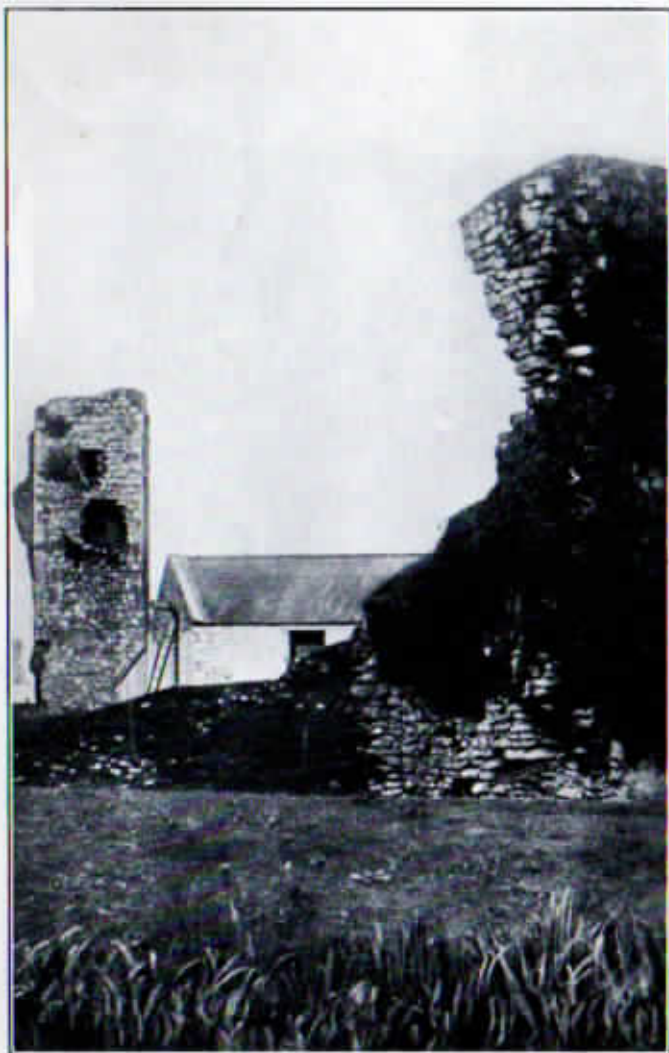


A POPULAR HISTORY
OF
EAST KERRY



OLD GERALDINE CASTLE
Oileán Clarraíche

A POPULAR HISTORY OF EAST KERRY

By
T. M. DONOVAN



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PREFACE

THIS attempt at a popular history of East Kerry appealing as it does to such a limited audience, had to be published by subscription. A full list of the subscribers towards its publication will be found at the end.

I do not pretend to any special training for the writing of this work, neither do I pose as a learned historian, who usually devotes years of labour to the conning over of old volumes, or to the deep study of ancient manuscripts. In one of the chapters I give my idea of what a documented History of Kerry will be, that is, a standard history of the Old Kingdom which will be written sometime in the future.

What I try to do in this volume is to give a fairly full account of the chief events that happened in East Kerry for the last hundred years from a personal and traditional point of view, together with a few incursions into the past, more especially into the time succeeding the Elizabethan devastation of the latter part of the sixteenth century and the consequences of the horrors of those evil days. For the latter peeps into the past I consulted King's, Smith's, and Cusack's histories of Kerry. For the traditional account of the last hundred years I am indebted mainly to information picked up at various times from the late Mr. Jeremiah Nolan, of Castleisland, who lived to a great age, and who was one of the most intelligent and talented men of his time.

I have introduced many humorous, true stories into my narrative, which may give readers a glance at the social conditions of the past, and maybe a hint or two at character. It must always be remembered that our people were in a state of slavery during the lapse of many centuries, and that these centuries of serfdom must have left their mark on the character of our race. Our Holy Faith alone that saved us from corruption. Our tendency to untruth, our penchant for quarrelling and litigation, our lack of the finer civic virtues, our boastful habits on the least provocation, and our envy of, and our uncharitable judgments on, our brethren who do well in life—all this is a part of the legacy engendered in us by the centuries of those dreadful social conditions which were imposed on our fathers by their conquerors.

But, being of a race that was cultured, religious, and learned, when the English were uncultivated pagans, we have that in us which will enable us to throw off these vestiges of slavery, and blossom out again into what we were before—good Christians. In our second spring we shall become again a nation of saints and scholars, and missionaries of the Faith to whole world. This will be our new glory—to have a spiritual hegemony in many lands, and to make our own dear land, if not the first, at least the second daughter of the Church.

We are an old and ever-faithful Catholic nation, and our dearest possession is our Catholic faith. Enjoying the status of a self-governing State, we must always keep the Catholic spirit in the forefront, for it is this spirit alone that will save civilization from utter ruin and all the races of men from the new paganism.

I have to thank all those kind friends who so generously subscribed to the fund for the publication of this book; but special thanks are due to the O'Connors of Ciarraighe Luachra for the great encouragement and financial help which they have so liberally given. As Ciarraighe Luachra (in old manuscripts called Ciarraide Luchra), which is the Irish name for East Kerry, was the principality of the O'Connors, it is very fitting that members of that old Celtic clan should help to forward the publication of its history.

I may be allowed to specially thank three representatives of the O'Connor Kerry family who have given me most generous assistance:—Dr. Joseph O'Connor, of Surrey, England; John C. O'Connor, of New York, and Batt O'Connor, T.D., of Dublin. To all helpers from every part of Kerry at home and abroad, to M. J. Reidy and J. J. Sheehan, New York, I return my most sincere thanks; but without the assistance of Dr. Joseph O'Connor this book could not be published.

T. M. DONOVAN.

Castleisland, 9th September, 1931.

INTRODUCTION

THE present attempt at the story of East Kerry is not in the form of a conventional history, with its regulated and graduated account of chiefs and kings, bards and battles, but it is principally an attempt to describe how the English came into Ciarraighe Luachra, how they lived as conquerors on the fat of the land, how they lorded it over the native Gael, and how they were driven out by the Land Leaguers of the eighteen-eighties, and the men of the Irish Revolution of 1916—1921.

In the usual documented history of a country or a county it begins with the legendary origins of human settlement on the land as hunters or agriculturists, giving a more or less detailed account of the races that discovered or conquered it. In this history of a part of a county we cannot follow the conventional routine of the learned historian with his elaborate accounts of the chief historical events as they followed each other in regular order from the earliest settlement to the present day. Here we can only give a birdseye view of the past, and a more detailed description of the leading events of modern times.

The chapter on the great saint of Ciarraighe Luachra, Mochuda, gives a glance at East Kerry in the time succeeding to that of St Patrick; the "Desmond Survey" gives us an idea of the social conditions prevailing there during the feudal reign of the Earls of Desmond, from the time of the Norman Conquest

to the terrible days of the Elizabethan persecutions. The chapters on the English Settlers of East Kerry show how the native Gael was dispossessed of the soil, the manner of living of these Settlers and their descendants, and of the descendants of the plebeian Cromwellian settlers who, about a century later, came to reinforce the Elizabethan Undertakers.

The Land War in East Kerry gives an account of the first serious revolt of the down-trodden serfs, the tenant-farmers against their alien masters, and the chapters on the Irish Revolution tell how the children of the Land Leaguers finally won constitutional freedom and ended the social and political domination of the English in East Kerry for ever. Part II. is mainly reminiscent, with a final guess at what the future has in store for Kerry.

Scattered throughout the history of Munster are a few references to Ciarraighe Luachra, which is practically coincident with East Kerry (from Killarney down to the Atlantic coast may be properly called South Kerry) and these references which are few and far between may be given here although unrelated to each other in the course of time.

From the Annals of the Four Masters we take most of these interesting historical items. In the year of the world 4169, a great battle was fought in East Kerry between the Irish monarch, Sirmia, and the Ultonians, and another battle is mentioned as taking place in 4981. At a battle on the borders of Ciarraighe Luachra between the chieftain of that territory, O'Connor, and Cormac MacArt, king of Cashel, an East Kerry Druid is said to have distinguished himself by beating the best Druids of Cormac in the "magic

art" of water-divining. The celebrated Gaelic scholar, John O'Donovan, in one of his translations from the Irish, says that the Lord of Ciarraighe Luachra had to send as tribute, annually, to Cormac Mac Art, ten thousand cows, ten thousand hogs, and seven hundred sows; and that the King of Cashel, as a matter of courtesy to his liege, sent back as presents to The O'Connor, seven women, seven matals (robes) trimmed with gold, seven drinking horns, and seven steeds. The Four Masters put it on record that an O'Connor Kerry was helping Brian Boru at the Battle of Clontarf. They state that "among the slain was Mac Bethaig or Baedan, son of Muireadhach Claen of Ciarraighe Luachra."

Coming to the days of the Norman Conquest we have a Latin proclamation or letter of Henry III, A.D. 1211, addressed to the Constable of Castleisland, then called "The Island of Kerry," who was in charge of the five-year-old castle, built in 1226 by Geoffrey Marisco: "We give you to know with grief that William Marschall, formerly Earl of Pembroke, your liege Lord, is dead; therefore, we command you that you freely deliver up the Castle of the Island in your keeping, to the charge of our well-beloved and trusty Waterond Fenton, to whose keeping we have committed the castle and lands of the aforesaid Earl in Ireland."

Another interesting item of historical importance is recorded in 1422, which shows that the Lord of the Island of Kerry was the dominant lord in the whole county. An indenture was made in Castleisland in that year between Lord James Fitzgerald, Earl of Desmond, and "lord of the liberties of Kerry," and Patrick Fitzmaurice FitzThomas—the latter was bound

to answer the said Lord Earl and his heirs and their assignees "in their apportionment and levies."

One of the earls of Desmond, Gerald, who was a poet, called Castleisland "the sweetest Island of Kerry." This earl was a hero of romance and was appointed Viceroy after Lionel, Duke of Clarence, but he was always recalling the sweet Island of Kerry where the beautiful scenery would inspire his muse. Miss Cusack says: "From all accounts it is evident that the Earl was in advance of his age in learning, if not in science, and as an almost necessary consequence he attained the reputation of being a magician."

In 1570 the Four Masters record a hosting made by the Earl of Ormond, "the Black Earl," that extended into Ciarraighe Luachra. The Valley of the Maine (Magh Luachra Deadhaich) was wasted, and he took hostages and spoils as he returned home by the same road without receiving battle or opposition, because "the two Desmonds were then in prison in London." A few years later preparations were made by the English for what they hoped would prove a war of extermination, in which Kerry was not spared. The Lord Justice passed into East Kerry. He proceeded to Teamhair Luachra, *via* Beal-atha-an-Teamhrach (Ballyintourig) in the then parish of Dysart, now Kileentierna, where he camped; thence to Tralee and North Kerry where he took Carrigafoyle.

There were English Black and Tans in East Kerry long before the war of 1920; for Sir William Hacket wrote, from Castleisland, to the English Court of "the way the (English) soldiers were suffered to go

up and down the county taking up meat and drink from the poor people."

Coming to the awful social conditions of the 18th century, we will here give a few extracts that will confirm the statements made in the body of this work. Galloway Rigg, in his pamphlet, *Ireland's Awful 18th Century*, quotes from a book published in 1786 a description of an Irish farmer's home. "The furniture of a piece with the rest, a few wooden vessels, trenchers seldom soiled with meat, two or three pots, and a couple of stools, compose the whole; the children squat half-naked and bare-footed around the fire; a car, or plough, or barrow, stuffed into gaps supplies the place of a gate; lean horses, milk kine with bones starting through the skin speak but too plainly their miserable and scanty pasture." And the farmers thus described are not the small cottiers but those renting from fifty to two hundred acres! Whitley Stokes writing in 1799 says: "I have known farmers to pay £200 a year who seemed little better than cottiers."

Writing of the tyrannical middle-men, Arthur Young, an English visitor, says: "Living on the spot, surrounded by their under-tenants, the middle-men prove the most oppressive species of tyrant that ever lent assistance to the destruction of a country. They re-let the land at short tenures to the occupiers, and often give no leases at all. Not satisfied with screwing up the rent to the utmost farthing, they are rapacious in the collection of it." And in addition to these exorbitant rents the middle-men exacted personal services for loading turf, hay, corn, gravel, and other things, "in so much that the poor under-tenants often lose their own crops and turf from being obliged to obey

these calls; there were duty fowl, duty turf, and duty work " extracted from these poor slaves.

Dobbs, in his *Essay on Trade*, writes, : " In many parts of the kingdom I have seen a number of poor souls fixed on the side of a barren mountain, two or three acres being parcelled out to each of them for a garden, where, by grubbing, stone removing, manuring, and dent of hard labour, they bring it to a kind of mould. But no sooner does the greedy landlord cast his eye on the produce of their labour, but he at once demolishes their little cabins, hedges and ditches, and so removes the poor people to the other side of the mountain there to do the like"—all of which goes to show that our ancestors were treated after a worse fashion than the negroes of the American plantations.

In a pamphlet called *The Groans of Ireland*, published in Dublin in 1741, the writer states " that near one-third the cottiers of Munster perished by fevers, fluxes, and downright want." He adds: " Although the famine of 1740-1 was the fiercest of those occurring during the eighteenth century, there were many others, notably in 1757, in 1765, in 1770 more or less calamitous." And to give a final picture of our forefathers in that terrible century, when the Irish gentry and their under-strappers, the "buckeens," were living riotously and squandering the substance of the workers, Dr. G. O'Brien quotes a contemporary description of the Irish peasant: " Behold the Irish husbandman sally forth to his work, barefoot and covered with rags; behold his ruinous hovel, covered with weeds and pervious to every shower that falls and every pinching gale that blows. Behold him seated after a hard day's labour, involved in smoke,

surrounded by his family, and sharing with them his dry and scanty meal." Dr. O'Brien quotes another work published in 1780: "To such a state has England reduced Ireland that out of two and a half million inhabitants not above one million are said to be so employed as to get more than the merest subsistence."

" O the hardships, O the hatreds !
Tyranny and cruel war,
Persecutions and oppressions,
That have left you as you are !"

Despite all this degradation and poverty our people still held on to their most treasured possession—their holy Faith. But our Catholic civilization was almost ruined. The English not satisfied with robbing us of our land, robbed us of our language, and tried their best to rob us of our religion. In that they failed, but they left the brand of slavery in our character. We were cut off from our old Gaelic culture, and our fathers had to live in an atmosphere of puritanical hypocrisy and under an anti-Christian social regime. " Between the middle of the sixteenth century," says Father E. Cahill, S.J., " and the beginning of the nineteenth century, the religious, educational, and economic organisation of the country was completely broken up, and nearly all the landed property was transferred from the Catholic Irish into the hands of the Protestant planters. The work of destruction was completed in the nineteenth century, when the Irish language, with all the wealth of Catholic tradition which it enshrined, was all but destroyed. The famines and ' clearances,' and the consequent expatriation of the greater part of the Catholic rural population, finally

broke the old Irish tradition, and severed the Irish nation from its past. . . . Hence while the Irish people are, for the most part, devotedly Catholic, in practice as well as belief, the character of the social system which has been forced upon them is neither Catholic or Irish."

What of the future? There is only one true guide for the present and future generations of the people of Ireland, and that is the guidance of the Gospel of Christ. If our social relationships are based on His teachings, then the prospect for prosperity and happiness of the people is bright. Let our legislation that controls the relations of capitalists and workers be inspired by the principles enunciated by the Holy Father of blessed memory, Pope Leo XIII, in his Encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*, and all will be well.

In a word, let the Irish enjoy the blessings of a truly Christian State, and such a Rule is sure to bring social justice, unity, liberty, prosperity, and—the greatest of all blessings—the grace of God to all the sons and daughters of Erin—North, South, East, and West. There is only one right way to rule men and nations, and that is God's way.

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Rí Ciappaige ór clannaib Céir
O Concobair, cóir uoi-rén;
Cele cláir an míor-éinn mhí
Ón Uraí go Sionainn rruic-éil.

A POPULAR HISTORY OF EAST KERRY

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

ST. MOCHUDA OF CIARRAIGHE LUACHRA.

ONE of the greatest men that was ever born in East Kerry was a saint that died in his monastery in Lismore, Co. Waterford, in the year 636, about 200 years after the time of St. Patrick. We are told by historians that St. Mochuda, sometimes called St. Carthage the younger, was born in Ciarraighe Luachra, and that (like our Great Patron) he was herding swine, when a young man, on the banks of the Mang, before he began his education for the Church.

And first, about Mochuda's tutor, St. Carthage the elder, who died near Castlemaine in the year 580. Very few facts about this holy Bishop have come down to us through the ages. The Danish and Norman conquests, and the persecutions from the time of Elizabeth until 1829, have cut off many of the records relating to our brethren of the early church in Ireland. It is stated that the elder Carthage was educated by St. Kieran, that he visited Gaul, was consecrated in Rome, and that he held a See in Kerry "somewhere near the River Mang (Maine)."

From the few facts given about this holy Bishop of Ciarraighe Luachra, it is probable that he, as was

the custom of the time, was also the ruler of a monastery near the mouth of the River Maine, probably at Kiltallagh. Living in the century after St. Patrick, it was the custom of the elder St. Carthage to travel up the Valley of the Maine with a company of his white-robed monks, visiting and teaching, and preaching to his people; offering the Holy Sacrifice at suitable places, and distributing the Bread of Life to his flock. As they moved from rath to rath, they chanted the praises of the Lord.

The Chief of the Vale of Slieve Luachra had in his service a young lad named Mochuda, who herded his master's swine in the meadows bordering the banks of the Maine. We can only surmise the location of this chief's lis or rath. It may have been Bawnard, a stronghold in pre-Christian ages, the high field overlooking the Valley of the Maine.

Mochuda, the swine-herd, happening to see these holy men—these white-robed soldiers of Christ—passing, and, being enraptured by the heavenly strains of their hymns, he followed the holy men down the stream to their monastery. There he remained all night, listening to the chanting of the monks, and longing to be with them. In various ways the chosen children of the Lord are called by our Father in Heaven to follow in the footsteps of His Son. In this attractive way the young Mochuda was called to the service of a Higher Master than the one for whom he herded the swine on the banks of the Maine.

One of the Four Masters, Michael O'Clery, in his short life of St. Mochuda, taken from an earlier one by Tadhg O Cianain, gives many interesting details of this great saint of Slieve Luachra. We need not

give here the many legendary miracles attributed to the saintliness of Carthagus. One historian says that Mochuda was called Carthage from the name of his friend and tutor, Bishop Carthage, but in O Cianain's life it is stated that he was christened by that name. "Carthage (Mochuda) was of the race of Fergus; his father's name was Fighenuis, and his mother's name was Med. . . . His mother was taken in childbirth, and she gave birth to a son beside the Maine, and there was no water on that hill (Slieve Luachra, or Slieve Mis), but a stream burst forth from its side and Aidanus was brought to them and he baptized him in the stream, and he was called Carthagus" . . . "The herds went one day to the chief's dún, Mochuda with them. The chief was taken with Mochuda because he was amiable . . . Mochuda went into the woods of Main with the pigs. He heard Carthagus, that is the old Bishop, reciting the psalms, and he took the path the clerics used to follow and reached the place in which they were. The chief wondered where Mochuda had gone that night and he sent people in search of him, and the boy was brought, *bound*, to him. The chief was feasting with Mochuda's father at that time and he gave 'warrior equipment' to Mochuda—'Here,' said he, 'and remain with me as heir to your father.' 'I will not remain,' said he, 'I prefer the words I hear from the clerics,' and when the chief perceived that Mochuda had love for God he gave him to the Bishop to preach the words of God to him." In another place we are told that Mochuda built a church to the north of Maine, and he built another church to the south of Maine in "Macaire Colman," and "he left people to do service in them and himself went to

Rosgiallan " (now Rostellan in Cork Harbour). From this it can be seen that any of our old churches, now in ruins—Kilbannivan or Kilmurry—might have been originally founded by St. Carthage.

If we take in the whole of Kerry north of the river Maine as the ancient principality of Ciarraighe Luachra, then we can claim the great Brendan himself among our saints of East Kerry, because St. Brendan's father Findulg was a member of the great Ciarraighe Luachra clan.

Mochuda's master, being a good man and a loyal servant of Christ the King, hearing from the youth of the cause of his absence during the night, instead of beating him as a pagan master would have done, went down to St. Carthage and asked the holy bishop to take the youth, Mochuda, under his spiritual care. There probably in the monastery of Kiltallagh the young swincherd was educated for the ministry, and in due time was ordained a priest by St. Carthage.

Some writers say that the young priest was so much attached to his spiritual father in God that he changed his name to Carthage after that of his protector and tutor. After his ordination, it is stated that he retired for a time to "the monastery of Thuain," for prayer, contemplation and mortification. We have nothing to guide us to the identity of the place called Thuain; but it is possible that this ancient monastery or hermitage was in the O'Connor Country of Ciarraighe Luachra, maybe at Tara Luachra, for the top of this hill is called, to the present day, "Both-Cartaig." This place is in the very heart of the Slieve Luachra mountains. Kiltullagh is mentioned as the

home of the elder Carthage, but that is evidently Kiltallagh on the right bank of the lower Maine. We shall not be far out, too, if we assume that Mochuda's master, the Chieftain of Slieve Luachra, was an O'Connor. Of Mochuda it was said that "he was beloved by God and man."

After his spiritual retreat at Thuain, he went on the Mission to various parts of Ireland and founded a monastery at Rathen in Leix. In later years many churches were dedicated to God under the invocation of St. Mochuda. Among others one in Killmaude in Galway, one at Kilmacuddy in Leix, and another in Tipperary.

St. Carthage (Mochuda) is the patron of the Waterford and Lismore Diocese; and the fine Cathedral of the Lismore diocese, in New South Wales, is also called by his name, to the glory of God and the honour of Erin.

He was a great founder of monasteries all over Munster. Usher, the Protestant historian, saw a copy of Mochuda's Rule, which, he says, "was written in very old Irish." But, like many saints in ancient and modern times, our East Kerry saint met with envy and persecution from other less successful clerics, and these envious ones, who had the ear of the local chieftain, succeeded in undermining the authority of the Kerryman; so much so, that the holy abbot with many of his disciples had to depart from Rathen.

Mochuda and his monks travelled south from Leix and came to "a barren waste piece of land" near Lismore. Here they founded another monastery. While digging the Lis or earthen rampart around their new home "a Lady in White" appeared to them and

asked them what they were doing. "We are digging a little Lis as a protection for our new home," they replied. "No, not a little Lis," the visitor said, "but a great one." And in this way Lismore got its name—a great fort for Christ, not only in Ireland but also in far-away Australia.

Mochuda of Slieve Luachra, during his life, performed many great miracles. Our people were at that time only a little over a century from the days of paganism, and it was a time when miracles were wanted to confirm the brethren. God gave the great gift of miracles to Patrick and his immediate followers, so as to enable them to gather the Gael into Holy Church; hence we read of the wonders performed by the great saints of our early Irish Church.

Mochuda cured Cathal MacAedan, King of Munster, who suffered from blindness, and he was also deaf and dumb. "Mochuda came to where the king was, and the king and his friends implored the saint to relieve his distress. Mochuda made prayers to God for him, and put the sign of the Holy Cross on his eyes, ears, and mouth; and the king was cured of all his distress and trouble."

St. Mochuda was famous for his great and tender devotion to Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. He was also distinguished by his many mortifications of the flesh and for the shedding of tears. The fond love that he lavished on Our Lord in the Holy Eucharist remains with us to-day, after thirteen hundred years, as a sweet memory of the gentle saint of the Valley of the Maine.

In giving directions on the duties of a priest he says:—

"If you be a priest, you will be laborious,
You must not speak but truth.
Noble is the order which you have taken,
To offer up the Body of the King.
To sing the requiems is thy special right;
Mass upon lawful days: Sunday along with Thurs-
day,

If not upon every day.
Masses for all Christians, and for all those in Orders,
Masses for the multitudes, from the lowest to the
highest."

And to the clergy and laity:—
"When you come into the Mass—it is a noble office—
Let there be penitence of heart, a shedding of tears,
And a throwing up of hands;
For pure is the Body which thou receivest,
Purely must thou go to receive It."

Every one of the parishes of East Kerry has given liberally of its sons to the Missions all over the world; and among the hundreds of East Kerry sagarts gone to their reward, it had the honour of being the natal spot of two bishops—the Most Rev. Dr. Bradley, Bishop of Manchester, U.S.A., a native of Knockeen; and the Most Rev. Dr. Murphy, Bishop of Mauritius, a native of Knocknagoshel.

Kileentierna, Furies, Clogher, Knocknagoshel, Brosna, and Rathmore are also famous for the many sons and daughters given to God and Holy Church.

That part of our old Kingdom called Ciarraighe Luachra has been for many generations the mother of priests and nuns—one of the seed-beds of the

Universal Church—and, under the Providence of God, it may be that for this great blessing we can thank the intercession of St. Mochuda and St. Moelang in heaven.

After many years of great labours for God, St. Mochuda died among his monks at Lismore. He asked for the reception of the Body of Christ, and after receiving the Holy Viaticum he passed away peacefully to his reward.

It is well for us, Kerry men, now when we are preparing for the great Eucharistic Congress of 1932, and praying for its success, to recall to our memories the life and work of this great saint who was born in our Valley—"in the sweet grassy land of Erin"—and who was such a great lover of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. The natives of East Kerry in particular should have a tender devotion to this saint of the sixth century, whose footsteps have made the fields of Slieve Luachra holy ground for ever.

