-by, we hope, in company with thee, gentle reader, wander in happy companionship, holding communion of days long passed away, or talking of all the beauteous things which nature has strewed over the fair earth so bountifully. But to places not so richly gifted we must also occasionally ramble. Whenever time has spared a relic of the past we would wish to guide our readers, and though many will, perhaps, smile to see Freshford announced as the subject of this nook, yet before we have done with it, we hope to lay before our good friends as much of "the precious and rare" dug up from the mine of antiquity as may

furnish both the "sauce piquant" whereby this article may be readable.

Some reader, however, into whose hands our present writing may find its way, and who may be unacquainted with the "locale" of Freshford, will ask why its introduction requires an apology; and the good folk of that ancient village may feel, perhaps, aggrieved at finding it thus lightly spoken of. To each and all we say that, to speak plainly, Freshford has been the subject of a "local" proverb which makes it share something of the ridicule that too often unjustly attaches itself to poverty; and that proverb, in allusion to the former paucity of attic chambers in the village, speaks of its having been a wonder or marvel, equal to that of having seen Seville, to have been "up stairs in Freshford." Some wag or another, too, in more modern times, alluding, perhaps sarcastically, to the "polish" of inhabitants, talked of an affected person as one "who had gone to Freshford to learn the English accent," and both these light and foolish sayings have long reigned against the locality. We can, however, assure those of our readers who have not seen the place, that "up stairs" are now no marvel in the village, and that if "the English accent" will not meet his ears in its streets, he will find genuine hospitality and true politeness amongst its denizens. But the situation of Freshford is not devoid of natural beauties, such as would sufficiently recommend it to notice. The stream upon which it is built is a merry little water, pure and limpid enough to justify the name of the village; and when seen beneath the clear blue skies and winding through the soft green meadow land, its "liquid lapse" and unpolluted freshness

> "Doth make sweet music with the enamelled stones,
> Giving a gentle kiss to every flower
> It overtaketh in its pilgrimage."

Beauty is clothing its banks, purity and peace, too, are, we hope, inmates of the cottages around—

"The dwellings of mild people interspersed
With golden harvest fields of ripening corn."

As you enter the village from Kilkenny you see it making its way through those pleasant scenes by more than one rustic mill and picturesque farm homestead. Here and there along its banks are graceful clumps of old ash trees, and the hills and woods around form a fitting background to the happy rural pictures. Near the town and by the road side a hoary blasted tree marks the spot where bubbles up fresh and clear a holy well, dedicated to St. Lactan, the tutelary saint of the place, and, by the time that you drive into the large irregular market square of the village, you are impressed with the idea that you are in a place at least very prettily situated.

Arrived there, however, your first glance is apt to be unfavourable. You see no modern public building of imposing architecture, nor is the eye caught by hoary ruin of picturesque castle or abbey, those memorials of past power and magnificence. A range of turf-cars is drawn up in front of the business side of the market-place; a lot of most clamorous mendicants, in defiance of the new Vagrant Act, are surrounding the Johnstown car—upon which we may suppose the visitant to be seated—and a score or two of poor enough and very lazy looking people are lounging about the corners of the public-houses. There are, indeed, a plentiful supply of the latter, with dingy signs meant to represent "St. Patrick banishing the snakes," "King Brian Boroime," encased in very questionable armour, and looking unutterable things at invisible Danes, or "The Royal Oak," with Charles of merry memory therein seated—most magnificently crowned and sceptered, as if on a coronation day, and

very conspicuous to all the world, except the Parliament's soldiers and blood hounds passing beneath. The square itself is surrounded by houses of all kinds, high and low, rich and poor—here a mansion of some pretence—there a row of wretched cabins. On one side the dwelling of an important functionary, the district coroner, and opposite the neat and hospitable residence of the village doctor, its front tastefully clothed with clematis roses, and multifarious creeping plants. Higher up may be observed the yet unfinished walls of a new chapel, of a most magnificent order of architecture, as yet unnamed, but which, from its disregard to all rule or taste, we should be inclined to term "The Barbaric." The centre of the square is ornamented with three melancholy-looking lime trees, growing out of round piece of rude masonwork, and, where the largest crowd of loungers are assembled, there is the base of what, first glance tells you, was an ancient cross.

Under all the circumstances the casual and indifferent passer through the village would be apt to set it down as an ugly sort of place which he would forget before he seated himself, on the same evening, to take his ease in his inn. But we shall not treat it with the same indifference, for there are, to our mind, some matters of great interest in Freshford.

The ancient name of the village was Athur—literally, "the fresh forde." An abbey was founded here very anciently by St. Lactan, who was himself the first Abbot, and was also endowed with episcopal authority. His death is recorded March 19th, A.D. 622. After the English invasion this ancient culdee institution was suppressed, and the parish became attached to the chapter of St. Canice's Cathedral, and still remains the best Prebend in Ossory, and is the head of a Rural Deanery. However, a portion of the original monastic institution yet remains, incorporated within the walls

of the old church, an edifice of unpretending appearance, and in itself unremarkable save for the remnant of the ancient building before alluded to—the curious doorway in its southern gable, which is an object of surpassing interest. It is a beautiful and tolerably perfect specimen of the style of architecture termed Romanesque; and is very rich in the characterstic details of its area—the massive pillars, round arches, with curiously intricate zig zag mouldings, and profusion of bold sculptures in high relief; it possesses also the surpassingly valuable feature, an Irish inscription, which is contained in the bands encircling the external face of the inner arch, the letters, as is usual in all ancient inscriptions, being indented. This inscription is translated as follows by Mr. J. O'Donovan, the first Irish scholar of the present day, in Dr. Petrie's valuable essay on Irish architecture and Round Towers—

On the lower band—"A prayer for Niam, daughter of Core, and for Mathghamnin O'Chiarmeic, by whom was made this church."

On the upper band—"A prayer for Gilla Mochlolmoc O'Cencucain, who made it." *

Dr. Petrie remarks that the sculpture could not be of an earlier date than the eleventh century, when the use of herditary surnames was generally established in Ireland. Mathghamain or Matthew O'Chairmaic would appear to have been the ancient chief of the district, and the name is still numerous in this county, though metamorphosed into Kerewick and Kirby. The name of the female in the inscription would appear to have been that of the chief's wife, it being an old custom in Ireland for married women to retain paternal names. The name mentioned in the other inscription was, no doubt, that of the artist who executed the curious sculptures and elaborate ornaments which decorate this remarkable doorway.

Every man of taste who has seen this beautiful relic of ancient art, so valuable as a specimen of of the skill and piety of our remote ancestors, will readily agree with us in wishing that it should be dealt with as a sacred trust confided to this generation for those which are to succeed it, and, as such, strictly to be preserved. They will be sorry, therefore, when we inform them that the relic is not even treated with the veneration which it claims from the surrounding villages, but that its carvings have been battered and defaced in a most unseemly manner, and that, the material being a soft sand stone, it has actually become the common whetstone of Freshford, wherin all the sharp tools of the village, from the carving knife of the Brian Boroime Hotel, to the razor of the barber or the cleaver of the village butcher opposite, are sharpened. The present Incumbent of the Parish, the Rev. Luke Fowler, who has lately bestowed the most praiseworthy exertions in the beautifying of the church, some time since caused a gate to be set up for the purpose of preserving the time-honoured portal from further injury. However the work was done in a somewhat bungling manner, one of the hinges have been so driven into the wall as to dislocate some of the sculptured stones of the doorway, and the position of the entire gate is such as that while the interior arch is certainly defended from injury, the outer part still affords full opportunity for sharpening, not the intellects, but the knives and other edged tools of Freshford. It would be a piece of judicious utilitarianism, in its best sense, likely to do immortal honour to the Rev. Mr. Fowler if he would follow up the good work which he has already commenced, by causing a railing to be erected and run along the entire front of the sacred edifice at a distance of a few feet from the wall, with a gate opposite to the doorway, and thus would he insure the entire of this beautiful relic from further sacrilegious intrusion.

Conspicuous from every part of Freshford and its neighbourhood is the fine demesne of Upper Court, its heights crowned with dark woods, which, spreading downwards, surround its beautiful pastures, forming in all directions—

"Fresh shadows fit to shroud from sunny ray,
Fair lawns to take the sun in season due."

Many a happy summer holiday have we ourselves spent enjoying those delightful shades amidst

"——— the wild odour of the forest flowers,
The music of the living grass and air,
The emerald light of leaf entangled beams,"

meanwhile dreaming of the olden days when this fair and pleasant woodland was the rural court of the Bishops of Ossory—when its forest paths were trampled by the semi-military retainers of the Lord Spiritual, marching to and from Kilkenny, subject, even on these short journeys, to many "a moving accident by flood and field"—sometimes from the attacks of the neighbouring Irish Kern, who regarded not the sanctity of Holy Church, and sometimes—as it happened when good master Bale sat himself down here during the first uncertain glimpse of the Reformation—from the violence of the prosecuting Romanist himself, Priest or Noble.

The Castle or Palace of Arthur, modernly termed Upper Court, was erected by Hugh Mapilton, who was consecrated Bishop of Ossory in the year 1251, and who not only built this episcopal seat as a county residence for himself and successors, but, says the Annaitt—"added to it fish ponds, fishings and other necessary ornaments—such good

men lived in those days!" Geofry St. Leger, who succeeded to the See in 1260, having given his town-Palace of Kilkenny, which the old historians term "his manse and lodging of the Common Hall,' to be used as a collegiate dwelling-place for the Vicars Choral of St. Canice, whom he founded and endowed, appears to have taken up his abode almost entirely at Athur, which "he was also at great charges in repairing and adorning." Many of the orders and letters written by that turbulent prelate, Richard Ledred (who filled the See from 1318 to 1360) touching the prosecution of the famous Alice Kyteler for witchcraft, are dated from his Palace of Athur, and it seems to have been the principal residence of the Bishop of Ossory till the end of the sixteenth century—amongst others we find it recorded that Bishop Cantwell, about the year 1500, "laid out much money in the repair of the Bishop's houses at Athur and Freinstown, and in repairing the great bridge of Kilkenny, broken down by a flood." The most remarkable incident in the history of Upper Court, however, occurred in the time of John Dale (the first Protestant Bishop of the Diocese). This uncompromising Reformer having retired from his town residence to his country seat of Athur, the retainers of the Lords Mountgarret and Upper Ossory, lay in wait to assassinate him when he should venture abroad unprotected; and Harris informs us that "they slew five of his servants before his face, but he saved himself by shutting the iron gate of his castle, and keeping his enemies out; where he defended himself until the Sovereign of Kilkenny came to his assistance, and under the favour of night conveyed him to Kilkenny, and from thence sent him to Dublin." From Bale's own personal narrative of this business it may be seen that the people rejoiced at his escape, and that the laity of those times were far from averse to receiving the Reformed doctrines. As the extract is interesting from

the rich quaintness of the phraseology, we here insert it:—

"On the Frydae next following, which was the 8th day of September, five of my household servants, Richard Foster, a Deacon, Richard Headley, Johan Cage, an Irish horse groome, and a younge maide, 16 years of age, went out to make hay about 9 of the clock, after they had served God according to the day. And as they were come to the entrance of the meadow the cruell murtherers, to the nombre of more than a score, leaped out of their lurking bushes with sweardes and with darts, ad cowardly slewe them, all unarmed and unweaponed, without mercy. This ded they, in their wicket furye, as it is reported, for that they had watched so long afore, yea, an whole month space, they saye, and sped not their purpose concerning me. They feloniously also robbed me of all my horses, driving them afore them. In the afternoon, about 3 of the clock, the good Suffren of Kylkennie, havynge knowledge thereof, resorted to me with 100 horsemen and 300 footmen, and so with great strengthe brought me that nyght to the towne, the younge men syngyne psalmes and other godley songs all the way in rejoyce of my deliverance. As we were come to the town, the people, in great nombre, stode on both sides of the way, both within the gates and without, with candles lighted in their handes, shouting out prayers to God for deliverynge me from the hands of these murtherers.—The Priests the next daye, to colour their myschefe, caused it to be noysed all the country over, and it was by the hand of God that my servants were slain, for that they had broken (they sayde) the great holy daye of our Lady's nativite. But I would fayne know what holy days those blood-thurstye hypocrites and malycious murtherers kepte, which had hired their cruel kearns to do that myschefe?"

But Upper Court did not long continue the seat of the Bishops of Ossory; the coronation

of Queen Mary drove Bale into exile, and John Thonory, a monk of Inistioge was by that sovereign appointed to the See. This prelate would seem to have considered his tenure of the sweets of office very insecure, and being therefore determined to make the most of them whilst they lasted, he sold several of the manors belonging to the See; amongst the rest disposing of Upper Court to Richard Shee, Knight, the founder of Shee's Poorhouse in Rose-Inn street. Sir Richard died in 1608, leaving his property to his son Lucas, who married Ellen, daughter to the second Viscount Mountgarret, and resided at Upper Court. He died on the 22nd July, 1622, and his wife erected the cross of Freshford as a monument to his memory. This monument originally stood at the back entrance to the demesne, the street leading to which is still called Bunacruisca—"the foot of the cross," but it was removed to its present position in the square of the village by a modern proprietor, who thus afforded the inhabitants of the place a means of intellectual amusement, of which they were not slow to avail themselves, in battering away the inscription armorial bearings, and other carvings, which decorated this monument. The inscription, though defaced, was legible a few years since, but, thanks to the indefatigable exertions of the Freshford urchins, not a line or letter can now be traced on the shattered base.

Lucas Shee was succeeded by his son Robert, whose property was confiscated by Cromwell because the Supreme Council of Confederate Catholics in 1641 held their meetings in his town house, still existing in Coal-market, and his son Richard being thus despoiled of his patrimony, carried an Irish regiment to Flanders into the Spanish service, during the exile of King Charles II., which was completely cut up at the seige of Arras. The manor castle, town, and lands of Upper Court, Freshford, etc., amounting to 2,259 acres, plantation measure, were

granted by Cromwell to one of his officers, Sir George Ayscue Knight, who succeeded in getting a confirmation of them under the Act of Settlement, notwithstanding that Bishop Williams, then filling the See of Ossory, instituted proceedings for their recovery, to which he was fully entitled, the sale made by Thonory being illegal; but he failed in his suit owing, as he himself complains, to Ayscue having had sufficient interest with the Sheriff to pack a jury.

There is no matter of historic interest connected with Freshford, save what is interwoven in the fortue of the various Bishops of Ossory, if we except one rather unimportant item noted by the annalist, Clynn—the birth of John, eldest son of the first Earl of Ormonde, which took place there on St. Leonard's Day, 1330. However, in connection with the demesne of Upper Court, we feel bound to make passing mention of one of its modern proprietors, the late Sir William Morres—a man of extraordinary though ecentric abilities—of refined and exquisite taste, an encourager of the Fine Arts in painting and sculpture, and himself an artist, as a landscape painter, of no mean order. The mansion of Upper Court exhibits in a very beautiful intaglio ceiling piece, representing "Apolle and the Nine Muses," the work of an Italian artist, and in its general design and arrangement, the only remaining memento of the taste of this erratic genius—except what has been preserved of his own designs after nature, one of which lately at an auction in London, a small but exquisitely finished landscape in water colours, brought the comparatively large sum of 10l. It is a disgrace to the taste of our Kilkenny amateurs to be obliged to record that at a recent auction at Upper Court two large portfolios of Sir William's unfinished designs in water colours were sold—for what?—Name it not in Gath—the sum of "two shillings and sixpence!" and at the same time some parcels of valuable prints were recognised

and purchased at a price which showed that the buyers knew and estimated their value.

From the late Mr. Tighe's valuable statistical account of Kilkenny, we may infer that Freshford, in common with all the other towns in our county, has not decreased in size, however it may have been reduced in trade, since the Union. Would the inhabitants recognise the Freshford of 1848 in the followng description?—"Freshford has 207 houses, including some miserable hovels in the outskirts, without chimneys or windows —there are, however, a few neat houses. It is a custom here to dash the roofs as well as the walls with white mortar, which preserves them, but is offensive to the eye. There are two distilleries here; but 32 houses in the parish paid hearth-money in 1800." We no longer see the white dashed roofs, nor do we recollect any house in the village without at least some apology for windows and chimnies —probably the withdrawal of the window and hearth taxes may account for the latter fact. But the two distilleries have vanished, and they even made their exit before the advent of Father Mathew—although the sport long survived the native "sperits" for, as a local poet says or sings

"—— 'Twas there was the fighting of cock
and of man,
Steel spurs and Shillelahs in mighty
request—
'Till Mathew came in like a canonized
Dan,
Spoiled drinking and fighting, and sport
that was best."

The two distilleries, however, for thirty-two taxable houses, reminds us strongly of Falstaff's farthing's worth of bread, to his inordinate quantity of sack.†

So much at present for the village of Freshford.

NOTES

* The extraordinary hallucinations, if not wilful mendaciousness of the Charlatan School of Antiquaries, who flourished in the last century, and of whom Dr. Ledwich may be considered the leader, cannot be better illustrated than by the translation of this inscription given by Beaufort in the "Anthologia Hibernica," with all the pravity of self-satisfied erudition—

"The priest, M'Roen and chief, gave this church the glebe of arable land; and over the door placed this stone, as a true token; and, with this favour, the land, slaves, and tribute."

Not one word of foregoing has reference or the slightest similitude to the true translation as given by O'Donovan. The worst part of this wretched dishonesty is that the mistake, or mis-statement, was copied into Gough's Camden, Lewis's Topographical Dictionary, and other writers whose works ought to be of authority, but who were deluded into taking so pompous a piece of ignorance for gospel truth.

† Indeed the Irish of 1802 must have been a hard drinking race, if we are to judge by Mr. Tighe's statistics, which show us the following very equitable proportions between the number of private houses and those that manufactured drink in the towns through our county—Callan, 530 houses, one distillery—no trade—do. manufactures. Durrow, one distillery—neither trade nor industry nor encouragement for them. Ballyragget, 214 houses, many of them wretched cabins, a brewery and two distilleries. Urlingford, 176 houses, 4 uninhabted, 5 unfinished—a distillery and a malthouse, etc., etc. This great decrease in the consumption of ardent spirits since the Union may perhaps furnish some of our political friends with another strong argument for the Repeal.

