

‘ A great deed that is done in Erin this day ’

from

Ireland
And The Celtic Church.

A History of Ireland from St. Patrick to The English
Conquest in 1172.

By The

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THE present volume, which I designate *Ireland and the Anglo-Norman Church*, is designed as a companion volume to a previous one which I entitled *Ireland and the Celtic Church*. The origin of the book which I now submit to the public was the same as the origin of the previous volume. They both embody the lectures, for the most part identically, and in some few places only substantially, the same as those which I delivered to my classes in Trinity College. The title which I have chosen for this volume, *Ireland and the Anglo-Norman Church*, expresses the object of my lectures, which was to sketch the history of Ireland as well as of Irish Christianity till the dawn of the Reformation. A very considerable portion of this volume will be found, therefore, to deal with the purely secular side of our annals, the story of the Anglo-Norman Conquest, and of the anarchy which ruined Ireland as the natural consequence of the strife and division which held sway in England. I have treated the ecclesiastical side of my subject in connection with the Anglo-Norman Church as I discussed the earlier history of Ireland in connection with the Celtic Church. I do not, indeed, believe that we can fix any hard and fast limit before which the Celtic Church system flourished, and after which the Anglo-Norman and Papal system prevailed. The process of change was a gradual one.

The original shape of this work explains two points which will strike the critical reader, the repetitions and the omissions thereof. In the course of my lectures I had perpetually to refer to certain documents, like the *Liber Niger* or the *Repertorium Viride* of Archbishop Alan, which can only be consulted in manuscript, and are little known. I explained, with a frequency which may seem tiresome, what these and similar documents contain, and where they may be found. I might indeed have recast the whole shape of the lectures, and thus have avoided the repetitions, but second thoughts are sometimes in literature by no means the best thoughts. When a man writes with a young audience vividly before his mind, the salient points of a story are seized, the mere subsidiary details are avoided, and the historical picture is made clear because the canvas is not too much crowded with figures. This circumstance is, in fact, my defence against one line of criticism to which I have been subjected. My volume on *Ireland and the Celtic Church* has indeed received, for the most part, a very kind and generous treatment at the hands of reviewers. But some critics have found fault with its tone. It

treated Irish history, in their opinion, in a style very different from the great masters thereof in the past, and discussed it in a very flippant spirit, as one stern censor put it. I must confess that I have suffered such critics and such criticism very gladly. There are some circles where obscurity is mistaken for profound thought, and pedantic dulness for surpassing learning. But then, if a member of such circles tried his methods upon a young university audience, his lecture-room would be a howling wilderness, and himself but the voice of one crying therein. I am paid by the University of Dublin to teach Ecclesiastical History. I hold that a professor is just like a preacher, he should be a teacher and an interpreter; and if students avoid the professor's prelections, or a congregation flee from the preacher's sermons, as if his words carried the plague with them, then whatever else professor or preacher may be fitted for, he is not fitted for the office he has assumed.

I did not submit my former volume, I do not submit my present volume, as exhaustive histories of the periods with which they deal, but I do submit them as attempts to redeem Irish history from its traditional dulness, and to show that it is not the pathless waste which some regard it. In doing so I have made it my object to interpret to young and eager minds the results attained by the great investigators, living and dead, whose works I have so frequently quoted, and have, therefore, systematically striven to make my narrative as interesting as I possibly could, a task at times by no means an easy one.

The origin of this work accounts also for its many omissions. Everyone desires to know something about the Conquest of Ireland, the Wars of Bruce, the Statute of Kilkenny, and Poynings' Act. I have devoted my efforts to illustrate these and other leading features of my period. I could have filled lectures with the numberless incidents which occupied the intervals of Irish history, but I had to bring my book within a limit marked out by the publishers, and have therefore been compelled to omit even much which I delivered to my class.

In conclusion I have to acknowledge my renewed obligations to the many original investigators into the sources of Irish history. I have used them as far as I have known them, and have endeavoured in every case to acknowledge my debt. If I have ever omitted to do so, the omission has been due to a lapse of memory. I have had many testimonies as to the good results of my previous volume in stirring up an interest in Ireland's ancient history. I can only hope that the present work may be as fruitful, and tend in some small degree to a better understanding and a more kindly feeling among the various races, Norman, Saxon, Scandinavian, and Celtic, inhabiting England, Ireland, and Scotland.

The conquest of Ireland by Henry II. and by Strongbow is such a great epoch ; much talked of, widely celebrated, but almost entirely unknown. It will be my object to withdraw that event from the region of mythical shadows into the clear light of historic day, using for that purpose the numerous contemporaneous documents, partly printed, partly still in manuscript, which our libraries possess. In order, however, to the full and perfect understanding of the conquest, we must previously realise to ourselves the state of Ireland during the last years of her national independence. To that work I shall devote the present chapter.

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ALL SAINTS' VICARAGE, BLACKROCK,
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Whence, then, it may be asked, do we gain our information concerning the events of that period ? The reply is easy. The various annalists—contemporaneous or else gaining their knowledge from contemporary documents, the *Book of Leinster*, the *Annals of Clonmacnois*, of Lough Cé, of Ulster, and of the Four Masters, together with the *Chronicon Scotorum*—furnish abundant information from the Celtic side, while the works of Giraldus Cambrensis and a curious Anglo-Norman poem, the substance of which is attributed to Morice Regan, secretary or chief domestic to Dermot MacMurrough, will supply us with vivid living traditions of the times from an opposite standpoint. [1] Let me endeavour to give you a picture of the social, political, and ecclesiastical life of Ireland as we find it in the first half of the twelfth century.