One could fill many pages with an account of Mochuda's works and miracles; but here I shall only give one fact relating to this great East Kerry man—a fact that is equally honourable to our saint and to the great Kerry Clan of the O'Sullivans, who made him their spiritual father and their special guardian.

A branch of the O'Sullivans who had a special devotion to this Kerry saint were accustomed to put their children under his care and patronage. They proudly called themselves Mic Gilla Mochuda, that is, the children of St. Mochuda: and this pious custom of this particular branch of the O'Sullivans being clung to for many generations, it became a second

name for them until finally they called themselves no other but Mic Gilla Mochuda—McGillicuddy.

The ages of faith after St. Patrick have left us in East Kerry, as a precious legacy, the memory of another saint, St. Moelang of Brosna, whose holy well is still revered there by the people. These saints must have been working hard for Ciarraighe Luachra in heaven, for, like all other parts of the Old Kingdom, East Kerry is famous for the number of its vocations to the religious life. Young men and maidens from Brosna to Rathmore have for many generations given up their whole lives to the service of God.

The capital of East Kerry, Castleisland, has at the present day twenty-four priests on the mission in Ireland, England, the United States and Australia, and more than double that number of nuns in the convents of the world. Scartaglin has eight priests and Cordal three to their credit. For these three united parishes, of the thirty-five priests, seven are O'Connors—a reminder to us that in the days of old the whole of Kerry, from the Maine to the Shannon, was the property and home of the O'Connors Kerry.

"Kings of Kerry over the clans of Ciar
Ua Conchobair, it is right for him so to be
Chief of the most abounding land
From the Strand to the fair-streamed Shannon."

To-day, although they have lost their principality, the O'Connors are serving a Higher Master as Soldiers in the Army of Christ.

CHAPTER II.

THE DESMOND SURVEY.

THERE is extant a far older historical document than Smith's *History of Kerry*, which gives us a most interesting account of East Kerry affairs in the years preceding the cruel Elizabethan wars that despoiled and depopulated our country, and that degraded our people to the status of serfs to the English colonists.

East Kerry occupies a leading place in that part of the *Desmond Survey* that appeared in *The Kerryman*, on the 17th December, 1927. In this document the quaint way the English scribe tried to give, phonetically, the Irish names of places is most amusing to us, anglicised Irishmen; but, to a Gaelic scholar, it would appear intolerable and almost damnable.

Here in Mr. Byrne's extracts we get a good view of the social and economic conditions of the inhabitants of the "Island of Kerry" and its dependencies in the days immediately preceding the Elizabethan devastation.

"The head-rents from one stately Castle, called Island Castle," writes the English scribe, "built very high, with several vaults, and situated within a mile of the great mountain of Slewlogher [Barnageha in the Slieve Luachra range of hills is not 'a great mountain,' and only a mile from the Castle if you begin to measure from the foot of the Maam, its southern rampart] on the north and east part, which

Castle the said late Earl of Desmond, at the time of his entering into rebellion, demolished and burned with the exception of the walls and some parts of the roofs. And from the demesne lands with their appurtenances to the said Manor belonging, called as follows: The demesne, the Island, and three other parcels called Meanus, Kyllvannaman (Kilbannivan), and Knockanegarowe (Knocknagore), being four villages, and containing altogether 16 quarters of land, are valued at £53 6s. 8d.," which can be multiplied by a hundred to get near to the value of the present day; and, if we add the townlands, by a thousand. In another place are mentioned the "chief rents" to the Manor of the Island of Kerry belonging, "which are charged above in the first title of free tenants in this barony of Trughanacmy."

The *Survey* goes on to name the Manor of Currins, with its appurtenances, and the demesne lands of the Manor, containing 6 quarters of land and 4 carrucates. This with another parcel of land called Kyallny-guyryno (an awful scribblesome contraption, which may mean Kilfalny, plus some other townland) "was formerly the tenure of John of Desmond."

Then follows a mention of the Manor of Drumultamore and Drumultanbeg, "with their great deserts and caves of robbers"; and the woods called "Kylterlong" (perhaps, Killeentierna), where there are "good macramic of silve cedue," whatever that means. It may be a printer's or a copyist's error, or it may mean a special kind of timber (silver cedars) found in that wood.

The English valuer of the lands of the murdered Earl goes on to write of "a certain parcel of land,

or a town called Dysarte, being the best land for arable land, meadow, pasture, and feeding, adjacent to the demesne lands of the Manor of the Island, formerly parcel of the possessions of John Fitz-Redmond Pronvild (Prindeville?), escheated to the late Earl of Desmond and valued by the Commissioners in lawful money of England, £20, payable annually at the feasts of Easter and Michaelmas."

A few years ago near this "town of Dysarte," the grave of an Irish chief of pre-Christian days was unearthed. The skeleton was in a sitting posture—a method of sepulture which carries us back to the pre-historic times, to more than a thousand years before the Anglo-Norman put a foot in the vale of Ciarraighe Luachra.

Mention is made of "a parcel of land at Maglass, in the parish of Ballymachellgoyde" (surely a jawbreaker to the English!) containing eight carrucates of land, valued by the Elizabethan Commissioner at a rental of £26 13s. 4d. per annum.

The perquisites of the Courts of the Manor at Castle-island are also mentioned; and the scribe adds these "were of greater value in the time of the late Earl than at present, by reason of the wasted state of the country and the small number of people there."

More interesting than cantreds and carrucates is the account of the works and services of the tenants of the Manor of the Island in the 16th century. The *Survey* mentions "the plowing, weeding, reaping, carriage-home, and stacking in the lord's barn (reeks of hay, oats, and wheat) in his haggard"; and the rents paid by the Geraldine tenants to the lord of the Manor in the form of "hens, eggs, geese, porks, and

such like"—the feudal payment in kind and services by the lord's tenants.

The receipts derived from certain customs, called "Cone-Oglie"—probably a phonetic rendering of an Irish word or a corruption of a Norman one, taken from the tenants of the Manor—are also valued. And again the money taken "from stranger persons for the pasture of their cattle and 'averiorium' on the mountains of Slewlogher and Sleevemisse and other mountains in the county of Kerry, together with poundage."

After the fierce, bloody, and ruthless wars of Elizabeth's armies in Ireland, the whole country was in a desperate state of desolation. Three-fourths of the native Irish were slain, and the remainder, without proper food or clothing, hid themselves in the bogs, mountains, woods, and caves. At night these wretched beings came out in search of food among the ruins of their burned homesteads. An English writer, Spenser, gives us an awful picture of the abandoned state of the starving nation. Then, indeed, as a nation we were very close to entire extinction. The gallant soldiers of England, Raleigh among others, sent an account of their murderings here in Kerry to the "virgin" Queen—the number of corpses proudly reckoned, as if they were boasting of the number of grouse and partridge bagged in a day's sport.

The Tierna Dubh, the Black Earl of Ormond, made a raid through the Valley of the Mainc, "driving all the inhabitants before him, with great ruin of life and property."

Many generations were born and passed away before

the rich meadows of the Maine Valley were again populated.

There is a note in German, in Smith's history that refers to the County Kerry. It is an extract from a book on the "British Isles," published in Nuremberg, in 1690. Its brief reference to Kerry runs thus: "It is untraversable because of fields, woods and mountains. There is no noxious beast in the place, save the wolf and the fox." A century before the book was published, the English had made our beautiful county into a desert, where the genus homo hid in the mountains, woods, and caves, and the wild beasts only, the wolf and the fox, roamed at large in the depopulated valley.

The *Survey* enables us to get a peep into the Courts that were held in Castleisland four hundred years ago. The fines paid into these courts were graduated according to the heinousness of the deed; for instance, the money penalty for effusion of blood was a hundred shillings, probably more in value than £50 of our present money. The 100s. fine was divided among the Lord of the Manor and the officials as follows: the Earl took 66s. 8d., the Seneschal 6s. 8d., the judge of the liberties of the County Palatine of Kerry, 6s. 8d.; to the Sergeant of the Earl, 6s. 8d.; to the Receiver General of the Earl, 6s. 8d.; and to the Kerne, that is the common soldiers, 6s. 8d. To bleed a man's nose—this fine would be excessive for an effusion of blood; but I fear this mild phrase stood for the killing of a man or woman—manslaughter.

Any town or village in the Barony of Trughanacmy that had "no sufficient tenant at the great Court of the said Manor to do the service there due"

had to pay a fine of 3s. 4d. in half-faced money; 3s. to the Earl and 4d. to his Sergeant; and another fine for "frays and bloodsheds upon any person who in that way would excite perturbation within any part of the barony," with a double fine on any local Castleislander for the same reason, because of the disquiet to the lords and ladies of the Castle.

But of all the many interesting items given in Mr. Byrne's *Desmond Survey*, the one that will interest literary readers most is the account therein of the Geraldine's Bard or Rhymer of Kilsarcon. This important official of the feudal lords held the "parcel of lands" at Kilsarcon on the conditions of paying into the Treasury of the Manor of the Island the cost of the annual expenditure on the candles consumed in the big island fortress; and, of course, one must assume that the poet laureateship for East Kerry, not being a sinecure, the Rhymer of Kilsarcon must occasionally compose soul-stirring verses when the Earls came home after a successful campaign, or when an heir was born to the House of Desmond.

Now this villainous scribe, it is true, through no fault of his own, for the unfortunate fellow was English, murders the word "Kilsarcon," that is, the Church of St. Sarcon, by calling it "Killtarkan"; and, worse still, he flings an unintended insult at the poet or bard of the Geraldine by calling him "the Rhymer of Kylesarcon," and adds injury to insult by saying that he lived "near the mountains of Slewlogher." This awful solecism by a scribbleous English boor must be intolerable reading for all the inhabitants of the parish of Kileentierna; but as we cannot now vent our spleen

against the writer of the *Survey*, we must only patiently grin and bear it.

But what a theme for some future poet or imaginative, historical novelist—to tell the people of later days, in prose or verse, in the old tongue, how a young scion of the noble Geraldine House in Castleisland fell madly in love with the fair daughter of the Kilsarcon Rhymer; and how a noble elegy on some dead and gone Earl saved the poet and his daughter from the dungeons of Geoffrey Marisco's tower.

He, the future novelist, will give a striking account of the Kilsarcon Rhymer with a cavalcade of his followers coming down from the mountains of "Slewlogher" with the money to pay for the Castle candles in one of his saddle bags, and in the other, to balance the candle money, a weighty manuscript in which is written a grand poem that will rouse the soul of the puissant lord of the Valley of the Maine to greater deeds of heroism in the future.

The cavalcade will have to avoid the woods at Drumultan, "where in the caves over the Flesk," opposite Ceanguilla there are bands of fierce robbers or rapparees. "The Rhymer of Kyletercon" and his men must cross the Flesk a little to the east of Tierna-coosh, and so keep the Ceanguilla rapparees well to his right, then round the Wild Goose bog at Slieve-weenuck, pass through "the town of Dysart," and cross the Maine near the Rocky Ford, before reaching the Castle, to demand audience of the Constable of the Tower.

Now that we have landed the poet and his followers safely within the walls of the fortress, we shall leave

the rest of the story to the imaginative poets and historians of the future.

Here we have been dealing with the real facts of history, for which we have to thank the great literary labours of the late Mr Byrne and the patriotic enterprise of *The Kerryman* for all these revealing pictures of the past.

CHAPTER III.

THE ENGLISH SETTLERS.

THESE chapters are written in the hope that they will give the present generation a little knowledge of the people of East Kerry who held the centre of the stage here from the latter part of the 16th century until the first half of the nineteenth, and to give them a glimpse of the past, when the social and economic conditions were entirely different to these of the present day. A hundred years ago the descendants of the original English settlers—the landlords, agents, and the whole of the Protestant gentry—possessed all the wealth and nearly all the political power in the county. They owned the land, the minerals, the fisheries, all the houses in town and country; and indirectly, as they possessed all the means of production and the sources of wealth, the lives of the farmers and labourers were really in their hands. At the whim of a landlord or his agent, and without the least excuse, a man's living was taken from him and he was thrown on the world helplessly, to sink or swim, to emigrate or to die on the roadside. During the Famine, while corn was exported to England, they died in millions. In a word, the Ascendancy Party, a hundred years ago, was on top and the native Gael was under its feet.

The religion of the Irish peasant was proscribed, the lands of his forefathers were in English hands, and the Irishman was a pariah and a beggar in his

own country. The chains of a past conquest were still riveted about his feet; he was a hewer of wood, a drawer of water, and the slave of the descendants of his conquerors.

O'Connell first broke the religious fetters, the Young Irelanders changed the atmosphere of despair to one of hope, and the revolutionary land war of the eighteen-eighties, in driving the landlords and agents from our shores, gave, since 1172, the first fixed tenure to the Gaelic land workers. Later, through the work of the Irish Republican Army, political power followed. This 1930 generation cannot fully realise the extent of the change in the social, economic and political conditions here in Ireland from the eighteenth to the present day.

Sixty years ago the tenant farmer had to vote for his landlord's candidate or leave the land. Now he owns his own farm, he is a free and independent voter, but unfortunately present economic conditions leave him not much better off than he was under the alien landlords. The whirligig of time brings us strange and surprising contrasts.

In the reign of Elizabeth, after the sordid and shameful tragedy enacted in the wood of Glounanentha, where the last of the regnant Geraldines was slain, that comparatively small portion of the Geraldine principality of South Munster, occupying the eastern part of the County Kerry, was granted by the British Queen to Sir William Herbert, who transferred it to his son-in-law, Lord Herbert of Cherbury.

"The Earl of Desmond was the great barrier to the proselytizing and subjugation of Southern Ireland." Hence the Elizabethan thirst for his blood

and the English hunger for the old lands of the Gael. After defeating the English at Youghal, the conquering earl commenced to march his army back to his Kerry strongholds; but the English laid "poison baits" in the shape of bribes to his supporters along, and each side of, his path as his war-weary troops marched back to the castle in Tralee. To undermine the power of the last of the ruling Geraldines, Elizabeth's soldiers scattered largess in front of the undefeated Desmond army, as it made slowly for its objective, in the Old Kingdom of Kerry, *via* Mallow, Kanturk, and Killarney. Nearly the whole of his army had deserted him before he reached Tralee! English gold had won the day.

We Irish laugh heartily, nowadays, at the Chinese Generals who sell themselves and their armies to the highest bidder; but we ought to hide our grins at John Chinaman, because the leaders of that great patriot, Paddy from Munster, often did the same in times past, here in holy Ireland. Human nature is much the same all the world round. The grand old Norman-Gael, the once splendid athlete and gallant soldier, lying ill of fever in the hut at Glounanentha, was betrayed by one of his own followers to Captain Zouche at Castlemaine, and slain by a mercenary bearing the old Celtic name of Kelly. This foul deed is a monstrous black stain in the annals of Munster, and it makes us all blush with shame that such a great dishonour should be on our escutcheon. But it is only one more sample of the "Sean mhallacht" of Ireland—treachery and dissension—only adding another execrable deed to the record of our past.

Garrett, the 16th Earl of Desmond, the princely

Fitzgerald, being now out of England's way, his great palatinate was sub-divided among the greedy and rapacious courtiers of Elizabeth.

Lord Herbert of Cherbury, who had the seigniorial rights over the valleys of the Maine and brown Flesk transferred to him by letters patent, never came over to take possession of his huge East Kerry estate. He farmed out all the lands from Barnageha to Gloun-daugh, and from Mount Eagle to the foot of Slieve Mis, to six English adventurers, called "undertakers," who paid him a yearly head rent for the confiscated Geraldine estate. Each of the six English families, or colonists, had a sixth share of this Herbert domain, and each owned a sixth of the land on which the town of Castleisland now stands. One of the original six undertakers sold his share afterwards to the founder of the Meredith family of Dicksgrove. Hence the different lettings and different owners of the sections into which the town is still divided.

Each of the six also had a share in the old Market House; in fact the Great House was built by the undertakers as a social centre and meeting place for the English settlers in East Kerry. Underneath, with its three great entrance iron gates, the market was held; and the great hall upstairs was used as a dancing place and assembly room. The Yeomen's Barracks, for keeping the English foot on the neck of the Gael, was only a hundred yards away. It is now transformed into a Garda Barracks.

As this book deals only in a popular way with the families of the above-mentioned undertakers, their descendants, and with those that were added after the Cromwellian despoilment, I make no claim to

deep research or perfect accuracy in these matters. Nearly all my facts have come to me through King's *History of Kerry*, and through the late Mr. Jeremiah Nolan, of Castleisland, who died a few years ago at the great age of 94. He saw O'Connell passing through the town or putting up for the night at the "Brandon Arms Hotel," kept by a sister of Mr. Roche, of Sandville, then Coroner for East Kerry, in the house now owned by Mr. Patrick Buckley, B.A. Mr. Nolan remembered the pre-famine time, and, of course, that awful catastrophe made a deep impression on his mind; he remembered the time when the marriage fee for the Parish Priest was made up by the contributions of the invited guests at the wedding; and he knew all the then living representatives of the Anglo-Irish Protestant families who ruled the roost here in the Castleisland parishes from the time of Elizabeth to the revolutionary period of the Land agitation in the eighteen-eighties of the last century. Then the English garrison in Ireland got a blow from Land Leaguers and Moonlighters from which they never recovered.

In East Kerry—and probably the same stands true for the whole of Munster—wherever you see a homestead nestling among a profusion of old trees and surrounded by fine meadow land, you may take it for granted that at some time, not too far remote, the house and farm was the property of Elizabethan or Cromwellian settlers and their descendants. These Anglo-Irishmen, being themselves planted in Gaeldom, were great tree planters; they beautified the valley by their domestic groves and the hill-sides by many fine woods. Look around you in East Kerry, even at

the present day, when most of the groves and woods have been ruthlessly cut down, and you can pick out all these old Protestant places at a glance—Kilcow, Sandville, Kileentierna, Dicksgrrove, Ballintourig, Carker, Tullig, The Domain (Cordal), Kilmurry, Ballymacadam Cragg, Mularkmarky, Woodville, Ballinvrisal, Camp, Ballyegan, and Anna—to name only some of them.

Although Lord Herbert of Cherbury did not come to Oilean Ciarraighe himself, one of his successors sent a near relative of his in the 17th century, a Herbert, whose first Kerry home was at Kilcow, a few miles south-west of Castleisland. This Kilcow Herbert probably came here to look after the interests of the great English lord, that is, to keep a Herbert eye on the six under-lordlings of the valley of the Maine.

In the old days there were two Hartnett families in the Castleisland district. The one, a Catholic family, lived at Castleview, where, before their time, a proselytizing Charter School was established; and the other, a Protestant family, lived at Sandville House, now the property of Mr. Kelliher. This Sandville Hartnett was at one time a "middle-man" for the Herberts of Kilcow, and towards the close of the 18th century he had rented the lands of Kilcow, Bullockfield, and probably that part of the Sandville House estate known as the Big Dairy, to the Nolans and Caseys. When the Hartnett lease of these lands terminated, these old families had to leave. Some of the Nolans settled down at Camp, and others at Tulligabeen.

When walking round Powell's Road, look up to the green meadows and clumps of old trees at Anna. The limestone peninsula of Anna juts out into the big

bogs of Annabeg and Annamore, which is continued towards Sleevweenuck as the Wild Goose bog. In geological ages, long before the first dawn of history, the site of these bogs, with Bonaskeha, Scrahan, Firie and Tullig, as far as the Shannow river and Brahig, formed a big lake; then a huge swamp, surrounding the limestone islands of Tullig, Caharog, Anna, Ballygree, and Farran. The new Cork road cut this huge bogland in two; but before that road was made there was a continuous stretch of bog from Cordel to Currow. The house at Anna was in those days a shooting-lodge, and about one hundred years ago a Lady Northcote lived in it. In this bog land the gentry got plenty shooting, and in still earlier times, as Yeomen,* their fathers had the added pleasure of hunting what they called "Rapparees" in the big wood at Drumultan, over Annamore and beyond to the frowning precipice of Ceanguilla.

The Twiss family lived at Ballintourig, near the legendary home of an ancient King of Munster. The last of the men of this well-beloved family, John Richard Twiss, never married. All his neighbours spoke in praise of the charity and kindness of this fine old Irish gentleman; and, as the old people used to say, "kind mother for him," because the greater part of two parishes found in her a charitable lady of the highest rank. She was the "doctor," for all the poor of Scartaglen and Currow, and her simple home-made remedies were in great demand by rich and poor alike. I can well remember the Misses Saunders of Carker House; they were relatives of the Saunders family of Breahig.

At Kilmurry House, Cordal, the Raymond family

still reigned in 1870. The lands around the Castle originally belonged to the O'Donoghues, and even down to the latter part of the 18th century that old Gaelic family held their ground in some fashion against the invaders. Sixty years ago the property belonged to Councillor Raymond, K.C., of the Dublin Bar, who always spent his summer holidays at Kilmurry House. The house at that time was kept for the Councillor by his relatives, Mr. Robert McIntosh and his sisters.

The councillor's father was Parson Raymond, and it is said that it was he who succeeded in getting the last of the O'Donoghue claimants to the lands to sign over his rights in favour of the Parson's family.

In the churchyard near the Big House still stands the ruins of the pre-Reformation Church of St. Mary, that gives the place its name. In the old days the faithful departed were buried in the yard of the Living Church, within sound of the server's Mass bell. This was the general custom in ancient Catholic Ireland, and in all Christian countries. Now we have cemeteries divorced from the Church, which our ancestors would look upon as a pagan custom. But the old custom of our forefathers has not entirely died out in Kerry. Look at the beautiful country parish church of Kiltallagh, with the graves of the last generation of its parishioners not far from the Living Bread in the Tabernacle. Around the earthly throne of Our Eucharistic Lord the remains of his faithful children lie at rest until the trumpet of the Archangel at the Resurrection. And around the ruined altars, and within the ivied walls of our old confiscated churches—such as Kilmurry, Kilsarcon,

and Kilbannivan, which were ravaged by Elizabethans and Cromwellians, lie the bones of our fathers and mothers, who preferred to lose their lives and give up their properties rather than to part from the Holy Faith brought to Erin by St. Patrick.

CHAPTER IV.

ENGLISH SETTLERS—(*Continued*).

AT Ballymacadam lived a Mr. Robert Madgett, a great sportsman, and the man who by careful selection and breeding first originated the now famous Kerry Blues.

The Marshalls lived at Baron Reidy's place at Cragg, and across the road in the same townland, in the house at one time owned by Mr. John Powell, lived Captain Harry Oliver, a retired Indian army officer, another great sportsman of the time.

Captain Oliver, as was the custom among the gentry in those days, kept a coop of game cocks for fighting. Local and inter-parish "mains" were then fought all over Kerry, and these drew crowds of onlookers, who were as interested in these sports as we are now at football and hurling matches. And thereby hangs a tale of one of the most famous of these cock fights that was ever held in the Kingdom.

About a hundred years ago a battle royal took place at Farranfore, then called the Pike, between representative fighters from Killarney and Castleisland, that well deserves a full and detailed description, for it was quoted by later generations as the classic sporting event of the time. Killarney then boasted that it had the champion game-cock of Kerry, and Killarneyites would stick a finger in your eye if you as much as hinted that there was a better bird to be found in all Munster.

Truth to tell their fine cock fully deserved all this adulation; for their great champion, Mulroon, up to that time had an unbeaten record. When a challenge came from Castleisland the Killarney men could not believe their eyes and ears—for it came to them by word of mouth and by letter. They laughed with great glee at the audacity of Castleisland—"the fine cheek of the Islanders," it was termed. However, to please the amateurs of the Mieng meadows, a main was arranged for a certain day, and Farranfore was named as the venue.

Now Castleisland had a card up its sleeve that, when played, would surprise all Killarney. The people of the latter town were convinced that there was not a bird in all Munster that could stand before Mulroon for thirty minutes, and keep alive; but they were to be sadly and swiftly disillusioned on that memorable day at the Pike.

Mr. Daniel Reidy, a great-grand-uncle of Nurse Kerins, of Castleisland, had bred a bird that would make short work of Mulroon. On account of his dark complexion Mr. Reidy was nicknamed Donal Duv. Another grand-nephew of old Donal's was the late Hughson Reidy, who often delighted to tell the story of the Battle of Farranfore. Mulroon, that used to crow so loudly near the big mountains, was doomed to meet his fate from the spurs of Donal Duv's "Dancing Master." Later on the Dysart people used to do a great blow about a cock of theirs that they called "the Little Boy from Dysart," but the Dysart hero was not in the same class as the Castleisland Dancing Master. At one of the latter's early fights the owner of the opposing bird called him, contemptuously, "the dancing

master," because of his habit of dancing round like a pugilist in the ring, waiting for an effective opening blow. So Donal left it at that, for "The Dancing Master" surely described his pet to the life.

The Dancing Master was a cross between a game hen and a cock pheasant; and "that was the reason." Hughson used to say that "the devil was in him—in his eyes and in his spurs."

"Yerra, tonomon-reel," Hughson used to say, when describing the battle of Farranfore, "the Dancing Master would make soup of every blanky cock in Killarney while you'd be saying Jack Rabbit."

Well, the great day came at last. Hundreds of "sports" came from Killarney and Castleisland, in carriages, in side-cars, donkey-cars, and per shank's pony. After a few preliminary bouts the battle of the day was staged. The umpires examined the spurs, and found everything right; but they did not find out the cross between the game hen and the pheasant. The Killarney men never dreamt that they would meet such a tropical bird! The birds faced and eyed each other critically. Mulroon, thinking of his many victories, waded in on the Castleislander with great vim and dash, and many a glancing blow; but the Dancer stepped lightly and gracefully aside. This happened again and again fairly rapidly, but the Dancer was never in the place where the Killarney hero delivered the goods. The Killarney men rocked with laughter. "He's yellow!" they shouted. "He's a coward. He won't stand up to it!"