THE NORE BELOW THOMASTOWN

Part I.—From Ross to Ballyneale.

Neither the Antiquarian devotee nor the admirer of natural beauties can fail of striking upon a rich vein to be worked out for their purposes if they follow the quaint old chronicler, Camden's plan, and trace the rivers and their tributary streams throughout their various windings. The latter, it may be, cares not for the ancient Castle or the stately Abbey pile except so far as their ruined walls add beauty to the picture. He wants rock and wood, lawn and knoll, and, above all, water. He must then, to find these requisites, follow the course of the streams, for the retiring waters of the vast primeval deluge, in scooping out the river-vallies, have bared, at various points, the rocky skeleton of our globe, rounded the knoll, scarped the steep declivity, and thus grouped those features which, clothed with verdure, or robed with forest, or stained with lichen, comprise, with the living waters which flow amongst them, the varied beauties of the landscape. Whilst the Antiquary, although a regular Dryasdust who would not turn ten steps out of his way to behold the most lovely scenery in nature, must yet, perforce, follow the same track, for along the streams lies the richest lands, and therefore along their banks he finds disposed the ancient city or borough, the castle of the feudal lord, the more unpretending tower of his retainer and the fair Abbey of the Monk. Now we have taken it for granted that our readers are endowed with the best features of both those classes, and therefore in these, our "Nooks and Corners," we have endeavoured to mingle together all that was more rare and precious both in scenery and antiquities when describing the various localities of our county; and we think that in the selection of our present subject we have chosen not only the most beautiful scenic panorama which it boasts,

but also a locality full of rich family history, forming the home, too, of some of the most interesting of the few remaining wild traditions of other days which have been preserved to us in these degenerate and matter-of-fact times.

The village of Rosbercon, from which we set out upon our present voyage up the Nore, is a suburb of Ross, situated upon the Kilkenny side of the river and connected with the main portion of the town by a wooden bridge, the proportions of which, viewed from up or down the river, are light and picturesque. Standing upon this structure the view in both directions is very fine; below the broad estuary with its wooded banks; in the foreground Ross and Rosbercon "steep and steaming upwards," as Stanihurst has it, on either hand; many vessels with flaunting streamers lie along the quay; picturesque villas are seen beyond

"Bosomed high in tufted trees."

On the Kilkenny side, occupying the gentle declivity of a verdant lawn may be discerned the quaint gables of Annaghs Castle, whilst the distant view is bounded where the river bends off amidst the wooded hills. Above the bridge the varied landscape is backed by the bold form of Brandon Mountain, and includes in its scope the picturesque eminence on which Mountgarret Castle raises its dismantled head. Along the right bank of the river stretch the hills of Ibercon, called in the ancient topographical poem of O'Heerin,

"Ui Bearchon of the yellow surface,
* * * * * * * *
The land over the bright-watered Barrow.
The river itself
"Is buoyant with innumerable boats."

for the bright morning sunshine a fleet of cots are proceeding to the "stands" of the salmon fisheries.

Rosbercon, though now, as we have already stated, a suburb of Ross, was formerly a place of more importance. Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, in the thirteenth century made it a corporate town, giving it the same privileges already bestowed upon Kilkenny by the charter of the Earl Marshall, and its fine Dominican Abbey, founded in the year 1267 by the families of Grace and Walsh conjointly, was even in the beginning of the present century a noble monument of ancient taste and piety. This Abbey is now, alas! obliterated, and scarcely may be traced the site of its once stately aisles; but from its situation and the magnificence of the structure itself it must have been an object of great additional beauty to the still most picturesque landscape. Indeed, from the description given by the author of "The Memories of the *Grace Family*," we *may* form a good idea of the pleasure the eye derived from the combination of natural beauties seen through the frame work of its storied windows and high embossed arches. We cannot resist the temptation to transfer to our pages the entire of that author's most enthusiastic painting of the glowing picture:—

"The monastic ruins of Rossibercon are singularly picturesque and attractive. From the lofty tower of the church, supported on four pointed arches, and adorned with pinnacles, an arcade extends, formed by the interior south wall of the aisle, containing five Gothic arches of noble dimensions, over which are ten windows, each divided by mullions, and terminating in circular tops. Other less interesting remains, together with numerous tombstones, are dispersed around. But to the adjoining scene, as connected with the monastery, must be attributed the chief attraction. Seated on the River Barrow, which here magnificently expands, and is navigable for ships of considerable size, the eye contemplates, through a lofty row of

ivy-covered arches, the larger vessels occasionally passing in full sail, amongst the scattered and almost motionless specks of fishing boats. To this animated scene a noble background is furnished by the town of Ross, which occupies the side of a precipitous cliff, majestically crowned by the extensive and venerable ruins of the great conventual church and monastery of St. Saviour. The interspersion also of trees in the gardens through and about the cottages in its outskirts, even down to the water-edge, contribute to the enlivening variety of the picture. It is indeed scarcely possible to imagine a happier or more eloquent or more impressive combination of circumstances than this grouping presents for the pencil of the artist, the reasoning of the philosopher, or the reflections of the naturalist to pause upon."

Such was the Abbey of Rosbercon ere its fall, and the ancient families of Walsh and Grace have shared a like fate with the noble monastery which their piety had founded. Their names and titles have long since disappeared from the "pride of place" they once held; but whilst in their old native district of Kilkenny their name and lineage are thus only to be found in humble stations, and their former honours are to be read of in the musty Close Roll or graven on the ancient tomb, we may still find the patronymic of Walsh amongst the nobility of France, in which land they found a refuge, and the name of Grace, though in the direct line extinct, exists even in a modern Baronetage in the Queen's County. There are other matters of interest, too, connected with the history of Rosbercon Abbey which, however, we have not space to glance at here; but one deed perpetrated within its precincts, as recorded by the analist Clynn, we must briefly notice as affording a view of the strange state of society existing at the romantic period which it illustrates. It appears that on the twelfth day of April, 1328, William

Fitz John De Rue, the outlaw chief of The Roar, along with other "ill-doers," his followers and relatives, was pursued to Rosbercon, and there taking refuge in the Abbey they were dragged even from that sanctuary by the avenging enemy and cruelly slain without its walls.* The village or suburbs of Rosbercon present at the present day no very attractive feature; but the opposite town of Ross is still rich in memorials of the past. With it, however, we have nought to do in these our present writings, as it lies beyond the bounds of our county, and therefore we shall not detain our readers by lingering by its "Fair gate"—so-called after its founders, the ladies of Ross, as we find from the Norman-French rhymes of Michael of Kildare, who sang of that town in the time of King Henry III. Nor shall we trace its ancient fosse and wall, raised by the good burghers against "the Irish enemy"—we shall not either describe St. Mary's Church so disfigured by modern vandalism after the Ecclesiastical Commission fashion, or the tomb of Rose McRoom, so full of local historic interest, but shall content ourselves in placing on record our testimony that modern Ross still keeps up its ancient character as given by the old rhymer—

"——Other town on Irish ground
More hospitable is not found,
Or where the visitant may be
More welcome, prosperous and free;"

and though in these "piping times of peace" it cannot and needs not muster the gallant array of armed defenders erstwhile ascribed to it—

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*This interesting incident in the history of Rosbercon Abbey has altogether escaped the researches of Burke, Archdall, and all other collectors of monastic records, and is now for the first time printed.

"Of cross-bowmen, their number be
Three hundred else and sixty-three,
Of Archers muster at their call,
Twelve hundred proper men and tall
Of men at arms, with lance and axe,
Three thousand who ne'er turned their backs;
And ever more the same before
Of mounted knights five score and four."

Yet we still acknowledge that no other town in this good land boasts of "more fair dames" than the present descendants of the warlike ladies who assisted with their own hands to erect the wall of Ross, and whose memory yet retains a monument in the Fair gate.

The united streams of the Nore and the Barrow are locally termed "the Ross River," nor have we any objection to this title; however, we cannot by any means allow that after their confluence they can with propriety be termed the Barrow, as some people evince a strong determination to do. (Witness the passage of the "Grace Memoirs," before quoted). The Nore is, in the first instance, the larger stream of the two at their junction, and though Ferguson, in his tale of "Rosabel of Ross" calls the Barrow "the elder sister," yet we think the claim of seniority should be awarded to the Nore, if to either. Spencer also would seem to take our view of the matter when he speaks of

"The stubborn Newre, whose waters grey
By faire Kilkenny and Ross ponte board"—

thus calling the river at Ross the Nore. Under all the circumstances, however, "the Ross River" is the least objectionable and perhaps more correct title for neither can be termed a tributary to the other. "They spring," says Ferguson, "from the breast of one parent mountain, and after wandering each her own way, unite again in the

same valley and descend into the sea together; the Nore dances at times along a path hung with garlands and enamelled with daisies that are more than just types of her own sprightliness and purity, and the Barrow, in mature beauty, is majestic."

At the distance of about a mile above the "hospitable town" of Ross the junction of the Nore and Barrow takes place, beneath the high land crowned with the shattered ruins of Mountgarret Castle.—Garrett is the Irish name for Gerald, and there is an impression abroad in the locality that this stronghold took its name from Margaret Fitzgerald, daughter to the Earl of Kildare, who is traditionally said to have built it, and to have carried the property as her portion to the Butler family, upon her marriage, in the fifteenth century, with the eighth Earl of Ormonde, and to whose second son it gave the title of Viscount. This supposition, however, is entirely false. The castle was built, and the lands were termed Mountgarret, before they came into the possession of the Geraldines. In the year 1408 King Henry IV. issued a writ stating that as he understood Patrick Bishop of Ferns intended to build a certain castle, to be of lime and stone and strongly fortified, in the marches of the County of Wexford, at a place called Mountgarret, he should have the Royal authority to impress competent stonecutters and masons within the Counties of Kilkenny and masons within the Counties of Kilkenny, Wexford, and Waterford, to work at the building, but to be paid at the cost of the Bishop himself (Rot. Pat. 10 Henry IV., 181). In the year 1600 Thomas Earl of Ormonde stormed and took this castle from his cousin, the third Lord Mountgarret, then in rebellion against the Queen; and it was finally taken and dismantled by the Army of Cromwell after the siege of Ross.

Under the hill of Mountgarret then the sister streams approach each other, uniting, as Ferguson most poetically describes the

meeting, with, in summer, "a gush of gentle and subdued emotion, but their winter confluence is one of stormier delight and he who did not know that the same breast of mountain had fed the infant streams of both might mistake the tumult of their congratulation for the strife of floods." In another paper of this series we have described a pilgrimage along the bosom of the Barrow to the lonely and sainted shrine of St. Mullins, and yet the beauty of that valley haunts us like a dream. Its precipitous banks clothed with hanging woods, whose rich foliage dips into the stream, the "castled crag" where the tower of Coolkill stands in its lone and silent grandeur, and the wild, solitary and mysterious ruins of St. Mullins itself—all passed forcibly across our mental vision as upon a later occasion our boat's head leaving the Barrow to the right turned up the valley of the Nore.

With all those recollections vividly in our mind's eye, we were prepared, notwithstanding if we could do so with any show of impartiality, to give the palm of superior beauty to the stream along whose banks the happiest days of our boyhood had been passed. We loved the Nore as an old friend, the music of whose waters our ears had often drank in—as the stream par excellence of Kilkenny—of which we had in childhood learned to sing in the quaint words of an old local song—

"Oh! the Nore is long, swift and strong,
Smooth and blithe, very wide,
Running down by the dark-walk side—
You may view it from Ormonde's glory."

Yet we shall confess that when first we passed the point where its waters receive the Barrow, and for the first few miles of its course, we were disappointed. The primary rocks, ever bold and picturesque in their grouping, which form the valley of the Bar-

row for many miles of its lower course, give it a decided advantage over the Nore, to whose stream the granite strata nowhere approach sufficiently near to form a feature in its scenery. But yet it is not without its own peculiar beauty, and ere our day's excursion terminated we were almost inclined to pronounce it the fairest river of the two. Its lower course is indeed naked and its banks flat, but the hills soon close in on each side, and woods, here and there, skirt the water's edge, and creep up the hill side. On the east Brandon ever towers conspicuous, and, as you look down the stream, the Wexford range of Slieve Keiltha forms a grand background.

On the left bank of the river, at a short distance from the confluence, occurs the first locality worthy of note, from a curious tradition preserved with regard to it. It is the townland of Tinnerannny, originally the property of the Sweetmans, a family of Strongbownian descent; but it appears that the Greenes had set up a claim to the estate, backed up by some order or grant derived from Cromwell. Tradition states that at the period of the commencement of the war between James II. and William, the two claimants were involved in a tedious and expensive litigation, which threatened, if carried on, to leave both plaintiff and defendant somewhat similarly situated to the unfortunate wights who, wrangling about an oyster found upon the seacoast, were awarded by the Court a shell each, whilst the hungry lawyer devoured the more valuable and nourishing condiment derived from the fish itself. Probably, having the fear of such an unpleasant result before their eyes, the Sweetman and Greene of that day agreed to leave their several claims to the decision of the "fortune de guerre," and Sweetman placing his hazard upon the success of the Stuart monarch, Greene staked his chance upon the fate of William's cause. They then looked quietly on at the contest, awaiting

the result, when of course Greene was successful by the triumph of Orange, and the elder title of Sweetman passed for ever from his hands. The same tradition, however, informs us that the successful claimant generously gave his defeated adversary ten of his paternal acres, as a free grant, by way of salvo—although at the present day we cannot find any trace of this liberal gift.

Journeying onward upon the bed of "the pleasant river," the nakedness of the banks on either hand for some miles mars the effect of the scenery, till we arrive at the plantations of Ballyneale, on the western side, which are extensive and give much beauty to that part of the stream, but the timber is yet young. Here our attention is attracted by the ancient Church of Dysartmoon, adjoining Ballyneale village, but as an inspection of that fane would naturally lead us into a review of the family history of the De Fraynes, who there have found a last resting-place, which would swell our present notice beyond the prescribed limits, we must defer it to our next leisure, when we shall have to lay before our readers matter both historical and traditionary, which, we hope, will prove of interest.

Part II.—The De Fraynes of Ballyreddy.

In pursuance of our design of travelling up the Nore we had arrived, in our last chapter, at that portion of the river where the plantations of Ballyneale on its western bank open to the eye of the tourist as he proceeds towards Inistioge. Those woodlands, though yet young and scarcely more than fringing the river's banks and the hill sides above it, are, nevertheless, as we before said, suggestive of interesting associations in the shape of family history, and of a period when the place now occupied by those young plantations was covered with noble forest trees, the remains of the an-

cient woods which once extended over this island, and portions of which still shroud the sister stream of the Suir during part of her course through the golden vale of Tipperary. But before we arrive opposite the little village of Ballyneale we cannot fail to notice the bold rocky and wood-covered promontory of Ballyknock with the little retired and wooded valley of St. Saw. The valley takes its name from having at one time formed a portion of the property of the great crouched Friary, or Monastery of St. Saviour, at Ross; and the rock of Ballyknock, beyond its interest as forming a somewhat striking object in river scenery, is also remarkable for containing at its base a cavern, which is still pointed out with awe and reverence by the rude boatman and simple peasant, for

"This silent spot tradition old
Has peopled with the spectral dead—
A fearful tale!————————————"

A mysterious legend is indeed connected with it, and although it is difficult to find out from the people around what the exact and full details of the story are, yet there is little doubt that the dark recesses of this cave, at some period, were the scene of a bloody deed. The nearest guess that can be made at the meaning of the tale is that during one of the intestine and civil brawls which so quickly trod upon each others heels in this unhappy country, a brother shed a brother's blood in that dark and lonely cavern, and that his motive in doing so was to prevent that brother, whom, as the legend says, he loved, from meeting some more fearful fate which inevitably threatened him. The tradition is a wild and curious one, and, however vague, must add an interest to this part of the river.

As we move slowly past the quiet little valley of St. Saw, with its religious memories, holy as the silence that hangs over its

thick shade of underwood, and as the occasional fall of our boatman's oars keep our boat's head straight up the river's course, with the gentle inland tide making with us —and whilst we regard with curiosity, not unmixed with that pleasing awe which an old mysterious legend has for us, the tall and precipitous outline of the rock with its dark clothing of trees and ivy, interspersed with the golden hue of the furze blossom, and here and there the many hues of its weather and lichen stained nakedness—as we listen to the last words of the undefinable legend which drop from the mouth of the most intelligent of our crew—the spell is broken, and one or two bold and vigorous strokes from our stalwart rowers bring us alongside of Ballyneale village and the ruined Parish Church of Dysartmoon. The latter object would not of itself be worthy of much attention, for though antique and ruinous, it is small and possessed of no feature of architectural beauty; but within its precincts is the last memento of an ancient and noble race which long occupied this locality; and in the old black marble and escutcheoned mural monument to which we refer the tourist will see all the record that now remains here of the knightly and powerful family of the De Fraynes of Ballyreddy.