The eleventh century commenced with the battle of Clontarf, followed and marked by the predominance of the O'Brians in Ireland, a family which finds a living representative to this day in the Barons Inchiquin of the county Clare. The eleventh century opened with the splendid achievements of Brian Boru ; the century closed with the decay and downfall of the O'Brian family, scarcely one of whom displayed any traces of the genius manifested in their great ancestor. So passed the eleventh century. The twelfth century was marked by the dominance of two families ; on the one hand, by the restoration and revival of the O'Neills of the north, and on the other by the sudden rise to fame and fortune of the O'Conors of Connaught, dynasties whose bitter strife and restless ambition led finally to the Anglo-Norman conquest. To the development of this story—a very tangled and a very bloody skein, by the way—we must now bend our best attention. In the year 1083 Donnall O'Loughlin, a descendant of Niall of the Nine Hostages, [2] and an ancestor of the Ulster O'Neills of Queen Elizabeth's time, became chieftain of a comparatively insignificant tribe of northern Ireland. He was an ambitious, a vigorous, and a brave ruler. He reigned for forty years ; and long reigns had one great advantage in those times of anarchy—they were continuous in policy and in design. Donnall O'Loughlin rapidly developed and increased his power, smote down his enemies on every side, and by the time of his death, which happened at Derry on February 9th, 1121, he had reigned for twenty-seven years as supreme king over all Ireland, and thirty-eight years over his own principality. The eulogy of the Four Masters upon him, as recorded under that date, will give a fair specimen of the very high-flown language in use among the ancient Irish chroniclers, since he is there described as “ the most distinguished of the Irish for personal form, family, sense, prowess, prosperity and happiness, and for bestowing of jewels and food upon the mighty and the needy.” [3] Twenty years afterwards, or thereabouts, another king of the same family arose named Murtoth O'Loughlin, who reigned, from 1140 to 1166, with a vigour which gained for him the same position as supreme king. But as it is now, so was it then. Ulster and Connaught are now violently opposed to each other as regards some of the keenest human interests ; Ulster and Connaught were just as bitterly opposed seven hundred years ago.

The county Roscommon is one vast plain, noted to the present day as the richest feeding-ground for oxen. The county is devoid of mountains save on its eastern and north-eastern boundary, where the Curlew range affords some fine scenery. A district which extends from Roscommon to Elphin, and from Strokestown to Castlerea, was ruled about the year 1100 by a family named O'Conor, many representatives of whom still exist there in every rank of life ; the direct descendants indeed of these chieftains having often represented the county, and being widely known as The O'Conor Don. Now mark the progress of events. In 1106 the O'Brians of Clare still exercised a shadow of their ancient supremacy ; for ancient name, and fame, and allegiance do not easily die out in Ireland. As supreme kings, they made Torlogh O'Conor ruler of the Roscommon principality, which, in his hands, developed into a kingdom, dominating the O'Brians themselves, his ancient patrons ; and finally, upon the death of Murtoth O'Loughlin, attaining supreme authority over all Ireland under Roderic O'Conor,—