But the Dancer was only biding his time, only watching his chance, as he politely bowed his compliments to Mulroon. He kept a steady, beady,

malignant eye on a patch of feathers where Mulroon's neck joined his head. That eye was deadly, like the skinned eye of a trapped eagle; it boded a bad time for the Killarney champion, who was futilely flapping his wings, striking the air, and gurgling great hatreds at his opponent. Not a gug out of Donal's pet while dancing a stately minuet and hopping and sparring round for a blow. Then at last it came like forked lightning—swift and sudden death for Mulroon. With one fierce dive and blow the Dancing Master's spur was through Mulroon's brain! Castleislanders knew all the time that the end would come suddenly, for at every previous fight the Dancer had killed his man with a single blow.

Killarney was dumbfounded—horrified, and entirely shocked. There lay their champion as dead as a door nail on the green grass! It was incredible; the hero of a hundred fights killed with one blow from an unknown Castleisland cock! This was too much for the patience of the men from the Reeks. Then the humans, excited on either side by victory and defeat, commenced a big battle with the bare knuckles, following the death of the great Munster cock-o'-the-walk.

We must draw a veil over the rest of this East Kerry shindy at the Pike; but we must add that it a very disorderly mob of disgruntled Killarney men, some of them with black eyes, that sneaked into their home town that evening by by-ways, and side-ways, and back-yards, with their pride utterly routed. But the Castleisland men came through the Main Street that evening, roaring themselves hoarse, with Donal Duv on their shoulders and the villainous head of

the Dancing Master peeping out from under Donal's jacket, while gorsoons and men cheered as if they had won a battle that freed all Ireland for ever.

The great victory was afterwards spoken of for generations. Poor old Hughson, God rest him, when worked up to a high pitch of excitement, describing the victory of his great-grand-uncle's cock, would actually dance round to illustrate the ring craftsmanship of the Castleisland cock, and clap his hands like a shot when he came to the darling Dancing Master's blow—the coup-de-grace—that humbled the pride of Killarney sportsmen for ever. . . .

It must always be remembered that, although English and Irish Protestantism did its worst to humble and crush the Faith of our fathers, the Protestant gentry of a hundred years ago lived among our people in great amity, kindly neighbourliness and charity. Individually they were an upright, honest, God-fearing people, according to their lights; and more often than not the greatest love and affection bound them closely to their humble Catholic neighbours. I shall deal with the Protestant Rectors of the Castleisland parish in a later chapter; but I will give here the opinion of an old Catholic woman of 86 years of age who said to me to-day, when we were speaking of the past Parsons of Castleisland—she knew five of them. "Not one of them," said she, "would tell a lie for £100!" That was her quaint way of valuing their morals. One can be sure that she meant by this that parsonical integrity stood at par in her opinion.

The old Herbert house at Kileentierna is now the Presbytery for the priests of the parish of the same

name. In the olden days Protestant Services were held in a church in the graveyard near the house—the ruins of which still stand. At one time this church had a fairly big congregation. Arthur E. Herbert, of whom I shall write later, lived in Kileentierna House. His father, Parson Herbert, that at one time lived near Maglass, I presume, officiated in the church nearby. The original Kerry Herberts are sometimes called the Kilcow Herberts and at other times the Currans Herberts. Arthur E. Herbert, who was shot during the Land War, must have belonged to the Currans family. Anyway, as Kilcow is in the parish of Currans, the two families were of the same stock; and the same can be said of the Herberts of Muckcross.

Now we come to the last and probably the best of all the English settlers in East Kerry—the Merdiths of Dicksgrove. In the old days they possessed a great rural estate and a sixth share of the townlands of Castleisland. They are the best known and the best loved of all our landlords of English derivation; and, moreover, they paid hard cash for this estate. They lived for centuries among the people and were never absentees, like Lord Headly, Lord Ventry, and the Drummonds, etc.; hence they were always spoken of with the greatest affection.

Innumerable stories are told of the kindness and generosity of the Merdith who reigned at Dicksgrove in the latter part of the 18th century. In his time he was the Chairman of the Castleisland Petty Sessions, and he was so influential a man that it was a common saying among the people, "that the Ould Captain often brought a man from the gallows."

In those days the smallest crime of any kind meant a most savage sentence. That was the time that very significant saying "that one might as well be hung for a sheep as a lamb," was coined.

In *The Kerryman* I have already written about the end which the old Captain Merdith put to Geoffrey Morris's arbitratorship among the Merdith tenants. (Note the names, "Morris," "Marisco," and "Geoffrey," the name of the builder of the old 13th century Castle, afterwards given by Marisco to the Earl of Desmond as part of the dowry of his daughter when she married the Geraldine.)

To illustrate the Merdith generosity I must tell how a poor neighbour so interested the old Captain in his family affairs that he there and then presented the diplomatist with a fine in-calf heifer! Old Captain Merdith was a great lover of trees, as any one passing the beautiful domain can see at a glance. At a little distance from the Great House stood a magnificent elm tree by itself, in all its glory—the pride of the domain. It was to the Captain as the apple of his eye, and no money could buy that tree.

One day a needy neighbour, in search of the well-known Merdith charity, accosted his honour, the Captain, as he was walking near the arboraceous beauty. The prime boy, Sean Og, who wanted to tap the Captain, knew well of his honour's great love for that particular tree.

"Good day, Sean Og," said the Captain.

"Good day, your honour," answered Sean, and with his most insinuating grin, he added, "I hope your honour will let me tell you that I had an increase in the family last night."

"My congratulations, Sean; and how many is that now?"

"'Tis the eleventh, your honour," said Sean, sorrowfully.

"Oh, dear me; Oh, pon my word now, this is terrible—and a poor man like you! Why you're more to be pitied than congratulated."

"True for you, your honour, and what's worse: we have the drop-down in the house. The ould roof is rotten, and the biggest drop-down is on herself and the baby."

"Oh, damn me, this is too bad—eleven children and a drop-down in the bedroom! Well, well, my poor man; this is terrible indeed."

Then the wily Sean, striking the iron while it was hot, made a direct appeal to the Captain's charity. "Maybe, your honour," said he, in his most humble and insinuating manner, "would give me that elm tree there, and I could cut it up for the makings of a new roof to put over the childer." For a moment the Captain was speechless with horror at the suggestion. He bridled up, got red in the face, and gasped for breath, before the inevitable explosion.

"Why, you damn rascal, I'd see you and your eleven children to the seventeen devils before I'd cut a branch of that tree. You infernal scoundrel! You blankety blank villain! You this, that, and the other—the dam cheek of the scamp to ask for a tree that I wouldn't give to the Lord Lieutenant! Well, of all the impertinent fellows I ever knew, you Sean, are the worst. Off with you, you ruffian!"

Sean stood there the very picture of chastened humility. He listened to all the abuse with the

greatest patience. Contrition was depicted on his sorrowful brow. Then he said with a sob and tears in his voice, as the rogue, try ever so hard, could not moisten his eyes, "Yerra, your honour, forgive me; I must have been out of my mind to think your honour would part from that tree for love or money." Sean staked all on the reaction after the Captain had exhausted all his abusive language and came out a winner. The great humility, patience, and sorrow, displayed by Sean, the diplomatist, had an immediate effect on the generous heart of the Captain. He rapidly cooled off, and he even showed some signs of shame at this furious exhibition of his temper. To hurl such invective, he thought, on the head of a father of eleven children was not gentlemanly. He stroked his chin reflectively, as he looked at Sean Og, now the picture of misery. The usual generous instincts of the Ould Captain reasserted themselves; and, as Sean was about to pass on he said: "Come here, Sean Og, do you see that heifer over there yonder: take her, sell her, and put a new roof over your cottage." "May God bless your honour," etc., etc.—a string of blessings that reached back to all the Captain's ancestors.

The Captain went home chuckling with hearty laughter at the ready wit of Sean who, after blessing again all at Dicksgrove, said with a grin, "Begor, your honour, when you pitched me and the childer to the seventeen devils, I made it up in my mind that that was more than wan aich for us; but now, with the help of the heifer and the new roof, I'll be more than a match for 'um even if they was two to wan."

The Captain, still laughing, stood by until Sean and the heifer were safely through the lodge gate. When the lodge-keeper's wife challenged Sean, the old Captain, God rest him, waived her aside.

The Merdith family will always live, affectionately, in the hearts of the people of East Kerry; for more than Sean Og often went away from the Great House carrying good news to wife and children.

In the old days a Mr. Lombard Fitzgerald owned the fine house at Woodville, that is surrounded by groves of massive trees and exotic shrubs, reminding one of Oakpark, but on a smaller scale. Here the hand of some one-time owner made his homestead into a sylvan gem of unusual beauty—magnificent trees, beautiful shrubs, gardens, orchards, and lawns that delight the heart of any lover of Nature. The owner of this rural retreat sixty years ago was one of Kerry's leading gentry—the late Mr. Hickson, a near relative of the former owner, Mr. Lombard Fitzgerald.

The present owner is Mr Arthur Lenihan, whose father was a tenant of the tClucan (Tullighan our Anglicised tongues used to call it) Hickson estate. In the neighbouring big house at Ballinvarascal, now owned by Mr. John Lenihan, lived the Hungerford family before it was bought by the late Redmond Roche of Tubbermeing House. Nearby is Ballyegan, the home of the Millwards. In the old days I well remember two of the Millward brothers: great big-bearded gentlemen, physically, perhaps, the finest men coming into the town of Castleisland.

At Camp, only a mile and a half from the town, in the usual lovely grove, and surrounded by beautiful

flower gardens lived Mr. Hewson. The present owner is Mr. Con O'Connor, himself belonging to one of the oldest and best stocks in Kerry. Mr. O'Connor and his brother, Patrick of Farranabrac are the present-day representatives of an old O'Connor family of East Kerry. Mr. Con, and my old school pupil, Pat, never boast of their long and honourable descent; but at one time the Farranabrac O'Connors owned all the lands from their old homestead at Farranabrac back to Ballymacelligott. By the way it was the O'Connors of Farranabrac that handed the first gun to the first Captain Moonlight and his two companions—"The Three Axeteers." One hundred years ago the then reigning O'Connor family in this historic homestead boasted of nine daughters who were admitted to be, by the gallants of Kerry, among the handsomest women in the county. Imagine nine lovely young ladies, sisters, all dressed in satin, and with red cloaks thrown gracefully over their shoulders, riding out after the hounds in the olden days of the Kerry hunt! That sight would no doubt melt the heart of the most confirmed bachelor.

CHAPTER V.

ENGLISH SETTLERS—(*Continued*).

WE read in Charles Lever's novels of the wild extravagance of the Irish country gentlemen of the latter part of the 18th century—of the expensive entertainments given by the Irish squires and landlords to one another and to visitors, one hundred and fifty years ago. In Lever we read of the fox-hunting, hard-drinking, duelling, habits of these country gentlemen, and of their lavish hospitality. Many of the Irish estates then became encumbered with debts that could not be paid by their descendants; and so by degrees the grand-children of these extravagant spendthrifts lost most of their lands; and with the estates went loss of political influence and their status as gentry. The children suffered for the sins of the parents.

An incident that happened in the Main Street of Castleisland about a hundred years ago will illustrate this better than many words. The wife of one of these squires had once a very embarrassing experience in our old town. She left her horse and four-wheel phaeton near the footpath for half an hour while she was shopping. When she came out she was horrified to find that the bailiff was in possession of her handsome turn-out! The bailiff, putting his decree on the back of the horse, informed her ladyship that it was for a long over-due debt of her

husband's. This was an awful humiliation for such a grand lady: but, being of blue blood, she did not wince or cry. What was to be done? She was entirely perplexed until a shrewd business man of the town came out and placed the amount of the debt—about £30—in the hands of the bailiff. The extremely grateful lady gave the wise man a deep bow as she stepped into her carriage and drove off to her country home. That man's good deed did not go unrewarded, for some time later on, besides getting his £30 cash, he got a farm of land near the town at a cheap rental, which is now the freehold property of his grandson.

The faults of the old gentry were numerous, but some would say that the virtues of many members of these families far out-weighed their failings. Many resident landlords often won the esteem of their tenants; and, although the whole system was entirely wrong and unjust, the charity of the resident gentry covered a multitude of sins.

Not so the absentee landlords who lived gay and expensive lives in London and Paris, and left their tenants to the tender mercies of agents, middlemen, understrappers, and bailiffs, whose sole occupation was screwing the last farthing out of the unfortunate tenant farmers. Many of these agents and middlemen took money bribes from landgrabbers, who coveted their neighbour's vineyards. There is no Donovan at Ballygree to-day because John Donovan was evicted by a ruthless agent who had the price of his dastardly trick in his pocket, before the innocent man thought there was anyone after his farm! "John," said this disreputable agent, "you

have eight years still to go in your lease. If you formally give me up possession, I'll renew the lease for a period of twenty-one years." The innocent man fell into the trap; he just put out all of his furniture in the yard, "as a matter of form"; then the bailiffs turned the key in the door and coolly told him that their orders were not to let him in again! The head-bailiff put the key in his pocket and ordered the victim off his own farm!

In those degrading days for the native Irish the tenants had their farms on short lease terms, and when the leases expired their homesteads were up for sale to the highest bidders. This rotten and degrading system of land tenure was brought to an end by the Land Leaguers and Moonlighters of the eighteen-eighties. The evil work of the absentee landlords, the corrupt, parasitic, land agents, rent warners, understrappers, and bailiffs, had then come to an ignominious end, and the Charter Schools and their ghoulish followers, who were trafficking in the souls of a persecuted people, had to flee from the county for ever. . . .

The present Protestant Church in Castleisland, built by the English settlers in East Kerry, is of no outstanding architectural beauty. It is a modern structure on the site of the pre-Reformation Catholic Church that was dedicated to God under the patronage of St. Stephen.

Although having no references on which to found my argument, I think that the old St. Stephen's Church, of which an ivy-covered gable and a part of the walls still remain, was built soon after the Norman, Geoffrey Marisco, had established his strong-

hold in "the Island of Kerry" in the 13th century. Before the arrival of the Norman invaders, a Catholic Church for the district of Castleisland was already built at Caherinard. The remains of the pre-Norman Church still stand in the haggard of Caherinard farm, the property of Mr. Thomas Griffin.

How do we know that the town Church was Norman and the Caherinard one Irish and pre-Norman?

The little bridge over the stream that separates the parishes of Kileentierna and Castleisland supplies the answer. The name of this tiny bridge, handed down by tradition, has kept for us the name of the small church at which Castleislanders worshipped, perhaps, for a hundred years before the arrival of the Anglo-Normans in Kerry. The name of this little bridge is "Droichedeen-Kilfinane"; that is, the little bridge (near to) the Church of St. Finian. There is a small swampy field between this bridge and the site of the ancient Church. A stone causeway was made from this bridge to the Church, and the remains of this stony path can still be traced through Mr. Griffin's field. Sixty years ago it was quite plain to be seen by passers-by from the Killarney road.

When the Norman, Geoffrey Marisco, built the Castle, the tower of which still stands on the right bank of the river Maine, he made the river to flow round the fortress, and so to act as a moat to protect the Castle from the raids of the native Gaels. Now, in winter, with no bridges then spanning the swiftly flowing river, the dwellers in the new castle were cut off from going to Mass on Sundays to the Church at Caherinard—a tree trunk across the river would do for the agile Gaels. The nearest Church to the

castle then, on the right bank of the river, would probably be the one at Kilbannivan (Churchtown). What was to be done? Why, to build a new church near the castle on the site now partly occupied by the Protestant Church.

It was dedicated under the invocation of St. Stephen, being Norman built, not under the patronage of an Irish saint. Such is my reasoning on this matter, not founded on much evidence, I admit, but I think that the inference is plain from these few simple facts.

St. Stephen's in the town was Norman, and the far older one at Caherinard was Irish; so much, I think, is clear.

From the time of the capture or demolition of St. Stephen's by the East Kerry Elizabethan Protestants, until the thatched church in old Chapel Lane, near the site of the Presentation Convent, the persecuted native Irish had no Church but the side of the mountain, the glen, or the humble hut in a bog.

Now, the least the Catholics of the present day ought to do is to preserve this precious relic of St. Finian's Church at Caherinard, where nearly a thousand years ago our ancestors worshipped. Our country is full of the ruins of these ancient churches. As Father Phelan, S.J., in his *Young Priests' Keepsake*, says:—"Every child should be made acquainted with the life of the leading saint, and the history of the most remarkable ruin, in the locality; these hoary prophets, now so mute, would speak with tongues of fire out of the dim past, telling the story of our fathers' faith and heroic achievements."

The gable, now rapidly decaying, has a handsome

window with a pointed arch still intact. Ten pounds' worth of concrete now applied to where it is being undermined would preserve it for many more generations.

The ivy-covered gable of St. Stephen's, still standing in the old town graveyard, is used as a belfry by the Rector of the Protestant Church. On the front wall of this very ancient church, facing the town, are the remains of a sculptured head. Some say it represented the head of a prelate; but the face, probably disfigured at the time of Cromwell's fanatical "Ironsides," is now but an amorphous outline with only traces of eyes, nose, and chin.

The walls are still strong; the "Gobban Saor" was a good builder; but the stones inside show by their scaling that at some time the interior was burned—not by any means an unlikely conjecture. The gable used as a belfry is entirely covered with a luxuriant growth of ivy which, no doubt, ultimately, will put an end to this ancient building.

Of all the old Castleisland parsons give me, first and last, and at all times, Parson Heffernan. It is impossible to praise this fine old Irish gentleman too much. About thirty-three years ago I praised him in an article, "Landlordism in a Kerry Village," written by me for the *Westminster Review*. He sympathised so much with the downtrodden tenant farmers of Ireland during the Land-War days of the eighteenthies, and he was such an outspoken Home Ruler that he was practically boycotted by the landlords and agents in East Kerry.

But, above all, he loved the great Ireland of the past, and when he saw any of the ruins of our

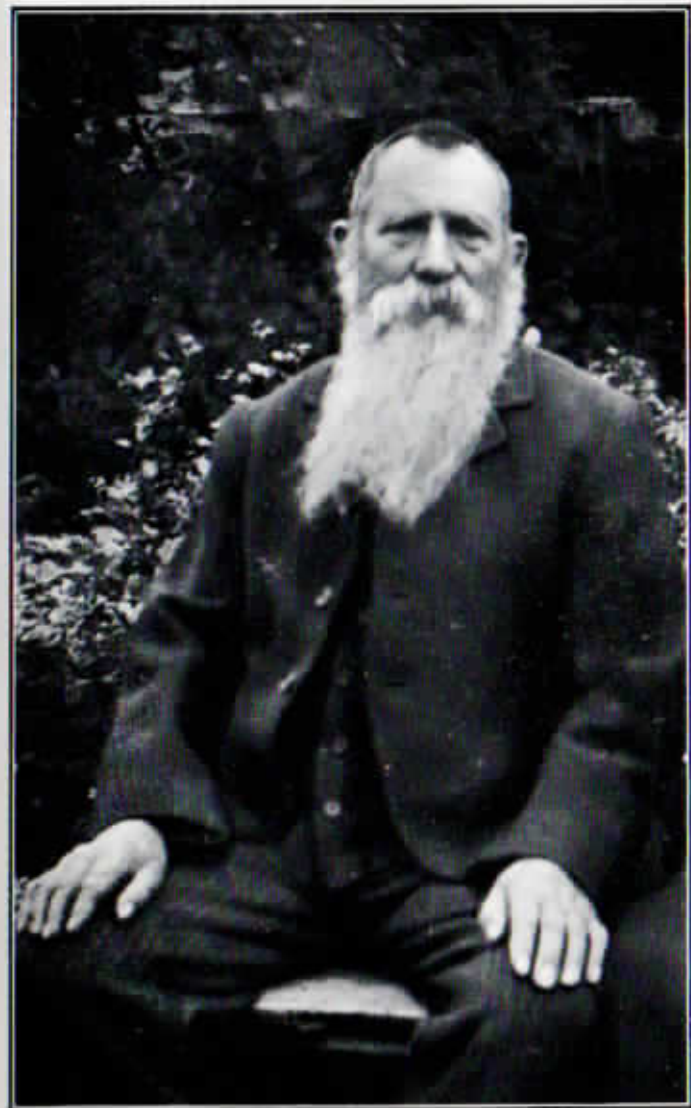
historic buildings desecrated by the improving profiteer, he was instant in denunciation, and at once wrote a letter of protest to headquarters in Dublin in defence of our sacred ruins.

He was, indeed, loved by the people of Castleisland of sixty years ago, and his memory is still held in fond remembrance by those of us still living who knew him in the flesh.

A strange coincidence it was that he lived in the house at Caherinard sixty years after it was the home of that grand old Sagart, Father Maurice Fitzgerald, who for over 50 years was the parish priest of Castleisland. While he lived at Caherinard the relic of St. Finian's Church had a loyal guardian. His gentle, unassuming manners were perfect, and, although a highly cultured gentleman and an enthusiastic antiquarian, he was one of the most modest of men.

Fearless in his love for his native land, but also stout in defence of his own faith, his sympathy with the aspirations of the people lost him the "push" of the influential patrons of livings. He was Rector of the Protestant Church at Cordal, and I think he sometimes officiated in the Church at Kileentierna.

Two parsons who officiated before my time in Castleisland were Parsons Mansell and Drew. When I was a boy there were many silly rhymes going the rounds about the Rev. Mr. Mansell, and still more silly stories. After all, many people are only children of larger growth. The following is hardly worth the telling, but it had a great vogue fifty years ago, and if you happened to talk to any of our old people over sixty and mention Parson Mansell they will at once tell you the story of "Jack Shay and the Parson." In the



HENRY WILLIAMS
Fenian and Landleguer

beautiful Protestant burial service there is a phrase used by the Minister:—"I heard a voice from heaven." It seems that at a Protestant burial service the village fool-rogue, Jack Shay, climbed a tree near the grave where the parson was reading the service; and the old story runs that when the Minister came to the phrase—"I heard a voice from heaven," Jack, the Gom, said: "That's quare, for I'm higher than you and I didn't hear it!"

This was the great Catholic joke of those days among the then ancients of the town. Truth to tell, I could never see any humour in it at all. Of course, the thing never happened, and I suppose Jack Shay, God rest him, invented it in order to get an occasional penny for a glass of porter; but the story got into the folk-lore of the day.

It must be remembered that the parson himself, the Rev. Mr. Mansell, was always spoken of as a good man, although, of course, they thought that there was a chance of a warmer climate for him than this, in the hereafter; but there never was any question of his sincerity in his own beliefs, or of his integrity and honour as a highly-placed member of the community. But these uncouth rhymes and somewhat childish stories were only the outward and visible sign that a new spirit was coming into the souls of the hitherto dumb, suppressed, and downtrodden Catholics of Ireland. Emancipation had given a new outlook and a new status to the "Romish idolators" and "superstitious Papists." Their inferiority complex as citizens was fast disappearing, and they were tuning their harps to a louder and more hopeful key.

Before they went about their religious duties in fear

and trembling lest one stroke of the chapel bell would rouse up the latent bigotry of their oppressors. For generations their masters classed them as members of a despised sect, but even in their deepest gloom our fathers always were convinced and firmly believed that the Protestant Church was in heresy since the time of its authors and creators—Luther and Henry VIII. Secretly in their hearts they always rejoiced because of their membership of the true Church—hence their willingness to give up all—to suffer every form of persecution, even death itself, rather than give up one iota of their Holy Faith.

The stories and rhymes above referred to—one of them on the danger of "Parson Mansell going to hell"—were, as I have said, not made up in any offensive way towards the then rich and aristocratic members of the Protestant Church, but they were expressions of the new religious and political spirit of independence that began to germinate in the souls of the people.

Father Mathew then came along with his great temperance crusade, and our people got still another uplift that put them on the road that leads to full freedom.

The foregoing sketch of the English settlers in East Kerry is practically all founded on local tradition; as a counterpoise to the traditional element, let me give as concisely as possible what some of the regular historians have to say on our subject. The writer who deals at length and in great detail with the English settlement in the whole county is, of course, Smith; and all Kerry men and women are greatly indebted

to *The Kerryman* for publishing Smith's history, in 1927, serially, *in extenso*.

Of course, a real live, authoritative History of Kerry remains to be written. In Smith's History very little is heard of the commonality: of the natives of the soil. In fact, a foreigner reading Smith would think that the English settlers in Ireland were the people of Ireland, and that the Church of this benighted land was entirely English and Protestant. Smith makes an occasional mention of a Papistical sect, the R. C., which would lead the foreigner to infer that the real Church of the people was of no account whatever and entirely negligible.

A real history of Kerry will, of course, one day be written. Some scholar may now be gathering together the materials for the building, or our future historian may be now at school, or mayhap, he is not yet born; but whether it be written early in the future or not, he will be a man or woman who shall devote the best years of his or her life to the work. He must be a real scholar in the true sense of that much abused word; a linguist of standing, and as conversant with Latin and Irish as with English. Above all, he must be a true lover of Kerry, of everything in it, and the sky over it. After years of preparation and research the standard history of the "Old Kingdom" will appear, and it will be read with great pleasure and profit in every school, in every town and village, and in every home in our fondly loved and beautiful county. And in every Irish home, overseas, it will be read by our people in exile, and by Irishmen generally.

Our political world has undergone a great change for the better in recent years; our young men are

making history in the athletic fields, and our native speakers and school teachers are making great strides in helping to restore our old Gaelic tongue to its rightful place in the lives of the people. A new era of hope for our dear land has appeared in the political horizon during the present decade.

CHAPTER VI.