The family of De Frayne, or De Fraxinis, was of great antiquity, and claimed descent from Rollo, first Duke of Normandy, who married Gisla, daughter of Charles the Simple, King of France. The third son of this marriage, Harlovan, was father of another Harlovan, who left a son, Fulk, who left a son, Alexander, who left a son, Alfrin, who was contemporary with William the Conqueror and the companion of his English invasion, and from Alfrin, or D'Alfrain, the race of De Frayne descended. Several members of the family filled high stations under the English Kings prior to the time of Henry II., but during the reign of that monarch Sir Herbert or Humphrey de

Frayne accompanied Strongbow in his expedition against Ireland, and acquiring large possessions in the province of Leinster, settled at Ballymacuoge in Wexford. He had two sons, Patrick and Nicholas, whose descendants early gained distinction and ranked amongst the most powerful of the Anglo-Norman Barons. In 1302 several letters touching the service in Scotland were sent by the King to Fulko De Frayne, one of the "fideles" of Ireland, and in the following year he accompanied Edward I. to Scotland at the time he conquered that country. In 1316 William De Frayne fell along with the Lord Thomas Butler in a battle with the Irish at Mullingar. In 1333 Fulk and Oliver De Frayne, amongst the other magnates of Ireland, attended Edward III. with their followers to Scotland and took part in the battle of Halidown. In 1342 Fulk De Frayne was rated at 10 men at arms and 20 hobelars to attend the King in the war with France, and in 1346 he distinguished himself at the battle of Cressy, as also at the siege of Calais, where, jointly with the Earl of Kildare, he commanded the Irish portion of the English Army. In 1361 Lionel Earl of Ulster created John, Patrick, and Robert De Frayne Knights, and the Historian Campion states that these gentlemen were the worthiest then in chivalry; members of the family also sat as Peers in all the Irish Parliaments of those times. The De Frayne family acquired their property in the district of Ibercon by the marriage, in the beginning of the fourteenth century, of Geoffrey de la Frayne with Johanna Purcell, the heiress of the Barony. On the 12th September Fulco Fitz Fulco de Fraxinento also received from the King a grant of all the lands forfeited by John de Carmerdyn, a traitor, in the liberty of Kilkenny; and on the 29th August, 1346, the King granted to Fulco de la Freigne all the land and tenements forfeited by William le Graunt, a traitor, in the County of Kilkenny, and

valued at 20l. per annum; in discharge of that sum, which Ralph de Ufford, Justiciary, had convenanted to pay him for his assistance in peace and war. A few notices of the Kilkenny branch of the family from the annals of John Clyn, a contemporary writer, may not here be uninteresting:—

"1320. On Sunday, 14th November, the Lord Fulk de la Frayne is slain by William and Silvester de Marisco, and the satellites of Edward Butler, whilst he was endeavouring to save his fellows and the faithful of his county from being by them despoiled.

"1333. In this year was slain by the O'Mores of Slieu Margy, on the Sunday after St. Remidius, the Bishop's day. Geoffrey de la Frayne, who had married Johanna Purcell, the heiress of O'Bargi.

"1336. In the summer there was war between the Lord Fulco de la Freyne, upholding and favouring the part of the English of Ossory, and Lysaight O'More.

"1338. On the vigil of the ascension of Our Lord, the Lord Eustace Le Poer, Seneschal of Kilkenny, attacked and imprisoned the Lords Fulco and Oliver de la Frayne, notwithstanding that there was no ostensible cause for his making such an arrest. But the said Oliver, fearing rather his malice and vengeance than the rigor of the law, prudently escaped from the Castle of Kilkenny, where he had been confined, on Ascension Day, and on the morrow, having assembled their followers and friends, with a strong force he returned, and breaking open the gates of the castle, delivered the Lord Fulco from custody in despite of the Seneschal.

"1334. At Christmas the Lord Fulco de la Frayne, Seneschal of Kilkenny, burned the town of Moydeshil and the whole country of the Comsey (County of Tipperary), and expelled the malefactors named St. Aubin, and did not leave them a house to live in.

"1346. On Sunday, after the Feast of St. Martha, Roger de la Frayne, Sheriff of Kilkenny, took a great prey from Carwill

M'Gilpatrick and from his men, such as in these parts was scarcely remembered to be taken for many years.

"1347. On the Feast of the Seven Bishops died Roger de la Frayne, Seneschal of Kilkenny, a noble youth, prudent and discreet, who would have come to a high pitch of honour had he not been prevented by premature death.

"In the same year, on Friday after the Feast of St. Nicholas, died Oliver de la Frayne in the office of Seneschal of Kilkenny—a good man, modest and prudent.

"1349. On the Feast of St. Moling the Bishop, died Fulco de la Frayne, who imprudently trusted the perfidious promises of the Irish, and was in consequence treacherously slain by them. He was a man eminently skilled in war and military affairs from his youth; a defender of the public peace from evil-doers, scarcely leaving his like in Ireland. He extirpated the Ronches and Cauntons, those oppressors of the faithful—a magnanimous man, not fearing the threats of the great—a man liberal and having more than the name of a man—profuse in sharing his substance, and shutting his door against none."

Branches of the family were settled at Carrick, in Westmeath, and at Athlumney, in East Meath, besides Wexford and Kilkenny, and they possess many descendants at the present day whoe patronymic, however, has been generally changed into Freign, Freny, or French—the latter is perhaps the most numerous, and is the name of one of the clans of Galway. On the death, in the middle of the fourteenth century, of Sir Patrick De Frayne of Ballynacuoge, County Wexford, his cousin, Oliver De Frayne, then Seneschal of the County of Kilkenny, succeeded to his honours, and became the head of the family. One of his grandsons, James, changed his name to Freynche, and was the ancestor of Nicholas French, the "turbulent Bishop of Ferns." Patrick French,

the grandson of the above James, was sent as a judge into Connaught, where he founded the Galway clan of his name, and his present representative is Arthur French of French Park, County Roscommon, who upon being elevated to the Peerage in 1839, in memory of his ancient family name, assumed the title of Baron de Freyne.

But the elder branch of the family so long settled in Kilkenny County have no longer "a local habitation and a name" amongst us, and their ancient castle and demesne of Ballyreddy, situate amongst the almost sterile hills and bogs near Ballyneale, are now obliterated, the only monument of their former dignity and honour being, as we before stated, the tomb in the old church of Dysartmoon. The somewhat ostentatious inscription upon the stone informs us that it is "sacred to the memory of the Lord Robert Frayne, a man truly pious, munificent, and hospitable, descended from the ancient knightly race of De Frayne, the Lords of Ballyreddy, Ballyknock, etc., who died on the 17th May, 1643, and his wife, Elenor Fitzgerald, daughter of the Baron of Brownsford." An old family pedigree, which now lies before us, states that on the death of this Robert Frayne his lady caused his body "to be kept nine weeks before it was interred, attended daily by a multitude of Roman clergymen and others; and during that time she built in the beautiful church of Dysartmoon, in said county, being part of her estate, a handsome vault, which she erected for her and her descendants, and wherein the said Robert was the first interred."* This Robert Frayne left two sons,

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* In the troubles of 1798 a poor old woman who had been rendered houseless burrowed into the vault of the De Fraynes, under the monument, and made it her abode. It is told of her that in the course of her excavations she found the silver plating of Robert De Frayne's coffin, and sold it to a dealer in Ross for the sum of eighteen shillings.

James and Thomas, and the troubles subsequent to the civil wars of 1641 occurring during the period when the former occupied the dignity of representative of his family, he endangered his property by enrolling himself against the Crown, and subsequently against the Parliament; however, the same old pedigree asserts that he saved his possessions for a time, having been "courted by Oliver Cromwell as a husband for his nephew, Colonel Asdell's daughter, which match was agreed upon with this condition, that the said James Frayne was to continue in peaceable possession of his entire estate." But fortune, it appears, did not smile upon the bridal contract, for though "the nuptial day was appointed, when the said James Frayne, Esq., was crossing the Ferry of Ross, in order to be married, one of his horses kicked a plank out of the cot, when he and all along with him were drowned, which stopped that alliance."† His brother, Thomas Frayne, succeeded him, and married Ellen, daughter of Edward Forristal of Carrickcloney, a near relative of the Duke of Ormonde, through whose influence Frayne, "for his strict honour and great integrity, was employed in the office of High Sheriff of Kilkenny for three years successfully, being a man much esteemed by the populace, who were then almost ungovernable." Under the act of settlement Thomas Frayne seems to have been offered an estate in the County of Clare, in exchange for his patrimonial inheritance, which would appear to have been declared forfeited, Ballyreddy, Ballyneale and Ballyknock having been granted to Maudlin, the widow of Edward Fisher, of Cradockstown, Co. Kildare. However, he

† This tragic incident forms the plot of an exceedingly interesting tale, by no unskilful hand, in the number of "Duffy's Catholic Magazine" for November last, and which was reviewed in our columns at the time of its publication.

clung to his old family estate, refusir the offer of transplantation, and this rash resistance seems to have led to the ruin of his descendants. He was succeeded by his son James, who married Ellice, daughter of Nicholas Aylward, of Alwardstown, and ancestor of the present J. K. Aylward, Esq., J.P., of Shankill Castle. This James Frayne seems to have been involved in an expensive litigation in the fruitless effort to retain his ancient patrimony, and although his right to the estate in the County of Clare was specially acknowledged by a grant, dated the 13th year of Charlss II., from "His Majesty's Commissioners appointed for hearing and determining ye claims of transplanted persons in the Province of Connaught and County of Clare," he did not avail himself of it, but still fondly but ruinously clung to the old estates of his family. Whether the loss of these was precipitated by his engaging in the war of 1690 on the side of he Stuarts, we have not ascertained, but it appears from an inquisition taken on the 23rd May, 1694, that there were in the custody of Balthazar Cramer, Samuel Booth, John Haddock, and John Eaton, Commissioners appointed for the purpose, "134 sheep and 61 lambs, lately the property of James Freny of Ballyreddy, which were forfeited to the King and Queen on account of the late rebellion." Even after the final confiscation of his patrimony, he refused to leave the neighbourhood, and obtained a lease of an adjoining farm called Brownstown. He died in the year 1724, and from his will, a copy of which lies before us, he appears to have been then in comfortable circumstances as a wealthy farmer. He leaves fortunes to all his children, one of whom was an officer in Queen Anne's service, and another was lieutenant on board a man-of-war, bequeathing his leasehold property to his eldest son, Robert Frayne, after the decease of his wife, to whom he demises for her life his house and farm, with 200 ewes

and their lambs, all the wool of his flocks, lodged in his storerooms, and all and singular her jewels, rings and ready money. Robert Frayne of Brownstown, the heir and executor of the will, however, encountered a severe reverse of fortune; from some cause of which we are unaware he became a pauper, and about the year 1750 was ejected from the farm; but, like his father and grandfather, he refused to surrender the property till the Sheriff with a body of soldiers drove him from his home, and he turned out upon the world a houseless wanderer. His eldest son, Thomas, went to Dublin to seek his fortune, and the neighbouring peasantry love to tell of him, that with true filial affection, the first guinea which he earned he walked home with to give to his then poverty-stricken father. This young man subsequently died without issue in December, and with him terminated the direct line of the once powerful De Fraynes of Ballyreddy, whose eventful history we have endeavoured here to compress into a short narrative, but which would be sufficient to form an interesting volume.

The simple peasantry of this locality have still amongst them retained a recollection of the iron feudal times when this family bore absolute sway in their little territory. Tradition here yet speaks of the ancient knights De Frayne, and that with a kind of awe and terror which is curiously illustrative of the petty despotism of those ages. The stronghold of the feudal chief is obliterated, his woods have disappeared long ago beneath the innovating axe—

"The knights are dust,
And their good swords rust,"

yet blended wth the local superstitons, the legendary lore of the district has preserved the memory of their tyrant rule, and more than one instance of their arbitrary deeds.

Even the ladies of the house are stated to have been wicked termagants who used to tear the caps and ribbons of the peasant women at church on Sundays, and the knights would allow none of their vassals to wear good or showy clothes, lest they should be as gay and grand as themselves! There is a lonely spot called by the people "Glan a Plunkonet," or Plunket's Glen, in Listerling, adjoining Ballyneale, connected with which is a legend—

"A tale more fit for weird winter nights,
Than for those garish summer days, when
we
Scarcely believe much more than we can
see."

Here did "Budesha Freinigh," or Knight de Frayne, bury alive a tailor named Plunket and his reason for thus cruelly putting the poor artiste to death was that he had disappointed him as to the making of a suit of clothes which were to have been ready by a certain day. The legend goes on to state that whilst the atrocious deed was being perpetrated a supernatural voice was heard to exclaim in the air: "guilfer—guilfer—guilfer," that is, "you shall pay for it.' De Frayne was startled at the words, and demanded, who shall pay for it? When the voice answered "not you, but your seventh generation," De Frayne is reported to have replied with much "sang froid," "If it is to go so far, the devil may care!" The prophetic doom is looked upon by the peasantry as having been fearfully fulfilled in the fall of the family from its high estate. The descendants of the cruel knight are said to have been ever after haunted by the aerial voice, and no one will, if it can possibly be avoided, pass that way after nightfall; for Plunket's tomb still remains, a lonely cairn in the middle of a corn field. The farmer who occupies the land was adventurous enough some twenty years since to determine

upon removing the heap for tillage room, but the labourers gave up the work with horror when they met the tailor's bones; it is even said they found his scissors.

In more modern tmes, that is to say, about a century since, flourished the last of this remarkable family who made a noise in the world—namely—"Jamse Freny, the robber." If to be the hero of a popular book be fame, Freny was famous. His "Life and Adventures," a rather unpresuming publication, "printed for the flying stationers," formed one of the hand-books of the youth of the past generation, and even still, we believe, it holds a place amongst the rustic classics. This doughty personage was born at Ballycocksaust, a portion of the ancient family patrimony, situate near Inistioge, and was in early life bred up a servant in a gentleman's family; but he wearied soon of such servile drudgery, and manifesting an insurmountable passion for living by the strong hand, which he probably inherited from his ancestry, he took to the road and became the leader of a most notorious and successful gang of Freebooters. His favourite haunts and lurking places, too, were about the spot where his family had flourished in the olden time. From Thomastown to Ross and Waterford he was well known, and in the wild hills of the district some of his most daring robberies were planned and executed. His name, unlike that of some of his knightly forefathers, is held still in love and reverence by the peasantry, for with a feeling similar to that manifested by many of his profession, whilst he preyed upon the rich, he was liberal to the poor. We cannot omit to mention of him that, unlike his cruel ancestor, he once had mercy on a tailor. A few stanzas from a rude old local song, once popular in our county, but now almost forgotten, will best tell the tale here of the passage between the bold highwayman and that most fortunate member of the Cross-legged Corporation—

" As by Thomastown I took my way
I met a tailor dressed most gay,
I boldly bid him for to stan'

Thinking he was some gentleman,
And its oh! bold Captain Freny—
Oh! bold Freny oh!

" Upon his pockets I laid hold—
The first thing I got was a purse of gold;
The next thing I found, which did me surprise,
Was a needle, thimble and chalk likewise,
And its oh! bold Captain Freny—
Oh! bold Freny oh!

" ' Your dirty trifle I disdain '—
With that I returned him his gold again
' I'll rob no tailor if I can—
I'd rather ten times rob a man! "
And its oh! bold Captain Freny—
Oh! bold Freny oh!

Many other wonderful exploits are told of the " bold Captain," but are they not to be found on record in the aforesaid " Life and Adventures? "—some of the passagee detailed in that rustic chronicle are indeed chapters of romance ready cut and dried for the novelist, and it is strange that Lever, in introducing Freny as a character in his " Knight of Gwynne," should therefore evince so little knowledge of his real character and history. He was by far a more dignified rogue than the Dick Turpins and Jack Sheppards who form the stock-in-trade of so many of our Romancers, and his end was more fortunate, for though he had lived a thief he died an honest man, and a Tide Waiter, under the Board of Excise, at Ross, having been saved from the usual exalted fate of heroes in his profession, through the interest of the then Earl of Carrick.

Having now disposed of Ballyreddy and its family history, our space forbids us to journey for the present any further. But

we shall soon, we hope, conduct the reader to more familiar as well as more beautiful regions along the banks of "the novice Nore.'

Part III.—From Ballyneale to Cluan.

After the long digression in our last chapter, detailing the family history of the De Fraynes, we trust our readers will feel pleasure in once more floating with us upon the broad highway of the Nore, which at every reach of the stream now shows some new and beautiful scene. Ballyneale with its woodlands, church, and legends, is left behind, and journeying onwards many a splendid bend, rich grassy slope and wood-clothed eminence is passed before our boatmen rest upon their oars once more at the mouth of a tributary stream, the Clodiagh—a spot well known to the simple navigators of the river from the dangerous bar which this impetuous mountain torrent has pushed out across the channel.

The Clodiagh has its source on the western shoulder of Brandon, and crosses the road from Ross to Inistioge at Allen's Bridge. The stream comes down to the Nore brawling fiercely through a wood-clothed ravine which gives much interest to the spot, for its waters thus confined in a rocky channel form many little cascades of great beauty; the oak and rowan-tree, with the evergreen holly, spring from its rugged banks on every side and over-arch its unique bed. As you approach the point of its junction with the Nore, the hoarse murmur of falling waters breaks on the ear, and at length a deep dark chasm opens to the river beneath, and the stream is seen to fling itself into a basin hollowed in the clay-slate rock, from which it rises again, eddying and foaming, and precipitates itself into a deep pool, known as the Kerry-hole. The common fame of the locality represents this dark abyss to be bottomless, and if the authority of our veracious car-driver, Walsh,

whose queer story we gave in a former chapter when speaking of the Barrow, is to be relied on, common fame in this instance cannot by any means be stigmatised as a common liar. At high water a boat can float up to the very foot of the fall, and from hence the best view of it is obtained. The rocks which form the sides of the chasm are stained with lichens of a thousand dies—plump grass and graceful nodding fern, gemmed with spray, spring from every crevice—the delicate green of the frohan, or whurtleberry, mantles each ledge and slope, while the twisted branches of the oak fling themselves across the narrow strip of sky, and the graceful mountain-ash waves its scarlet clusters in the breeze—as beautiful a natural ornament as any

"———That earth, the general mother
Pours from her fairest bosom when she smiles
In the embrace of autumn———."

Leaving behind us this romantic scene, we are again rowed up the Nore, which still improves in beauty, and the banks are more gracefully furnished with wood as we advance. We have not proceeded far until the scenery begins to assume the true picturesque character. An abrupt bend of the river, closed in on the right bank by a steep shelving declivity of several hundred feet in height, clad with young larch timber, and on the left by rich woods dipping their branches into the stream, gives it the appearance of a lake—

"Where the fresh breezes from the forest told
Of grassy paths and wood, lawn interspersed
With over-arching elms and violet banks."