only to yield it up, however, five or six years afterwards, to the Normans and Henry II. The history of Ireland from 1100 to 1170 turns round these two houses and their struggles, the O'Loughlins of Ulster, the northern O'Neills, descended from Niall of the Nine Hostages, representing the ancient kings ; and the O'Conors, an important but still upstart race of usurpers striving to wrest the sceptre from hands consecrated by time and the nation's reverence. I will not weary you with an attempt to depict the varying fortunes of the contest. These you can read for yourselves, if so inclined, in the monotonous pages of the Four Masters, or of the *Annals* of Ulster or of Lough Cé. The O'Conors on the one side, the O'Loughlins on the other, strove to attain their purposes by perpetual raids and plundering forays upon their neighbours round about, sweeping away their cattle, burning their corn, plundering their houses. It is scarcely possible to imagine how any kind of prosperity could have dawned upon this unhappy country amid the scenes depicted by the Four Masters, or by any other of the numerous annalists. The kings themselves lived pretty secure. O'Conor at Croghan, in Roscommon ; the O'Brians at Cencora, near Killaloe ; the O'Loughlins at Aileach, near Derry, lived safe and secure behind their entrenchments, massive earthworks which to this day excite the curiosity of the traveller, and, down to Queen Elizabeth's day, gave quite sufficient employment to the gunpowder and the ordnance of a more advanced civilization. [4] But the unfortunate peasantry must have lived in daily terror of their lives, and in a state of insecurity utterly fatal to all improvement. Within these entrenchments, strengthened by formidable palisades of sharpened piles and stakes, the kings maintained a certain barbarous extravagance. Thus the *Annals of Ulster* tell us that in 1107 Cencora, the residence of the O'Brians at Killaloe, was burned, when there was consumed " seventy tons of drink called mead and of old ale." [5] But their mode of life proved destructive to the morals of the kings themselves. They lost all sense of religion and its obligations amid their ambitious projects. In my previous lectures on the history of Ireland from St. Patrick to the Norman Conquest, I showed how a knowledge of Byzantine art and literature penetrated to this country. [6] With Byzantine accomplishments, however, there came Byzantine vices as well. Truth and mercy disappeared from Byzantine morals. Faithlessness and cruelty marked each successive dynasty which held the throne of the Eastern empire, and defiled the sacred precincts of the Holy Eastern Church itself. So it was, and even worse in Ireland. Cruelty and falsehood were peculiar to no race of princes, but displayed themselves equally in the O'Loughlins, the O'Conors, and the O'Brians, as well as in the inferior chiefs, who showed themselves apt pupils of their betters. Let us take a few specimens which will illustrate more vividly than any description of mine the social life of Ireland during the last years of independence. The light they cast is a very lurid one indeed. Thus, to take the charge of cruelty first. Blinding, quite after the Byzantine fashion, was the ordinary fate reserved for dangerous captives, yea, and even for the members of the princely families who became obnoxious to the reigning sovereigns. The Empress Irene, about the year 800, blinded her own son when he threatened to become dangerous to her supreme power. King Torlogh O'Conor in 1136 blinded his own son Hugh when he was becoming dangerous. Five years later we read that Dermot MacMurrough, of whom we shall have much more anon, blinded Murtogh MacGillamocholmog, chief of Fercullen, a district near our own city of Dublin, together with twenty of his chief men. [7] While, again, in 1153 we hear of Melaghlin or Molloy, King of Meath, blinding his cousin Conor Melaghlin, and of Dermot MacMurrough, ever the prince of evil-doers and of cruelty, blinding O'More, prince of Leix, in the Queen's County, and then with savage irony releasing the wretched man from the fetters in which he was bound. Scarcely a princely house throughout Ireland was there where some blind warrior lived not, occupying the corner of the hearth, and helping by the tale of his own wrongs and the speaking evidence of his sightless and mangled eye-balls to deepen that tribal hatred which was fast ruining Ireland. Permit me here to give you a word of warning. As a historian I must strive to be impartial. Specially as a historian of the Church, I am pledged to be fair and truth-telling. In this chair I know no politics, and hope to pander to no prejudices. Here, therefore, I am bound to

tell you that cruelty of this wanton and hopeless kind was not limited to Ireland. It found a place among the more cultured and civilized Normans as well ; and Mr. Freeman's pages or the Chronicle of North Wales will show how Henry II. treated his Welsh hostages in just the same fashion, rooting out their eyes, and parading them thus tortured round the walls of Caerleon when the brave townsmen refused to surrender at his summons. While again we learn that the Scotch Celts were possessed by the same bloodthirsty spirit, as we are told by the Annals of Clonmacnois, under date of 1098, that Donnell Mac-Donnogh, King of Scotland, was blinded in both his eyes by his own brother. [8]

Cruelty was not the only princely vice then prevalent. Treachery was closely allied with it. Let me give an illustration. In 1140 the ancient town of Athlone was just as important a military post as it is to-day. The ancient Castle, still guarded jealously and fortified in modern fashion ; the frowning batteries with guns all looking towards Connaught, speak clearly of the invasions expected from that quarter. Seven hundred years ago a Celtic dun of earth rose on the very same spot where now stands the Castle raised on the ancient site by King John's ecclesiastico-warrior architect John, Bishop of Norwich. [9] The Castle of Athlone has ever guarded the pass of the Shannon, and has seen many a hard fight for its possession, down to the last great struggle when De Ginkle defeated St. Ruth and destroyed the hopes of the Stuarts. In the early twelfth century it was just the same save that the attacks on the Celtic dun were infinitely more numerous, while the bridge which then connected the opposite shores of Meath and Connaught was a much more fragile structure than the long narrow rambling Elizabethan structure on which the famous struggle of July 1691 took place. [10] To Athlone in 1140 resorted Torlogh O'Conor, King of Connaught, to meet Melaghlin, King of Meath, whose kingdom bordered his own. O'Conor was in a penitent mood, it may have been ; though the penitence and the religion were but short-lived. Gelasius, Primate of Armagh, had just made his first visitation of Connaught, and succeeded at last in establishing the primatial jurisdiction of Armagh, hitherto jealously rejected, as involving the ecclesiastical supremacy of what to Connaught men was a foreign city and kingdom. Roman influence and ideas were steadily though slowly triumphing over ancient Celtic jealousies. "The churches of Connaught," we are told by the Four Masters, "were adjusted to the jurisdiction of Gelasius by Torlogh O'Conor and the chieftains of Connaught ; and Patrick's successor and his clergy left a blessing on the king and his chieftains."