MOUNT EAGLE ROYAL.

IN a subsequent chapter I give a brief sketch of the geological formation of the Maine Valley, which shows that at one time, aeons before the days of the Firbolgs, De Danaans, the Celts, this fine valley was at the bottom of an inlet of the Atlantic Ocean, as far as the foot-hills of Croaghane and Mt. Eagle; and around in the northern side, the horseshoe inlet washed the base of Crinny Hill, Barnageha, and the hills of Dulage, Tlucan, and away back to Rathanny and Obrennan; and again on the south side of the horseshoe it washed the foot-hills of Slieve Luachra, *via* the Mount of Scartaglin, Caol-na-Sprida, and Drumultan, to where between Ballybeg and Ranaleen, it joined a narrow depression, now a valley drained by the brown Flesk.

The bottom, level, or undulating, part of the valley of the Maine is composed of extensive limestone islands surrounded by boglands which are nearly cut out. Monemore (Monvore), for instance, now rich grazing lands, was in our great-grandfathers' days a big bog quite close to the limestone island on which our town is built; so that in more than one sense Castleisland was the island of Kerry. In geological ages these limestone islands were deposited in this one-time inlet or bay from the debris of minute shell-fish and other ocean fauna.

Viewed from any of the surrounding hills with their

sloping green fields, which were reclaimed by our ancestors, this valley has charmed the hearts of all lovers of Nature. From the mountain tops this picturesque and lovely valley, with its rich and prolific meadows, the shining, winding Maine, the fringe of ocean gleaming in the west, and the noble range of the great Reeks forming a blue rampart on the south-western horizon—this land and seascape has won the admiration of all in ancient and modern times.

"In descending these mountains towards Castle-island," says Smith, "the country hath a very agreeable aspect, the soil being mostly a fine limestone ground; and yet there are fewer improvements and less tillage here than in other places where the land is not so proper for it," which is in every way a good description of things as they are at the present day.

I have already (in previous chapters of this attempt to give a popular history of East Kerry for the last 100 years), described the straight, up-hill-and-down-dale roads built by the Elizabethan settlers, north, south and east over the Slieve Luachra mountains to bring the Valley into communication with the outside world. Even the first part of the flat, ten-mile, road to Tralee had to be cut through the Monvore bog that spread itself round south-westerly from Crocknariagha to Caolgurim.

One of these roads ran eastward and then south, *via* Scartaglin, towards Cork: part of this old Cork road is the Kilgane-Coolavanny section of the Firie-Breahig road. This old Cork road was joined, perhaps, near Gortglass, by an old Fitzgerald road that crossed the infant Blackwater at Glountane, coming from Newmarket. This road over the wildest moors of

Slieve Luachra was very stony and dangerous in places. About 200 years ago the coach of the visiting Lord Justices, on its way to Tralee, was overturned somewhere between Knocknaboul and Glountane, which gave the opportunity to one of the two judges to quote a passage from the Bible, to his brother: "The Scripture is fulfilled," said he, "for the judges were overthrown in stony places."

Coming down Caol-na-Sprida in a Bianconi car about the middle of the 19th century, John Mitchel, the great Young Ireland patriot, exclaimed, when the splendid valley opened to his view, and Castlemaine Bay shining in the distance—"It is a valley worth fighting for." And the originator and founder of the Land League, that earnest, true-souled patriot, Michael Davitt, many decades later, at the same place, gave expression to the same words.

Now, to give an English opinion on the beauty of this, our dear Valley of the Maine, an English officer, in the days of the Tithe War and the poteen-makers' ventures in Foyle Pilip's glen, who was bringing his artillery *via* the old Blackwater Bridge-Newmarket road, when he came to the top of the mountain road near Mount Eagle, and as the valley lay smiling before him, and the waters of Castlemaine and Tralee bays were shimmering in the distance, said to his men:—"It is the most beautiful view in all Munster." But it must be seen when the sun is lighting up the whole landscape. On such a day, from the top of Carn Tuathail this valley must be a grand sight; but without any high mountains to stand on, East Kerry men and women in foreign lands see their loved valley often in their dreams of home.

Besides the huge domain of Mount Eagle Royal granted to Sir William Herbert, at 4d. an acre, and given as a dowry to his only child, Mary, Lady Cherbury of Castleisland, Queen Bess also granted 3,768 acres to Sir Charles Herbert, whose son, Giles of Hadnock, and Rulace, sold the greatest part and left no issue.

The name of the Herbert that the Lord of Cherbury and Castleisland sent over to keep a Herbert eye on the Undertakers before mentioned, who divided the Valleys of the Maine and Flesk between them as middlemen, is Thomas, of Kilcow, of which lands, together with those of Ballymacadam he was enfeoffed by Edward L. Herbert, Lord Cherbury, on April 18th, 1656. Kilcow was, therefore, the first home of the Herberts of Kerry. Smith remarks that Kilcow is situated "in the rich vein of Castleisland." Afterwards the descendants of this Kilcow Herbert transferred their principal seat in Kerry to Muckruss, "from rich to romantic land." The Rt. Hon. Henry Herbert used to tell how the manager of the Herbert lands at Kilcow, a Scotsman, protested at the foolishness of the family removing to the neighbourhood of the Reeks. The practical Scot said that it was a shame to give up "the bonnie fields of Kilcow for the mountains and stones of Muckruss."

At the time when Smith was writing his history of Kerry, Kilcow belonged to Edward Herbert, Esq., of Muckruss. "Here are good plantations," he writes, "of the first Kerry home of the Herberts," as also at Currans, the seat of George Herbert, Esq., which stands on rising ground not far from the river Mang (Maine), three miles west by south of Castleisland.

Between Castleisland and Killarney is Tiernacoosh (Dicksgrove), the seat of Mr. Meredith, near the River Flesk, which, about a mile to the west of this place, empties itself into the River Maine. The late Mr. Meredith greatly improved this place, from whence there is an agreeable prospect westward to Castlemaine Bay.

Under the name of Mt. Eagle Royal, 13,276 acres of the confiscated Geraldine estate in East Kerry were granted by Elizabeth to Sir William Herbert, a Knight of the county of Monmouth; and this newly-acquired Irish estate was transferred to his son-in-law, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, as a dowry to Sir William's only daughter, Mary.

Lord Cherbury was created Lord of the "Island Castle," that was built by Geoffrey Marisco in 1226. The Castle, which has been a stately ruin since Cromwell's guns battered it, after his army had bivouacked at Camp, near Kilcow, also gave its name to Sir T. Gage, who was created Viscount Gage of Castleisland.

"After the forfeiture of Gerald, Earl of Desmond," says Smith, "the family of Herbert had a grant of this seignory. Queen Elizabeth in her patent, styled it the Manor or Seignory of Mount Eagle Royal. It extends about twelve Irish miles in length and ten in breadth, and contains by a late survey 37,128 plantation acres." (The above 13,276 acres may have been reckoned as arable; and the excess in the latter may represent mountain and bog land, or, maybe, the original surveyor had been bribed by Sir William. Smith adds, that of the smaller area, only 14,211 acres are profitable.)

Smith continues, "The whole of it is farmed from the Rt. Hon. the Earl of Powis (a Herbert) by Sir Maurice Crosbie, Knt.; Arthur Crosbie, Esq.; John Blennerhassett, Esq.; Edward Herbert, Esq.; Robert Fitzgerald, Esq. (an ancestor, I presume, of the Protestant Fitzgeralds); and Richard Meredith, Esq., who have recently improved this estate by cutting a road from Abbeyfeale to Castleisland, and from the last-mentioned place to Killarney, which roads are carried in direct lines over mountains, through bogs, and morasses, having several stone bridges erected on them with deep ditches on either side, for the carrying off the water, whereby the land on both sides is become considerably drier than before."

The old castle, which gives its name to Castleisland, saw many changes, much bloodshed, and many wars, in the Valley over which it stood guard for many centuries. In pre-Elizabethan days it was the chief stronghold of the Geraldines in Kerry; the Tralee Castle occasionally depriving it of this honour; but after its surrender to the Herberts, or rather its occupation by them, for—after the disgraceful tragedy at Glounanentha—there was no loyal Geraldine army to defend it. In succeeding generations the fortunes of war gave it many alien masters until the time of its destruction by Cromwell's army.

In ancient times it was reckoned a place of great strength by the feudal lords, "the River Mang flowing round its walls." ("Mang" was the effort of the English tongue to pronounce the Irish Mieng.) In 1345 it was captured by Sir Ralph Ussord, being then held for Maurice Fitz-Thomas Fitzgerald, the first Earl of Desmond, by Sir Eustace de Poor, Sir William

Grant, and Sir John Cotterel. On its capture these three knights were summarily executed by General Ussord, who was a Lord Justice of Ireland.

In 1397, Gerald, the Poet, the 4th Earl of Desmond, was murdered near the castle; so if any of the inhabitants of our Killarney Road, in whose backyards the ruins of the once great fortress stand, should hear at the witching hour of midnight any one reciting poetry in Norman-English, or in Irish, they will know that it is the wraith of the old Earl conning over his poetic effusions of the long ago. The murder of the last regnant Earl, as mentioned above, took place at Glounanentha on the 11th November, 1583—one of the foulest blots in the annals of Munster.

Five years after this dastardly deed was accomplished, Sir William Herbert was writing to Sir Francis Walsingham a letter of complaint against his cousin, Sir Edward Denny, dated "From the Castle of the Island, this 27th December, 1588."

In the reign of James I. "the Herbert family," says Smith, "must have failed to claim their grant, or in the wars of 1600 some confusion arose; for we find Lord Baltinglass possessed of the estate and advowsons of the seignory of Mount Eagle Royal"—the English name for the valleys of the Maine and brown Flesk. The then Lord of Mount Eagle Royal, and of "ye Island of Kerry" got a royal charter to hold a Wednesday market and a fair, on the 21st July and the following day; also to hold "Courts Leet" and "Courts Baron" before Seneschals of his appointment.

Before leaving the affairs of the Protestant Church in East Kerry, I must not forget to mention a Castle-

island Protestant layman, and a dear old friend and neighbour of my father's, who was well known for his heroism in dark and evil days.

Mr. John Williams was in the seventies the Dyer for the whole of East Kerry. As I have described in a subsequent chapter, in the "seventies" the farm housewife spun the wool and the flax in her own home, the "wavers" wove the thread into cloths, and Mr. John Williams and his son Harry, who, as I have often written before, was a leading Fenian and Land Leaguer, dyed them for the tailor and the dressmaker to make into comfortable warm clothes.

Mr. John Williams, whose father and mother belonged to the gentry of Mallow and Kanturk, was a powerfully built man, and, when I knew him, active for his age. To see him and his son Harry, as I often did, controlling the machinery that filled a big hall—the shafting worked by the hand power of assistant labourers, was to see skill and physical endeavour at its highest pitch.

But why do I write of the Williams family at length? Not for the sake of the Fenian son or the charitable wife and mother; but because of old Mr. John Williams himself. He was a true Christian; and, as we say in Australia—a white man; a doer of great deeds of the most heroic quality.

During the awful cholera epidemic that followed in the wake of the famine, and during the days of the famine itself, Mr. Williams proved himself a great Christian and as true a hero as ever walked the streets of Castleisland. Talk about your soldiers and their deeds of daring—these are not to be compared with the man that will go into famine and cholera-stricken

homes to give nourishment to the living and burial to the dead! Thank God, our Sagarts of the Black Forties did it too, and they are long ago in heaven. I often heard the old people say that when every one else was scared of his life to go near a cholera infected home, John Williams went in to succour the sick; he often carried the dead body on his back and buried the corpse himself. There are no suitable words of praise to do full justice to such deeds. To feed the hungry, to visit the sick, to bury the dead—these are, in our catechisms, called corporal works of mercy. And if by the number and grandeur of our corporal works of mercy, we gain heavenly rewards, then the soul of John Williams must have a very great one. We, who are not heroic in word or deed or in any great virtue, can only say, may God reward him and give him a bed in heaven. In him, and in his son Henry, was the blood of heroes and gentlemen.

The landlords, agents, and squires of East Kerry, of whom I have been writing, have long ago joined the great majority of the mighty dead. A great number of them lie at rest in the graves and tombs and vaults under and around the Protestant Church in Castleisland. There the remains of the English settlers in these East Kerry parishes lie in peace after centuries of war and striving for place and power, and after lording it over the native Gael for many generations. Now their race is running out; they are almost departed, extinct. Only a few descendants of these proud aristocratic families survive. Their day is past, their race is run. After the terrible famine of the Black Forties, when emigration was depopulating our land, the English *Times* boasted—gloated over

the fact—that "the Gael was departing." With its usual English insolence and unholy glee, it announced that "the native Irishman was fleeing from his native land."

Well, the ways of Providence are inscrutable. To-day, thank God, we can say that never since 1172 was the Gael more securely settled in his own dear homeland. Now—in 1930—it is the other way about; the Irishman remains and the English and their descendants have vanished. We do not say it with any boastful pride, but with humble thankfulness to God, Who has preserved our people amidst the terrible trials of war, conquest, penal laws, famine, and pestilence. Our fathers suffered every form of social torture during these centuries—the emigrant ship, poverty, our religion proscribed, our language nearly annihilated, the pitch-cap, the gallows, and a continuous deprivation of justice—but their sons remain, and their enemies are scattered.

These English invaders had their good points and their bad; virtues as well as vices!—the usual mixture of blemishes and perfections found in the men of every race. In these chapters, I tried to see them at their best and I did not put any special emphasis on their many questionable, and often cruel, deeds. This is not the time for reviling, or rehearsing, or for paying off old scores; rather it is a time for forgiveness and appeasement. They did send millions of our people overseas; but it was the devilish system of land tenure that was in fault and not the men who inherited it; so that we, as Christians, can now say from our hearts—May these English settlers rest in peace!

To-day I went over to the old churchyard of St.

Stephen's, to note any facts about these dead and gone Elizabethans and Cromwellians that might be gleaned from their tombstones. There are many headstones, tombs, and vaults there which hold the remains of the one-time powerful aristocracy of East Kerry.

One of the oldest families of the district—the Saunders of Breahig—are lying in a vault under the northern side of the church. The descendants of this family, although now no longer residents of the county, have not forgotten their dead. Our well-known, highly skilled and artistic monumental mason, Mr. P. O'Reilly, got an order from them a year ago to restore and re-decorate the finely arched flagstone at the entrance to the vault. He has, indeed, more than restored it, for he has added some beautiful scroll-work underneath the arch, and he has chiselled the whole in such a way that it looks quite new. The date on this stone, 1690, shows that it is the burial place of one of the oldest families of the district. The Marshalls' vault lies near it, with the next oldest visible date, 1774. The Hewsons' big tomb has a comparatively recent date, 1864; but there are three vaults under the church, one north and two in the south side, with no inscriptions, or at least with no writing that can be read. These may be still older than any of the above and no doubt they are the vaults of some of the oldest of the East Kerry landlords, who probably have no descendants now living to look after the sepulchres of their fathers. Alas! that is the common fate of most of the old families—Protestant and Catholic. Here they lie at rest, the great ones of times past, the lords of the Valley of the Maine; the once-powerful families that for many generations

formed themselves into a close corporation and a high society for the subjugation of the natives, and for the entertainment of its own members—a caste apart.

The grand balls, dinners, garden parties, and banquets, with which they regaled each other are over and gone for ever. The hunting and racing, the drinking and duelling, and the carousing of the men, are to be no more. The horn of the huntsman "no more shall rouse them from their lowly beds."

"The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth ere gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour,
The paths of glory lead but to the grave."

May they rest in peace!

CHAPTER VII.

THE LAND WAR.

THE Land War in Ireland began at Irishtown, in the County Mayo when Michael Davitt founded the Land League there in 1879.

Before the advent of the League the state of the tenant farmers of Ireland was indeed deplorable. They were ground down by a merciless landlordism, rural slavery reigned undisturbed, land-grabbing and evictions were quite common; the tenants had hardly any legal rights, and they and their families were entirely at the mercy of rapacious agents and tyrannical landlords, who were alien in blood, and many of them were absentees, who lived luxuriously and gaily in London and Paris on the labour of their serfs in Ireland.

These alien lords invented a system of competition among the land workers that kept the latter in constant poverty. The struggle for a mere living—the pressure of hunger—forced otherwise good men to grab at their neighbour's farm. The greedy so-called landlords accepted the highest offer for the land; and the man in possession had to yield his homestead if he could not pay a rent equal to the highest bid of any outsider.

There was no such thing as an economic rent—no conscience clause, no pity, no Christian principle of any kind entered into the forced bargain between most of

the landlords and their tenants. When a bad year like that of 1879 came, the farmers who were forced to pay these extortionate rents became bankrupt, and our lately departed, but not regretted, Lords—Cromwellian and Elizabethan—started the usual eviction campaign, put the sheriff and his bailiffs to work, sometimes helped by crowbar brigades, police and soldiers; cleared out the tenants as if they were vermin; and again put up the homesteads to the highest bidders. And so the awful degradation and slavery went relentlessly on, until the great Fenian, Michael Davitt, breathed a spirit of faith and hope and unity into the minds and hearts of our downtrodden people in the County Mayo, in the year of Our Lord, 1879.

As a recent writer puts it briefly—"A hundred years ago the farmers of Ireland had practically no rights in the land. They simply held and worked their farms in the interests of their landlords. In fact they were little more than workmen, with this difference, however—that they had to pay instead of being paid." The landlord took the cream and the wheat of the farm, while the nineteenth-century Irish peasant took for his share the potatoes and skim milk. No words can exaggerate the depths of its infamy, for it was a devilish system, and its equal in rascality was not to be found in the whole of Europe. The English won our lands with the sword, and the descendants of these conquerors had kept our people in an Egyptian bondage for centuries. But to-day, thank God, we have won back our land; these alien lords are gone for ever, and the tiller of the soil—the hardy Gael, who has survived a hundred persecutions—sits securely in possession of his homestead, a free man, and no

longer the slave of these Elizabethan or Cromwellian landlords.

But there is another kind of conqueror—the husbandman, of whom we never read in our history books—the conqueror with the hoe and the spade and the plough.

Coming east from Tralee to Castleisland, a traveller enters one of the finest valleys in Ireland, with its fields of luscious grass, waving corn, and green meadows. And as the hills and distant mountains open out, you see a panorama of rural beauty hard to be matched in any part of Ireland—the blue Reeks in the southern horizon crowning a scene of surpassing loveliness.

Look well at the green hills surrounding this valley. Begin at your left, as you come east, looking north, with the green hill-side fields of tClucan. Carry your moving view across the glen that bounds the parishes of Clogher and Castleisland, and continue looking around Curranes and Fahaduv to the great green mound of Crinny-Glounsharoon; and so round to Glenlaurin, Ardnagragh, Breahig, Gortglass, to Drumultan, Currow Hill, and Firie, and back to the foot-hills of Slieve Mis. All these green farms—hundreds of them, with their white homesteads standing out bravely in the sunshine—were made by the conqueror with the gruffaun, the spade and the plough.

After the Elizabethan persecution—Neroian in its devastation—the country was entirely ruined and wasted; and again after the re-conquest by Cromwell, the Gael had to leave the rich lands of the plains and take to the mountains and bogs to eke out a miserable existence.

Now for the moment to leave general statements about this continuous war for the land of Ireland between Gael and Gall, let us take a strip of that hillside well known to me, and a few details about it will illustrate my meaning better than a column of generalities. The man who makes two blades of grass to grow where before only one grew is a good citizen. How much more then is he who makes a waving meadow out of a barren waste?

Let us go back to the green fields of tClucan—there over the Nohoval churchyard, to your left as you come from Tralee. There are four comfortable homesteads standing out on the hillside, surrounded by grassy fields, waving crops, and meadows. About 150 years ago all this cultured farm land was a wild moor covered with furze, bracken, heath, and bog. It was given at a nominal rent to my great-grandfather, Thade Lenihan. He and his three sons, Denis, Michael, and Teig, and their sons, made green fields out of the heathery and boggy moor. And when this waste land was, by herculean labour, turned into profitable, cultivated land, the landlord stepped in and claimed it as his own!

The sons had to pay a heavy rent for the farms that were created by their own hands and the sweat and labour of their own children. It is a misuse of language to call the so-called landlord the "owner" of tClucan, for in strict justice he had no claim to a penny of rent for land that—after the Creator Who made the soil—was brought into profitable cultivation by the Lenihans.

But see how the whirligig of time, and the mills of God that grind so slowly, bring just retribution to

the sons of the just man. One of old Thade's sons, Denis, was a fine type of Gael. He could read and write in his native language; as a seanachie he was full of traditional Irish lore; and he sang and recited the poems of Eoghan Rua. Although his "landlord," who quadrupled his rent, looked on him as an ignorant peasant, he was, in fact, in his own way and in his own language, a man of culture in the intellectual as well as in the physical fields. He made the wild barren moor to blossom like the rose, and he cultivated his mind and heart on the prose and poetry of our own native writers and Kerry poets. A grandson of this Denis Lenihan, who was able to wield the pen as well as the gruffaun—Arthur Lenihan, ex-M.C.C.—is now the owner of the grand home of his grandfather's landlord, where in the old days the aristocracy of Kerry were often entertained! The course of time brings many strange retributions, but none so strange as that which sees the grandson of the old Gael in the seat of the once mighty landlord. The irony of fate can show us no more curious event; but, understood rightly, it is simply a case of retributive justice.

Now what I describe in some detail as happening at tClucan happened all round the circle of hills from there to Crinny, to Glenlaurin, Drumultan to Firies and Slieve Mis. All these hundreds of hillside farms, right round the valleys of the Maine and Flesk, were made out of waste moor by the sweat and labour of our ancestors. And when the grass began to grow where heath and furze grew before, the landlords stepped in and claimed the work of others for their own!

All this goes to show the present generation what

landlordism meant to Kerry down to the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

The foregoing is an introduction to the history of moonlighting in Castleisland; to show how the movement originated, and the reason for its appearance at that particular time, in the year 1879. It must always be remembered that, although I feel it my duty to condemn many of the outrages committed during the Land League campaign, all these agrarian outrages were but as dust in the balance against the centuries of outrageous persecutions, horrible cruelties, and unmentionable offences, committed on our defenceless people by generations of these alien gangs of land-robbers. But two wrongs never made a right, and we must always remember the laws of God and the divine charity of Our Redeemer. Seventy-nine was a bad year when there was a partial failure of crops, and very little turf saved; farmers, labourers, and traders felt the pinch; but the absentee landlords continued to demand their rents.

The farmers were disunited and impoverished; they were bidding against each other for a living on the land; land-grabbing was the order of the day; and even well-to-do-people thought it no shame to reach out for the vineyard of their more unfortunate neighbours.

The first moonlighters in Ireland—those of Castleisland—were embodied in order to stand behind the distracted farmer, to give him a backbone to resist oppression, and to put down land-grabbing once and for ever. Nearly a year before the first Land League meeting was held in Castleisland on the 10th October, 1880, the first of the moonlighters were sworn in. It

is well to note that this is the first authentic account of the origin of moonlighting in Kerry, to be published; and I might as well explain from the start that this does not purport to be a full and complete history of moonlighting in East Kerry. It deals solely with the origin and formation of the first company of moonlighters; and as these were the first in Ireland, you have here the true account of the first "Captain Moonlight and his Company," which ought to be of great interest to all as it is an important chapter in our history. Other companies of moonlighters quickly followed the example of the Castleislanders, in nearly every parish in Munster; so that when I do not mention the names of the well-known moonlighters like Denny O'Donoghue, who one day walked through the town, then swarming with police, with two revolvers in each pocket, and Sean Bawn Hussey who was imprisoned, it will be understood that I am not writing of all the moonlighters, but only of the group that was first formed to put down land-grabbing in the Castleisland parish.

During the year 1879 all in this first group were active members of the Castleisland "Moonlighters Association," and by the end of 1881 they had put down land-grabbing completely and for ever. There followed great numbers of active moonlighters in Dysart, Cordal, Scartaglin, Currow and Clogher, who finished the work commenced by the others; but the records of these fighters is another story altogether—a subsequent chapter in the history of moonlighting in East Kerry.

Many think that moonlighting started after the establishment of the branch of the Land League in

Castleisland; but the contrary is the fact. The first moonlighters were more Fenian than agrarian—to free Ireland was the *raison d'être* of their existence, and to put down land-grabbing was the secondary or subsidiary object in their national programme. Those who came after them were almost purely agrarian in their aims; and "The Three Axateers" and their first company are not responsible for any of the subsequent acts of the moonlighters in East Kerry. Foster's Coercion Act practically disbanded the original company, for all the best of them, the Captain's inner guard who were at all times ready to face death and even ready to discipline their own companions, left the country when that Act came into force. The Company of Moonlighters continued for many years after, but it was composed of new and entirely different material. "Who will take your place," said one of Parnell's lieutenants, "if you are arrested?"

"Captain Moonlight," answered Parnell.

One evening in 1879, Mr. Robert Finn, then a young athlete of great promise, met two Castleisland men of his own age, Mr. Batt O'Leary and Mr. Justin McCarthy, who asked him to form a secret society: (1) for the purpose of freeing Ireland from English rule, and (2) to help the farmers to put down land-grabbing. Bob Finn was a very pious Catholic, a weekly communicant, and a daily visitor to the Tabernacle. He told his comrades that he would consider the matter. As his brother Mike, then in England, was a well-known Fenian, Bob's political inclinations were more towards Fenianism than towards agrarianism. His trade as a cooper, of course, depended on the prosperity of the farmer, and we may

be certain that the troubles of the agricultural community had his full sympathy. A few days later he consented to form the society. The following night the trio met at Cahareens, a few hundred yards to the south of the town, and then and there the foundation members of the first company of moonlighters were sworn in, and Bob was made Captain of the infant organisation.