Whilst still labouring under the pleasing fancy that we are embayed amongst the richly foliaged banks and our further course

about to be altogether interrupted immediately by the tall precipitous crag of Carrickoneil, our boat rounds the point, and gradually and beautifully the scene opens; every stroke of the oar brings some new and romantic feature into view, until at length the grey and riven walls of Cluan, or Clonmery Castle, bursts upon the sight seated boldly on its wooded knoll over the broad majestic river, with its grotesquely pointed gables, its massive chimneys and picturesque turreted angles, whilst at a greater distance from the stream, on the opposite side, rises dimly the dark, battlemented outline of the more ancient donjon keep of Brownsford, and the noble woodlands behind which with the background of bold mountain scenery, all form a "coup d'œil" that a skilful painter might portray, but which language cannot adequately describe. Many of our readers, we have no doubt, are familiar with the beautiful view of the first named ruin as seen from the quay or landing place at the Red House of Woodstock, but in our mind the prospect presented as you come up the river far exceeds it—it is indeed surpassingly beautiful, always supposing the tide to be full in, for banks of thick sludge are certainly a sad drawback from the graceful outline of a river's margin.

Cluan Castle in the point of picturesqueness of situation stands, in our county, second only to Coolkill, on the Barrow, but the former has legendary and family lore connected with it which gives it much greater interest than the tower of the semi-barbarous Roaches possesses. One of those legends account for the curiously shattered appearance which the Castle present, it being riven at two opposite angles from the battlement to the foundation. The tradition relates that one of the Barons of Cluan, at a period long gone by, for his mere amusement, hanged the only son of a widow, his own vassal, from those very battlements;* and the caoine made by the desolate and broken-

hearted mother is yet well remembered in the neighbourhood, and when chaunted in the Irish tongue, with the peculiarly wild intonation and pathos of the peasantry, it is singularly touching and impressive. After upbraiding the cruel Baron for having murdered her boy, "her beautiful, her brave"—for having, as the caoine expresses it, "raised him on high and not looked up to him with compassion"—the poetess turns prophet and predicts ruin and desolation to the stern chieftain and his stronghold to the former loss of property and the extinction of his family, to the latter that it should become the residence of the birds of the air, and the animals that burrow into the earth, whilst its walls rent asunder should give free passage to the winds of Heaven in their course. Her prophecy seems to have in it the truth of inspiration—when the Sybil spoke, the legend asserts there was high revel and reckless wassail—now

"————In place of it
The ivy and wild creeper interknit
The volumes of their many twining stems
Parasite flowers illume with dewy gems
The lampless halls."

In fact the peculiarly desolate character of this ruined tower is by the country round universally attributed to the retributive justice of an avenging Providence in visitation of this cruel deed.

Of the great house of Fitzgerald there was no fewer than three families of minor importance located in the County of Kilkenny. Of these the Barons of Burnchurch were of greater note, and were descended from Maurice, the first Knight of Kerry, otherwise called "the Black Knight." The families of Fitzgerald of Cluan and Gurteen would appear to have been branches from that of Burnchurch, and the head of the first mentioned was styled Baron of Brownsford and Clonamery. He was not a peer of Parlia-

ment, but of a second-class nobility, holding somewhat the rank and precedence of our modern Baronets. However the title went into general disuse about the sixteenth century, and such Barons as were not actual peers, began to be considered as Esquires only; but the Fitzgerald of Cluan had been so long known as "the Baron" in his own locality, that the title became a kind of second name, which was generally used with alias, whilst sometimes the original patronymic was dropped altogether, and the title used in its place. Thus we find Miles, Abbot of the Monastery of Inistiogue, who was created Bishop of Ossory in 1527, always termed Miles Baron, because he was the son of Fitzgerald, Baron of Brownesford; and at the present day many descendants of that ancient house continue to use this adopted name—amongst the rest Sir Henry Winston Barron, Bart., M.P. for Waterford. The Castle of Brownesford, a tall and massive tower, the outworks of which are now obliterated, was the ancient family residence, but some centuries subsequently, in times of greater refinement—probably in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, the more picturesque and comfortable seat of Cluan or Clonamery was erected upon the opposite bank of the Nore. An inquisition was held at Kilkenny on the 25th of March, 1584, by which it was found that Edmund Fitzgerald, alias Baron, then lately deceased, had been possessed of the castle, town, and lands of Brownesford, with two salmon weirs upon the Nore, which were held from the Earl of Ormonde by knight's service, the castle, towns, and lands of Cluan, Coolnamuck and Ballygub, which he held from the King by knight's service, and several other adjoining lands and tenements, such as Baronsrath, Ballynabarna, Coolsilege, Curraghmore, a burgagery in Ross, two messuages in Inistioge, and a water mill upon the river. He was succeeded in the property by his grandson, David Fitzgerald, alias Barron, whose daughter, Eleanor Ger-

aldine, was wife of Robert Frayne of Ballyreddy, and the erector of the monument in Dysartmoon Church, to which we had so often to allude in our last chapter. This David died in 1621, and the cross which stands in the Square of Inistioge was, as appears by the inscription, a monument raised to his memory by his widow. The inscription is curious as showing that the claim to the honour of the Baronage was still locally asknowledged—

"Orate pro animabus domini David Geraldin, dicti Baron de Brownsfoord. Obiit 14 Aprilis, An. 1621. Et Joanne Morres, obiit. * * *"

His son, Edmund Fitzgerald, was the next proprietor of the patrimony. In 1626 he took out a patent under the Commission for the "remedy of defective titles," which secured him in free enjoyment of his estate by the payment of a yearly rent of 7l. to the Crown.† The respectability of the station occupied by this gentleman may be inferred from the fact that his daughter, Mary Fitzgerald, married Arthur the third son of Morgan M'Brian O,Kavanagh, chief of the sept called Slegiht-Dermot, of Pealmonty, by his wife Elenor, second daughter to Richard third Viscount Mountgarret; we also find this Edmund Fitzgerald of Brownsford upon the roll of Representatives returned to sit in the Supreme Council of Confederate Catholics at Kilkenny. His connection with that Convention would appear to have well nigh led to the forfeiture of his family property, for though he died before the period of Restoration, his son and successor, Edward Fitzgerald, was held responsible for his "nocense" in the rebellion, and luckily escaped with the loss only of a part of Brownsford and Curraghmore, amounting to 63 acres, which were "retrenched" and vested, by virtue of the Act of Settlement and Explanation, in the King, who subsequently granted them to the Bishop of Ossory. This Edward, or as the peasantry call him, in Irish, Eadert, was,

however, the last of the Fitzgeralds of Cluan, as he subsequently contrived, by an active support of the cause of King James II. to incur the forfeiture of his entire patrimony and the attainder of his family. In the Parliament held in Dublin on the 7th May, 1689, by the exiled King, Edward Fitzgerald in conjunction with James Bolger of Ballynabarna, represented the Borough of Inistioge, and he subsequently raised and equipped a regiment of his tenants and retainers, at whose head he fought in the eventful fields of the Boyne and Aughrim. After the success of William of Orange, Fitzgerald's property, then consisting of 1685 acres of land held in fee-simple, was seized into the hands of the trustees of forfeited estates, and having been set up to public auction on the 17th June, 1703, at the sum of £208 10s., was knocked down to the *Hollow sword*-blade company at £1,473, but subsequently conveyed to Captain Stephen Sweet, on payment of the same money.

So far historical documents have furnished us with information as to the fortunes and fall of the last lord of Cluan and Brownsford, but tradition goes further and supplies us with some information of romantic interest respecting him. He was, it is said, a beautiful harper, and in the dismantled ruins of his castle the window is still shown looking out upon the winding Nore, where he swept the chords of his clairseach or native harp. That master-hand has been long cold, and the silvery chords of the instrument unstrung but yet the memory of the minstrel soldier lingers round his old domains. He was slain, it is stated, at Aughrim, the last fight made in Ireland for the cause of a weak, unworthy and ungrateful Prince. The morning after the battle his war-horse was found standing at the stable door of Cluan, and by this the retainers, who recognised the intelligent animal, knew that "the master" had fallen in the fight. Their surmise proved but too correct, and thus the vassals who returned

from the fatal field told of his death. When the Lord of Cluan perceived the Irish Army beginning to retreat he called to his "boy," or page, for his horse—he addressed him in Irish, sorrowfully, but affectionately—"Arra Pat, my good fellow, give me my horse"—but how much more pathetic would the words go in the language in which he spoke them. However, the faithless horse-boy had already been seized with the panic which prevailed, and jumping himslf into Fitzgerald's war saddle, he left the unfortunate proprietor, jack-booted and spurred, to his fate. Fitzgerald, the legend goes on to state—certainly to the prejudice of the romance of the entire transaction—ran a mile and a half in his boots before he was overtaken and cut down by a Dutch trooper. After his fall two of his followers came up, and recognising the body, amidst the first feeling of their grief a recollection of his sweet strains was uppermost, and one exclaimed poetically to the other in Irish—"feach miar bing a clairseach!"—that is, "look at the sweet finger of the harp!" The names of these two retainers were Cavanagh and Synnot, and their descendants still live amongst the peasantry of Cluan, and love to recount this tale of times long gone by.

Amongst the inquisitions taken in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to ascertain the extent and value of the property belonging to the Fitzgeralds of Cluan and Browusford, their fishing weirs upon the Nore are always mentioned as a most important item. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth the Corporation of Inistioge had assumed to itself the exclusive right of fishing the river, but the Baron of that day having instituted legal proceedings, obtained a writ from the Court of Chancery securing and recognising his privilege to fish within the bounds of his own property. In the "Book of Postings and Sales" wherein is set forth the advertisement of the forfeiture of Edward, the last of

the family, and the invitation to purchasers to come forward, an inducement is held out by the hint—"These lands have good benefit of fishing"—and the Right Hon. W. F Tighe, the representative of Stephen Sweet, who then became the purchaser still enjoys the profit, we believe no inconsiderable one. of the several fishery here. where the "gur gites," or fishing weirs, of the old Barons of Cluan are still in active operation. In relation to the fisheries of the Nore, there is also a legend which we may perhaps be excused for here inserting; for, if we mistake not our class of readers, a genuine legend must be always acceptable. It is told then by the peasantry that long, long ago, when St. Moling was residing at his solitary monastery in the deep recesses of the lone valley which the Barrow forms below Graigue, and when St. Evin, the Patron Saint of New Ross, then called Ross-mastreoin, flourished in that ancient town, and possessed broad lands, above the junction of the sister streams, along the flowery margin of the Nore, those two worthy churchmen had various disputes which were very harrassing to the finny tribe in their periodical journeys from the ocean up to the sandy spawning places at the distant sources of the rivers. St. Evin used sometimes to command them all up the Nore in order to benefit them at his fisheries, while St. Moling, no less anxious to secure good fasting fare, as continually countermanded the poor obedient fishes, and ordered them up the Barrow, that he might bring them into his own nets. However undignified those bickerings between their ancient Saintships may appear, posterity is bound to regard them with a lenient eye, for it must not be forgotten that even modern churchmen will sometimes indulge in perhaps equally vindictive and unseemly squabbles both for loaves and fishes. But be this as it may, the ancient finny inhabitants of our local rivers were fairly puzzled what to do between the

contending Saints—in fact, they were regularly so overpowered and tormented with bans, interdicts and excommunications that they became prematurely spent, and with their relations in the modern verse, it is not improbable, they

"————Beginning to sweat
Cried d——n it, how hot we shall be,"

for being good pious orthodox fish, they did not like to disoblige or disobey either of the thoroughly orthodox Saints. Well, if all this did not get the finny genius into hot water, it certainly embroiled the two churchmen in various very unedifying feuds, which ended in such fierce heartburnings and recriminations that at the suggestion of their mutual friends they agreed to leave the matter as it were to arbitration, and accordingly it was arranged that upon a certain day then named the rival saints should proceed from their several establishments to the point at tlie junction of the rivers, and then and there at a certain specified hour—the fishes frequenting these waters being sitting in solemn conclave—upon the statement of the respective claimant's cases, this ancient "congress of cods" should decide like honest and upright fishes to which stream they felt in conscience bound to give the preference, and to that stream should they for ever after adhere. Accordingly one fine summer morning St. Moling set out from his cloisters on the Barrow, and wending his toilsome way along, he passed Coolkill and Ferry Mountgarret, to Reinkmore, modernly corrupted in Ringwood, and a long and weary walk he had of it sure enough. By the time he reached the trysting place he felt exceedingly tired, and finding, upon taking a synopsis of the sun that he was more than an hour too soon upon the ground, and there being no one s yet in attendance, he lay down under an old boat sheiling and was soon fast asleep. Now, St. Evin, who had scarcely a mile to travel from Ross, took the matter more easy,

and just arrived at the exact hour appointed; so he looked about for his opponent, and at length discovered his lying in the shade and snorting most lustily. "Ah," says the Ross Saint, "there you are, my old dust, and I'll soon do your business." Accordingly St. Evin went to the river bank, where the fish were already mustered, and stated his case to them in an exceedingly oratorical and argumentive discourse, which appeared to the court altogether unanswerable. However, proclamation was made for the rival advocate to come forward in his own behalf, and his non-appearance was immediately decided to be a regular contempt, whereupon judgment was suffered to go by default, and it was determined that from thenceforth for evermore the salmon should always choose the Nore as their parent stream, whilst the Chads, a miserable and meagre fish, alone were suffered to frequent the Barrow. The resolve being come to, off went the fish rejoicing that their difficulties were all now removed, and everything was most satisfactorily arranged; and then St. Evin wakened St. Moling and communicated to him the irrevocable decree of the finny convention. The poor saint of the Barrow was obliged to take the trick in good part, for there was no tribunal of appeal, and from that day forth his brethren and himself had to mortify their stomachs with the tasteless and dry Chads

"On Fridays when they fasted,"

whilst the Monks of Ross, luxuriated upon the rich curdy salmon.

To say the truth we cannot tell how to reconcile this most veracious and curious story with Spencer's description of

"——The goodlie Barrow which doth hoard
Much store of salmon in its deep bosom,"

nor with the present reputation of that river for the same palatable fish. But we must only conjecture that at the period of the Reformation, or in the heretical days of the Wicklifites or Lutherism, the salmon of this river became contaminated with the new doctrines, and waxing regardless of their religious observances and long customs, separated at the water's meeting, and indifferently took the left or right passage up the "Stubborn Nore" or "Goodly Barrow." It is, at all events, consolatory to reflect that a large proportion of them remained firmly orthodox as the fisheries of Woodstock and elsewhere can to this day testify.

Before concluding this part of our subject, we must not omit to mention the ancient Church of Cluan, situate near the Castle. Surrounded by a grateful shade of forest trees, the spot is one of much seclusion, but the ruin derives its principal interest from the fact of the great antiquity of a portion of the structure. The mason work is of cyclopean proportions, ever the index of remoteness of construction; and the door-way, situate in the west gable, is flat-headed, with inclined sides of the true early Christian type. On the upper lintel, or architrave, is sculptured in relief a cross of shape called in heraldry "pattee"—a most remarkable feature. It is curious that this church, though of the most remote antiquity, and possessed of so much interest, has been altogether overlooked by the careful and laborious Petrie in his great work on early Irish ecclesiastical architecture; we can, however, promise the antiquary who may be inclined to visit the spot that he will find it a perfect gem.

We must here again break off, hoping at an early date to loiter with our readers amidst the pleasant woodlands and along the mountain streams and rocky waterfalls of Woodstock.

NOTES

• The story runs that the youth was wild and dissipated, and the poor mother complaining of his misconduct to her feudal master begged that he would interpose his authority and endeavour to reclaim him. The baron told her to send the lad to him and he would soon "quiet" him. The mother departed rejoicing, but having sent her son to the castle, was horrified to have his dead body returned to her with a message from the cruel lord to the effect that she would now find the scapegrace "quiet enough!"

This wild tradition has been most unfairly dealt with by two lady tourists of the book-making and twaddling tribe—Mrs. S. C. Hall in her "Ireland—its Scenery, Character, &c.," more properly "Ireland carricatured and humbugged," would appear to have forgotten to mention it when noticing Woodstock, where, of course, it was related to her, but not being very particular about such trivial matters, she turned it to account elsewhere, and ascribed this incident to a castle situate in Tipperary or Queen's County, we forget which, but where it was altogether out of place. Lady Chatterton, in her "Home Sketches and Foreign Recollecions," with more honesty gave it is proper locality, but drew freely upon a fertile imagination for very unnecessary embellishments. Here is her perverted version of the curious legend—

"Clewen Castle belonged formerly to the Fitzgeralds, and is now fallen to ruin in a very peculiar manner. The four corners of its large square tower are rent asunder, and through the fissures thus formed, the wind howls with a strange unearthly sound. The wild legend, which I give as related to me, accounts for this peculiarity of its destruction in the following manner:—The last Baron Fitzgerald to whom it belonged gave

one night a splendid feast within its walls. He was boasting of its wealth, and of the uninterrupted prosperity which his family had enjoyed for many generations when a person describing herself as a poor widow came to the door and begged for charity. Fitzgerald repelled her with disdain, and angrily reproved her for interrupting his enjoyment. The widow immediately assumed the form of a banshee—that well-known apparition, which always foreboded death to one of the ancient family of Fitzgerald. The baron and his guests trembled at the sight, and their mirth was turned into sadness. But after a few minutes Fitzgerald gazed steadfastly on the supernatural being, who still remained under the great gateway of the banqueting hall, and said to his companions —"Let not your hearts be sad; if my hour has come I will die bravely, as my fathers have done." "You will not die as your fathers did," said the banshee, "for they fell on the battlefield, and their spirits now dwell with God; because during their lives they were ever mindful of the poor. No beggar was ever turned from their doors, and therefore a blessing attended them and their possessions. Proud Baron! your hour draws near, and I came to try your heart. If I found it open to charity, your race would have continued long to enjoy its ancient greatness, but now that you have proved unworthy, you shall miserably perish! This castle, under whose splendid roof you have forgotten that the poor dwelt without, exposed to the howling tempest—this proud castle shall be rent asunder; and as long as the world lasts, its ruined walls shall remain open to the four winds of Heaven!" So saying, the banshee disappeared in a loud clap of thunder—the castle was struck by lightning, and the great tower, which sustained the banqueting room, was torn asunder at the four corners. The roof fell in upon the Baron and his guests, and thus

perished the last of that powerful branch of Fitzgeralds, or Geraldines, as they were generally called."