Under the influence of the mission thus held by the Primate himself, O'Conor invited Murrough Melaghlin of Meath to a conference at Athlone, which was duly held. The high contracting parties took mutual oaths, made mutual armistices, the bridge of Athlone was broken down (in token of peace, because only used for war), and they parted in apparent love and friendship. But the old Adam was too strong in O'Conor. The King of Meath doubtless withdrew his troops and tribesmen, trusting to the lately sworn oaths, and the flocks of Meath were grazing in peace. But then we read as the very next entry by the Four Masters : "Another wicker bridge was made by Torlogh across Athlone, and he devastated the west of Meath." So little binding force had oaths for him ! The same Torlogh O'Conor three years later seized, his own son, Rory O'Conor, and kept him a prisoner after he had solemnly sworn to keep the peace towards him, and the same year he captured the person and lands of Murrough, King of Meath, though the Primate of Armagh himself and the most venerated relics of Ireland, the staff of Jesus, the altar and shrine of St. Kieran of Clonmacnois, the bells [11] of St. Fechin and of St. Kevin of Glendalough, had been solemnly invoked as witnesses and guarantees that peace should be preserved between Connaught and Meath. No oaths could bind O'Conor, and yet so little were this falsehood and cruelty regarded as blemishes, that when he died the annalists exhausted all the resources of their high-flown language in celebrating his panegyric. Thus they call this faithless, perjured, bloody tyrant "the flood of the glory and splendour of Ireland, the Augustus of the West of Europe, a man full of char-

ity and mercy, hospitality and chivalry.” Public opinion must have been in a low estate indeed when the religious teachers of the time—for they alone were the writers of history—could use such language about such a man. And yet he was not one whit worse than his neighbours. He merely acted towards the Melaghins of Meath or the O’Neills of the north as they acted towards him.

It was a sad time, when every man’s hand was against his neighbour, and when for the poor peaceable, industrious man there was neither light nor hope nor security.

To enable you to grasp the course of events which led up to the English conquest, you must understand the state of Irish politics about 1150. The northern O’Neills, princes of Tyrone, were the nominal kings of Ireland. O’Conor was seeking, but in vain, to deprive them of that very precarious and shadowy dignity. The kingdom of Meath and Tara anciently and by right the supreme monarchy was a kind of debatable land between the two rivals. Just as Alsace and Lorraine and the Rhenish provinces have been in the past, and are destined still to be in the future, the battlefield between France and Germany, so Meath was at this time the perpetual battle-field between the kings of the north and of the west. Two individuals come now upon the scene whose deeds and quarrels contributed even more than those of the supreme kings to the making of Irish history. [12] Tiernan O’Rourke was Prince of Breifny, a district to use modern phraseology covering the counties of Leitrim and Cavan ; or perhaps, to put it more exactly still, the dioceses of Kilmore and Ardagh, for the diocesan jurisdictions coincide more accurately than any other with the ancient tribal divisions of this country. [13] Dermot MacMurrough was Prince of Lagenia, or Leinster, a district embracing the modern Leinster less by the diocese of Meath on the north, which comprehends the ancient kingdom of Meath and the diocese of Ossory proper on the west, which corresponds to the kingdom of Ossory. [14] It is important that you should understand these local distinctions if you wish to follow aright the course of political development. Leinster and Dermot’s kingdom, roughly speaking, embraced the country from Dublin and Naas on the north, to Wexford and Waterford on the south, touching in both directions on the bounds of Danish dominion. This Danish power, indeed, is a most important fact, and has a special bearing on the course of our narrative ; upon it, there-fore, I must bestow a brief notice before I describe the quarrels of O’Rourke and of MacMurrough, which led up to the Conquest, in which the Danish population played no small part. The history of the Danes in Ireland has suffered under a grievous misapprehension. The Danes, as I explained in a previous course of lectures, were defeated by Brian Boru at Clontarf, but were not expelled from Ireland. Their supremacy was destroyed, but not their existence. Christianity, too, came to the relief of the Celtic Irish, and the conversion of the Danes rendered them more peaceable neighbours than they had previously been. Still, they did not sink into and coalesce with the mass of the Celtic population. Independent communities of Danes existed all round Ireland, and along the eastern coast of Scotland. The Scottish isles were ruled by Danish earls, whose fleets were ever ready to succour their Irish brethren, [15] or ally themselves for pay with the O’Neills of Ulster. Larne, Carlingford, Dublin, Wexford, Waterford, and Limerick were free Danish settlements during the twelfth century. Dublin was ruled by a family named Turkil, [16] or MacTurkil, which continued to occupy a high position both in Church and State during the thirteenth century. The Danes, too, like the Anglo-Normans of later times, imbibed the same love for civil broils which marked the Celts of the period. The Danes of Dublin warred, for instance, upon the Danes of Waterford in 1137, and again in 1140 (cf. *Four Masters*), and defeated their countrymen, a most dangerous kind of victory for themselves. The Irish chieftains were doubtless very glad to see such powerful and warlike neighbours destroying each other, specially when the Dublin Danes could muster two hundred ships.