The next move was to procure arms. Bob and Justin were coopers, so they borrowed their fathers' axes, and the adventurous three, thus armed, made their first raid for guns at Farrenabrac, not far from the town. In a week they were the proud possessors of eight shot guns and a bullet mould!

The second question was one of recruits. When their comrades in the town were told that the infant company had already collected eight guns, more than a score were sworn in to the new society of moonlighters. It will be well here to give the names of the first company of Kerry moonlighters—Bob Finn (Captain), Batt O'Leary, and Justin McCarthy, the three foundation members or "axateers." Then followed:—Ned Shanahan, Jack Deenihan, Mike Cotter, and Bryan O'Connor (Churchtown) as the inner guard, who could be depended on to discipline their own comrades if any of them showed the white feather. Tim and Mike McCarthy, James Hussey, Maurice (Jack) Brosnan, Ned Barry and Con Casey—all of the New Line, now Church Street—Bill Hickey, Jack Flynn, and Mundie D. O'Sullivan, of Close. Ned Healy, Denny Shanahan and Jack Brosnan (New Line) joined up later. As time passed many others joined up, but the above is a fairly full list of the original

company. Bryan O'Connor and Mundie O'Sullivan were the only farmers' sons in the original company; but, of course, Batt O'Leary was the son of a farmer at Ballinhalla, who was then living in the top of the street.

Jack Deenihan, Maurice Brosnan and Denny Shanahan went to Australia. Ned Shanahan, Mike Cotter, Justin McCarthy, Batt O'Leary, Bill Hickey and many others went to the United States. As a postscript to the list of names, I might add that these men never did a deed that would bring a blush of shame to the most sensitive and honourable Irishman.

Bob Finn and the two Shanahans were educated brainy young fellows. Ned Shanahan afterwards became the Chief Medical Officer in an important city of the United States, and his brother Denny became a leading business man in Brisbane, Queensland. Men of this type do not commit crimes in the name of patriotism; they went out to do good and not evil, and Ireland has not produced at any time or in any generation more pure-souled, unselfish patriots than the Fenian core in the first company of Castleisland Moonlighters.

No wonder then, when, a generation later, Ireland was in the throes of the far more serious and terrible war against the Black-and-Tan janizaries, two nephews of the Shanahans distinguished themselves as fearless fighters in the cause of Irish freedom. One, Richard, made the supreme sacrifice; and his brother John, happily, thank God, amongst us, escaped death from the Black and Tan fiends by a miracle. His own courage and resource when he was severely wounded, and the skill of his brother, Dr. Edward Shanahan,

who assisted the county surgeon, a namesake, of Tralee, brought him back from the verge of the grave. I only mention this to show that blood will tell—the nephews were following in the footsteps of their uncles, Dr. Ned and Denis.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LAND WAR IN EAST KERRY.

NOW I must face the question: "Is it ever right for an unauthorised person or society to murder an unarmed man in cold blood?" And I answer at once—No; never. According to God's law, no reason or cause, no matter how exigent, pressing, or patriotic, can justify the taking of another man's life. When an unarmed man is fired at from behind a hedge and murdered in cold blood—this is murder, and it is a hateful and sinful act in the sight of God, and in the opinion of all decent men. Such acts only bring our old nation into shame and dishonour.

It is a different thing altogether of course in a guerilla war, like that with the Black and Tans. The proper tactics then, when our fighters were few in comparison with England's army, was surprise and ambush; so that the strategy of the I.R.A. was entirely right and proper. It was War: both sides were taking their lives in their hands; both were more or less ruthless in their methods; but war is war. Brave men often stood face to face fully armed: the issue was joined, and they were prepared to accept the consequence of their actions. Admitting all this, yet there were a few killings in that war that cannot be justified. In a few cases our men followed the bad example of the Tans who committed hundreds of murders. In defence of one's country, standing

bravely in the ranks of war, it is right and proper; killing an unarmed man in cold blood is an entirely different thing—it was murder. It is of the devil and no man can justify it. This is one reason why I cannot enter into a discussion of the crimes that followed in the footsteps of the first Castleisland moonlighters, whose conduct was irreproachable and whose shield remained unstained by the perpetration of any major crime. Of course, they broke England's laws, and they put the fear of God (or is it the devil?) into the hearts of the landlords and the land-grabbers; but the first company never committed a dishonourable crime.

The history of the land war in East Kerry I cannot attempt, but a sketch of its activities here can be briefly stated: The first Land League meeting in Castleisland was held on the 10th October, 1880. Father Arthur Murphy, then C.C. here, was chairman of the first branch of the League; Mr. Thomas Moore was Treasurer; and Messrs. T. W. Horne and T. O'C. Brosnan were joint secretaries. On the day of the public demonstration Father Arthur introduced Mr. Joseph Bigger, M.P., as "the veteran obstructionist of the House of Commons." I am indebted for these details to my old friend, Mr. Maurice Brosnan, N.T.; for, though I was present, and in fact astride the front barrier of the platform at Harrington's Corner, I had forgotten all about it.

Many other monster meetings were held, but one I well remember that was organised by my dear friend and cousin, the late Denis E. Shanahan. As a protest against the eviction campaign of the landlords, then in full blast, about eleven men of the Royal Irish Constabulary resigned in this district, and a public

meeting addressed from the balcony of the Crown Hotel, by Mr. Crilly, M.P., was held to celebrate the event—an event by the way that caused consternation in Dublin Castle and in the British House of Commons. These men—one of them the handsomest man I ever saw—went to America; their action did great service to the national cause at the time; and it is to be hoped that every one of them prospered more under the Stars and Stripes than if they had remained at home guarding landlords and land-grabbers, or emergency men and their flocks and herds. I also remember a great meeting addressed by the Father of the Land League, Michael Davitt, whom Parnell sent down to the head centre of moonlighting in Ireland—Castleisland—in order to put the brake on the activity of our men, in order to make matters easy for William Ewart Gladstone, who had promised our Parliamentary Party a new Land Act—probably that of 1885, which made the first real attempt to transfer the land of Ireland to the tillers of the soil.

The wounded soldiers of the Land War, as the evicted tenants were called, suffered great wrongs from their tyrannical lords. Many of these lost their homes because of their inability to pay the extortionate rents demanded of them, and a few here and there would not pay, although they could, as a matter of principle to help the common cause. These men who stood boldly out against these tyrant aristocrats, were the real heroes of the war: many of them went to gaol rather than submit to injustice and their families suffered great hardships.

For many years the Head Centre of the Land Movement in East Kerry was "Major" Hussey of Dysart.

He was a special friend of Parnell's in Kilmainham Prison; for he was a fine character; blunt of speech, straight as a ram-rod in stature and principle, most amusing in conversation, and decisive in action. After Captain Bob Finn and Jack Deenihan went to Australia, the Major, who had come home from "Down Under," had taken the reins of leadership into his own hands. He had none of Bob Finn's qualms of conscience, so he soon made his namesake—Samuel Hussey, the notorious land agent, and all the East Kerry landlords, sit up and listen to reason. He was a huge bearded man, and when he was surrounded by his armed guard from Dysart, he was a very formidable person to meet. The teeth chattered and the knees trembled of all bailiffs and young policemen when they met him; for his fierce gaze was enough to petrify the most audacious of his adversaries.

The late Pat O'Keeffe and I went to see an eviction carried out by Arthur E. Herbert, who was shot a few years later as he was walking home to Kileentierna. I cannot now remember the exact townland of that famous eviction, but it was somewhere on the road between Glountane and Knocknabowl. It was, indeed, a sad and cruel sight, and the terrible work of that day left a lasting impression on my mind. All around were the wild moors, with the round head of Mount Eagle in the distance; the little brown road following the windings of the glen. Along the side of that road a company of soldiers stood in all the panoply of war, while at the other side there were serried ranks of helmeted R. I. Constabulary with their swords and rifles ready to disperse any of the mountaineers who would dare to interfere with the majesty of the law.

There we saw British law at its worst—an army driving a poor Irish peasant from his homestead.

The few pieces of furniture flung out, the hard-working parents with their children thrown on the roadside, and the old grandfather that made the land a farm, feebly following.

What an outrage in the sight of God and man! We cannot justify the killing of Arthur E. Herbert, but human nature has its limitations; and, as was the case with that other tyrant, Lord Leitrim, people are sometimes forced to take the law into their own hands. When later on in the struggle I saw the police putting the dead body of the last of the local Herberts into a common cart, I could not but think of that bleak day on the mountainy road beyond Glountane, and of that heart-breaking eviction scene of which he was the author.

A Herbert came to East Kerry in the days of Elizabeth as the lord of the confiscated estate of the Geraldines; and there near Lisheen-Bawn Cross, I was looking at the last Herbert being taken away in a common cart for burial at Kileentierna! Such was the irony of fate, for Time had now taken its revenge on the once rich and powerful family of the Herberts.

As is the case with all revolutions, no matter even if they begin with the purest motives and best intentions, in the final wind-up they nearly always degenerate into looting, murder, and anarchy. The revolutionary Land Movement was no exception to this rule. When the first moonlighters, who were guided by Fenian principles, departed, a distinctly lower class of men got into the companies; and rapine, robbery, and murder followed in their wake. Some



ROBERT FINN
Original Captain Moonlight

horrible and revolting incidents occurred—thank God not many—but enough to bring our county for a while to shame and dishonour. It is far better to draw a veil over the activities of the last of the moonlighters; they even descended to petty larcenies, and in one case a poor lonely old widow was robbed of her life's savings!

Irishmen, no matter how patriotic they are, must remember that we are first of all children of God. We cannot do anything contrary to God's law: as Catholics our first obedience is to Christ the King. The excuse of love of native land, love of freedom, love of the people, will not do if, even to free our country, we break the laws of God. There is a limit—a boundary—if we o'erstep, we do so at the peril of our immortal souls. No matter what be the end, our means must harmonise with truth, justice, and mercy; and with the teachings of our Redeemer. Many of our people do not fully realise these self-evident truths. A neighbour takes my land, my house, my situation, or my money. Any amount of people will tell you that that neighbour deserves to be shot, and that there is no harm in shooting him! Such people, of course, have not a proper hold of the teachings of Christ at all. He taught us forgiveness for trespasses. But some so-called Catholics have only a veneer of Christianity spread over a really pagan personality. Their outlook on the world of events is not Christian but pagan. What terrible deeds have been committed in the name of patriotism which, as somebody has said, is often "the last refuge of a scoundrel." To rid Ireland of landlordism was a noble task; but to

put it down by evil means was not a good thing for the people of Ireland.

We are nearly finished now with that evil land system, but we do not seem to be on the whole much better off. That old-man-of-the-sea—the rack-renting landlord—has been taken off the farmers' back, but another "old-man-of-the-Boards" has taken his place, so much so that now the rates are as big a burden as the old rent. This should teach us a lesson that if you suppress one devil by evil means, fifty other devils will grow where the ashes of the first were deposited.

It would be far easier, and certainly it would earn far more popularity, if, instead of questioning the policy of the gun, I ladled out indiscriminate praise to hundreds of moonlighters living and dead, and indulged my pen in fulsome flattery for deeds that brought us very little honour. "Desperate evils require desperate remedies," one will say. Yes, certainly, but the best doctors use severe and sometimes desperate remedies without killing the patient; the great surgeons use the knife to cure; not to kill. The nation that honours God and keeps His Commandments lives and prospers; the people that rebel against His laws may flourish for a while, but ultimately they disappear off the face of the earth.

It is a long time to look back—fifty years ago—to '79. Only one of the original "Three Axateers" is still living, and only a few of his first company; but the farmers of Kerry ought to remember with gratitude the men who struck the first really effective blow that shattered the chains from their fathers' feet and won our land from the bondage of an alien ownership.

I shall here give a brief account of three murders that were committed in the days of the Land League in East Kerry. Two were official murders by the British, and one by hired assassins. At Drumultan, Scartaglen, three families, neighbours, lived in the same townland. The man to whom they paid their rent was a direct descendant of the Geraldines, but he was only the middleman, who had to pay a head-rent to the alien landlord. This middleman, being a spendthrift, was forced to sell his interests in the three farms.

One of the three, whose name was William Browne, was a most industrious, hard-working farmer—a farmer of the very best type; frugal, sober, a good Catholic, and a splendid husband and father. Browne tried his best to get the other two to join him in the purchase of the middleman's interests, but they refused. Having the money, he bought himself. By so doing he had no intention of interfering with his neighbours' possession of their farms. All their rights remained intact. If Browne did not buy any stranger with the money could have bought. The only difference that it made to them was that now they would pay their rents through Browne.

They had the same rights as before: they could go to the Land Court, if they wished, to demand a reduction in their rent. I am assured by an old Scartaglen moonlighter—an honest, intelligent, decent man, who ought to know, that Browne had never any intention of grabbing his neighbours' farms. And if he had such an inclination, it can be stated at once that land-grabbing at that time was at an end—the moonlighters had made

that certain. No one but a madman would then dream of grabbing his neighbour's farm.

Some one arranged that Browne should be shot. Two desperadoes were hired to do the job, at a price, it is said, under £10, but never paid!

Two innocent men, Poff and Barrett, were hanged in Tralee jail for the murder of Browne.

It is painful to recall this awful tragedy. A finer man than Mr. Browne I never knew. Physically and morally, he was a splendid specimen of an Irish farmer, a type of man that any country would be proud of.

He was murdered in his field by two hired assassins, and two beautiful, innocent, young men were hanged by the British instead of the real murderers. Thus the assassins' bullet, and the police lust for a victim, caused the deaths of three fine Irishmen, ruined more than one happy home, soiled the souls of a few witnesses, and put three others under the risk of eternal damnation.

In my chapters on the Land War I only deal with the original (Fenian) moonlighters of Castleisland, and for the very good reason that I could not praise a movement which was originally pure, sincere, badly needed, and truly patriotic, but which later on degenerated into daylight robbery, maimings, and murder—that has on the debit side scores of ruined Christian homes, and unprintable crimes, that brought down this originally nationalist and worthy cause to the utmost deep. A poor farmer throttled on a fair day, a few hundred yards out of the town, and his gale's rent, £16, taken, by a latter-day "moonlighter!" The savings of a poor old woman forcibly taken in the night; sheep and cattle belonging to honest, decent

neighbours eaten; men shot for a ten-pound note. Let us never forget that in connection with moonlighting there is also an authentic roll of dishonour to be written. For the sake of future generations, this must be publicly and fearlessly stated. Without entering into further nauseous details, one can state that during the Land War in East Kerry we had fighters, clean, open and above-board, as the old people used to say, who well deserved to be listed in an authentic roll of honour; and, alas also we had very many men who deserve their places in the roll of dishonour. These latter cannot be blamed, for their ignorance will be taken into account when the Almighty comes to judge them.

A most interesting revelation may now be made. It will give our future historians a true picture of all that is best in the moonlighters of the eighteen-eighties. It will show that the original moonlighters were made of sterner stuff than the heroes who later in the campaign maimed or killed cattle, ate good, young beef, or fired into a house full of children. I do not write this in an offensive way, but in reporting the past we must try to lay down a means of forming a true valuation of such deeds for the guidance of future historians. Let us tell the truth and shame the devil.

There were some leading moonlighters in Castleisland whose motto was "safety first," and who fought England with their mouths. These men slept peacefully in their beds on moonlight and dark nights, and "hurrahed on" youths to do deeds that they themselves carefully avoided.

Remember that Denis E. Shanahan, after the original company of moonlighters was dispersed by Foster's

Coercion Act, became one of the organising brains of the land agitation in East Kerry. When the incident that I am about to relate took place, he was only a stripling of 19 years of age. He was a comrade of the late P. M. Quinlan, the one-time Secretary to the County Council, then also a young man. Denny was chosen to shoot Arthur E. Herbert, of Kileentierna, the notorious rack-renting landlord agent and Petty Sessions tyrant. Were I a pagan, I would say that he deserved to be shot. I have already described how I was present at an eviction carried out by him. But, being, I hope, a Christian, I cannot show any justification for his murder. May God forgive the men who sent that young lad out the Killarney road on such an errand. Denny went out that road armed with a loaded revolver to do a deed which he foolishly thought he was bound to do as a member of an oath-bound secret society. Obeying the orders of a so-called superior, he thought he was acting as a soldier of Ireland, and risking his life in slaying the chief prop of the English garrison in Castleisland. Afterwards he thanked God heartily that his hands were not stained with blood.

Bob Finn, the first Captain Moonlight in all Ireland, then no longer the Head Centre, took very good care that Denny should not do this bloody deed. Bob met Denis Collins Shanahan at the little bridge of Droichdeen—Kilfinane, near Caherinard, and did his best to dissuade his young comrade from attacking Arthur Herbert. Arthur was afterwards shot dead by Brown and Casey at Lishenbawn.

Bob Finn's arguments failed to shake Denny's resolution, as they walked along the road altogether.

"Very well," said Bob, "I will stay with you, and

if Arthur is shot, I'll be hanged, and you, on account of your youth, will get off free."

That finished Denny, and no attack was made on Arthur that day.

Ireland in the past was a land of heroes. Red Hugh, Owen Roe, O'Sullivan Beare, not to mention the legendary Cuchulain, were no mean heroes. Let us then, by all means praise our true heroes of the past, who lived and died nobly for Ireland, and let us forego this cheap claptrap about certain moonlighting activities.

I could quote incidents of the Land War that would surely bring a blush of shame to the faces of every honest man and woman in Munster. Let us then refrain from fulsome praises of those who participated in the campaign—there were a tremendous amount of mean Land Leaguers: generations of oppression had made them so—and let us in all humility and sincerity pray for the souls of the many men of that time who broke all laws, human and Divine.

This curious state of mind that is greedy for praise for the alleged patriotic deeds of the past is symptomatic of many things. First it is a sign that our people, still in a primitive state, have a warlike outlook, while Europe is doing its best to give its people a pacifist atmosphere: that we lack the heroic virtues almost entirely, that in spite of the fact that our old nation was once famous for sanctity, we have gone back towards primitive paganism, and that, moreover, we are far removed from that state of Christian perfection which, as professed lovers of a gentle and forgiving Saviour, we, as Catholic children of the ages, ought to have reached long ago.

CHAPTER IX.

THE IRISH REVOLUTION.

IN this attempt at a popular history of East Kerry we now come to the most important event that occurred in our county since the Repeal of the Union and the Rebellion of 1798—the Irish Revolution of 1916-1921. Of all the great happenings during the last hundred years, Emancipation and the agitation for the repeal of the Union, the Tithe War and the Disestablishment of the Protestant Church, the Young Ireland and Fenian movements, and the Land War of the eighteen eighties—the Irish Revolution of 1916-1921 must be given the place of honour in the front rank of events; for it won for us what O'Connell and Parnell failed to achieve—legislative and economic independence. Partition, the one great blot, of course, detracts from its importance, politically; but as this unnatural arrangement is due in the main more to religious bigotry than to racial antagonism, it cannot last, and long before the present century has passed, Ireland one and indivisible, will emerge a free and independent nation. Christian charity and not hatred, good government and not guns, will bring us union with our fellow-countrymen of the North, unless the "accursed bombast of patriotism" prevents its consummation.

When the Sinn Féin movement was begun, Arthur Griffith was the first man in these later generations to see that, no matter how brilliant the performances of



SEAN O'C. RIADA
Sinn Féin Organiser

the Irish Parliamentary Party were—and Balfour, one of our ablest enemies, said it was the most brilliant Parliamentary Party in Europe—they were in the later stages only giving an exhibition of Gaelic fireworks in the British House of Commons that would never succeed in winning real legislative independence. A truncated, limited, hobbled, Home Rule—yes, but the real thing—never.

Like one crying in the wilderness, Griffith preached "ourselves alone"—let us rely on our own actions at home in Ireland; let us shake the dust of the British House of Commons from our feet: let us build our own institutions, ignore the conqueror's chains, return to our own native culture, and so become in soul, in spirit, and in fact, the owners of our own country and masters of our own destiny.

But Griffith was as one born out of due time; a prophet of self-achievement, self-restraint, self-resource, and self-reliance. For many a weary year and lonely decade he had no honour in his own country. We, old people, who saw and heard Parnell and Davitt, and who went through the Land War of the eighteenthies, put our trust in their successors, Redmond and Dillon, and entirely ignored the true teacher, Griffith, whose teaching, ultimately, put an end to the rule of the Englishman in Ireland for ever. It is good for us, old Parnellites and Redmondites, to confess our sins openly, and to admit our lack of vision when a true prophet in Erin arose; for it was Griffith's Sinn Féin principles that led to the revolutionary action that, in the years between 1916 and 1921, lifted our country out of centuries of bondage.

If Griffith was the evangelist of the Irish Revolution,

it was Padraig Pearse and his gallant comrades of 1916 that set free the soul of Ireland by the sacrifice of their blood.

"Nineteen-sixteen" in the eyes of the world, and in the minds of a large majority of the Irish people of the time was a great madness, but a madness that at once changed the whole political situation; it turned the thoughts of the Gael from futile parliamentarianism to the preparation for armed insurrection.

The savage butchery of the Englishman, Maxwell, converted the people of Ireland, overnight, as it were, from constitutional agitation to armed rebellion. If the blood of martyrs is the seed of the Church, the blood of true patriots is the seed of Irish freedom. Where Pearse, Clarke, McDonagh, McDermott, MacBride, Connolly, Kent, Plunkett, and their comrades planted this freedom in 1916, Michael Collins, Cathal Brugha, and their companions reaped the harvest in 1921.

In 1916 hardly 20 per cent. of the people were for war with England; in 1919 the position was reversed—80 per cent. of the people were in full accord with the aims of the Irish Republican Army. The principles of Sinn Féin had won through.

To come back to East Kerry: Batt O'Connor, T.D., the right hand man of Michael Collins in Dublin, when he was sent down to his native village of Brosna in 1916, found only two good men on whom he could rely, and, outside the Volunteers, the same might be said of many other places in Kerry. There were scores of sworn-in Volunteers ready to shoulder the gun in the chief towns of the county, but the general mass of the people were hostile. Many persons, who

were in 1916 entirely opposed to the Revolutionary movement fostered by the Irish Republican Brotherhood, afterwards became stout supporters of the Irish Republican Army in 1919.

One of our most distinguished East Kerry men, Mr. Batt O'Connor, in his book, *With Michael Collins*, writes (p. 48): "Nearly all the people in the village were hostile. They spoke bitterly of the leaders in Dublin, as rebels and pro-Germans, and said they were ruining the country."

It was the same in nearly every other part of East Kerry. With the exception of the Sinn Féiners and Volunteers, the great bulk of the people in town and country were hostile to the insurrectionary rising of 1916. Now we know that the general mass of the people were wrong and that the comparatively small number of Sinn Féiners and Volunteers were right.

To sum up in a few words: If Sinn Féin and the I.R.B. were the grandparents, Dan O'Mahony was the father and Sean O'C. Riada was the mother of nationalism in East Kerry for the last twenty-five years.

For the benefit of future ages it is only right and just to place on record the names of those pioneers of the movement who founded the first Sinn Féin Club in East Kerry. Early in the present century Sean O'C. Riada, Dan O'Mahony and James E. O'Connor organised this club, with the latter, a true Gael, as chairman; Dan as treasurer, and Sean O as secretary. So many professors of the sartorial art were members of this first Sinn Féin association that the people called it, contemptuously, "The Tailors' Club."

The members of this pioneer Sinn Féin Club of

Castleisland were looked on by the people of the town and country as amiable fanatics, or lunatics, when they were not being denounced as disturbers of the Irish Nationalist peace. They were placarded with many names; foolish idealists, rainbow-chasers, fad-dists, and general nuisances. Despite this hostility and contempt, they fought the good fight in their own humble way, and they did their best to spread the light of Griffith's gospel of "ourselves alone," here in our native heath, to free Ireland from English rule, English ideas, and from the English language.

In this they were ably seconded by the Gaelic League. James E. O'Connor, their chairman, really lost his life by his regular attendance at the Gaelic classes during the severe winter weather. These pioneer Sinn Feiners and Gaelic Leaguers were the leaven that leavened the whole mass, but it took many years of self-sacrificing labour to do so. They had to fight against local opposition when they began to ventilate their revolutionary ideas in public.

Sean O'C. Riada set himself to study the Irish language and succeeded so well that he became a fluent speaker in Irish; he became the speaker of the new movement. Like Dan O'Mahony and the others, his earnestness in the cause and his patent sincerity won the applause of even his political opponents.

Sean O was the heart and soul of all the demonstrations and displays that were got up in Castleisland for the purpose of advancing the national cause. The great demonstration and procession to Dysart on an anniversary of the execution of Allen, Larkin, and O'Brien was an inspiring spectacle—Sean himself delivering the oration in praise of the martyrs.

Sean O'C. Riada was elected a member of the Tralee Rural Council as a representative from Castleisland.

At first the Sinn Feiners, when they entered the Rural and County Councils, rooted out a lot of corruption from these public institutions; but later on, when pure idealism had spent its reforming force, these public boards became as bad as before in nepotism, graft, billet-making, and contract-jobbing. This corruption was very rank at one time. On one of my many visits home from Australia, I heard so much about it—for example, it was stated on good authority that a doctor, twenty-five years ago "sunk" three years' salary on his "election"—so much of this was proved to me, that I wrote an article in the Press denouncing this horrid traffic. The Bishop of Kerry, the late Dr. Mangan, wrote to me congratulating me on my article, and he asked me to send him an extra copy of the issue.