† The original of this patent, an elaborate parchment document with the great seal of Ireland pendant, is at present in the possession of the Rev. Philip Moore, R.C.C., Rossbercon, to whose antiquarian taste and diligent research amongst the old inhabitants of the surrounding district we are indebted for much of this legendary lore embodied in these papers.

Part 4—Woodstock.

Woodstock! for the Kilkenny people what a charm is there in the very name!—how mingled with many memories of long blissful sunny days, of happy social "fraternisations" amidst its green nooks and pleasant woodlands, by the broad river's side, or up the rocky torrent's course. Many a young heart will beat high when the name is spoken at recollections of love-passages which have, ere now, taken place in "Lennox Bower," or "The Red House." Many a head now, perhaps hoary, will remember the time when in health and youth its owner footed it there featly in the mazy dance; and not a few of those who will read this paper, some perhaps even now grilling their livers 'neath India's burning sun, will turn back with all the fondness of first love to memories of those pleasant rustic Balls which so often wound up with a most delicious impromptu "petit soupre" of new potatoes and fresh-caught salmon. And so it is—and will be; youth will fade into age, but love, song, and delight, are never dead. Yes! when we mention the name there comes before our mind's eye a thousand visions of "places of nestling green," made not so much for poets as for pleasure parties—of bowers kept open for us

"Full of sweet dream, and health, and
quiet breathing,"

forming ever "flowing bands to bind us to the earth"—of trees young and old, "sprouting a shady boon to simple sleep," the lush oak, the graceful ash, the darkly-piled sycamore, the vivid green of the early budding chestnut with its pyramidal blossom, the tall elm, the noble Scotch fir, the evergreen pine, hanging in many a terraced height along the fair hill-side over the noble river—even as we write

"A scent of violets and blossoming limes
Loiter about us—and of honey-cells
Made delicate from all wild flowers' bells."

To speak of Woodstock, indeed, is "to tell of goodly bowers and gardens rare," for truly unrivalled in the South of Ireland are those, extensive, almost paradisaical "pleasaunces," with their cool deep grottoes, their rockeries, waterfalls, and fountains—their alternate mazy paths and terraced walks, with glorious stretching vistas whose side-long aisles of noble forest trees are ever backed by the stately and giant outline of Brandon or the scarcely tamer form of Mount Alto—unrivalled indeed are their rare and beautiful flowers, some lifting high their heads in luxuriant exotic beauty beneath almost temple-like domes of costly glass, others creeping at their own sweet will into the forest wilderness that stretches beyond those trim parterres. Yet with all these attractions we must not too long dwell upon the noble gardens and exquisitely kept demesne, but return to our river pathway and keep along its course to the park entrance at Inistioge.

Many a party who spent a long summer's day at Woodstok, have enjoyed an excellent cold dinner and have gazed complacently upon the bottles of champagne, which were to wash it down, as their silvered swan-like necks reared their tempting forms trembling in the sparkling spring hard by; a single "nook or corner" has scarcely

escaped their prying search, and every object of attraction is supposed to have been beheld and admired, but at the same time they have in reality missed the most exquisite scenery in the locality, having explored all the ways of the place except "the watery way" afforded by the river's bosom in that part of its course between Cluan Castle and the bridge of Inistioge—

"Where from a certain point to its winding flood,
Seems at the distance like a crescent moon."

Did the Nore not present us with one single other object of beauty, this two miles of its course would, of itself, stamp it as a noble river. Oh! that we could worthily tell of the majestic multudinous leaved trees that cluster on its banks, where one might wander many a day long

"Through wilderness and woods of mossed oaks
Counting the passing minutes by 'he strokes
Of the lone wood-cutter————————"

of the rich lawny inches that stretch away here and there from its brink—of the kine grouped beneath the shade, lazily lowing in luxurious enjoyment of the calm summer day—of the woods piled on high, tier over tier, in all their mingled and varied glories of foliage—of the gently drooping tress-like sprays that bend lovingly down to kiss the grey waters of the Nore—of the distant glimpse of healthy mountain steep, caught between the woods, showing purple in the clear bright day—of the islets that divide the stream, some ozier-covered and rich in "palmy fern and rushes fenny," some crowned with noble sycamore, of varied and increasing loveliness which "can never pass

into nothingness."

But since we could do but small justice to those natural beauties, we shall content ourselves with pointing out, as our bark glides up the stream one or two objects of interest. Brownsford and Cluan Castles are left behind, and the next spot on the bank opposite to which we rest upon our oars is the Red House, a modern semi-Elizabethan looking building, raised something over the river, having a terrace in front and within a large room for the accommodation of pleasure parties, and where an album is kept in which twaddling tourists scribble their effusions. These same twaddlers, amongst the foremost of whom may be reckoned Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, one fond of preserving drawings of the Red House as seen from the river—a picture which presents no very striking feature that we can discover—but they seem altogether to overlook the magnificent prospect to be beheld from the Red House itself, in which the Castle of Cluan on its wooded eminence makes so fine a feature, backed by the closing hills and superb bend of river. The Red House is also a station for pleasure and fishing-boats, and opposite are the extensive salmon weirs of Mr. Tighe to which we alluded in our last chapter. In the immediate neighbourhood is one of the sweetest glens in the demesne, through which winds with a beautiful devious course a rocky stream that near the glen's mouth precipitates itself over steep crag, forming a double fall, a perfect miniature of Poulaphooka. A pathway runs along the margin of the stream and across a rustic bridge, every turn leading to new combinations of close rocky scenery, enriched with the most varied foliage, and high above upon an overhanging cliff stands "the cottage," a very tastefully formed rustic structure in keeping with the romantic picture. This glen forms the scenery of the closing chapter of Banim's "Fetches"—it is there-

fore made classic ground. Our native Novelist has no doubt exaggerated the extent and wildness of the scene, which nowhere ascends in reality, to sublimity, though it often rises to grandeur, and is everywhere highly picturesque. The scene will, however, be dear for Banim's sake, if not for its own beauty, to everyone interested in in our native literature—they will never visit it without thinking of the striking close of the tale where the dying Tresham mistakes the real appearance of Anna for her fetch, and where they plunge together from the precipice above the cataract and are lost in the abyss of whirling waters beneath.

Ascending the Nore we next perceive on the Woodstock side a ruined house situate upon the river's very brink. It is a long building with two rows of windows to the front looking out upon the water, but was never possessed of much pretensions, and, ivied and lichen covered as it is now, it is, perhaps, a more beautiful object than when it was inhabited and rejoiced in formal regularity. The remains of this "modest mansion" are interesting, however, as being the family residence of the proprietors of Woodstock—of those who first applied to the demesne that title in the early part of the eighteenth century.

Our readers will not, perhaps, have forgotten that we have before mentioned the fact of Captain Stephen Sweet of Kilkenny, an officer of King William's army, having purchased the forfeited estates of poor Fitzgerald of Cluan, who was slain at Aughrim after the rout of King James's force. Struck with the romantic beauty of the spot, Captain Sweet erected a residence for himself and family in the centre of its most picturesque scenery. He died on the 7th August, 1725, in the 65th year of his age, leaving an only daughter, Elizabeth, who had married Kenrick Flowers, Esq., the only

son of William Flowers, who on the 14th March, 1689, was appointed conjointly with Lord Shelburne, Ranger and Gamekeeper, or master of the game, Ranger of the Phœnix Park, and of all the parks, forests, chases and woods in Ireland; he was also Sheriff of Dublin in 1697, and Lord Mayor in 1708, and was created a Baronet of Ireland on the 26th October, 1724. Sir William outlived his son, but his grandson, William, only son to Elizabeth Sweet, succeeded him in 1735 as the second Baronet. In 1749 he was Member of Parliament for his own Borough of Inistioge, and in 1761 he represented Knocktopher; he was also sworn of the Privy Council, and married Lady Elizabeth Ponsonby, daughter to the Earl of Bessborough; but dying without male issue, the title became extinct. Sir William, however, left an only daughter, Sarah, who in 1765 married Wiliam Tighe, Esq., of Rossana, in the County of Wicklow, the descendant of an ancient Milesian family whose original patronymic was McTeige. Mr. Tighe, of Rossana (who was the grandfather of the Right Honourable William Fownes Tighe, the present proprietor of Woodstock), was the son of William Tighe, Esq., Keeper of the Records in Birmingham Tower, and Member of Parliament for Clonmines, by Lady Mary Bligh, daughter of the Earl of Darnley; and his grandfather, Richard Tighe, also was one of His Majesty's Privy Council. We have thus accounted for the manner in which the estates of the old Baron of Cluan passed from the purchaser, after their confiscation, to the present possessor, but we are uninformed as to which of the descendants of Captain Sweet it was who abandoned his original residence and erected the present mansion of Woodstock.

Nearly opposite the old house a brawling mountain stream comes down from Brandon, dividing the townlands of Kilcross and Oldcourt. Its course is singularly beautiful

as far as the eye can see it from the river's bed, leaping from rock to rock in foamy ire, amidst overhanging clusters of rowan trees and holly branches, and drooping weeds—

" ——————————a lush screen
Thick, as to curtain up some wood-nymph's home "—

until emerging with a headlong dash it flings itself precipitately into the broad Nore over a rock some 30 or 40 feet high. Immediately opposite the Waterfall, on the Woodstock side of the river, glimmers through the foliage, the latticed and trellised windows of a very pretty cottage, all overgrown with woodbine and roses intertwining round its rustic verandah, from which—when we visited the spot for the purpose of this present writing—we could see issuing

" Fair faces, and a rush of garments white
Plainer and plainer showing—'till all past "——

doubtless some pleasure seeking party bound to the Red House along the widest valley of the wood, which here keeps by the river bank, surmounted by a magnificent wall of rocks and screen of hanging woods, as beautiful an avenue as poet ever wandered through.

From this point to Inistioge the river, though beautiful as before, presents no object calling for an individual description; and as our boat lands us at the town we may be permitted to enter the principal avenue of the demesne leading to the house, and, by the way, conduct our readers to one place of view from which, perhaps, the finest prospect is to be obtained—although in that rich demesne of five hundred acres of woodlands hanging in one noble shade to the river, and abounding so largely with beautiful landscapes, it is hard to select one from the many. The foreground is made grand by some of the noblest forest trees we have ever seen—many of them entwined

with parasite plants, some sweeping the green sward with leafy tendrils. Between is a vista showing beyond it, first a ferny underground of woodland through which the antlers of a fine troop of deer are visible, and beneath it the noble river sweeping along towards the far-off Wexford hills. Brandon, in the background, its bare empurpled head rocky and fern clad. Beneath the mountain rich cultivated terraces slope down to the river side with their bright white farm homesteads gleaming in the sun. Immediately below the graceful arches of the long picturesque bridge stretch across the gentle flowing river. The village of Inistioge at our feet with its shattered mural defences and its ivy covered abbey tower. Passing along from this enchanted landscape we plunge through the forest shade and soon reach the modern house of Woodstock, a very superb and beautiful structure, rich in many gems of art, and possessing some beautiful pictures. Its principal attraction, however, is its association with the name of Mrs. Mary Tighe, who here collected

"The graces that adorn her first wild song"—

the exquisite poem of 'Psyche, or the legend of love'—where she passed the latest years of her life, and near which she was buried. This lady was a daughter of the Rev William Blashford, and was born in this county in the year 1773. She gave early indications of surpassing talents, and her beauty and accomplishments procured numerous suitors for her hand. Her marriage with Mr. Henry Tighe was entered into when she was extremely youthful, but she was early attacked with severe bodily infirmity which deprived her of the use of her limbs; however, in the intermitting hours of protracted suffering she solaced herself by the indulgence of her

rich poetic taste, being compelled to have an amanuensis to commit her thoughts to paper; and her compositions have been declared to be the finest which ever appeared in this or any other language from a female pen. She died at Woodstock on March 24th, 1810, in the thirty-seventh year of her age. Her tomb is in the graveyard of the ancient Abbey of Inistioge, and is enclosed in a plain mausoleum. The monument itself is a very beautiful design, and is an illustration of the superior elegance and touching effect of the altar tomb and recumbent effigy, even when combined with modern costume. Mrs. Tighe is represented as reposing on a couch, and there is a volume of fine intellectual expressioin about the face. Mrs. Hemans, a sister poetess, whose name is better known, visited the monument, and thus describes it:—

"We went to the tomb, 'the grave of a poetess,' where there is a monument by Flaxman: it consists of a recumbent female figure, with much of the repose, the mysterious sweetness of happy death, which is to me so affecting in monumental sculpture. There is, however, a small Titanian-looking sort of figure, with wings, sitting at the head of the sleeper which, I thought, interfered with the singleness of effect which the tomb would have produced; unfortunately, too, the monument is carved in very rough stone, which allows no delicacy of touch. That place of rest made me very thoughtful; I could not but reflect on many changes which had brught me to the spot I had commemorated three years since without the slightest idea of ever visiting it; and though surrounded by attention and the appearance of interest, my heart was envying the repose of her who slept there."

The interest of this monument is perpetuated in more than one of the beautiful lyrics of Mrs. Hemans—a fitting tribute from a fair child of song to a sister in the gentle

profession of the minstrel.

But Mrs. Tighe was not the only literary member of the family. The late William Tighe, Esq., father of the present proprietor, was a man of the most profound research and undoubted talent. His "Statistical Survey of the County of Kilkenny" is a book of sterling and lasting value as a work of reference, and contains a large mass of most important and curious information, collected by him with indefatigable perseverance and industry, on every subject connected with the undertaking. His brother. Mr. Henry Tighe, was also an accomplished scholar and cultivator of literary taste. Mrs. Hemans in the letter to her sister, above quoted, bears this testimony to his talents:

Amongst other persons of the party was Mr. Henry Tighe, the widower of the poetess. He has just been exercising, I found, one of his accomplishments in the translation into Latin of a little poem of mine; and I am told that his version is very elegant."

We may fitly close this chapter by also extracting the general description which Mrs. Hemans gives of the scenery of Woodstock; her testimony to its varied beauties is very high and competent authority, and no one who knows the place will be likely to gainsay the truthful and graphic picture which she draws of it:—

"The scenery of the place is magnificent—of a style which I think I prefer to every other; wild profound glens, rich with every hue and form of foliage, and a rapid river sweeping through them, now lost and now lighting up the deep woods with sudden flashes of its waves. Altogether it reminds me more of Hawthorden than anything I have seen since, though it wants the solemn rock pinnacles of that romantic place. I wish I could have been alone with nature and my thoughts; but, to my surprise, I found myself the object of quite a reception. There was no help for it, though I never

felt so much as if I wanted a large leaf to wrap me up and shelter me."

In our next chapter we shall notice the ancient little Borough of Inistioge, with its scenery and antiquities.

Part 5—Inistioge

Reaching the spot at which the tidal water of the Nore ceases, we are at Inistioge. From thence, in following the course of the "stubborn" stream, we must wander by the river-side pathways where the gleaming water

"Gurgles through straiten'd banks, and still doth fan
Itself with dancing bulrush, and the bream
Keeps head against freshets."

Here and there we shall have to make detours through woodlands or shady lanes, when either some bold rock forcing itself down to the water-side or a tributary stream impedes our passage. The placid surface of the pastoral river will be no longer broken by barge or lighter, or even by a boat of such dignified pretensions as the six-oared gig in which we have hitherto travelled, but whose services can be no longer of use to us. The flat-bottomed cot of the fisherman, or the small pleasure-boat which never leaves its quiet bit of river ponded by the mill-weirs, we shall now only see. But before we proceed along those quiet woodland alleys to "where the jaunty streams refresh themselves" let us for a while linger at Inistioge.

We shall suppose ourselves entering the village by the Ross road. For some time we have overlooked the valley of the Nore, with the shattered tower of Cluan below us, and the magnificent woodlands spreading all around. Between the closing hills, in the middle distance, we see the river bending off towards Ross and the far removed Wexford hills. Now the whole glorious panorama is

shut out as we plunge into a closer landscape; magnificent forest trees overhang the way, and on the gentle slope of the hill-side to the right of the road we pass a pretty cottage, though one of those abortive modern attempts at the Elizabethan style. But we shall not abuse its incongruities because there are trim parterres around it, and

> "A bush of May-flowers with the bees about them;
> Ah! sure no tasteful nook could be without them"—

beside many other luxuries "bright, milky, soft, and rosy." The sight of so sweet a retreat reminds us that we are entering the village, and in a few minutes more we stand upon the bridge, the last that crosses the Nore—a graceful bridge, too-, though not a very ancient one.

Who ever passed over a bridge without gazing up and down the river which it spans? He must be, indeed, an indifferent traveller who on such an occasion looks straight on his road and neither turns to the right or left—such a man would travel "from Dan to Beersheeba and say all was barren." The view down the river from the bridge of Inistioge shows the Nore wandering through islands beautifully wooded until it is lost amdst the glades of Woodstock. Up the stream we see it brawling between the little town and the bold rocks which spring from the water's edge at the other side. Passing on, we remark the remains of the old town wall where it bounded the borough to the south-west. The decaying mural fortifications of an ancient community form a sight which we ever loved to gaze and ponder on, and here they are rich in all the beauties which nature delights to spread over every relic of the past—ivy and wall-flowers and lichen of glorious colour; but besides, what

every old town wall cannot boast, here they are loaded with more delicate creepers, which, being not "native here," show that the cultivating hand of man is about them also. They are decked, too, with

"Clumps of woodbine taking the soft wind
Upon their summer thrones."

and roses clinging amongst and mingling with the dark ivy, so that the shattered wall forms indeed a pleasant object as you enter the peaceful little village which in more iron times it guarded.