Such was the position of Danish affairs. Let us now return to MacMurrough and O'Rourke and the native Irish. MacMurrough, King of Leinster, was a thorough villain. Providence sometimes works with very vile instruments, but never with a viler instrument than Dermot, King of Leinster, was. Yet with all his violence he was an energetic and an able man. Dermot's personal appearance is described by Giraldus (see *Ann. Four Masters*, A.D. 1172). His name indeed is, for most of us, but a shadow, and his personality has long since faded into that land of myth and fable which is, in scriptural phrase, "a land of darkness as darkness itself, and where the light is as darkness." Let us then strive to make it a reality; and for this we have abundant materials. This College, for instance, of our own, now the College of the Holy and Undivided Trinity, of Queen Elizabeth's foundation, is in its first origin a monument of one of Dermot MacMurrough's transient seasons of repentance. The Corporation of Dublin, again, possesses a Baldoyle estate of considerable value, whose origin goes back to the same monarch. We have a charter, too, with his signature, witnessed by St. Laurence O'Toole, [17] setting forth an endowment granted by him about 1160 to the Abbey of Duis, in Kilkenny. But we can go still further, and recover the books Dermot read, the education he received, the manner of men with whom he conversed. Let us see how this comes to pass. The *Book of Leinster* is a great collection of documents. Photius, a learned Greek patriarch, published in the ninth century some volumes of extracts accumulated during the course of a studious life, which he denominated a Bibliotheca, or a Library. The *Book of Leinster* is a similar bibliotheca or library of documents, written from time to time during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, many of them having been composed some time about 1120 or 1130, by the tutor to whom Dermot Mac-Murrough's education was entrusted. The *Book of Leinster* remained for more than seven centuries unedited,—till six years ago, when it was published in *facsimile*, and thoroughly analysed by our own Professor Atkinson, at the joint expense of this University and of the Royal Irish Academy. [18] Any of you can now consult it in our various libraries, and there you will find a volume which lay in the library and which exercised the attention of Dermot's early days. The careless or unsympathetic inquirer might easily be repelled from it. It is full of mythical stories. It goes back to the Flood and before it, tracing the history of Ireland's various invasions thousands of years before the Christian era. But mingled with such legends there are scraps of genuine history which illumine the tangled and darksome past of Irish life.

There is another aspect, however, from which such literary efforts should be viewed. Egypt has been of late years rendering up its buried literary treasures, and among them we have found, not history alone, but legends, novels, poems, which are valuable as illustrations of the social life and literary influences which formed the national habits and character. Everyone nowadays recognises the vast influence exercised over men and women by the tales and poems poured by nurses into the ears of innocent childhood. The British Museum carefully collects and catalogues even the sixpenny children's books which come teeming from the press, on this special ground, that they will show future ages the social and literary influences which shaped our minds. And so, too, this *Book of Leinster* is most valuable, not alone for the true history which it contains, nor for the genuine annals which it embodies, but most of all as setting forth the social life, the habits, customs, the poetry and literary influences, amid which Dermot MacMurrough and men like him were cradled and trained. Read Professor Atkinson's analysis, and then you will cease to wonder at the civil strife of the twelfth century. Yea, rather, you will wonder how there could ever have been an hour's peace not to speak of a year's between tribes whose earliest notions must have been of war and mutual hate. One poem, for instance (p. 27), celebrates the story of the renowned King Conor MacNessa and his hospitality. He was a prudent man, too, and knew his guests right well; so before dinner, as each guest entered, the king secured his arms and piled them up in a strong chamber, lest they should run amuck at one another for some rough expression. And then, to show the nature of the guests, the poem celebrates one who from the time he took spear in

hand wounded or killed every day some man of Connaught, and never slept comfortably unless the body of a Connaught man formed his pillow. The contents of the *Book of Leinster* will at once explain the career of Dermot and his brother chieftains. They were simply such as their education had made them. The Book of Leinster was written for the one purpose of exalting Leinster, and depreciating Connaught and Munster and everything connected with these provinces. One poet (p. 23) says, "If I had seven heads I could not tell all the prowess of the Leinster men even in a month, without seven tongues in each separate head"; and then, recalling the achievements of various battles, at the end of every tragedy adds, "'Twas the Leinster men killed them." This brief account of the *Book of Leinster* will prove, at any rate, that Dermot MacMurrough's character can be tested by a modern rule. Examine a man's library, and you can generally fairly gauge his habits and character. Examine the *Book of Leinster*, and you will not be surprised that Dermot MacMurrough's career was stained by bloodshed, vice, and falsehood.