But to come back to Sinn Fein; Arthur Griffith thought so much of Sean O'C. Riada that he offered him a good position in Dublin; but Sean's disinterestedness was such that he refused. He thought if he accepted a position in Dublin that the usual envious criticism would be made. "Ah," the scandal mongers would say, "we told you so; Sean was all the time after a billet." Had he gone to Dublin his talents and his national spirit would have carried him far, and, perhaps, to-day he would be reckoned among the leaders of 1916.

Later on, he went to America, where he has always done good work for Ireland among his fellow-countrymen in the United States.

This original Sinn Fein Club was the seed bed from

which the Irish Volunteers of 1913-19 grew. It inspired all that followed in the Irish Revolution of 1916-1921. First the seed planted by the Sinn Féin Club, then the young and vigorous plant of 1916, and later on the forest of armed men in the successful war of 1920-21. Then our Kerry men, with their brothers throughout Ireland, fought the murderous Black and Tans in the guerrilla war which drove out the English garrison from the twenty-six counties for ever. Good sense, good government, and good citizenship will soon, please God, bring in the other six counties that are lost awhile, but not for ever.

In 1913 Sir Edward Carson's action in arming the North to resist Home Rule was the immediate cause of establishing the Irish Volunteers. Tom Clarke and Sean MacDermott organised a big meeting in the Rotunda, Dublin, where 6,000 young men turned up to be enrolled. As Batt O'Connor, T.D., in his book, *With Michael Collins*, says, "All the young men were eager to be enrolled in the new Volunteer Army, which was recruited, ostensibly, in support of the Home Rule Act, but to the men of the I.R.B. (of which Mr. O'Connor was a leading member) was to be the means by which young Irishmen could be drilled and disciplined for the carrying out of the Fenian policy," and Mr. O'Connor adds: "Young men everywhere hurried to be enrolled into the ranks, and were drilled by ex-soldiers who had seen service in the British Army."

When this Volunteer movement was sweeping the country, Redmond intervened and split the movement into two—one party, Redmond's National Volunteers for backing up England in the Great War, and the

other, the Irish Volunteers, for taking advantage of the war to fight England. At the time many Irishmen could not see any great advantage for Ireland by exchanging a British Lord Lieutenant for a German Governor-General—the latter not at all an unlikely contingency if the Kaiser became the dominant Lord of Europe. Again, many old nationalists could not sympathise with the then Sinn Féin cry of "Up the Kaiser." Emperor William's real sentiments towards Ireland forty years ago were known to be hostile to Irish aspirations. At the time of the Parnell divorce the Kaiser wrote to his "dear grandmamma," Queen Victoria, who was always a vindictive and bigoted opponent of Home Rule for Ireland.

"Dear Willy," the old anti-Irish Queen used to call him. This "dear Willy" grandson wrote to grandma Victoria about the defeat of the Irish and the downfall of Parnell: "Dear Grandma," writes Willy, "The sudden fall of Parnell and the exposure of Gladstone are such a piece of good fortune as seldom falls to statesmen, and right glad am I for Lord Salisbury and you"—Salisbury who compared the Irish to the Hottentots of South Africa!

In the splitting of the Volunteers, Redmond was wrong, as we know now; but he thought that backing up England in the Great War was the surest way of winning legislative independence for all Ireland. He backed the wrong horse. His kow-towing to England, his generous gesture in 1914, with only a prospective Home Rule "after the war was over," was a foolish and costly bargain for Ireland. Had he said: "A Parliament for all Ireland in Dublin, full legislative independence—now at once—or no help from Ireland,"

we would be enjoying what has been so dearly bought for us by the blood and misery of succeeding years.

Redmond's long period of co-operation with the English Liberals took all the ginger out of his nationality, and in the last stages of his political decadence he was only a simulacrum of his former self. Morning teas with Lloyd George weakened his punch and took the sting and grit out of his resolution. The followers of the Irish Parliamentary Party no doubt loved Ireland as dearly as the Sinn Feiners, but, perhaps, not as bravely or as wisely.

In East Kerry six companies of the Irish Volunteers—the real ones who meant business—were formed into the No. 2 East Kerry Battalion under the command of Mr. Daniel O'Mahony, who spent his early manhood exploring little known lands and shooting big game in tropical Africa. In the chapter on distinguished East Kerry men I shall give some interesting details of his life in the African Bush.

Commandant O'Mahony had six Lieutenants (popularly called Captains) under him, each commanding their respective units in Castleisland, Scartaglin, Cordal, Currans, Furies, and Rathmore—namely, Timothy O'Connor (Thade Matt), Bryan Cormac O'Connor, T. J. O'Connor, Ulick O'Sullivan, P. O'Riordan, and Dan Dennehy. At that time Killarney (Michl. Spillane) and Kenmare (J. Rice) were also attached to East Kerry No. 2. Commandant O'Mahony later, in 1917, organised another company at Lyracrompane under the captaincy of John Florence O'Mahony. Later a Brigade was organised for South Kerry, with Michael Spillane as Commandant. Mr. D. Griffin was the Brigade Secretary for No. 2. From 1917 to 1921, Leo



COMMANDANT DONAL O MAHONEY
I.R.A. Organiser and African Big Game Hunter

O'Leary was a dispatch rider to the No. 2 Kerry Brigade, and he was also Captain of Fianna Eireann.

As everyone knows, it had been arranged that Volunteer "manoeuvres" were to be held at Easter Week, 1916, which were to synchronize with the arrival of the *And* containing munitions of war from Germany; these were to be landed at Fenit, near Tralee. Under cover of these manoeuvres a general rising or rebellion was to take place, but nearly at the last moment Eoin McNeill, who was Chief of Staff, issued an order cancelling the manoeuvres for Easter Monday. Pearse and Connolly, however, decided to carry out the original plan. Because of this cancellation, the Rising was almost a purely Dublin attempt. At only a few places throughout Ireland actual warfare occurred. Swords, Co. Dublin, was occupied by Volunteers under the leadership of Dr. Hayes and Tom Ashe, the latter by far the most unselfish, finest, and best of all the Kerry men that took part in the Revolution.

At Ashbourne, in Meath, a party of 50 police were defeated, with ten killed and fourteen wounded; and in Wexford the Volunteers held Enniscorthy until the leaders of the Dublin Rebellion surrendered.

It was all over in a week—a mad enterprise if you will, but a magnificent gesture that five years later led to a great achievement—an international Treaty between England and Ireland—but this achievement, unfortunately and tragically, divided the country into two hostile camps, and was followed by a disastrous Civil War.

CHAPTER X.

AN ABORTIVE REBELLION.

It is an interesting exercise of the imagination to picture to oneself what might have happened in Kerry if Sir Roger Casement's enterprise in a German submarine, in 1916, was a complete success; that is if everything was carried out according to plan. The miscarriage of this part of the Revolutionary war was principally due to the fact that there was no proper co-ordination between Sir Roger and the Captain of the munition ship the *Aud*, on the one hand, and the Dublin leaders and the Kerry Volunteers on the other. Such a co-ordination of plans or co-operation with local forces was attempted by Sir Roger Casement through the American Clan-na-Gael Republican Organisation; but according to Sir Roger's comrade, Monteith, this liaison failed to deliver the all-important message in time. The Kerry Volunteers were almost entirely in the dark.

The tragedy in the Laune at Killorglin was one of the broken links in the chain of events that led to the capture of Sir Roger Casement, to the sinking of the *Aud*, and to the inactivity of the Kerry Volunteers.

But let us suppose that Sir Roger had succeeded in meeting the leaders in Kerry (Austin Stack, Dan O'Mahony, and the others), let us assume that the munition ship, the *Aud*, had landed its rifles, machine guns, and ammunition safely, and that a fleet of

lorries was ready to carry them to all parts of the county. Let us further suppose that the Rebellion was general throughout all Ireland—then one thing would be pretty certain—the whole of the County Kerry, South Limerick and North Cork, would be in the possession of the Volunteers within a fortnight. British rule in these places would be at an end. Any Redcoat alive would be a prisoner of war. But, for how long? How long would the tricolour be flying from the flag poles in all South Munster towns and villages? It would depend on the fortunes of war in all the European fronts. With no great disaster threatening in France, a small part of Kitchener's army would probably be diverted to Ireland to take part in a ruthless and savage campaign; and, if the German Fleet had not won some great victory in the North Sea, a small British fleet would be sent to our coast. The small patrol boats were already in our bays and estuaries.

Now, imagine the destruction that one modern cruiser would do in a few days, in Tralee Bay, in Dingle Bay, and in the mouth of the Shannon. Tralee, Dingle, Caherciveen, Killorglin and Listowel would be successively reduced to ruins, and a few bombing aeroplanes would wipe out Killarney and Castleisland. Kenmare would be an easy prey.

It will do us no harm to ponder on the might-have-been as well as on the actual events. If everything was carried out in Kerry according to plan we would have to suffer all the pangs of a relentless, ruthless war, and a murderous devastation.

A strict embargo would be established around our shores; no supplies of any kind could come in, and

no person, letter or telegram could go out of Ireland. The world would only get the news the English liked to tell about the war in Ireland. We should be entirely dependent on our own resources—on our own production of food, clothing, fodder, munitions of war—everything. Could we win through? It would be a miracle if we did; and, win or lose, our country would be a desert when it was all over.

This is a very pessimistic picture of the probable course of events if Sir Roger Casement's plan for Co. Kerry had been entirely successful. The only thing that could save us from destruction in these circumstances would have been either a great German victory, the collapse, and defeat of the Allies, or the intervention of the United States on our side. Students of the political events of the time can use their own judgment in coming to a decision on these probable eventualities. Was Nationalist Ireland then armed for even the semblance of war? No, nor even fully equipped for a guerrilla war: and it must be kept in mind that 80 per cent. of the people at that time were entirely against war with England. So, when all is said and done, we ought to thank God Who saved us from the dreadful state of real, bloody, and long-sustained war.

Ireland suffered in 1920—1921 from the plunderings and killings of murderous gangs of Black and Tans, and our people suffered great miseries, but it escaped from the devastation of real war, and the usual concomitants of war—massacre of large bodies of unarmed citizens, famine, and pestilence. At most, the Irish death roll in 1916 was well under a hundred; but alas, the flower of Gaeldom was included in that

hundred, and in 1921-22 the number of killed was under a thousand. So, measured by the loss of life, and the destruction of property, our revolutionary war compared with real war was as a common cold is to double pneumonia. I say this with the examples of France, Belgium, Poland, and Serbia, in my mind—our war was only a skirmish compared to their devastating battles.

This picture of the realities of a big war which shows our recent little wars in true perspective is pure heresy and almost blasphemy to scoundrels who are constantly fighting immense battles with their mouths. These extra special patriotic orators know everything that can be known about the parish pump, but nothing at all about the rest of the world. They delight in exaggeration and superlatives: in picturesque accounts of their own noble deeds, even when they only dug trenches under compulsion. We must as a nation be always on our guard against these wordy dullamoos who delight in bombastic adulation of so-called great deeds, and who with shameful and unmanly raimies, boast about twopenny halfpenny battles. The men who took a prominent part in all the fighting and who endured great hardships never boast; they leave that to the camp followers who saw the fighting—at a distance.

There is one thing of note to the credit of East Kerry men in 1916—they saved the life of Sir Roger Casement's comrade, Monteith. The R.I.C. and its detectives were on his trail when Mr. Arthur Lenihan had him in hiding at Woodville House. When the scent became too hot, Mr. Lenihan took him by night over the tClucan Mountain to John Thade Lenihan's

cottage in Glounanentha, which, by the way, is only a few hundred yards from the site of the hut in the Glen where the last Earl of Desmond was slain. After living with "Sean Heig Og" (as he was called) for some time, Rev. Father F. Harrington and Arthur Lenihan arranged a plan for his escape to Limerick. The Rev. Father Morgan O'Flaherty—fine scholar and true patriot—took Monteith in a motor car to friends across the border in Limerick. Only for these four—the big farmer, the peasant, and the two priests—Monteith would have suffered the same fate as that true noble man and real martyr of Erin, Roger Casement.

Years after Mr. Monteith, who escaped to America, sent a letter to Sean Heig Og, which contained a cheque; but poor Sean had passed away before the grateful letter of thanks for his hospitality arrived from the United States. It speaks well for Mr. Monteith's kindness of heart. God rest the soul of poor Sean, he did his humble part well, and may God bless the man who came under water and over water to help our country in its fight for freedom.

Here it is only right to give Mr. Monteith's own account of the cause of the failure of the plan of campaign in Kerry for 1916:—

"For the proposed Rising of Easter Week, 1916, the German Government had been asked by the Irish Republican Brotherhood to help by sending a shipload of munitions, field guns, together with officers and gun crews, machine guns, rifles, etc. It was requested that the boat be accompanied by a submarine escort and that she should reach Fenit, Co. Kerry, on Easter Sunday night. . . . When the news of the proposed

Rising reached Berlin, Sir Roger was seriously ill in a sanatorium at Munich. For some hours Casement and I discussed plans. We committed to paper a proposal which I submitted to the (German) Admiralty, that since the proposed programme for the landing of the arms had not been elaborated beyond that they should have the ship at Fenit on Easter Sunday night, we recommend that Sir Roger and a Sergeant of the Brigade should be sent to Ireland at once with a detailed plan for the landing of the arms."

And he adds: "Neither our friends in New York nor the heads of the I.R.B. had information of the coming of Casement."

In this last sentence we have the root of the matter—the real cause of the failure of the expedition. It seems that John Devoy in New York had been informed of the alteration of the probable date, that he dispatched a messenger from the United States to Ireland, but the messenger did not arrive in time.

"Casement thought," says Monteith, "that the Rising would be doomed to failure if it were made contingent upon German assistance, and such was the message I carried to Austin Stack."

And he continues: "We had no definite news from Ireland as to the progress of the revolutionary movement, and were not in a position to pass judgment upon the probable success or failure of a rising at that or any future time."

Man proposes and God disposes. It may be that in this affair Providence, that rules over men and events, directly intervened; for, as I have pointed out before, had Sir Roger's plans been carried out in their entirety, the whole of South Munster would have suffered a

disaster comparable only with the Elizabethan devastation of the latter part of the sixteenth century. One thing is fairly certain: many thousands of men and women now alive would be in their graves fourteen years ago. We should have thousands of martyrs to mourn and a country that would take generations to restore. God has preserved Ireland for His Own wise purposes, the chief of which is to be again as it was over a thousand years ago—a missionary nation to all the countries of the world.

One of the most resounding blows shrewdly given to British rule in Ireland by Sinn Fein was the establishment of Republican Arbitration Courts. This wise move completely nonplussed the English garrison in Ireland; and it was here, more than in any great military efforts of the I.R.A. that East Kerry helped the general assault on British institutions.

The people at once rallied to the Republican call, and the English courts were deserted. The solicitors, after a little very natural hesitation, offered their allegiance to the new authority, and the younger men among them joined up and took the ordinary risks of the I.R.A. soldiers in the campaign against the Tans. One of our local solicitors, Mr. O'Neill, joined the I.R.A., which already had three professional men in its ranks—all three chemists.

At once the British sensed the danger to the regime of John Bull and Co., and every effort, subtle and murderous, was made to prevent these Republican Courts from functioning. A man found with a summons as a witness from a Republican Court was murdered by the Tans in the parish of Killeentierna,

and no means were too base to terrify the people from using these courts.

It will then be readily realised that to have the honour of a seat in these Irish Courts was to become a marked man by the English authorities. Yet some of our leading citizens were courageous enough to accept these perilous positions. The men of East Kerry who presided at these courts deserve to have a special roll of honour of their own. In Castleisland, our venerable parish priest, Archdeacon Casey, V.F., was chairman, and he was ably supported on the bench by two of our principal business men, Jeremiah Nolan, William H. O'Connor, and a Cordal farmer, T. J. O'Connor.

Without the backing of the I.R.A. these Republican Courts would not be such a success. They were a temporary expedient that admirably filled the breach or interregnum between the discarded British Courts and the establishment of the Free State courts in 1923.

It was the general mass of the people that stood up to the terrorism of the Black and Tans. It was the resilience or toughness of the ordinary man and woman in resisting this furious and scoundrelly assault of the Tans and Auxiliaries—the dregs of the British Army—that won the fight.

As I have said, our soldiers performed no great military feats in East Kerry, won no spectacular battles, gained no great victories; but their illusive tactics and their daring raids and ambushes, backed by the resolution and inborn grit of the people, carried the day.

The I.R.A. were so few in numbers and so poorly armed that the great battles, defeats and victories,

of a real war could not be fought, lost, and won. The only commonsense strategy, under the circumstances, was a guerrilla war; and this, under the inspiration and guidance of Michael Collins, was entirely successful.

When the first Dáil gave authority to form a native Government, having the usual public departments, the English garrison in Ireland, and many of the native Irish, looked on the whole proceeding as a good joke; but he who laughs last laughs best. It was these despised Departments and Arbitration Courts that undermined British institutions in Ireland, and that, with the help of the rifles of the I.R.A., led to their entire overthrow and abolition under the Treaty.

In addition to the District Arbitration Courts for East Kerry, one for every parish—there was also a higher court, which, like the lower court, sat at appointed places in secret, to hear appeals. This Court was composed of four members:—Rev. Patrick Brennan, then a Catholic Curate of Castleisland, now P.P. of Castlemaine; Commandant Daniel O'Mahony, Ulick O'Sullivan, and Michael Spillane.

All these courts gave entire satisfaction to the people; but, of course, defeated litigants were, naturally, not pleased. A saint down from heaven could not please everyone, more especially the litigious Irishman. Mr. Tim Reidy, of Castleisland, was the officer of the courts, appointed by the I.R.A. to see to the order of the proceedings, to summon witnesses, and, if necessary, to carry out their decisions. He had the rank and duty in these courts equivalent to those of the old-time District Inspector of the R.I.C.

This Black and Tan cum Auxiliary fight was a life and death struggle with our ancient enemy, England,

and our people as a whole came out of it with clean hands, rather distracted minds over the "great split," and empty pockets.

We were, practically, for all purposes of a real war, an unarmed people. The Flying Columns of the I.R.A. alone were armed, and even these, compared with their enemies only partially. A good deal depended on Irish wits versus John Bull's stupidity. Look how England let loose the murder gangs in Ireland and so gained for us the goodwill of the whole world! Could stupidity further go, when, with the people of the civilized world looking on, they tortured Terence MacSwiney to death, and murdered his predecessor in the Mayoralty of the City of Cork! And, as a crowning act of infamy, burned down that old Irish city. We must always remember that it was not by arms alone we defeated England; it was the public opinion of the world, particularly that of our second homeland, the United States, that won for us a seat among the nations.

To sum up the whole history of the Revolution, it might be put briefly thus—The men who were born at the time of stress, during the Land War of the eighteenth-eighties, made the hopeless but magnificent gesture of 1916—it was in their blood, from their revolutionary fathers; and the men of 1916 inspired the men of 1920—1921, who in their turn threw off the English yoke for ever. Therefore, keeping in mind what the public opinion of the United States did for us—it broke the power of England to do us further evil—let us not boast of our military prowess, but thank the Lord, who brought us out of the land of bondage, and for our good fortune in holding what we have won without

any great sacrifice of blood and treasure. Would to heaven that the men of the I.R.A. who fought a good fight for the Motherland in 1920-21 were once more united into a solid national party, under the banner of Dark Rosaleen; but, alas, the passions engendered, the quarrels, and political feuds of 1922-23 keep them apart, much to the sorrow, disedification, and great loss of the men and women of Erin.

However hopeless the union of the two great political parties looks at present, Time, the great healer, will, with God's help, lessen these animosities. We must never forget that we, as individuals, want forgiveness for our trespasses, and never to lose sight of the fact that we are a Catholic people, an old God-fearing nation, bound by the closest ties to the teachings of Our Redeemer. To Christ the King our first loyalty is due, and His charity must guide all our actions. This means that we must put obedience to His laws before loyalty to any political party. Men of goodwill in all parties will, charitably, help to soften these one-time desperate asperities in public affairs between old comrades; and the Day of United Action will be brought nearer if we all take as our motto the words of Holy Writ:—"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things will be added unto you."

CHAPTER XI.

DISTINGUISHED EAST KERRY MEN.

IN ancient times the most famous son of Ciarraighe Luachra was St. Mochuda who was born in East Kerry in the century after the death of St. Patrick. This greatest of East Kerry men, the founder of the great monastery of Lismore had all the learning of the schools, and his great sanctity has shed a lustre over the Vale of Slieve Luachra that remains with us for all time.

Since the time of the great Mochuda, Ciarraighe Luachra has not produced a more illustrious son; but it has produced distinguished sons in every age—fighters like MacBeatha, the heroic son of O'Connor Kerry, who died with his paramount lord, Brian Boru, at the Battle of Clontarf, and many in the arts of peace, like the great engineer, Bartholomew Kelliher, who found a way for the American railways through the Rocky Mountains. In our own time we have many sons of Ciarraighe Luachra who took a leading part in the fight against the English invader.

In modern times then Ciarraighe Luachra can boast of poets like O'Sullivan and the two O'Rahilleys, scholars, engineers, and fighting men, who have distinguished themselves in every sphere of life. Bartholomew Kelliher, who was born and bred in the Valley of the Maine, was the greatest engineer of his time. He it was who built some of the trans-continental

railways of North America. At a congress of railway engineers, held in London some years ago, he was proclaimed by his professional confreres as the most successful railway engineer of that time.

In scholarship, too, the sons of Ciarraighe Luachra take a leading place. In 1896 two young priests were taking their final course of theology in the Jesuit College of Drungen in Belgium—one a native of Rathmore, the Rev. Father Dinneen, M.A., who afterwards became the most expert Gaelic scholar of the day, and the other, Rev. Father Donovan, M.A., a native of Castleisland, who is acknowledged to be one of the most expert of Greek scholars. As I have given, elsewhere, a detailed account of the other distinguished East Kerry men, whose photographs appear in this book, I shall here give a brief account of the work of these two eminent scholars. In the native tongue and in the classical languages both have won renown, and in so doing they have brought the honours of the schools to their native place—Ciarraighe Luachra.

To enumerate the works of Dr. Dinneen would take several pages: as a lexicographer and author of books printed in the old tongue he is in a class by himself—incomparable with any other. His career is coincident or contemporaneous with the movement for the revival of the Irish language. His working life has been devoted to that revival, and he has laid foundation stones for the entire structure of modern Irish. Without the tools which Dr. Dinneen has fashioned the progress of the movement which every year has been gaining momentum, would be impossible. His long years of patient labour in the National Library is now bearing abundantly. The harvest is ripe for every

Gael to reap and garner, and so use that the next generation will be Irish-speaking and Irish-thinking. When that time comes there will be great honour for this distinguished son of Ciarraighe Luachra, Patrick Dinneen, M.A., D.Litt., and his memory will be dear to the minds and hearts of his fellow-countrymen.

It is unnecessary to dwell at length in these pages on the career of a man who has done for the language what the great West Kerry man, O'Connell, did for religious and political liberty. When the tale is told of the resurrection of the Irish language, Dr. Dinneen's name will stand with that of Douglas Hyde among the men who did the spadework of the Gaelic League. In the case of Dr. Dinneen, it should not be forgotten that long before the famous scholar directed all his energies exclusively to Celtic studies, he was master of the Greek and Roman classics—with which he was so familiar that, given a line, let us say in Juvenal or Horace, or Homer, he would recite the remainder of the poem or book from memory! There are people still alive who can bear witness to Dr. Dinneen's marvellous familiarity with the ancient classics, so many of which he had memorised. In all-round scholarship he stands beside the greatest men of our race.

Thus, he approached his great work of lexicography with a thorough grounding in the morphology and literary graces of the classics. It is men of such preliminary genuine literary training who alone are fit to build up a lost national language. The deplorable situation of our mother tongue at the beginning of this century called loudly for such a man as Dr. Dinneen, and this famous son of Ciarraighe Luachra stepped into the breach.

Father Donovan is far less known than Dr. Dinneen, as his life work was cast in a foreign country. Hence in Ireland he is only known among the readers of the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, to which he has been a contributor since 1921. He first made his debut as an expert in classics in the pages of the old *Classical Review*, 1892—1925, when professor at Stonyhurst, and as a student at St. Beunos, North Wales. Through these scholarly contributions, already before his ordination, Father Donovan was known in English University circles. Some of these contributions attracted the attention of the famous Brugmann, who quotes them with respect in his world-famous *Complete Grammar of the Greek Language*.

With a view to accuracy of detail and to avoid all possible bias, I deem it wise to content myself with quoting the statements of others about this learned son of Ciarraighe Luachra. The following is taken from the *Catholic Who's Who*:—

"Donovan, Father John, S.J., M.A.—born in Castleisland, Co. Kerry, 1861; educated at Turnhout, Manresa (London), Stonyhurst; entered the Society of Jesus, 1879; priest, 1895; has made a special study of Christian literature of the first three centuries. Author of *A Digest of Greek Idioms—Theory of Greek Prose Composition—The Logia In Ancient and Recent Literature*; translations from the German, *Christian Monism and Bases of Belief*, and from the Latin, *Directory of the Spiritual Exercises*."