There are few villages in Ireland and certainly not one in our own county so beautiful as Inistioge. It has all the elements of the picturesque about and within it; situate in a lonely valley, surrounded by lofty hills, watered by a noble river, having within its boundary an ivy-clad abbey tower, and the remains of its mural fortalices, besides being neat and full of pretty houses, decorated by many choice flowering plants which show by the luxuriance of their growth that the snug little settlement is sheltered from "all the airths the wind does blow"—with such advantages, so many and so varied, we think we may venture to hold it up as a rival to the most favoured localities in Ireland. The name of Inistioge ("-inch-tih-oge"), we believe, signifies literally—"the island of the Virgin's house." In this country low-lying meadows upon the margin of rivers, though not surrounded by water, are commonly termed "inches", and a religious establishment was early made here dedicated to the Virgin Mary and also to St. Columb, who have been ever since esteemed "the especial patrons of the place." The town, like many others in our county, derives its origin from the monastery, around which it sprung up, and from which it obtained its first chapter

of incorporation. The church feuars who constituted its earlier population held the Prior as their lord temporal as well as spiritual, but, in later days, being made by royal charter a regular borough, it did not, like Jerpoint and other similarly constituted communities, fall into decay with the suppression of the monastic establishment from which it drew its first existence; and although now deprived of its privileges as a municpal and parliamentary borough-town, it is yet, under the fostering care of a beneficent and resident landlord, a prosperous and thriving village.

The ruins of Inistioge Priory constitute the principal claim of the town to be considered of antiquarian interest. These remains have been, by a misfortune only too common, converted into a parish church, and it is needless to say that the transformation is, as usual, effected in very bad taste. We have, however, preserved as an adjunct to the church the handsome steeple which, with a new cloister, was erected by the last Prior, Milo, in the beginning of the sisteenth century; and the original belfry of the abbey, a curious tower, square below and rising to an octagon shape, still remains in all the majesty of decay, whilst around its base spreads an enclosed graveyard luxuriant in dark coned shrubs of cypress and laurel, making shady nooks where in early spring

> "The leprous corpse, touched by that spirit tender,
> Exhales itself in flowers of tender breath
> Like incarnations of the stars."

It is a fitting burial place for a poetess, for here it is that the mausoleum to Mrs. Tighe stands, of which we spoke before in our chapter on Woodstock; we would wish again, nevertheless, to linger for a moment upon a spot containing the ashes, and made sacred by the inspired fancy of that singularly gifted

woman—to gaze once more upon that face which, though but sculptured by mortal hand, yet seems so life-like in the expression and mark of that intellect which the original so eminently possessed, that we might almost deem it placed there

"In mockery of monumental stone."*

The original religious house of Inistioge seems to have been founded so early as the year 800, but this Culdee institution would appear to have been suppressed upon the English invasion, for the only fact in the way of ecclesiastical history which we can find recorded of the place between the arrival of Strongbow and the establishment of the Augustinian Canons there about the year 1210, is a statement in Allan's Registry (vol. 21) *that in the reign of Richard I. Prince* John, Lord of Ireland, confirmed to John Comyn Archbishop of Dublin, amongst other possessions in Ossory, "the knight's fee in Inistioche, which by his consent had been previously given to the Staff of Jesus "† The monastery of which the ruins at present exist was founded by Thomas FitzAnthony, Seneschal of Leinster in the reign of King John, and grantee of under that monarch of a fair tract of land in the County of Kilkenny. He conferred the foundation on the Canons of St. Augustine, dedicated it to St. Mary and St. Columb, the ancient patrons of the place, and, by the advice of the Bishop of Ossory, appointed Alured, a Monk of Kells, but originally of Bodmin in Cornwall, the first Prior, giving him ample possessions of land and titles for the support of the establishment. It is strange that the annals preserved of so important a Priory should be meagre and but of little interest the following are all that are to be found in books or records:—

1218. Alured, the Prior, granted to St. Thomas's Abbey, Dublin, all the rights which

he had received from Stephen Archdekin Knight. viz., the moiety of the churches of Kilcormac and Thullabarry with their appurtenances. Witness Ph. de Eray, and the Lord John de Vesey. The grant was continued by Archdekin. Witness, Thomas Fitz-Anthony, Senechal of Leinster (King's Collections).

1318. The King granted a licence to the Prior and Brethren of the Blessed Virgin at Inistioge, that Henry Fitzhenry de Rupe of the Roar might have liberty to give them the advowsons of the churches of the Roar and Listerling, and two acres of land in each of those places, by the way of glebes, to be held by them and their monastery as alms for ever‡ (Rot. Pat. II. Edwd. II., 178).

1324. On St. Dominick's Day died Brother David, Prior of Inistyoke, a man much to be venerated and honoured as one who had acted justly towards God and man (Clyn's Annals).

1355. John Modberry, the Prior, received foul treatment at the hands of a brother ecclestiastic, Stephen, Prior of Kells, who was tried and found guilty of committing a robbery upon him, and fined therefor twenty shillings. (King's Collections).

Milo Fitzgerald, one of the Cluan family, was the last Prior. At his own expense he built a new belfry and cloister for his abbey, and in the year 1527 he was made Bishop of Ossory, still holding his priory by a dispensation from the Pope till the general suppression or religious houses; he then surrendered the monastery of Inistioge, with all its possessions, to the town, and received therefrom, in lieu, an annual pension of £20 Irish for his life. He repaired the Bishop's palace at Kilkenny, and gave to the Cathedral "a crozier staff of silver and a fair marble table for the altar." Ware informs us that in 1550 or 1551 he "died of grief, which in old men is often fatal, and was interred amongst his ancestors at Inistioge." All the possessions of the priory (amongst which are enu-

merated eighteen burgageries within the town of Inistioge and a tribute of forty-six hens payable yearly from the tenants of the same) were granted by Queen Elizabeth to Edmund Butler, brother to the Earl of Ormonde. The last religious ceremonial witnessed in the old Priory of Inistioge was the consecration there of John Tonory as Bishop of Ossory in 1553, by order of Queen Mary, in the room of Bale, the Protestant Bishop, whom she deposed and sent into exile. Tonory, like his predecessor, Fitzgerald, "died of grief for the loss of his goods by thieves."

So much for matters ecclesiastical; it is fitting that we should now glance at the military and civil history of the village. Of the first there is not much remaining on record. About the year 815, according to Keating, when Hugh Orindighe was King of Ireland, a fresh swarm of Danes landed on the Wexford Coast, and marched into Ossory, plundering on their way the towns of Teach Muna (Tagmon), Teach Moling (St. Mullins, and Inis Tiog, the inhabitants flying terror-stricken before them; but whilst ravaging Ossory (the present County of Kilkenny) "the people of that country rose upon them and with great bravery attacked the foreigners, who were unprepared for an assault, and were intent upon carrying off their booty, and after a desperate and bloody conflict gave them an entire defeat, and slew 707 of them on the spot." In the year 1324, near Christmas, Arnold Le Poer, Seneschal of the County of Kilkenny, gathered together an army at Inistioge, with which he wasted the territory of the Roar, and forced its proprietor, Henry de Rupe (the former benefactor of the abbey), who was in rebellion against the King, to surrender and swear allegiance to the throne. At the same period William FitzJohn de Rupe of the Roar, was imprisoned for treason in Kilkenny Castle, and in 1311 the property of William de Rupe, who was hanged for a similar offence, was

confiscated. The sum of £100, a large amount in these days, was disbursed from the Treasury to Arnold le Poer as the expense of maintaining his army at Inistioge whilst subduing the rebellious de Rupe family. In 1649, whilst Cromwell was at Ross preparing to lead his victorious army into the County of Kilkenny, the Duke of Ormonde, reinforced by the regiments of Hugh O'Neill, advanced his troops from Graigue to Inistiogo with the intention to prevent the Parliament's army from crossing the Ross river; however, finding that the passage had been already effected by means of a bridge of boats, the Duke retreated to Thomastown, closely followed by Cromwell ," upon which," says the historian, " Enistego, a little walled town, about five miles from Ross, was reduced by Colonel Abbott," who was one of Cromwell's officers. The town was not garrisoned or fortified sufficiently to have made any lengthened resistance. How it came to be fortified at all we are unaware, as it does not appear to have ever obtained any charters of murage; however, some of the walls and two of the flanking towers yet remain. Its two gates, called " The Court Gate " and " The Burgagery Gate ", have been long since removed.

The civil history of Inistioge contains, perhaps, the most curious and interesting memories connected with the town. The formation of the borough was somewhat singular, the charter of incorporation being derived from the Prior and not from a lay lord of the soil. We had, however, some other similarly constituted corporations in this county, such as that of Irishtown, which derived from the charters of the Bishops of Ossory. These charters in the case of Irishtown are completely lost, and the original grant to Inistioge being fortunately still on record, we consider it of sufficient interest here to present our readers with a full translation. The deed was made somewhat within the first

twenty years of the thirteenth century :—

" Know all men, present and future, that I, Alured, Prior of Inistioc and Canon of the same, have granted, and by these presents do grant, to our Burgesses of Inistioc all the liberties which it befits Burgesses to have and me to grant. ' Imprimis,' viz., that no Burgess shall be impleaded in any cause which arises within the boundary of the borough, in the Prior's Court or elsewhere, except in the Hundred Court of the Town. That it may be lawful for the Burgesses to hold said Hundred Court in their town one day in each week, where they may plead without vexatious delay, and that none of them shall be fined except by the consideration of the Hundred Court; and that if any Burgess shall be fined he shall give security to us for 12d., of which 6d. is to be paid to us, and the other 6d. to be forgiven, without the infliction of corporal punishment, except in the cases of old offenders. That no foreign merchant shall be permitted to cut cloth or hold a wine-tavern in the town of Inistioc, except for forty days, and if he wishes for a longer space he can only obtain it when it appears to be for the profit of the town. That no Burgess shall be compelled to give bail for anyone, though he holds under him, except with his free will. That said Burgesses be permitted to have a Merchant's Guild and other guilds, and to take customs and tolls with all liberties to them belonging, as is the privilege of other good towns. That they may dispose of their burgageries as seems fit to them, provided they do not injure their neighbours, and that they whose holdings are situate near the river may extend them over the water, so, nevertheless, that the ancient way be not impeded. We also grant that they may sell or mortgage all their conquests, saving the services and customs due to me and my successors. The said Burgesses to have commonage of our woods and to have common pasture over the entire thereof out-

side the bounds of cultivated lands, meadows and enclosures. That no Burgess be compelled to supply cattle (to the Priory) unless be first have security for payment at a certain time, and if any Burgess shall by his own free will give cattle to the bailiffs of our court, if there be no certain time appointed, he shall be paid within forty days. That the said Burgesses may set part of their tenements to free tenants to the extent of 20 feet; and that they (the tenants) shall have common liberty with the Burgesses. That they may prove their debts by credible witnesses. That they and their heirs hold their Burgageries from us and our successors, freely and peaceably, together with thirty acres of land assigned to each burgagery, paying to us or our successors annually for each burgagery, in lieu of all services, twelve pence, to be paid in two terms—to wit, sixpence at Easter and sixpence at Michaelmas. And the constitution of the Burgesses is such that after seizen of his land granted, each Burgess reside thereon in 'propria persona' within three weeks, or lose his tenement for ever. We also will that no assize of victuals shall be made in said borough without the common consent of the Burgesses and our Bailiffs. And that this grant may remain firm to all future times; we have corroborated it with our seal. Witness—Thomas FitzAnthony, Adam FitzMilo, M. FitzGriffin, Stephen FitzA, Rodger Russell, Reginald Kervit, William Poer, and William the Chaplain."

Inistioge does not appear to have any charter from the Crown till the sixth year of the reign of James I. when the inhabitants obtained, upon payment of a handsome douceur to that royal extortioner, a patent entitling them to style their village "The Town and Borough of Inistioge," to govern it by a Portrieve, twelve Chief Burgesses and as many Freemen as they might think fit to elect and appoint. The Portrieve to have

the government of the town in as ample and free a manner as the Portrieve of Cashel had or ought to have had. To hold a court from three weeks to three weeks for the recovery of debts to the amount of £20 Irish. To build a Tholsel for a Town Hall. To appoint a Recorder and Town Clerk. The Portrieve to be Justice of the Peace, Coroner and Clerk of the Market, and to be elected annually from amongst the free Burgesses on the Feast of St. John the Baptist, and sworn into office on the Monday after Michaelmas. To crown all, the Burgesses and Freemen were to have the important privilege of sending two representatives to serve in Parliament for their borough—a right which they continued to enjoy till the passing of the Act of Union, when Mr. Tighe, as patron of the borough, and the Portrieve and Burgesses received £15,000 compensation.

There are some curious recollections connected with their elections and their representatives. In 1642 Walter Dennis, one of their members, was expelled from the House of Commons for being implicated in the rebellion of that period, and in 1661 they were represented in Parliament by Sir William Petty, author of the celebrated Down survey, together with Joseph Deane, Esq., of Crumblin. The family of Deane, whose chief residence would seem to have been at Dangan-Terenure, near Dublin, continued without interruption to represent the borough, and the head of the corporation, either by themselves personally or by their nominees till the middle of the eighteenth century. They appear to have had predominating interest in the town derived probably from the grant made by Cromwell to Joseph Deane, a Major in his army, of 1,716 acres of land in Ballygallon, Coolesillagh, Ballycoughsoust, Powerswood, Coolroe, Coolreeny, and Ballyduff, all situate in the neighbourhood of Inistioge. The family also similarly acquired a large property in Meath and Wexford which they

hold to this day. Their influence in Inistioge was for a long time unopposed, but Captain Stephen Sweet, of Woodstock, having purchased the old abbey property of Inistioge from the Duke of Ormonde, his successors, the Fownes family, asserted a right to the patronage of the Borough, in which they ultimately succeeded, triumphing over the Deanes after a protracted and desperate struggle. A striking contrast is indeed formed between the peaceable little village of Inistioge of the present time, and the bustle and turmoil which it occasionally presented in the olden days of its electioneering glories. The Journals of the Irish House of Commons for the year 1727 are filled with the discussions which resulted from a double return of members for the Borough of Inistioge for the year. It appears that Edward Deane and Stephen Deane, Esqrs., were returned by an indenture under the hands and seals of the Portrieve, Daniel Osborne, and several of the Burgesses and Freemen of the town, whilst the Hon. Henry and Folliott Ponsonby, relatives of Sir William Fownes by marriage, were also returned by an indenture under the hands and seals of the Recorder, Christopher Hewitson, and several of the Burgesses. Upon investigation of the matter it was found that the precept had been directed only to the Portrieve, whereupon it was on the 20th December, 1727,

"Resolved, Nemine contradicente, that James Boyde, High Sheriff of the County of Kilkenny, by receiving a return from Christopher Hewitson, as Recorder of Enistioge, who had no power to return members to serve in Parliament, for the said Borough, acted partially and illegally, and in breach of the privileges of the house.

"Ordered, that the said James Boyde be, for his said offence, taken into custody of the Serjeant-at-Arms attending this House."

The High Sheriff remained in confinement till the 29th January in the following year,

when the following entry appears upon the Journals:

"A petition of James Boyde, Esq., High Sheriff of the County of Kilkenny, in custody of the Sergeant-at-Arms attending this House, expressing his sorrow for his offence, by unduly making a double return for the Borough of Enistioge, and praying to be discharged out of custody, was presented to the House and read.

"Ordered, that the said James Boyde be discharged out of custody, paying his fees."

In the meantime the Ponsonbys' petition against the return of the Deanes, as having been procured by undue means, and their petition was referred to the Committee of Privileges and Elections, who reported that in their opinion Edward Deane and Stephen *Deane, Esqrs., were not duly elected* Burgesses to serve in Parliament for the Borough of Inistioge, but that the Honorable Henry and Folliott Ponsonby were duly elected. The question was then put to the vote of the House, when tellers having been appointed, and the usual formalities having been gone through, it was finally declared that the Honorable Henry Ponsonby was duly elected, but that the election of the three other gentlemen was null and void. A new precept was accordingly issued for filling the vacancy, which gave the Burgesses of Inistioge a grand opportunity for a renewal of a "shindy"; the contest lay between Edward Deane and Folliott Ponsonby, and after a desperate struggle the former was returned. The defeated candidate, of course, petitioned, but he cannot have had good grounds to rest his case upon, as on the 6th November, 1729, he obtained leave from the House to withdraw his petition.

From the Corporation books of Inistioge it appears that a similar struggle for ascendancy in the Municipal Council was long carried on between the families of Deane and

Fownes. The earliest record which we have been enabled to consult dates at the year 1717§, when Edward Deane was Portrieve, and many others of the same family amongst the Council of Chief Burgesses; one of the name invariably held the Portrieve's office for every successive year down to the middle of the eighteenth century, when the Fownes' interest seems to have grown too strong for them. In 1750 a batch of seventy-three new Freemen, chiefly residents of other counties. were admitted, by which the Deane interest was completely swamped; and a mandamus having been issued from the King's Bench in 1761 ordering the Burgesses and Freemen of Inistioge to elect a new Portrieve in the room of Sir Robert Deane, the office being declared vacant "by judgment of ouster pronounced on conviction of the said Sir Robert Deane of intrusion into the Portrieveship," Godwin Swift, Esq., was elected Portrieve, and Sir Robert Deane, with four other members of his family and a large number of old Freemen and Burgesses are recorded to have resigned. In the same year Sir William Fownes and several others of his interest were elected in their room, and Sir William was subsequently declared Portrieve, an office in which he continued till 1786, from which period it was held by his nominees, and those of the Tighe family after his decease, till the passing of the Corporate Reform Act, Dr. Anthony Pack, Prebendary of Clonamery, having been the last Portrieve.