MacMurrough belonged to a family which, for several generations, had reigned over Leinster, [19] and which still finds a lineal representative in that of the Kavanaghs of the county Carlow. He was born about 1100, and was educated by Hugh MacGriffin, afterwards Abbot of Terryglass, in the county Tipperary. He ascended the throne of Leinster about 1135, and signalled the very year of his accession, according to the Annals of Clonmacnois, by attacking the city of Kildare, sanctified by the memory of St. Brigid, killing one hundred and seventy of the townsmen and of the members of the convent, and crowning his wickedness by taking the Abbess the successor of St. Brigid out of her cell, and compelling her to marry one of his courtiers. Henceforth his career was one continuous tale of violence. A lady, too, enters upon the scene. Tiernan O'Rourke, of Breifny, and Dermot MacMurrough had originally been suitors for the daughter of the King of Meath, Dervorgil by name. [20] O'Rourke succeeded in marrying her, though the lady favoured Dermot Mac-Murrough. Dermot, however, had his revenge. A man that would force the Abbess of Kildare to marry, a lady vested with even episcopal rights and authority, would not scruple to plot against another man's domestic felicity, and carry off another man's wife. So in 1152, when both parties had arrived at the mature age of forty at least, the princess Dervorgil and Dermot MacMurrough established a mutual correspondence; the lady signified, by trusty messenger, to Dermot where her husband had placed her during one of his numerous predatory excursions. Thither MacMurrough marched, carried her off with all her cattle, and brought her to his own residence, at the town of Ferns, in the county Wexford. [21] This was too extreme an action even for that wild time, when marriage ties sat very lightly indeed upon Irish princes. O'Rourke appealed to Torlogh O'Conor, King of Connaught, his great ally, who assembled an army, marched against Dermot, defeated him, and restored Dervorgil to her rightful lord. [22] This laid the foundation of perpetual strife between O'Rourke and Mac-Murrough. Year after year the O'Neills of the north were summoned to Dermot's aid, while the O'Conors assisted O'Rourke; till at last a decisive crisis came, decisive for Ireland, for MacMurrough, and for England, too, embodying all the elements of violence, cruelty, and falsehood concerning which I have spoken. Mortogh O'Loughlin, of the northern O'Neills, was then supreme King of Ireland. He had sworn before the Primate of Armagh, upon the most solemn of Irish relics, the staff of Jesus, given to St. Patrick by our Lord Himself, to keep the peace with a number of chieftains whose names I will not attempt to repeat. As soon as he got them into his power he blinded one who is described as "the pillar of the prowess and hospitality of the Irish," and killed the others. This roused a number of the surrounding princes, who attacked Mortogh, utterly defeated his forces, and killed the sovereign himself, whom, notwithstanding his perjury and cruelty, the Four Masters describe as "the Monarch of all Ireland, the chief lamp of the valour, chivalry, hospitality, and prowess of the West of the world; a man who had never been defeated in battle till that time, and who had gained many battles." His defeat had many and far-reaching results. The O'Conors had always kept their eyes fixed on

the supreme monarchy as the object of their highest ambition. And now this was their opportunity, when their rival was dead, and his country torn with civil strife. Rory O'Connor, son of the vigorous, though cruel and false, Torlogh, was now the monarch of Connaught. He assembled an army, marched to Dublin, purchased the alliance of the Danes, received the allegiance of the rebel tribes of the North, and then, turning upon Dermot MacMurrough, who alone held out, despatched against Dermot his ancient and deadly foe, Tiernan O'Rourke, burning with the remembrance of ten thousand injuries, public and private.

Dermot was now abandoned on every side. The Psalmist's words came true at last with Dermot as with many another : " Evil shall hunt the violent man to overthrow him." Dermot's cruelties had alienated his own tribesmen even, who forsook him on every side. O'Rourke easily defeated the few who remained faithful, seized Dermot's house at Ferns, and drove him forth an exile to seek aid from Henry II. of England. The *Book of Leinster* enables us to fix the very day of his defeat and exile. Upon the margin of folio 200 one of Dermot's scribes has written, under the date August 1st, 1166, " Oh Mary, it is a great deed that is done in Erin this day, the Kalends of August. Diarmid, son of Donnchadh MacMurchadha, King of Leinster and the Danes, was banished by the men of Ireland over the sea eastward. Uch ! Uch ! Uch ! O Lord, what shall I do ?" despairing words of a courtier which yet are of deepest interest. They prove that bad as Dermot was there were some who loved him. They have a prophetic ring, too, about them, though the seer knew not of what he prophesied.

[1] All these works are now, or will shortly be, accessible to the general reader with one exception. A few words of explanation may, however, be useful. The *Book of Leinster*, otherwise called the *Book of Glendalough*, is one of the most important Celtic MSS. in existence. It dates from the twelfth century. The portion which now remains consists of one hundred and seventy-seven loose leaves of vellum in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, and of eleven leaves in the hands of the Franciscans of the Irish province. See Mr. Gilbert's *National MSS. of Ireland*, Nos. liii—lv. A transcript of it in folio, with introduction, analysis, and index by Professor Atkinson, was published in 1880 by the Royal Irish Academy. The MS. probably formed a part of King Dermot MacMurrough's library. The *Annals of Clonmacnois* exist only in an English translation made in the year 1627, three MS. copies of which have come down to us, one in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, another in the British Museum, and a third in Sir Thomas Phillips' library ; see O'Curry's *Lectures on Irish MS. Materials*, p. 130 (Dublin : 1861). The *Annals of Lough Cé* have been published in two volumes by Mr. Hennessy in the Rolls Series. They are described by Mr. O'Curry in his *Lectures*, ed. 1861, p. 93. They were the annals of the Mac-Dermot clan, and were composed at their residence, situated on an island in Rockingham demesne, the seat of the late Colonel King-Harman, M.P. The *Annals of Ulster* are now in process of publication, the first volume having appeared in 1887 under the direction of Mr. Hennessy and at the expense of the Royal Irish Academy. They were composed towards the close of the fifteenth century. Mr. Hennessy considers the *Annals* of Ulster and of Lough Cé superior in honesty and accuracy to those of the Four Masters. O'Curry describes them at length in his fourth Lecture. The *Chronicon Scotorum* is an ancient volume of annals composed in the Abbey of Clonmacnois prior to the Norman invasion of 1172. It has been published in the Rolls Series, under the editorship of Mr. Hennessy. The *Annals of the Four Masters* form a compilation out of the ancient annals known in their time by Michael O'Clery and three other monks of the Franciscan monastery of Donegal. This great work was composed between the years 1632 and 1636. It was printed in seven volumes under the direction of Dr. John O'Donovan, and at the expense of Mr. Smith, a Dublin publisher, in 1851. The *Annals of the Four Masters* are fully described in Mr. O'Curry's seventh Lecture, and in Dr. O'Donovan's learned preface.