On Professor Donovan's book, *The Logia*, I give here an extract from a recent American publication, *St. Luke, Greek Physician and Historian*, by Prof. John A. Scott, of the Northwestern University,

U.S.A. Writing on the authenticity of the Gospels he says:—"He (Fr. Donovan) shows beyond the possibility of a doubt that the Matthew we now have is none other than the Matthew that has existed from the beginning; that all the arguments about the sources and speeches collected by Matthew are due to the failure to comprehend and properly translate a simple sentence in Papias. He has so demolished the whole theory of the slow and gradual development of Matthew that there is not enough left of the theory to give it a burial." This is great praise from a non-Catholic professor of Greek; and the same Homeric scholar, Prof. A. Scott, writing to Prof. Kleist of the St. Louis University, writes, in answer to a presentation of Fr. Donovan's books:—"That book and the two articles by Prof. Donovan are simply astounding. He is a man of very great ability and huge learning. That book on Greek Prose is entirely over the heads of anything done in this country and very little advanced prose is taught, as far as I know. The work of collecting examples and then arranging them, which he undertook, simply baffles the imagination. There must be a field for such work in Europe that we do not have here, and it certainly would make a student appreciate style as few courses of study could." Fr. Donovan's work on the *Logia* earned high praise from many leading University scholars in England and Ireland—among the latter was Dr. Purser of Trinity College, Dublin.

These two famous scholars are at least worthy of honourable mention as hailing from East Kerry; Dr. Dinneen, M.A., Ireland's greatest Gaelic scholar, and Fr. Donovan, M.A., the well-known Greek expert.

Both received their training in their early years from the Jesuits, Dr. Dinneen at Mungret, and Fr. Donovan at Turnhout in Belgium. Both had distinguished university careers: Dr. Dinneen winning his way with honours through the various tests culminating in the M.A. at the old Royal University of Ireland, while Fr. Donovan passed likewise with honours through all the old London University examinations, coming out second on the list at the M.A. in 1888. Fr. Donovan specialised in Classics, whereas Dr. Dinneen had a brilliant career in the Classics and Mathematics before he became the leader of Gaelic studies in Ireland.

In the chapters on the Land War and those on the Irish Revolution, I give a detailed account of East Kerry's fighting men:—Captain Robert Finn of the land campaign of the eighties, Sean O'Reidy, the organiser of the Sinn Fein movement in Ciarraighe Luachra, and Commandant Donal O'Mahony, the organiser and head of the Irish Revolution in East Kerry.

These eight East Kerryites will stand as worthy representatives of the men of Ciarraighe Luachra in modern times. As men of thought and action they compare favourably with the great men that the old Kingdom of Kerry has produced in every age.

In the latter part of the eighteen-seventies, three young fellows were class-mates in the highest forms of the old Castleisland National School. These three school-boys were the Rev. John Donovan, Bartholomew Kelliher, and Donal O'Mahony. The first became a master of the classics, the second, the great railway engineer, and the third, a great African explorer and one of the most famous of lion-hunters.

I have already written of the men of learning: now I propose to write of the men of action that Ciarraighe Luachra is proud to claim as sons.

Bartholomew Kelliher, perhaps the greatest railway engineer of North America, was born at Cordal, near Castleisland about seventy-two years ago. At first he attended the Kilmurry National School, under the management of the late Mr. Peter Kearney, and afterwards he attended the Castleisland National school, under Mr. D. Desmond.

Young Bartholomew was apprenticed to an engineering firm first in Tralee and then in Dublin. After qualifying there, he went to the United States, where he at once jumped into the front rank of railway engineers.

After some years of hard work, pioneering, he became one of America's leading engineers. He helped to build both the Union Pacific and Northern Pacific trans-continental railways; but his greatest achievement has been the building of the Grand Trunk Pacific of Canada.

To quote a Canadian paper: "Mechanical and engineering experts will remember what a sensation was created in their circles when it became known what Kelliher was about to undertake in the construction of the Grand Trunk Pacific. To build a great railroad through the Rocky Mountains with only a four-tenths of one per cent. grade was considered not only impossible, but the idea itself was looked upon as the mad vision of an idealist. Yet, Kelliher accomplished this, and as a result the Grand Trunk Pacific has the lowest mountain grade in the world. At Kicking Horse

Pass, the Grand Trunk reaches an altitude of 3,712 feet.

"It was the ambition of the two first Presidents of the line to build a road-bed from coast to coast, over which trains would travel as smoothly as rubber-tyred automobiles on a graded road." This idealistic dream, of "making a feathered bed out of hard steel," was actually laughed at by men who had already become famous as railroad builders. But B. B. Kelliher accomplished the feat. At a recent meeting of great railroad builders in London, it was conceded that for workmanship, smoothness, and grade, the Grand Trunk Pacific was the greatest road in the world; and B. B. Kelliher, being the man behind the gun, it follows that he was acclaimed as the greatest railroad engineer of our time, and his work is known all over the world—in North and South America, and in India—everywhere in fact but in his own native land.

Now, readers will understand what great honour this Castleisland man has won for Kerry and for Ireland. He is an outstanding son of the Old Kingdom, and if ever Kerry shall institute a roll of honour the name of B. B. Kelliher ought to take the leading place among men of action.

He was married, secondly, to the sister of Sir James O'Connor, and his only living relative now in Castleisland is Mrs. James Pembroke.

The works of two scions of the late O'Connor Kerry family, Batt O'Connor, T.D., Dublin, and John C. O'Connor, journalist, New York, are well known to all. As men of thought and action they compare favourably with the great men that the old Kingdom of Kerry produced in every age.

Batt O'Connor was born in Brosna on the 4th July, 1870. At the age of twenty-three he went to America. One peculiarly Irish trait in his character is typical of most of the exiles from Erin—while abroad he wrote regularly to his mother in Brosna every month. Our Irish boys and girls always remember the old folks at home. Five years later he came home an expert brick-layer—so expert in fact that laying bricks at the fast rate he was accustomed to in America, in a building at Cobh, his brother tradesmen went on strike until this innovator was dismissed!

He saved his earnings and became a builder and contractor in Dublin, where he flourished. In 1916 he was high in the councils of the Irish Republican Brotherhood. During the Black and Tan war his expert knowledge as a builder stood him in good stead. Collins was his ideal hero whom he strove with all his might to protect from the sleuth-hounds of Dublin Castle. O'Connor built secret passages and hidden rooms in several Dublin houses, to protect the man he revered and loved, and also as safe hiding places for the money and documents of the I.R.A. A man of great geniality and integrity: no one but a fool or a fanatic can point out a flaw in his character.

The journalistic career of John C. O'Connor, of New York, has helped to uphold the reputation of our countrymen for perseverance, versatility, and talent. Hitherto, in the homeland, the opportunity was lacking to show that the native Gael was as gifted as the men of Irish blood who distinguished themselves in every land but their own. Mr. O'Connor's children—all with an university education and placed in responsible positions, show what the Irish race can do when the

opportunity is given to compete on equal terms with any race on earth. One son is a Master of Arts, and Assistant Principal in a great college, another in the publishing trade, and a third still at his university. Three of his daughters are highly classed teachers in the schools. At the southern end of Slieve Luachra another talented East Kerry man was born—near Rathmore—Dr. P. Sheehan, of Carlisle, who has four sons and two daughters—all doctors, and a fifth son is a literary man of great promise. Irish men and women and their children throughout the world are showing in every walk of life that the Gaelic race have a culture in their blood that is the equal of any other culture in the world. The above brief sketches of a few of our distinguished East Kerry men will prove this statement.

About forty years ago Mr. Dan O'Mahony left his native Kerry for South Africa; and, after working his way through Cape Colony and the Transvaal to Rhodesia, the fascination of the "big game" so attracted him that he became a mighty hunter. With his rifle he has, perhaps, brought down more lions than any other hunter of big game. Mr. Grogan tells us in the second chapter of his book that Mr. Sharp induced Mr. Dan O'Mahony to join the expedition, and adds: "Mr. O'Mahony, who had only just recovered from a severe shaking administered by a cow elephant, had hunted the Pungwe district for nine years, and is well known as the greatest lion slayer of that part of Africa. No one knows the hunting grounds between the Busi and the Zambesi as he does, and as he is a keen observer, as well as a first-class shikari, I only hope that he will yield to my persuasions, and some day give us a book of his experiences."

After coming home to Ireland in 1912, Mr. O'Mahony became one of the leaders of the Sinn Féin movement in Kerry, and was the chief delegate from the south at all the conventions held in Dublin. He afterwards organised the local Volunteers and became their first Commandant. A fine man physically, and a man of great will-power, had the "rising" eventuated in Kerry in 1916, the British would find in him their most formidable opponent. At the time of the disastrous split in 1921, Mr. O'Mahony retired from active politics, and he is now trading as a merchant in his native town of Castleisland.

As a boy I knew Mr. O'Mahony going to the national school in Castleisland in the eighteen-seventies. He was of a modest and retiring disposition. No one of us then could discern the mighty hunter in our quiet and gentle schoolmate. The slayer of many lions and elephants and the organiser of rebellion is in character just the same to-day—far more retiring and unassuming than some of our great men who won the war with their mouths.

There are many tribes in South-East Africa that only know two words of English, and, curiously enough, these two words are Irish—"Dan Mahony."

Dr. Harrington, a native of Castleisland, was the father of the famous Sir John Harrington. That famous soldier and diplomat, who distinguished himself in Abyssinia, was reared by his Uncle John in the capital of East Kerry.

There are hundreds of East Kerry men who have distinguished themselves in various activities and in every land; but here, obviously, I can only find room for the few whose works are comparatively well known

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at home and abroad. The spiritual children of St. Mochuda of Ciarraighe Luachra will always be to the fore when mother Erin calls for men and women to help her. Every man, woman, and child in Kerry can always help her by being honest, hard-working members of her family—honourable citizens noted for civic pride and the fearless performance of civic duties; and, above all, men and women, whether in peace time or in war time, true to the Faith of our fathers.

PART II.

REMINISCENCES

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CHAPTER I.

YOUTHFUL MEMORIES.

It is an old and true saying that of the total sum of human life the years of our youth make the most lasting impression on our minds and character. How fondly we remember the companions of our youth, how lovingly we recall the incidents—be they ever so trivial—of our schooldays! The mind being young and active, the tablets of the memory remain everlasting. Far more important events may take place in middle life, but most of them are fading or forgotten. This explains the often imperative, but always persistent call of the homeland to the far-away exile. It is present, even if dormant, in every over-seas Irish mind.

I remember being at an Irish dance in Los Angeles, and when the boys and girls found out that I was on my way home to Kerry they all accompanied me back to Ireland in thought. Although all were earning big money, every one of them expressed a wish that they were going too. This love of native land is entwined with our dearest and fondest memories. It is a part of our nature. At home most of our people lie at rest in their quiet graves—there, too, we would like to lie until the last day.

Being born in April, 1863, the first things that I clearly remember are the putting up of the telegraph poles in Castleisland, the Kerry election when Blennerhassett beat Dease, and Home Rule won its first victory; and the Franco-German war of 1870. The day Dease went round the town canvassing for the anti-Home Rule or landlord vote he was "chrusted" with mud and turnips, and narrowly escaped a ducking on the old broken bridge across the Maine in Barrack Lane. Archdeacon O'Connell, the then parish priest, came in for a share of the mud; and hence the tragedy to us boys in the convent school that day. We could hear the far-off tumult, but we did not know what happened until "Mrs. Bawn" very obligingly fainted opposite the key-hole of the gallery room where we were at lessons. Our teacher went out to see the cause of the swoon, and we boys fought for a turn at the key-hole in order to see her doing it. Seamas O'Keeffe and I, being leaders or bosses of the boys' department, had a monopoly of the key-hole, and the others had to be content with our joint effort at describing what we saw and heard. When she came to, she told the nuns that the Archdeacon was "kilt," and that this was the end of the world! That was bad news for little lads of seven.

Of the many men who were trading in the Main Street of Castleisland when I was a boy only one remains—Mr. Jerh. Nolan. He has given two sons to the service of the Church and two to Ireland. I remember him when he was in his prime, a fine block of a man, with perhaps the finest brains in the whole town. We youngsters used to think it an intellectual treat to listen to his conversation with other merchants.

European politics, economics—everything in this old world of ours—was discussed at length and with great fluency. He could go back to the days when Castleisland was a village—just a long straggling street of houses most of them thatched. I remember myself when the police barracks was at Jerh. Andy's corner, and thatched houses where Mr. Terence Brosnan's big shop and the Chute Hall Hotel now stand. The houses at Castle View near the doctor's, all Castle Street on the Killarney Road, and half of Church Street were non-existent. Where the Imperial Hotel, the Club, and a row of fine cottages now stand was a field—Redmond's field; and on the opposite side of the old New Line—now Church Street, I often saw a field of barley growing on the site of the new convent schools. As for the Pound Lane it was in the seventies full up to the brim and overflowed at the back in the form of a square called the Cooleen. Thank goodness most of the dwellers in Pound Lane have long ago gone out into the comfortable labourers' cottages now lining the roads in all directions.

Perhaps there are only a few score of "Islanders" now living who remember a curious little house on the brow of the Main Street, near where the fine building housing the Provincial Bank stands. It had a small garden in front enclosed by a small wall painted blue or green. In my memory it remains as a small mud wall washed with green or blue paint. In the old days—in the dark and fearful days of '98, this house was occupied by the assistant parish priest—Canon Sugrue. He was one time a Chaplain in the French army, and was a highly cultured gentleman. The "Yeos" (Yeomen) were then in the ascendent, and Catholics

dare not call their souls their own. A group of drunken Yeomen once insulted the Canon, and he laid a complaint before the officers. The officers, finding that the Canon served as a chaplain in the European wars, made amends for the boorishness of their men, and afterwards often invited him to their table.

I often heard my father speak of another parish priest of the early days—a Father Fitzgerald—he lived at Caher-an-ard, where, in Land League days, Parson Heffernan, "the Home Rule parson" lived. It was an appropriate place of residence for Father Fitzgerald; for the remains of an old church are still in evidence near by; it overlooked the old Geraldine Castle on the bank across the river. In those early days the only bridge across the Maine was the one in Barrack Lane, beyond which the roads to Cork and Killarney branched off.

I must tell one good story about the priest's man. Archdeacon O'Connell's man was called "Jack the Priest" by town and country. Between himself and the parish clerk, Eugene MacGillycuddy, there used to be a great rivalry for the honour of driving the Archdeacon to the Conferences in Tralee. On one of these occasions, Jack was very much disappointed, for Eugene got the outing to Tralee, and Jack got the job of pulling geosadans. "Johnny," said the Archdeacon "go up to the field and pull all the geosadans. Then, when you have them all pulled, tackle the gennett and draw them out on the old bohereen." Our brave Jack instead of carrying out the orders went down to a publichouse near the forge, and played cards and drank porter all day until late in the afternoon, when someone, looking back the Tralee road,

shouted—"Here comes the Archdeacon!" Now it was about 100 to 1 that Jack was due for the order of the sack. Seemingly nothing could save him; for there was not a single geosadan pulled. However, his wit saved him. He went out the back way, ran down the Barrack Lane, jumped in over the old bridge, and was pulling geosadans for dear life when the Archdeacon's side-car pulled up at the church gate. He remarked to Eugene: "I will walk over and see what Johnny has done!" Jack had a furtive eye for the Archdeacon as he walked across the field, and, pretending not to see him walked towards the mill-stream, and with great "muster" threw a big armful of geosadans into the rapid current!

"Hem-m," said the Archdeacon loudly. "Johnny, what are you doing?" "Well, Archdeacon," said the imperturbable Jack, "the gennett wanted a rest after yesterday, and I thought it better to throw them into the mill-stream." The Archdeacon looked down the stream, and, of course, saw many geosadans sailing away towards Slieve Mis. He said, turning away home, well satisfied: "A very good idea, Johnny—a very good idea!"

The old castle of the Desmonds that gives Castle-island its name was of deep interest to us when we were boys. In histories we only get a glimpse here and there of this Geraldine fortress. In the early days the whole of what was called the Castle field was covered with its ruins. From the wall of the old "Yeo" barracks—a part of it later to be made into a police barrack—to Mauragosheen, the ruins lay everywhere between the Killarney road and the river. The river was turned into the moat which surrounded

the castle. Hence the name, "Castle-Island." In pre-Elizabethan days it was the principal stronghold of the Geraldines in East Kerry. Its highest tower dominated the valley of the Maine, and a watchman on the look-out could see over Caher-an-ard, which is not really very high, and Cahereens. He had also a clear view to the north and east, for the present town was then represented by some rows of thatched cottages occupied by the camp followers. To the south the warder could follow the Cork road as far as Gortglas, and the Killarney road to Lisheenbawn. The Tralee road could be read like an open book as far as Knockeen; Kilmurry and Ballymacadam, held by Fitzgeralds, were in close touch with the Island fortress.

The old fortress weathered many attacks from all sides. It has been taken and re-taken many times—now under a British Constable; again restored to the Geraldine. But when the curse o' Cromwell fell upon it, it gave up the ghost and became a ruin. From near Camp he pelted it with his big guns, and left it a mass of tumbled stone and mortar.

When we were boys we were delighted when we first succeeded in climbing to the top of the big castle. Grass had grown on the top for many centuries when I first tremblingly stood on it. It was an easy matter to climb to the first storey when one's hands and feet were big enough to reach from hole to hole. The second storey was a stiffer climb, but the top, where one had to monkey up a narrow wall, was a proposition for well-tried nerves. Originally the railway station at Castleisland was on the Killarney road side of the track; not on the Tralee road side as at present. Well,

one fine summer day Sergeant Lenihan of the R.I.C., while standing on the railway platform saw a sight on the top of the old castle that made him shiver.

And this is what he saw: He saw Donogha O'Keeffe, the leader of "Our Gang," holding a little boy by the hasp of the breeches and by the nape of the neck, and he was swinging him to and fro over the edge of the top of the castle! I was that unfortunate little boy, and you may be sure I was grateful to the Sergeant when he sent up a roar: "Keeffe, you devil!"

The sergeant had his belt off, and was as nearly as red in the face as I was myself when my heart began to beat once more. Donogha did it only for fun, of course; so, to outwit the sergeant, he said we would go down "Skeleton's Hole," and leave the enraged limb of the law cool his heels at the main entrance. Skeleton's Hole was really a second "stairs" to the first storey of the castle; but there was no stairs and no outlet below. It was an awful place, like being at the bottom of a deep well. Then when the sergeant got tired of watching we ascended, came through the Hole, and went down to *terra firma* once more.

I suppose the old castle has overlooked the valley of the Maine for about 700 years. It has seen the growth of the town to which it has given its name from a little row of thatched houses, with the manure heaps in front, to its present substantial status as a good sized trading centre. It has witnessed the fall of the once mighty house of Desmond. It witnessed the arrival of the Elizabethan Undertakers, the six English adventurers who, paying a head rent to Lord Herbert, divided the fair lands of East Kerry among them, and saw the dispersion of the Anglo-Gaelic

owners. It saw the destruction of the local Catholic Church—one of the gables now used as a belfry is still standing. It listened, now in vain, to hear the bells of Kilmurry and Kilbanivan calling the faithful to prayer. The call to Holy Mass was no longer heard at Kilsarcon, and the little churches at Dysart and Kileentierna were no more used as a house of God for prayer and Sacrifice. It saw the guns of Cromwell at Camp and the arrival of his soldiers to take over the lands of the slaughtered Gaels—just as the Gael had driven out the Tuatha Dedannan and the Firbolg. And, alas, the old tower has lived to see the returning Gael make a cabbage garden of its enclosures and manure of its mortar.

The Franco-Prussian war I remember because at the convent school we had a mimic warfare of our own. The French were so popular in Ireland then that at first it was impossible to get a German side: we all wanted to be French. Seamas O'Keeffe and I were joint leaders; that is, in single combat we were able to beat any of the others, but were in doubt about the issue of a fight between ourselves; so, like the Roman Emperors of old, we occupied the throne jointly and severally. Seeing that there would be no fight if there were to be no Germans, I volunteered to be Von Moltke, while Seamas posed as McMahon. Geosadans were the weapons. My army, after the first fierce onslaught, went over in battalions to the popular side and left me almost alone to defend the Fatherland. The blows rained fast and furious on my devoted head, and the thick stems being now rather penetrating, I lost my temper and banged Dan Sheehy's head against the sharp window sill. I had before that put

Dan's head through a pane of glass, for which his parents and mine had to pay, but now, when his mother, who was living alongside the school, saw the big cut in poor Dan's head, she came into the school in a fury, and would have taken summary vengeance on me only that I kept well behind the Reverend Mother.

The school Black Hole reminds me of another youthful escapade. My co-ruler of the boys' school, Seamas O'Keeffe, one day committed some offence. Rev. Mother ordered him an hour's detention after school in the big press in the hall-way. There was plenty air and plenty cracks through which Seamas viewed the outside world. Loyally I waited the hour at the big gate for my companion. He came out smiling, with a big slice of currant cake. He gave me half the cake, and there and then I promised him faithfully that next day I would commit a bigger offence, take my share of the lock-up, and come out to share with Seamas a bigger slice of cake. I forget what I did, but I did it in such an unmistakable manner that I got four cuts of the cane, straight off the reel, and not even a bun into the bargain. . . .

At one time during past geological ages our Kerry mountains were on the same scale of magnitude as the present Alps. Take away the carboniferous limestone that partly fills our Valley of the Maine and restore the thousands of feet of Old Red sandstone that have been denuded, worn away, from the Slieve Luachra range, from the Reeks and Slieve Mis by the action of rain, frost, and snow, during the aeons of geological times, and you will have a picture in your mind's eye of ancient Kerry, with its mountains,

avalanches, and glaciers, that would compare with those of present-day Switzerland. Crinna Hill, Croaghane, Mount Eagle, the Mount of Scartaglen, and the Slieve Luachra range near Rathmore, were in those far-off days great mountain monarchs. While Carn-Tuathail and Beaurtegaum looked down on our valley from Himalayan altitudes.

In one of these geological ages our beautiful county was covered with a mantle of glacial ice, 2,500 feet thick, which filled our valleys, scooped out our lakes, and rounded our hills. Then, instead of the fox and the wolf, and the great elk, Munster saw the polar bear, the woolly elephant, and the hairy rhinoceros. Kerry was at one time a part of the continent of Europe: at another time only the Reeks stood above the level of the sea—in fact Ireland was at another time an archipelago, and at still another era, all but the Reeks was submerged for more than a thousand feet. So this Old Kingdom of ours saw many ups and downs, many strange land and sea animals, and experienced many extremes of climate.

At another epoch when we were joined to the continent and had temporarily lost our individuality, the Kerry mountains formed the spearhead that withstood the assaults of the Atlantic. It formed the north-eastern shore of a big Gulf of Biscay.

We see then that from the first day when God said: "Let there be light," until the present day, change has been constant. The world was old even when the foundations of the Reeks were laid. What changes in climate and structure have our valley seen since! And changes will go on until the last day when the sun himself shall stand still—cold and dark in death.

What ephemera we are, and how we fight and bite at each other as if we owned the round globe! But we are more than quarrelling mortals: we are made in the likeness of God. We are only temporary occupants of the green hills of Erin. Our eternal home, if we stand the test of human life and are not found wanting, is beyond the sun with Our Father in heaven. . . .

There is a splendid view of the whole valley of the Maine from the top of Mount Eagle or Croaghane. One sees the winding river—a bending silver streak—from its sources at Foyle Pilip and Tubber Mieng to its entrance into Dingle Bay. Tralee Bay and Dingle Bay, divided by Slieve Mis, are in the background. The Blue Reeks, standing out majestically, guard the south-west, while the grey old town, with the church and convent plainly distinguishable, occupy the middle distance. Although I am here writing this 12,000 miles away in the Queensland bush, I can in my mind's eye see every acre of that glorious valley. There is no place on this wide earth so dear to me as that valley surrounded by its cultivated hills. I love every foot of it and the sky over it, and I hope that my grave may be with my own people in the very middle of it, not far from the resting places of my youthful playmates—near Seamas, and Pat, and David.

Let us in imagination go back to geological times before even the Firbolg roamed its forests—before the Cromwellian and Norman, even before the time of the Gaelic race whose blood flows in our veins—before Adam.

At one time the sea even covered Croaghane and Mount Eagle, but oftener its waves lapped the foot-

hills of Barnageha, Glounsharoun, Crinna, Glenlaurin, Ardnagrah, and the hills between Scartaglen and Cordal. Dingle Bay and Tralee Bay joined to form a deep gulf, leaving Slieve Mis and Mount Brandon as an island. At one epoch Great Britain and Ireland were joined on to the continent; at another they were depressed and separated. So our lovely valley was often at the bottom of the sea. In those far away eras were deposited our present limestone districts—*islands* in a prehistoric Gulf of Kerry. The surrounding bogs after an age of upheaval formed in shallow lakes and marshes. Castleisland is built on one of these limestone islands. The neighbouring islets, then peeping above the sea, were Close and Caherrog, Cahereens and Caher-an-ard. The whole valley was gradually rising, and when the sea finally departed, shallow lakes and swamps, in which the sphagnum flourished, filled the hollows between these islets and the foothills. Bogs were thus born, and the waters from the surrounding hills formed into rivulets cutting their channels through the now green valley. One day a Firbolg hunter resting on Croaghane saw the valley smiling before him; and behold! it was the fairest in all that southern land.

CHAPTER II.

RECOLLECTIONS.