Local tradition asserts that the Deanes fought manfully for the maintenance of their hold upon the Borough, and were not vanquished till every stratagem, warlike or legal, had been unsuccessfully resorted to. On one occasion the clan, having mustered in force, perhaps headed by the worthy Knight, Sir Robert, is said to have marched towards Inistioge from the direction of Graigue in full battle array and determined to carry the borough by storm. However, at that period

no goodly bridge spanned the Nore at this point, and the staunch supporters of Sir William Fownes having, by a grand stroke of generalship removed all the boats to the Inistioge side of the river, the followers of the rival Knight were stopped short in the midst of their career, and were obliged to content themselves with assailing the enemy by showers of stones across the water, after the fashion of Homer's heroes; each warrior like

"—— fierce Tydides stoops, and from the fields
Heaved with great force, a rocky fragment wields
Not two strong men th' enormous weight could raise,
Such men as live in these degenerate days.
He swung it round, and gathering strength to throw
Discharged the ponderous ruin at the foe."

The foe no less heroically returned the compliment; volley after volley of stones flew across Nore's classic stream, but as the combatants were unable to come to close quarters, their ammunition was expended without any serious results, and the patience of the Deanites having at length become exhausted, they retired "bootless home," and the doughty Burgers of Inistioge, in the Fownes' interest, remained masters of the day.

Like other corporations, that of Inistioge enacted by-laws for the government of their town. Of these few of interest are extant, but we cannot refrain from placing before our readers one which presents a rare combination of loyalty, with a due regard to the creature comforts of the candidate Freemen. On the 6th October, 1718—we like to be particular—"upon a full assembly of ye corporation it was ordered that no person be for

the future be made free of ye said Corporation unless he then drink ye glorious memory of King William in a bumper"—of course the corporation provided the liquor at the public cost.

The Market Square of Inistioge, which contains the principal part of the town, is comprised within the limits of the ancient walls. It has a handsome appearance, being planted with elms and surrounded by neat houses. In the centre is a cross, not, however, the market cross, for of the existece of such a structure we have no record, but a monumental erection raised, as the inscription informs us, to one of the old Barons of Cluan and Brownsford. It must have been removed to its present site from the Abbey burying ground. The base of the cross is surmounted by a modern erection, somewhat resembling a miniature attempt at the Wellington Testimonial, and quite out of character. A fragment of the ancient shaft supports a sundial in a neighbouring garden.

The visitor to Inistioge should not fail to inspect the Moat, a singular mound which seems to have been originally constructed as the earliest military erection upon the first settlement at the place. Putting aside its antiquarian interest, it is an object worth being seen, for taste of ingenuity has now formed it, in connection with the ground surrounding its base, into the very prettiest of flower gardens. There is a half-cultivated, half natural character about the arrangemant of the place, which we admired very much, for beyond those terraced beds where grow the more tenderly cultivated plants we observed

"——Hill flowers growing wild
Into pink and purple chequer."

We ascend by a devious path around the Moat, formed by what may be supposed to have been the ancient esplanades of the rural fortress, and having reached the sum-

mit, we were well repaid by a very beautiful view of the town with the mountain and forest scenery around it; we have also glimpses of the river chafing under the precipitous and wooded rocks on the opposite side. Turning round, we get another prospect of a very different character, quite in the stern style of Salvator Rosa. A wild and rocky glen called "The Combe" is presented to the river; through this rugged ravine a brawling little mountain stream forces its tortuous course to join the broad Nore, washing, in its after journey through the village, the site of the ancient town wall on the north. Opposite the Moat the track of a tiny streamlet leads up the hill-side to the Holy Well of St. Columb. To this well, not very long ago, on the Sunday after the 9th June, pilgrimages were made. The devotees commenced their station at the town, and crawling on their knees up the course of the stream through the sharp and shingly stones which form its bed, they at length painfully reached the little streamlet which conveys the holy water to the larger brook; up the steep hill-side through the bed of this smaller water-course they also laboured, and when they reached the blessed well their self-imposed pilgrimage had ended. There was, we are informed, a wooden image of St. Columb, of great antiquity, enshrined beside the sacred fountain, and there it remained, protected by the simple faith of the peasantry, until the period of the rebellion of 1798, when some rude and over-zealous "Protestant" yeoman, not having the love and reverence for ancient things in his heart, but being moved and instigated by a horror of all things savouring of papistry, broke down the saintly shrine, and carrying off the image in triumph flung it into the swift stream of the Nore, when poor St. Columb's effigy departed on a wider mission than it was ever likely, but for this "righteous intervention," to have under-

taken. For which deed of fanatic and mistaken piety, we say to the shade of "the yeoman stout"—"anathema!"

There are but few other objects worthy of being particularised in Inistioge. We may mention the Chapel, a large and convenient but not particularly handsome, structure recently completed which stands in most loving contiguity to the Parish Church; and the schoolhouse, a very pretty cottage building located at the entrance of Mr. Tighe's demesne. From the appearance of the children in this school and the extreme neatness of its arrangements we should say that it must be a great blessing to the district. The example of cleanliness, regularity, industry and order must, in our mind, be productive of benefits at least commensurate with the education received. Indeed through the entire of Mr. Tighe's district these qualities appear to have become paramount, and give proof, if any proof were wanting, that a benevolent resident landlord must impart a high moral tone and character to the people amongst whom he dwells. The apologists for non-resident proprietors must necessarily acknowledge this broad truth, nor can be believe that there is any district where the residence of a humane and upright lord of the soil would not convert its condition, however wretched, to one of prosperity and content, making the desert places to smile forth in all the healthy luxuriance of a cultivated garden.

Having thus disposed, as far as our knowledge and ability admits, of the scenery, antiquities, and historical associations of Inistioge, we shall, in our next "Nook," solicit the companionship of our readers along the woohlands crowned anr meadow-bounded banks of "The Novice Nore." We have still to tell many a tale of chivalry and many a hoary tradition

"Which linger yet about long gothic arches

In dark green ivy, and among wild
arches;
To speak the splendour of old revelries,
When butts of wine were drank off to
the lees
Beneath the shade of stately banneral
And the bright lance against the fretted
wall;
Stories of sh'ning cirass, sword and
shield,
And legends of many a bloody field."

NOTES

*"The execution of this monument does credit to the genius of Flaxman, and though carved in a rougher stone, we believe it may even be safely compared with those masterpieces in the ideal of art, the recumbent figures of children by Chantry in Ashburne Church, Derbyshire, and at Lichfield Cathedral. It would appear, however, that there is a dissentient voice on this question. We may be here excused for quoting the description of the monument and mausoleum given by a recent tuorist of the querulous class to which Smellfungus belonged. We do not know his name, as we accidentally stumbled on the paragraph in a scrap book—a literal scrap book too, for the ingenious proprietor had managed to cut off the names of his authorities when making up his "book of shreds and patches." Our readers will perceive that the tourist does not think much of the tomb as a work of art. He had been hunting for some record of Mrs. Tighe from Rossana, County Wicklow, to Woodstock, and not having been told at the latter place that there was a monument erected to her memory, he seems somewhat irate at finding one out through another source of information, and so discharges, as follows, his redundant bile. He is an Englishman, by the way, and the name of Inistioge seems to

have fairly bothered him. for he spells, and no doubt pronounced it, "Innertioque."

"When I reached the Church at Innertioque the matter received a most striking confirmation. There, sure enough, was a monument in a small mausoleum in the churchyard. It is a recumbent figure raised on a granite altar-shaped pavement. The figure is of freestone, resembling Portland stone, and is lying on its side as on a sofa, being said by the person who showed it, to be the position in which she died on coming In from a walk. The execution of the whole is very ordinary, and, if really by Flaxman, displays none of his genius. I have seen much better things by a common stone-mason (!) There is a little angel sitting at the head, but this has never been fastened down by cement (great fault indeed—was he afraid the cherub would fly away?) The monument was no doubt erected by the widower of the poetess, a man of classical taste."

It is strange, indeed, that the man of classical taste should allow a monument to be erected to the world-famed woman to whom he had been united, such as a common master mason could surpass—but infinitely stranger that he should neglect to cement down the "little angel!" The winged figure alluded to, and which, by the way, seems to be a sad puzzler to stupid visitors, by a really happy image is meant to represent Psyche, or the soul, typical of the spirit of love, so beautifully illustrated by chaste music of the poetess over whom the sporit seems to keep watch. It is somewhat surprising that Mrs. Hemans did not perceive this felicitous and poetical allusion, and calls this little sculptured Pysche, rather contemptuously, we fear, "a Titanian-looking sort of figure"—but it is often thus that the most beautiful ideas are misunderstood.

† The "Staff of Jesus" was amongst the

list of relics of All Saints, Dublin, and it was transferred there from Armagh by the Norman invaders about the year 1180. It was traditionally said to have been presented by an Angel to St. Patrick, and it was held in such reverence that large offerings were made for its "support" to the clergy. The Four Masters record that it was burned by the Reformers in 1537.

‡ This grant would seem never to have been carried into effect, for at the dissolution of Jerpoint Abbey it was found to be possessed of the advowson of the Church of the Roar.

§ We take this opportunity of thanking Thomas Innis, Esq., of Inistioge, for kindly affording us valuable local information and giving us every facility to consult the corporate documents in his keeping. The earlier records of the municipal body may perhaps be still in existence, and we need scarcely say that, should any of our readers be able to inform us on the subject, we shall be greatly obliged by their doing so. Any intelligence as to the present repository of the corporate records of the ancient boroughs of Thomastown, Gowran, and Knocktopher, would also be esteemed a favour.

No. 6—From Inistioge to Grennan.

In our last chapter we gave as much of the "memorabilia" of Inistioge as we were enabled to recollect. Before leaving it, however, we must direct attention to a fine view of the village and its surrounding scenery; which may be had from a point of the Graigue road, at the other side of the river; and, lest we be deemed ungrateful for those comforts which are as indispensable to the picturesque hunter, the antiquary and the sketcher as to other men, we should also loiter at "mine inne." No wanderer has failed to do so from the days of old Chaucer;

and Isaac Walton's pleasantest reveries are after-dinner ones, when "taking his ease" in that rustic little caravànsera, which, when travel-tired, always makes us long for a bed, smelling like his, of lavender, in some wayside hostel where roses and honeysuckles look at us through the windows. Such resting places the traveller does not often meet in Ireland; but the Inn at Inistioge is a neat and pleasant one, and shares with its neighbour-houses, all the luxuries of flower and creeping plants. It is therefore with full sense of happiness that, having completed our survey of the village sights, we sit ourselves down in the parlour of Butler's Hotel and talk of the abbey, the moat, the old town wall, the schoolhouse, and the pretty flower-grown cottages; and having dined and "thrice our palate moistened," we prepare to start upon a ramble in search of the river above alluded to—

"As those who pause on some delightful way
Though bent on pleasant pilgrimage—."

Having crossed the bridge and ascended the steep road opposite, we surmount the summit of the wooded and rocky ridge which forms the river's boundary. The trouble of gaining this point of 'vantage is well repaid by the views obtained from it. Looking down the river we have the village and graceful bridge of In'stioge with Woodstock rising behind. green lawns studded with trees, relieving here and there the masses of wood. This view has reminded us of the celebrated one of Enniskerry as seen from the hill above Mr. Grattan's place; the latter, though superior to mountain scenery, yields to the landscape we have glanced at in the features of wood and water. Looking up the river a prospect of a very different character pre-

sents itself. The broad valley of the Nore lies before us, hills rising above hills at each side, not much wooded, but studded here and there with a farmhouse and its accompanying cluster of trees, and covered with a network of enclosures, some brown, some green, some golden-tinged with ripening corn. Through the centre of this fair valley winds the Nore, and the declining sun just breaking out as we gaze on the peaceful scene changes its waters to a stream of molten silver.

And now having taken this "longing lingering look behind," we are fairly again on our journey up the river. Leaving Inistioge by the Thomastown road the scenery is bold and romantic, as the stream enters the village the rocks and hanging woods on the Graigue side giving it a picturesque character which it exchanges soon for a pastoral one, winding through broad meadows as we ascend its course. On the side opposite to our road the ground swells into gentle ridges, and is broken by two pretty valleys, partly clothed with grown timber and watered by separate mountain torrents. The first of these comes down through the glen of Dobbin's mill from Brandon. Higher up the stream of Aughnagrass descends to the Nore from the Coppena hills through the romantic little ravine of Rockview. Both these streams are spanned by picturesque bridges where they join the Nore, and the valleys through which they run are prettily studded with cottages, each peaceful homestead having its own clump of trees, all of which objects impart a pleasing effect to the pleasant pastoral scenery. A little higher up we stand on the bridge of Kilmacshane, sometimes called the Foxhunter's Bridge, the second which spans the Nore. The structure is modern, and is only remarkable as presenting a very awkward turn at each of its entrances. From its parapets a pretty landscape is discovered both up and down the

river. Looking down we have the hills of Brandon and Coppena with the singular eminence termed, from the peculiarity of its outline, "Saddle Hill," in the background, and the Nore in the front gliding swiftly towards the woodlands of Inistioge. Up the stream a sylvan picture of a gentler aspect shows the river emerging quietly from the woods of Ballyduff and Brownsbarn, its even course recently disturbed by a salmon weir, and the noise of the distant falling water coming softly and soothingly on the ear. We shall not cross the bridge, but rather take the river pathway, and a pleasant path it is, through the deep green meadows marging the western side of the quiet sylvan stream. We pass through the demesne of Ballyduff, the river bank rocky but well clothed with wood, the water flowing gently under the drooping branches of the trees—here and there lingering in dark inlets formed by jutting rocks. The house of Ballyduff is a modern one, well situated above the river, amidst

"————————the pleasant green
Of easy slopes, and shadowy trees that lean
So elegantly o'er the water's brim."

Above the house of Ballyduff the Argula River, one of the largest tributaries of the Nore, comes down from the hills which bound Knocktopher, through a richly-wooded valley, giving fair promise to the tourist of many a romantic "Nook and Corner" along its sinuous course. The demesne of Brownsbarn on the east bank is next passed, its half ruinous mansion, its rich sloping lawns and the fine oak timber still remaining tell of more prosperous days; and Coolmore on the opposite side of the river with its fine trim pleasure grounds and handsome modern mansion, presenting a marked contrast—on one side decay and ruined fortunes, on the other

taste and culture, aiding the bounty of natural beauties. Brownsbarn, anciently termed Fossa McCody, was a portion of the estate of the Anglo-Norman family of Archdeacon, which soon became "Hibernis ipsis Hibernioris," and assumed the more Milesian sounding name of McOdo, subsequently corrupted into Cody. It was declared forfeited by Cromwell, who granted it to John Nixon, one of the officers of his army; and in the Nixon family it remained till it was a few years since sold by their present representative, and is now therefore vested in a non-resident proprietor. Above Brownsbarn, and on the same side of the river, is an eminence jutting towards the stream called "the fourpenny rock," and which thus obtained its name. Some years since boats were used to convey merchandise from the tidal water at Inistioge to Thomastown, a traffic since altogether abandoned. The boats were towed along in those days by men, who were paid eightpence each for the journey up or down between the two places. This was considered exactly half way, so that on arriving there the men had earned fourpence each, and therefore did they term it "the fourpenny rock." Following upwards, by Coolmore, the course of the stream, the pilgrim by the Nore's green margin finds his progress along the west or right bank barred by another old mass of rock; it is of clay slate, the most picturesque of the primitive group, ever rich in ferns and lichens and plumy grass which, with rock-flowers of varied dies, nestle in its rugged chinks or droop from its bold projecting ledges. In none of these beauties is Dysart-rock a whit behind its compeers. The ivy, too, clusters there in deep green masses, mingling with

"————Fair clinging weeds
Clasping its grey rents with a verdurous woof,"

and the dwarf oak, sending its roots deep into the clefts, flings its gnarled arms across the sky, while the light feathery ash and the fresh green foliage of the hazel afford a contrast of hues seldom surpassed—

"Like pearls upon an Æthiop's arm
Each gives each a double charm."

The stream eddies in a deep dark pool under the base of Dysart-rock, well known to the cot-men of the Nore as the deepest "hole" in the upper course of the river, and famous for holding "good store of salmon in its deep bosom." Often on calm summer nights have we marked the slender canoe-like cots stealing in pairs about the stream, each with its silent figures at stem and stern; and seldom has it failed but that when the dimly seen forms entered the shadow of the rock, the cots suddenly closed, the net was drawn up, and the silvery scales of the prize glistened in the starlight. We could long linger in the recollection of many such hours spent, with rod in hand, watching the sullen rising of the late-feeding trout; but, at the same time, with eye and ear open for all sights and sounds of beauty, as is the wont of every true brother of the "gentle craft." Let us, however, return to our subject. Having surmounted Dysart-rock by a briar-tangled path which winds through the coppice, one of the most delicious nooks amongst our river scenery lies beneath it. The rock and hill upon which it abuts sweeps back in a bold curve from the stream, leaving space between the hillside and river bank for a broad grassy inch on which, nestling under the rising ground and backed by folding woods and the rocky crest of Carrigmourne, rises the tall and graceful ruin of Dysart Castle, whose

"Lonely turret, shattered and out-worn,
Stand venerably proud—too proud to mourn
Its long lost grandeur————."

A single glance suffices to show that this tower could not have been erected for the abode of the feudal chieftain half robber, half noble—whose stronghold must have been contrived and ever ready to stand a siege. Dysart Castle has more of the monastic character about it, and from its situation under the grey hillside it could never have been a defensible fortalice. In truth, we know but little of its ancient history, except that it was a grange belonging to the rich Priory of Kells, to which community the parish anciently called Dysart, now known as Pleberstown, was appropriate. The Parish Church adjoins, on the east, the tower, and in the latter probably the Vicar of the Monks resided along with the steward of their property in the locality—that property consisted, at the suppression of the Abbey, of ten meassuages, 200 acres of arable land, 100 of pasture, 10 of wood, and 40 of moor, with the appurtenances of the annual value, besides all reprises, of £3 13s. 4d., a sum which, though it appears trifling at present, was of importance in those days. Dysart, with the other possessions of the Abbey, was granted to James, the ninth Earl of Ormonde, to be held by the service of the paid annually to the Vicar of Kells.