- [2] The descendants of Niall of the Nine Hostages (A.D. 400) divided themselves into two great branches ; first the southern O'Neills, represented by the Kings of Meath, the Melaghlines ; secondly the northern O'Neills, called O'Loughlins. Niall of the Nine Hostages is in the female line still represented in the peerage by Lord O'Neill, of Shane Castle, county Antrim (see Keating's *Hist. of Ireland*, ed. O'Mahony, pp. 719, 723).
- [3] The same kind of language was used among the Welsh about their favourite princes and warriors. See the Welsh *Chronicle*, A.D. 1137, about Gruffyth ap Rees, Prince of South Wales.
- [4] Fynes Morison thus describes one of these forts in the county Antrim, still used in the reign of Queen Elizabeth :— “ The fort of Innisloughlan is seated in the midst of a peat bog, and is no way accessible but through thick woods very hardly passable. It has about it two deep ditches, both compassed with strong palisades, a very high and thick rampart of earth and timber, and well flanked with bulwarks ” (*History of Ireland*, ii. 190). See also an extract from Petrie's unpublished essay on the military architecture of Ireland, in *Petrie's Life*, by W. Stokes, M.D., p. 221. The crannogs, or fortified islands, continued in use among the Celts from the earliest times down to the end of the seventeenth century. See *Irish Archæological Miscellany*, p. 233, for an instance of their use in A.D. 1448—49. The English used the same kind of fortifications till the arrival of the Normans. See G. T. Clark's *Mediæval Military Architecture*, vol. i., ch. ii., p. 30 (London : 1884), where the following description is given of Anglo-Saxon fortified residences of earth and timber :— “ In viewing one of these moated mounds we have only to imagine a central timber house on the top of the mound, built of half trunks of trees, set upright between two waling pieces at the top and bottom, like the old church at Greensted, with a close paling around it, along the edge of the table top, perhaps a second line at its base, and a third along the outer edge of the ditch, and others not so strong upon the edges of the outer courts, with bridges of planks across the ditches and huts of ‘ wattle and dab,’ or of timber, within the enclosures, and we shall have a very fair idea of a fortified dwelling of a thane or franklin in England from the eighth or ninth century down to the date of the Norman conquest.”
- [5] Cf. *Annals of Lough Cé*, ed. Hennessy, in *Rolls Series*, vol. i., p. 97.
- [6] See *Ireland and the Celtic Church*, chaps, ix., xi., xii.
- [7] The clan MacGillamochoilmog inhabited the country through which the Dodder flows (see O'Donovan's note, *Ann. Four Masters*, A.D. 1044). In ancient Dublin there was a street called after their name (see Gilbert's *History of Dublin*, t. i., p. 233). The princes and chiefs of this family often appear in Anglo-Norman documents (see Gilbert's *Chartularies of St. Mary's Abbey*, *Rolls Series*, preface, p. xxiv ; *Ann. Four Masters*, A.D. 1044, O'Donovan's edition). The *Rotuli Chartarum* (ed. T. D. Hardy, 1837, p. 173) gives the details of their property as it existed in the days of Henry II. They had fifteen carucates of land in the valley of Dublin, and some houses in the city itself. A charter of Luke, Archbishop of Dublin A.D. 1241, printed in the *Chartæ, Privilegia*, p. 24, published by the Irish Record Office, shows that the clan had property near the town of Rathcoole, in the county Dublin.
- [8] Cf. *Ann. Four Masters*, ed. O'Donovan, A.D. 1100.
- [9] Athlone Castle, in Celtic times, was called the Bo-dun or Cow-Castle, or fort of the O'Conors. Bo-dun is the origin of the word bawn, which so often occurs in ancient Irish grants of property. A bawn was a fortified yard where cattle were secured. See Mr.

Hennessy's edition of the *Annals of Lough Cé*, p. 207, cf. p. 245.

- [10] This ancient and historic bridge was only removed forty-five years ago. Some Elizabethan monuments which stood upon it are now preserved in the cellars of the Royal Irish Academy. See two interesting pamphlets by the late Rev. J. S. Joly, Rector of Athlone, entitled *The Bridge of Athlone* and *Our Church Bell*.
- [11] About sacred bells and their profanation, see O'Donovan's note on *Ann. Four Masters*, A.D. 1044
- [12] People sometimes think of these Irish princes, the Mac-Murroughs, O'Brians, O'Conors, and their fellows, as if they were simple savage's, with no better culture or education than Red Indian chiefs. They were very cruel and very savage according to our ideas, but not more so than the English kings and nobles or the Welsh princes of their time. Dermot MacMurrough issued charters in regular form, and in the Latin language. In Mr. Gilbert's *Facsimiles of National MSS*, there will be found a charter issued by Dermot Mac-Murrough for the foundation of a Benedictine monastery at Duisk, now Graigenemanagh, in the county Kilkenny. In the same valuable publication there is contained the foundation charter of Holy Cross Abbey, issued by King Donnall O'Brian, of North Munster, in 1168. In fact the Irish annalists present the blackest side of their country's story ; because, imbued with the spirit of their times, they thought nothing worth telling unless it dealt somehow with fighting, plunder, or murder. A series of Newgate Calendars would not give the truest picture of English life in the last century. We get scarcely a glimpse of social organisation or of material improvement from any of these sources. Yet there must have been skill, taste, and wealth when structures like Mellifont, Holy Cross, Cong Abbey, Cormac's Chapel at Cashel, and the Nun's Church with its exquisite carvings and mouldings at Clonmacnois, could be erected by Irish princes and ecclesiastics prior to the arrival of the Normans. These Irish princes erected castles after the model of the Anglo-Normans, as at Tuam, where Roderic O'Connor built a castle with strong central keep, courtyard fortified with outlying towers connected by curtain walls and protected by a deep fosse. See for a description of it a paper by Petrie in the *Dublin Penny Journal*, vol. i., pp. 99 147 ; Petrie's Life, by W. Stokes, M.D., p. 212 (cf. p. 282), for a disquisition on the excellence of the goldsmith's art at the court of King Torlogh O'Connor, at Roscommon, in the year 1123. The charters and other legal documents contained in the *Book of Kells* (see *Irish Archaeological Miscellany*, pp. 137-49) prove the presence of the goldsmith's art, for instance, at Kells, together with the existence and legal transfer of individual property in that town about the year 1100. They show, too, that rent was paid in Ireland about the year A.D. 1000. Kells, it may be noted, is one of the few places in the United Kingdom where traces of the old communal system of land-holding still survive. See Seebohm's *English Village Community*, p. 227 (London : 1883).
- [13] Reeves' *Diocese of Dublin and Glendalough* ; Graves on the tribes of ancient Ossory in the *Kilk. Archaeological Journal* ; *Three Fragments of Irish Annals*, ed. T. O'Donovan, LL.D. (Irish Arch. Soc.), pp. 8, 86 ; *Irish Archaeological Miscellany*, p. 289.
- [14] The kingdom of Leinster, broadly speaking, covered the south-eastern part of Ireland, from Dublin and the line of the Liffey and Barrow to Wexford and the Irish Sea. Its princes resided sometimes at Naas, or at the Hill of Allen, near Kildare, and in the twelfth century at Ferns, near which rises Mount Leinster, one of the finest mountains in Ireland.
- [15] Cf. *Annals of Four Masters*, A.D. 1142. In the year noi, 1102, Magnus, King of Denmark, invaded Ireland with the help of the Manxmen, and fought a battle near Dublin. On that occasion the daughter of O'Brien, King of Munster, married the son of Magnus.

- [16] See *Four Masters*, A.D. 1146, where MacTurkil is described as chief steward, or mayor, of Dublin. Gilbert's *Chartularies of St. Mary's Abbey*, in Rolls Series, t. i., p. 83, gives much information about this distinguished Danish family. Henry II. gave a portion of their estates to St. Mary's Abbey, Dublin. The family and name were known in England too (see Freeman's Appendix, *Norman Conquest*, iv., 780, on the Turkils of Warwick, and the *Chronicle* of Joceline de Brakelonda, Camden Society's Series, p. 153). The name Turkil was not extinct so late as the last century. A brother of the celebrated Rev. Philip Skelton married, when Vicar of Newry about 1720, a Miss Turkil.
- [17] Cf. Gilbert's *Facsimiles of Irish National MSS.*, No. LXII., and on the same page the charter of Holy Cross from Donnall O'Brian.
- [18] A history and analysis of the *Book of Leinster* will be found in O'Curry's *MS. Materials for Irish History*, p. 186 (Dublin : 1861), and in the letterpress attached to Mr. Gilbert's *Facsimiles*, No. LIII. See also note on p. 2 above.
- [19] Dermot MacMurrough was descended from a prince named Diarmaid, son of Mael-na-mbo, who succeeded to the principality of Leinster in the first half of the eleventh century. See *Annals of the Four Masters*, A.D. 1052, O'Donovan's edition, where the editor traces the succession of princes, and descent of the families of MacMurrough, Kavanagh, and Kinsellagh.
- [20] Dervorgil was a common name in those times. See *Ann. Four Masters*, A.D. 1080 and the Index Nominum. The mother of John Balliol, King of Scotland, was so called. She was princess and heiress of Galloway. See *Stubbs, Const. Hist.*, i., 557.
- [21] *Ann. Four Masters*, 1167. Dervorgil built the Nun's Church at Clonmacnois, the ruins of which are still visible. See O'Donovan's note sub. an. 1167. Morice Regan tells the story of Dervorgil's abduction with an evident relish. A successful achievement of that kind was clearly a thing to be proud of. The whole story reminds one of the scenes of the last century so vigorously depicted in Froude's *English in Ireland*.
- [22] Dervorgil died at Mellifont, A. D. 1193, aged eighty-five. See note (c) *Ann. Four Masters* on that year, and 1152 and 1153 in same.

Ireland and the Anglo-Norman church : a history of Ireland and Irish Christianity from the Anglo-Norman conquest to the dawn of the Reformation (1892)

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