The style of the remains of sedilia and an aumbry existing in the ecclesiastical part of the structure prove it to have been erected about the middle of the fourteenth century, and the tower is probably of the same date. The scene is altogether wild and romantic, and nothing can be more in keeping with its lonely grandeur than the ruin itself. The fantastic and turreted battlements and broken walls of the tower are luxuriantly overgrown with lichens of deep sienna to parts of the pile, contrasting beautifully with the ivy tresses which with their æthiop berries, clothe other portions of the building; and the entire group in the sunlight of a summer day stands out in bold relief against the

sombre hills behind. But there is a deeper interest about those secluded ruins and attached to this beautiful portion of the valley of the Nore, for adjoining the ancient tower on the south some trifling remains of a more modern date mark the site of the mansion of the Berkeleys of Dysart and the birthplace of the Bishop of Cloyne, whose name will ever live amongst the roll of illustrious men whom Ireland has sent forth.* This is not the place to review the life and works of that distinguished divine and true patriot —a task which has been recently ably executed in the "University Magazine"—but it is not too much to conjecture that to the lovely scenery which enriched his birth-place George Berkeley owed much of that keen relish for the beauties of nature which his

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* In the life prefixed to the three-volume edition of Berkeley's works, London, 1820, he is said to have been born March 12th, 1684, at Kilcrin, near Thomastown. The latter statement is altogether a mistake. There is no such place as Kilcrin near Thomastown, and the uniform and vivid tradition of the country points to Dysart as the place of his birth. Various entries in the Corporation Books of Inistioge afford proof that the Berkeley family inhabited Dysart in 1728, and continued to do so as late as 1756.

† See the original Register of the Endowed School of Kilkenny, in the custody of the present Master, Dr. Browne. A long and illustrious list of men known to fame as Statesmen, Poets, and Philosophers might here be given from its pages did space permit. It seems to have escaped the Biographers of Berkeley that his intimacy with Thomas Prior, to whom a great number of his letters are addressed, commenced at this School. The Register states that Prior left second class for Trinity College, Dublin, in 1699, the year before Berkeley's entrance into the University.

letters evince him to have possessed. He was entered in the second class of the ancient Endowed School of our City on July 17, 1696, in the eleventh year of his age, and left the first class for Trinity College, Dublin in 1700† It may be allowed us to imagine the handsome thoughtful boy (in manhood he was noted for beauty of feature and strength of limb) "wandering by the winding banks of the Nore" during the vacation periods, and giving the vein to that luxuriant imagination which distinguished him to the last hour of his life. In this age of book-making, when volumes of uninteresting correspondence teem from the Press, why have we not got a good life of Berkeley and a complete edition of his letters? Those fragments of his epistolary correspondence prefixed to his works only make us long for more; they show the man of deep and varied erudition, and yet withal simple-minded as a child, ever intent on some plan to benefit his country and his kind—now ready to sacrifice his splendid prospects to be the founder of a Missionary College in Bermuda—again longing to be the Dean of Dromore, when his patron, the Duke of Dorset, had procured him the Bishopric of Cloyne—settling down in that remote part of Ireland, when he "did" accept the See, and entering heart and soul into plans of improvement for the poor of his locality—refusing to use the great interest he possesed to procure himself the Primacy, because he thought he could do as much good as he was, and did not feel himself "in love with feasts, and crowds, and visits, and late hours, and strange faces"—and finally, when he wished from the state of his health to remove to England, applying to the Government for leave to resign his bishopric, and only retaining it because George III., who knew his character well, would not receive his resignation, and swore that he "should die a Bishop in spite of himself." The peasantry

still speak of the Berkeleys of Dysart; and with that strange inversion of facts which is often observable in traditionary lore, they will tell gravely that the Bishop kept a school there and taught his scholars that there was neither spirit nor immortal soul, but that, when the body died annihilation ensued; that to enforce this doctrine he made them leap over the schoolbenches till, from striking against them, their shins were bruised and bled; and then he informed them that when all the blood thus ran out of the body, there was end of them! Another of the local traditions concerning the Bishop —equally unfounded and absurd as the former—is that his remains were interred within the masonry of a portion of the battlements on the summit of Dysart tower.

Leaving Dysart, where we would gladly linger longer, and turning our steps northward, we next saunter up the stream for a short distance, and there, having, with much misgiving anent the probability of being subjected to a ducking, entrusted ourselves on board one of those before-mentioned canoe-like cots, we pass over to the west bank just where the oak wood of Dangan skirts the water's edge. There is scarcely a pathway here between the rocky woodland and the sallow-margined bank; large masses of brecchia show themselves ocasionally through the openings in the forest, over-canopied by the hanging branches of the sturdy oak and tangled brushwood, amongst which the holly trees grow in abundance. Sometimes the course is impeded by a little stream which has overspread the narrow way, at other times the out-crossing rocks come down almost to the water's brink. In one of these is a small natural cavern which art has helped to enlarge, and which was for many years a favourite haunt of the celebrated robber, Freny, and is known to this day as Freny's hole, or cave. Its entrance is so well concealed that the casual passenger would never

suspect its existence, and when we visited the spot in quest of the outlaw's hold we should have failed to discover its whereabouts, after hours of long searching, but for the guidance of a little urchin whom we found engaged in fishing on the river bank. This nimble Cicerone led us to a rude kind of stair in a chasm of the rock by which the cave is approached; its roof is partially artificial, being composed of large masses of stone, one of which has fallen in, and there is an aperture, or loophole, in the side of the cavern which looks towards the river. The place is covered with ivy and rock-plants sufficient

"To hide us up although Spring leaves were none,"

and altogether it seems to have been a very proper robber's den, where before the era of green-coated and lynx-eyed policemen and omnipresent "detectives," the freebooter must have often found a safe retreat.

The valley of the Nore between the old Castle of Dysart and Grennan, before the barbarous demolition of Grennan wood, was richly timber-clad on both banks of the river; fortunately Dangan still stands, and sweeping upwards along the side of Carrigmourne, forms a noble mantle to that rock-crowned eminence. Following the path down the stream, we emerge from the wood and get a very beautiful view of Dysart Castle standing out in bold relief in its brilliant livery of green ivy and rich yellow lichen against the dark wooded hill behind; whilst the river in the foreground and a furze-clad rocky hill in the middle distance form altogether an exquisite picture. At this point, leaving the margin of the Nore for a time, we must ask the gentle reader to breast with us the hillside and climb the breast of Carrigmourne. Never was a ten minutes' taxing of wind and limb repaid by a nobler prospect; below lies the shining river winding its snake-like

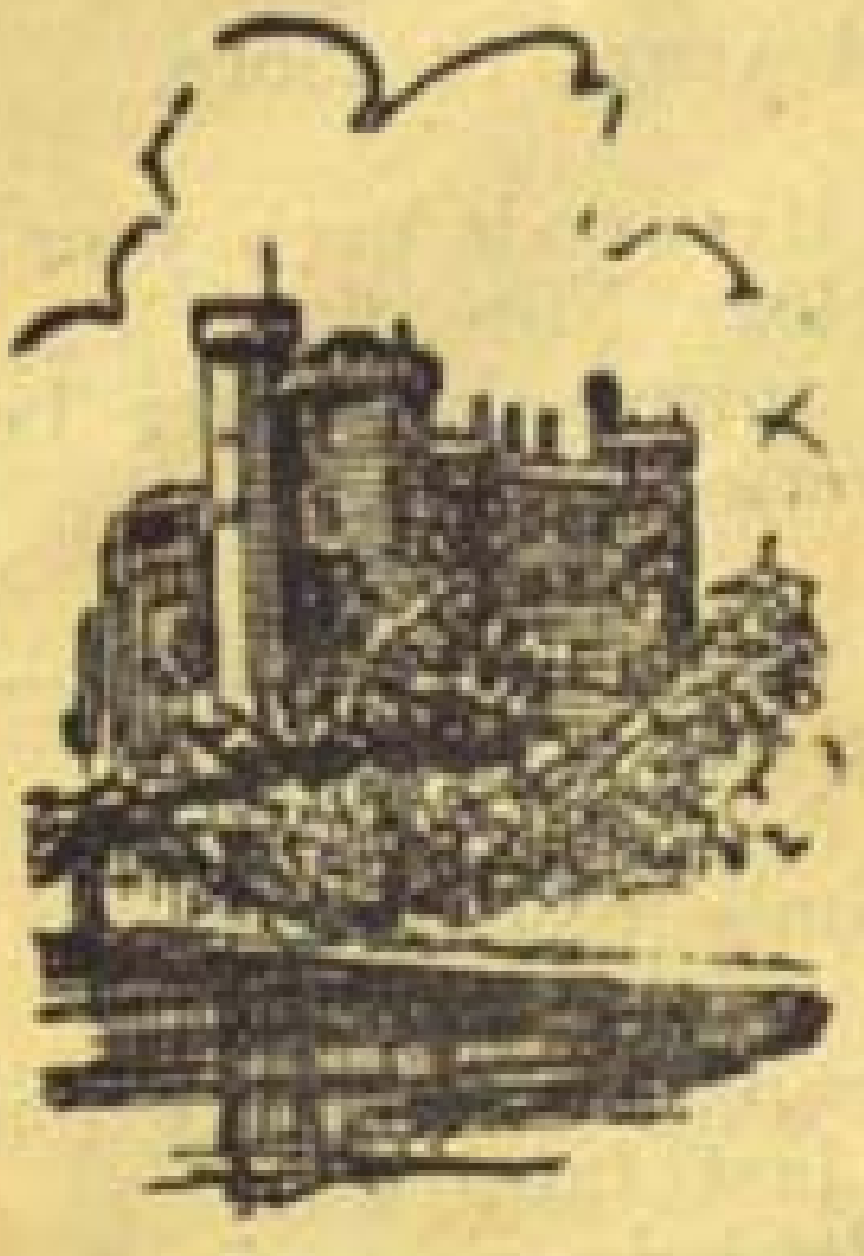
course between banks clad with noble trees, "All in its mid-day gold and glimmering," while the course of the tributary Arguia may be traced for many a mile by the foldings of the hills off towards distant Slievegrian. On the left Brandon lifts his heath-clad head; the forest scenery of Woodstock, backed by Mount Alto, forms the centre distance—and all basking in the luxury of a bright summer day, when sunshine chases shadow across hill and wood and river, and

"————the blue sky is seen,
Fretted with many a fair cloud interwoven
Most delicately————."

Truly we envy not the man who can stand upon Carrigmourne on such a day and not feel himself stirred as with a spell when gazing on the scene which we have endeavoured faintly to describe.

And where Dangan wood girts Carrigmourne we must "give us pause"—want of space forbids us to trench to-day on Grennan, where so much legendary lore awaits us—we shall, however, we trust, soon travel again

"By woods, and fields of yellow flowers
And towns, and villages and towers,
Day after day of happy hours."



KILKENNY CASTLE

LEGENDS OF CLUAN

(The following ballad is designed to illustrate a legend given in a recent chapter of the "Nooks and Corners of our County," which preserves amongst the peasantry of that district the affecting circumstance attending the death of the last Baron of Cluan or Clonamery, at the fight of Aughrim, whose horse, they say, made his road good from the distant battle-field where its master lay slain to the Castle of Cluan without any guide but that of the wonderful instinct so constantly found in some of the lower animals).

"And home came the saddle, all bloody to see!
And home came the steed—but home never came he!"

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

There stood beside the winding Nore
A Castle fair to see;
It was the home of the Geraldine,
And a gentle knight was he.

But now a hoary ruin it stands
Beside the winding Nore,
All lonely, and all desolate,
A hundred years or more.

And though its woods each year grow green
And the clear Nore flows on,
Yet Cluan's tower shall ever be
A ruin grey and lone.

Cluan's lord was a true knight—
He fell amid the slain,
The first in fight for his king's right,
On Aughrim's bloody plain

Two summer nights scarcely past
Since that last fatal day,
When Cluan's lady mourning sat
For her good lord away.

Oh! heavily and wearily
She sits within her hall
And startles oft as if she heard
Her good lord's wonted call.

She sits beside her baby boy
As quietly he sleeps,
And recks not of the woes for which
His tender parent weeps.

And now she listens eagerly,
For hark! there comes a sound
Of footsteps, and her anxious eye
Is looking all around.

The sound grows loud and nearer
Along the well-known track—
Can it be true that her good lord
Is well and safe come back?

"Ho varlets all! wake ye in haste,
And on your lord await—
I hear the stamp of his good steed
Without the Castle gate."

Thus did she speak in ecstasy,
And well did all obey,
And quickly did the gate unbar
Ere yet began the day.

Down came the lady Eleanor
All trembling for joy,
And brings to welcome back his sire,
Her sleeping infant boy.

But oh! it was a dismal sight
To see the good steed there,
When Cluan's lord had not come back
To greet his lady fair.

Oh! is he a prisoner to his foes,
Or fallen in the fight?
Or why comes back his gallant steed
In such a woeful plight?

Why stands he thus impatiently
Without a curb or rein?
There's blood upon the saddle-bow
And foam upon the mane!

"Oh, woe is he!" the lady cried,
"Sure this must bode of ill!
"To see those ruddy drops of blood,
"My very soul doth chill."

In vain they looked, they searched in vain
Around both tower and tree
But the last lord of Cluan's Hall
They never more shall see!

One summer day of dread and doubt
Had scarcely passed away
When a youth rode up in fearful haste
With looks of wild dismay.

"Oh! noble youth wilt thou not bide
"To speak one word to me—
"What means this look of wild despair,
"Or whither does't thou flee?

"I am the lady of this tower.
"You may find shelter here—
"Or friend or foe, which e'er you be,
"Thou shalt have nought to fear."

"Or friend or foe, which e'er I be,
"With thee I cannot bide—
"A woeful tale is mine to tell,
"And one I fain would hide.

"Our rightful King has lost his crown—
"And all our hopes lost we—
"Nought now is ours, and the proud foe
"Exults in victory.

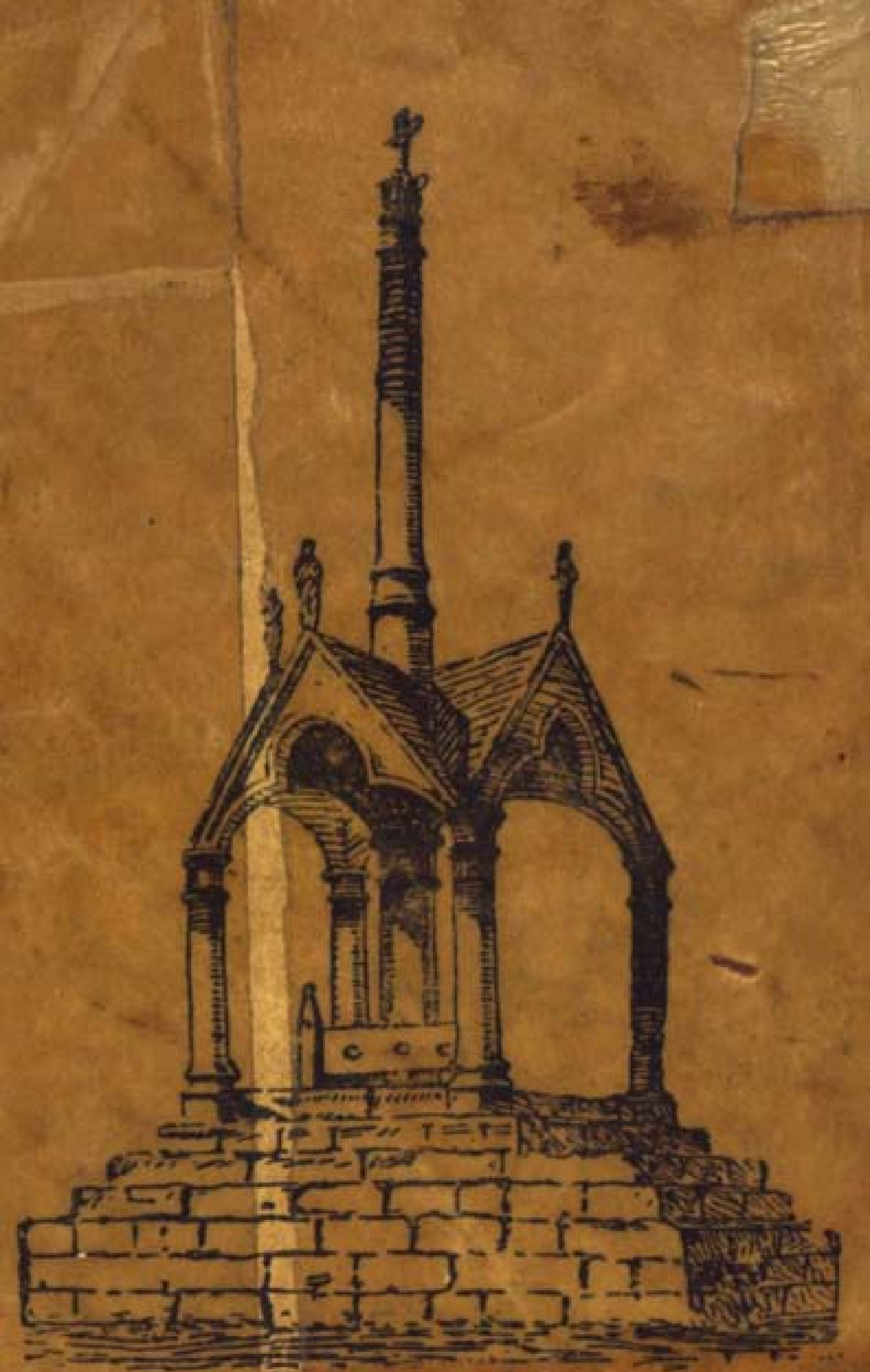
"I saw thy lord fall by my side
"Amidst a heap of slain,
"While swiftly flew his gallant steed
"Across the battle plain."

Thus having said, he turn'd his rein—
No more she heard him speak;
The tears were falling from her eyes,
And pallid grew her cheek.
And well might she both wail and weep
To leave her kin and home—
Her lovely tower to seize upon
The ruthless foe is come!

And though its woods each year grew green
And aye the Nore flows on,
Yet Cluan's tower shall ever be
A ruin grey and lone!

M.

Arch of Black Freren Gate.
showing portion of old City Wall.



THE OLD MARKET CROSS
OF KILKENNY