WHEN the big bell of the parish church, three times every day, booms out the Angelus, is it not good to see the present occupants of the Valley of the Maine turn their thoughts to God, bow their heads and recite the Angelic Salutation—Hail Mary, full of Grace! Is it not, next to Holy Mass, one of the finest offices of our holy religion—to commemorate the Incarnation of Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ? Long may that holy custom remain in our Valley. Long may its people remain true and faithful servants of Our Lord and His Blessed Mother! When the bell booms at morn, noon, and night, then turn towards the true heart of town and country, where Our Lord reigns in the Tabernacle. Bow the head and put away all work while our salutations ascend before the Throne of the Most High. When the bell rings out let the school children acclaim aloud the glories of the Queen of Heaven, let the plough rest, stop the saw and the hammer, put the spade and hoe aside. Let the housewife put away the needle, the mower his scythe, the harvester his hayfork. Bend the head and join in the great hymn of prayer and praise of the Almighty. Leave a petition at His feet that we the sons and daughters of the Gael, who in the olden days travelled across so many lands to make his home in Erin, who sent back sons to convert a heathen continent to Christ,

and who are still, for His dear sake, sending sons and daughters to all the ends of the earth that His Gospel may be preached to every one—leave a petition vibrating in your heart asking the Creator of the Universe to keep our people of the Green Isle faithful and strong and true to Christ and His Church. Think of the long procession of people, tribes, and races, that follow one another in temporary possession of our valley. They are gone: we are on the same road, and unborn generations will surely live and go down to the same grave in Mother Earth. And for what end? Reason and revelation tell us for a great and glorious end—to know and serve God for ever in the many mansions He has prepared for us—at least for those who serve Him faithfully here below. The sun and moon, and even the stars, will pass away, but the soul of a just man shall live for ever.

Let us come back to worldly affairs. The road to heaven leads one's thoughts back to the roads about my native town. The Killarney road is the high toned one, or the road patronised by the gentry. For instance, bank clerks, they say, favour this road for a walk; but in my time it was the favourite road for a walk for everybody, because the breeze from the bays was fresher there, and then there is the attraction of the old Castle, and the river, and above all, it leads to the well-known Powell's Road which is lined with "seats beneath the shade for talking age and whispering lovers made." Around Powell's Road! How often does the exile far away take an imaginary walk along its shady avenues! For the townsman confined indoors by his business, a walk round Powell's Road is just the refresher he wants, as it is just the length

the doctor ordered—three miles. The Tralee road, although the busiest for traffic, is not favoured for a walk, as it stands high and shelterless as far as Knockeen. It is not too long ago since one could see turf cutting going on close by it. But if one has a cycle and goes beyond Knockeen, then one is in the land of shady bowers, orchards, and small woods, as far as the Mile Height. With what awe did I first see the spire of St. John's Church from the Tralee road near Ballyseedy!

There, I thought, around that spire is the big city of Tralee! We had to turn back from Ballyseedy, and so I did not see it for years after. But the view of the big spire remained in my mind's eye and the imaginary big city that lay around it. Since we were boys I have been in many cities of the world—in all the capital cities of Australia—in London, Dublin, Liverpool, Paris, New York, and San Francisco; but believe me when I say, I would rather a holiday in the capital of the old Kingdom than in any of these great centres of commerce. The other roads leading from Castleisland all make for the hills. In the olden days they went straight at them, as witness the Maam, Glounsharoon and Coolhill road. The old Cork road did the same, but the New Line road begins to wind when it meets Caol-na-sprida and the latter winds round to Gloun-an-affrin, where Mass used to be celebrated in the penal days for the hardy tribes of Scartaglen. When cycling round East Kerry one trip of mine was a special favourite—out *via* Cordal and Glountane, and through Mullen and Scart home to the Island. The wildness of the country and its utter loneliness beyond Glountane had a special attraction;

but one should go from the Glen near where the Blackwater rises to Knock-na-bowl to feel the wilderness in all its beauty—the call of the wild.

The thought of the Killarney road brings in its train many memories—some tragic and a few comic incidents of the days gone by. On that road during the Land War, Arthur Herbert was shot. The Herberts are in evidence in the history of Kerry since the time when Elizabeth granted the lands of East Kerry to Sir William Herbert, the father-in-law of Lord Herbert of Cherbury. He rented his domain to six English planters who came over after the wars that made Munster a desert. A cousin of Lord Herbert's first settled at Kilcow. The last of the Currens, Herberts—Arthur, an old bachelor, lived at Kileentierna House, now the parochial residence for the parish of Kileentierna. Mr. Arthur Herbert was a small landlord, or middleman, and the agent for the landlord of a few townlands. He was a typical John Bull, dogged and determined in upholding what he considered his rights; but, when not acting as a defender of landlordism, genial and sometimes generous to his neighbours. He had no Tory swank in his manner; and, during the latter stages of the fight for the land I think his income must have been considerably diminished. I often saw him putting a sheep's head, liver, lights, and all into the well of his sidecar, for his dogs, perhaps. Although we had the notorious R. magistrates taking the chair in the local bench at the fortnightly Petty Sessions, Mr. A. E. Herbert might be called the principal executive officer of that bench for many years. He was very severe on anyone who

broke what, after all, in those days was the landlord's Law.

I remember one cold day walking with my schoolmate, Pat O'Keeffe, far into the country to witness an eviction. I am not sure of the place, but I think it was on the road between Glountane and Knocknabowl. A big body of well-armed R.I.C. were there to see Mr. A. Herbert evict a poor cottier and his helpless family out of their little home. It was to us lads an immensely sad spectacle. No Christian—no follower of our Lord, can advocate the use of the gun for murder. The gun never yet settled any dispute justly and never will. But in truth fallen man is far removed from Christian perfection. Passion loosens our hold on the spiritual, and the untamed animal appears. The work of the evictor that day on the bleak mountain road sealed the fate of Arthur Herbert. One fine evening the old town was startled by the news that Mr. Herbert was shot dead not far from Lisheenbawn cross. A good many of us flocked out the Killarney road to visit the scene of the tragedy.

We were just in time to see the police putting the corpse in a common car to be conveyed to his home at Kileentierna. God forgive us, many of us had no sympathy with the poor man whose soul was sent so unexpectedly before its Maker. It seems that Head Constable Huggins walked out the road with Mr. Herbert as far as Dysart, and that shortly after parting with him he was shot a little to the town side of the cross. No one was hanged for the murder. Inspector Davis of the R.I.C., in his evidence before the judge at Tralee, when Mr. Herbert's relatives were claiming a big sum for compensation, stated, as a proof that

public opinion in Castleisland condoned the murder, that a rhyme was made in the local national school about the event, which showed that even the children were sympathisers with the outrage. I was one of the "poets" who composed the doggerel, I am sorry to say; for now I can see that it was shockingly sinful for children to gloat over a murder no matter what was the motive that urged the crime. Landlordism is dead and buried long ago; are the small farmers much better off to-day? Are not the new rates nearly as heavy a burthen as the old rent? They made a precarious living then; the security for a living for themselves and their children is very little better now.

If you suppress an evil by evil means then two evils will grow where before there was only one.

Now we come to the famous Samuel Murray Hussey. I need not recall the many incidents that gather round that name—they are well known all over Kerry and the South of Ireland. I often saw him passing along the Tralee road with an armed policeman balancing him on the opposite side of the car, and four policemen with rifles at the ready on a sidecar behind him. Out of those deep-set eyes he looked at one like a hunted animal. Once he won a victory over the tenants in a North Kerry estate in the Dublin law courts, and his man in Castleisland, Tom Burke, of the Market House, had to do something to celebrate his master's victory. Small blame to the poor man, for his living depended on the good will of Hussey. Mr. Burke got a few Pound Roaders to make a small bonfire near the fountain—first filling them with porter. Not that Pound Roaders were less patriotic than any other class in the town, for a few soakers can be found in any street or

lane. Then we boys stood round the fire ready to kick it to smithereens, and when we got the wind of the word from Bill Quinlan of Farran to go it, we made short work of Sam's bonfire. That very night "Coroner" Mahony was christened. It happened this way. After kicking the bonfire round the street, an effigy of S. M. Hussey was made and a great crowd marched up and down the street singing patriotic songs. Then at the fountain an inquest was held on the famous land agent. Mr. Mahony, of Dysart, was appointed Coroner, a verdict of guilty of slaughtering the peasantry was brought in, and poor Sam's *alter ego* was consigned to the flames on the very site of the "victory" bonfire! Ever since Mr. Mahony has been known as "the Coroner."

During the stirring days of the Land War "our gang" formed itself into a fife and drum band. Mr. Pat O'Riordan, who had charge of the brass band, was also our instructor. In a fife and drum band the big drummer with his two kettle drummers is really the band. The piccolos and fifes are all very well in their way; but, as in the Orange North, it is the drummers that draw the crowds. At first our big drummer was Mr. Pat Nolan; but as Paddy only gave the drum a bang now and again with one hand, he was superseded by Jack Denihan. Jack soon became an adept at wielding two sticks in orthodox style; and, when we had three tunes learned, with what pride did we march up and down the main street! All eyes were centred on Jack; so if the fifes were a bit out of tune, it was not noticed in the commotion. When we all got nice round butter-dish caps, with a green

band round our noble brows, we were as proud as punch and became quite saucy to the big band fellows.

On fine Sunday afternoons in the summers of long ago the members of the Brass Band used to go over to the Caves at Tubber-Mieng and discourse sweet music for the big crowd that would follow them. And where could one find a finer amphitheatre than the big cave for such an entertainment? Like a big circus or the Coliseum in Rome, it is a huge circular hollow. It is terraced round with mossy seats, and the trees waving their branches overhead make a cool shade. The underground river rushes out from its cavern at the bottom for a short distance and again plunges beneath the rocks, to appear again in the form of a big spring a few hundred yards away. If Foyle Pilip is the father of the River Maine, Tubbermieng is the mother. And coming home again in the cool of the evening, where could you get a more wholesome drink of water than at Tubberamountee? Alas and alack! for those happy days of old they are gone into the womb of time, never to return!

Other Sunday evenings we would go up to Dicksgrove to the dance at the cross-roads. And Currans fair—a fair in the morning, a pattern in the afternoon! It was a yearly event that we all looked forward to. I often saw the side of the road between John Welsh's hotel and the school occupied by as many booths as you would see at a racecourse. I was there the day the Riot Act was read by Mr. Arthur Herbert and saw the baton charge near Welsh's hotel. One of "Our Gang," Jeremiah O'Leary, distinguished himself that day. A great mob of men were running like sheep before the batons, when Jer.

mounted the earthen fence and called on the crowd to stand. He gave them the length and breadth of his tongue, and pointed to heaps of metal lying on the side of the road. The crowd quickly took the hint, and the tables were turned on the peelers. Soon the batoners whom I saw a few minutes before laying out innocent old men, were flying down to the school, which was the headquarters of the Constabulary. When they returned with fixed bayonets we thought it about time to make home to the Island.

I have spoken in these random reminiscences about riots and raids and guns; but the older I get the more convinced I am that no man, no people, no nation, ever got a permanent good, that is peace and prosperity, by the gun. Forms of government may change, new systems may take the place of old, material prosperity may come and go, but none of these things really matters. The one thing worth striving for is the grace of God in our souls and the love of our neighbours in our hearts.

Whether it is that distance lends enchantment to the view, or that one is looking through the rose-tinted spectacles of youth, the ten years between 1860 and 1870 seems to me to have been the happiest for the people living in the Valley of Castleisland. It is true that people had to work hard then and to live the simple life, very economically; yet there brooded over men and things a calm peace that in many ways and in spite of many hardships was idyllic. The main food of the labourer and the farmers' sons was potatoes and skim milk, with the "Yellow-quate," as a change for the breakfast. A bacon and cabbage meal on Sundays; and tea only at stations, weddings, and

funerals. No finer men and women than those of 45 years ago stand in Ireland to-day. In feats of agility and strength, the men of those days would compare more than favourably with the men of the present day. The men were dressed in homespun freize dyed by old Mr. Williams, and the women in their cloaks and mantles were comfortably clad. There were no English or Parisian fashions then, and no cigarettes. And look at the merriment there was at fairs and patterns! The only people who drank more than was good for them in those days were the big farmers who had the limestone under their land. Although porter and whiskey were cheap, poor people could not afford to buy them. Another thing—and this will be put down to the idiosyncrasy of age—we used to get finer summers in the old times. Of course 1879 was a bad year, but take them as a whole, summers were summers in those days. What a big mob of merry boys used to be tumbling into Bill Burke's Pool in the fine summers of long ago! What games "Our Gang" had all over the town until the quarter bell! Our leader Donogha O'Keeffe was a real playboy at inventing new games. It was to lose the membership of "the gang" if you funked any dare-devil adventure in following the leader.

CHAPTER III.

OLD TIMES IN OILEAN CIARRAIGHE.

It is always a matter of great interest to the student of ancient times to listen to old people who can trace men and events back to the days of our great-grandfathers and beyond. Your genuine seanachie is like the poet, born, not made. This "tracing" of old families; this recalling of stirring events in the distant past seems to be characteristic of certain clans, as if they were the lineal descendants of the Bards of Erin, who were the poet-historians of the great chiefs of our race.

Recently I had the good fortune to enjoy long conversations with some of our Castleisland local historians—seanachies in the true Gaelic sense, who took a keen delight in retailing the oral tradition handed down to them, and in discussing the knowledge gained by their own historical reading. What one picks up in these talks about old times may not be unimpeachable history; but all the same it has a value for the future which makes it well worth recording.

Coming down to the last years of the eighteenth century we know that the then parish priest of Castleisland lived on holy ground, for he owned the Caherinard farm; and we may be sure that he, like the present owner, took good care of the remains of St. Finian's Church. He, too, was of the Geraldines—Rev. Maurice Fitzgerald, one of the grand old clerics

of the diocese. He at first celebrated Mass in an old thatched church, in old Chapel Lane—a part of which was still in use as a schoolroom by the Presentation Nuns sixty years ago.

It was Father Maurice Fitzgerald that built the old church with its big Rood facing the New Line. He, his successor, Father Darby O'Leary, and a curate, Father MacCarthy, who died in 1810, were buried in the old church, and when the present beautiful parish church was built in 1884, by Archdeacon O'Connell, the remains of the three priests were translated, and their monuments re-erected in the new church. During a later regime two of these monuments were depleted (I can find no other word but vandalism, and that would be none too strong) and partly covered over by the Stations of the Cross. I had to get a candle and place the light under the "Station" to get the epitaph from the copper plate over Father Maurice's grave: "In memory of the Reverend Maurice Fitzgerald who died in the 84th year of his age, and the 56th of his ministry. For 49 years he presided over the parish of Castleisland, edifying his people by the holiness and austerity of his life. He was a man of great and varied learning, and a zealous preacher of the Word of God. May he rest in peace." Here, then, lies the Grand Old Man of the Diocese of Kerry, with his monument depleted and his name hidden from the eyes of the congregations! He was born in 1746, was ordained in 1774, was made parish priest of Castleisland in 1781, and died full of years and honours in 1830. He was the spiritual ruler of Oilean Ciarraighe during all the White Boy troubles, and when the Rebellion took place in 1798. During the

reign of Terror in France the Catholic clergy were either executed or driven out of the country. Father Maurice had two of these refugee priests helping him in Castleisland, whether at the same time or successively, I do not know. Canon Sugrue was a Kerryman and Father Bartholomew Shine, O.P., was a native of Cork. The Canon was probably a relation of Bishop Sugrue's. Father Shine, O.P., was a great-uncle of Mrs. John O'Leary, of Castleisland, and a grand-uncle of the late Father Patrick Shine, parish priest of Fossa.

Of course, Castleisland was then only a village of thatched houses, with the manure heaps in front of the doors.

Father Maurice Fitzgerald lived at Caherinard, and a group of whitethorn trees are still standing, which he made into a rural bower, where he used to read and recite his office. In the summer time he had a magnificent view from the Priest's Tree, as it is called to the present day. The beautiful Valley of the Maine spread itself out before him, and the circle of enclosing hills round by Crinna, Foyle Pilip, and Croaghane; Slieve Mis, separating Dingle and Tralee Bays; and the Blue Reeks standing out so grandly in the south-west. Father Maurice, even in heaven, must often think of that glorious landscape that would delight the heart of any Kerryman.

There are many still living in Castleisland who remember some of Father Maurice Fitzgerald's pupils. For a time, like Archdeacon Irwin, in later years, he had a class in Latin at the Presbytery, Caherinard. Some of his pupils were the late Dr. Harold, Mr. Redmond Roche, the apothecary, who was familiarly

called "Dr. Mundy," and that fine old Irish Gentleman, Maurice S. Reidy, J.P.—the Baron, as he was called by all Castleislanders.

Finally, then, we can give the list of parish priests of Castleisland, from the year 1781 to the present day period, of 146 years: (1) Rev. Father Maurice Fitzgerald; (2) Very Rev. Archdeacon O'Leary (Father Darby); (3) Very Rev. Archdeacon O'Connell; (4) Very Rev. Archdeacon Irwin; (5) Rt. Rev. Monsignor O'Leary, and (6) our present venerable pastor, Very Rev. Archdeacon Casey.

Archdeacon Jeremiah O'Leary succeeded Father Maurice Fitzgerald. Because, I suppose, he was a curate in Castleisland for 17 years, before he became the P.P. he was known all through his 53 years of ministry in this parish as "Father Darby." Although he was the first Archdeacon the people very seldom gave him the new title—not through disrespect, but from love; for he had endeared himself to the people as Father Darby, long before he was raised to the archidiaconate. The combined reign of the two pastors was 85 years; and, if we add Father Darby's 17 years as curate, we get the remarkable total of 102 years. Archdeacon O'Connell, and the late Monsignor O'Leary, also, had comparatively long reigns. When the latter died, he and his four predecessors averaged over 29 years. Only for Archdeacon Irwin's short period as parish priest the average would be far more impressive. Compare these figures with the average number of years the Bishops of Kerry occupied the See, and you will at once see the big difference, or as an insurance agent would say, the superiority of Castleisland climate over that of Killarney.

A Mission was held in this parish by the Dominicans from Cork in 1838. When we were boys our elders in Castleisland reckoned their ages from the year of the "First Mission." Twenty-eight years later a Mission was held in the parish by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, according to one who attended it, Mr. P. O'Riordan. While one of the Missioners, Father Fox, was preaching one night on the "Last Judgment" a terrible panic occurred among the congregation. The old people used to give various reasons for the sudden scare, but the most probable one is that during the sermon some one must have dropped something on the floor, and struck a match to try to find it. Then a crazy, nervous person shouted "fire," and a dreadful panic took place.

Big Father Michael O'Sullivan, afterwards Archdeacon of Kenmare, then a curate in Castleisland, knowing that it was a false alarm of fire was doing his utmost to keep the people in the church. Mr. John Williams, a Protestant, a very powerful man, physically, and always a great friend of the priests, ran down to help when he heard the commotion. He was doing his best to relieve the jam at one of the doors—like pulling sardines out of a tin—when he suddenly received a few hard wallops on the back from a big stick wielded by Father Michael. Realising the situation he, of course, at once helped Father O'Sullivan to calm the people and keep them inside. The result of the whole panic was that one woman lost her life, and a good many were seriously injured. So this Mission became even more historical than the first.

When Archbishop O'Leary died Father Michael O'Sullivan was so popular in the parish, the people

wanted him to be made parish priest; and a few of them went so far as to nail the door against Archdeacon O'Connell, when he was appointed by the Bishop. Afterwards the people found that they were in every way blessed by having such a splendid spiritual guide as Archdeacon O'Connell proved himself to be. He was a man of great piety—learned, affable, gentlemanly, and a most wise councillor even in temporal affairs. He was the builder of our fine parish church; he also built the old Boys' National School, and during his time large additions were made to our convent schools. He often preached in Irish; and, although we did not understand much of the sermon, we really enjoyed the grand and fluent way that he rolled forth our ancient and harmonious native tongue. In politics he was Conservative, and during the Land War he used to denounce every form of outrage. He believed that no permanent good could come to the people through crime. He had, like Monsignor O'Leary, great influence with the landlords; and it must be admitted that he kept the roof over the heads of many a family that, but for him, would be on the side of the road.

Archdeacon O'Connell was followed by Archdeacon Irwin, who was in many ways a lovable pastor. He was very charitable and died poor—let this be his epitaph; for his parishioners up to the present have given him no other. His rule was comparatively short—only about nine years. He was a great Latin scholar, and he had not much "meas" on any one who was ignorant of that language. He was very blunt in his manner and in his speech. Once he told the people of Scartaglin, who were not noted for their classical culture, that he had more knowledge in his "loodeen"

than was contained in all their heads put together! This egotistical pose was his only failing—a failing that became a virtue in one so really pious, sincere, and simple in his manner of life. The late Monsignor O'Leary, who followed Archdeacon Irwin, was also a very holy priest and a most gentle pastor. His was another very long reign in Oilean Ciarraighe. He built the spire on our parish church; and also the handsome new convent school, facing the New Line, now called Church Street. Unfortunately, during the rule of the Monsignor many of the people of the parish were divided into two factions. It is a chapter in our history that we would like to forget, for in the clash of opposing interests religion suffered.

And the old-time curates of Oilean Ciarraighe! What a list of splendid men in the service of God! Big Father John O'Sullivan and little Father Power in the seventies; followed by Father Arthur Murphy, the well-beloved patriot priest of Kerry; Father H. O'Riordan and Father James Fitzgerald—a worthy pair—great preachers and earnest workers, in the Lord's Vineyard, followed by Father D. McGillicuddy. Father Carmody and Father McDonnell—all zealous, hard-working priests and great organisers. Then we come to Father M. Keane and Father F. Harrington, the wonder workers, "the Hounds of Heaven," reconciling sinners to God, and shepherding the little children's souls, doing three men's work during the Monsignor's long years of invalidism (90 when he died), and beloved by almost everyone in the three parishes. We take off our hats and give them the royal salute as they pass in our memories through Oilean Ciarraighe!

But writing so much of holy men makes our present chapter a very serious affair; so to relieve the situation with a bit of humour, I must finish by telling my readers a true story—an amusing story of Big Father John O'Sullivan, in which I, myself, appear as a very disreputable character.

One fine autumn morning, in the early seventies, Father John rode down the street on his big bay after coming from the "Stations." I was then a lad of eight years, and was on that very day "scheming" from school. I was enjoying myself at the New Line bridge, while all decent boys and girls were improving their minds in the Boys' National and Convent Schools close by the old church. When I saw Father John turning the corner of the New Line, I made a rapid retreat behind the hedge in the old bohoreen bounding the Nuns' field. Father John was always smiling—geniality and good humour oozing out of him, as it were, on all sides, to every one he met, an exact copy of a later much loved curate—Father Charles O'Sullivan. As he passed our house my mother, putting her head out of the window, said: "Father John, Thady is scheming from school again to-day!"

Father John smiled broader than ever, but at once began devising a cruel and heartless scheme to capture the culprit. He went to the boys' school, then in the chapel yard, and brought out my cousin, Mike Donovan, and put him and Archdeacon O'Connell's nephew, Mundy Roche, kicking a big bladder in the Archdeacon's lawn. The fun of the two boys was—according to plan—so boisterous that "the schamer" in the bohoreen heard them at it; and he, very warily, advanced as far as the bridge. The two boys invited

him to join them; but the young scamp whose teeth, or rather toes, were watering for a kick, asked them "where was Father John?"

"Oh," said my cousin Mike—not lying outright—"do you think I'd be here if he was here?" I leave to caustics to determine how much of that statement was true or false—even when used for a good purpose. But it was good enough for me. I climbed in over the bridge, through the hedge, and soon was in full cry after the bladder. The surprisingly kind lads left me most of the kicking. Then, in their enthusiasm to make me entirely happy, they put me in charge of the goal—just three paces from the Archdeacon's door! Just as I gave the "bag" a tremendous kick I was lifted into the air by my two ears and found myself struggling in the arms of Big Father John! My face was very dirty and the crying made it worse. Smiling broadly all the way, he marched me, God rest his soul, by the hand, and led me, through the rooms of the convent school, to show them all a naughty, dirty boy, who would not go to school for his mother! The humiliation was complete. To be led through the boys' school was nothing, but to be made an exhibition of for a hundred grinning girls was a terrible degradation.

I got two "slaps" from the Rev. Mother, and was put into the "Black Hole" under the stairs as a further punishment. Compared with a master's slap, experienced later on, the nun's slap was a pure joke. Strange to say, I enjoyed my imprisonment in the "Black Hole." My great mate, Seamas O'Keeffe, came to the key-hole at play-time, to rub in my affliction and tell me what the girls said about my dirty face! Seamas

becoming too sarcastic about my personal appearance, I at once put a stop to his flow of abuse, and he went away with his hand over his right eye, and vigorously using the wristband of his sleeve.

Then Seamas had a brilliant inspiration. One by one he brought all the boys from the playground to look through the key-hole "at Thady"; and every one of them went away sadder and wiser boys with a hand over an eye, but warned by Seamas "to tell no man what befell them." The vulgar little boy inside, who was being made a peep-show of by Seamas, spit into every eye that came to the key-hole! Seamas was shaking with laughter until all were what he called, "vaccinated." One cannot blame the naughty boy inside, for he had gone through an ordeal that would break up the manners of the best conducted boy.

Exhibition through the girls' school, slaps, and black hole, were all child's play to what I got from my father's cat-o'-nine-tails that night before going to bed.

CHAPTER IV.

PASTORS AND PEOPLE.

I CAN well remember that fine old Irish sagart, the Rev. Patrick Moriarty, parish priest of Brosna, in the seventies of the last century. As well as being a good priest he was also a fine type of a true Irish gentleman—one of the old school of clerics who combined simplicity of life with great learning. To the younger priests of the time he appeared to be old-fashioned and lacking in the learning of the schools; but to their great surprise they found on closer examination that his knowledge of theology and canon law was far more extensive and profound than theirs. Young fledging clerics who, with the polish of the schools still thick upon them, often fell a prey to Father Pat's apparent simplicity. That pride of newly acquired learning that goes before a fall got no quarter from the humble but learned pastor.

The great priest-author, the late Canon Sheehan, must, sometime in his life, have met Father Pat Moriarty in the flesh; for in one of the Canon's books there is a clerical character that is practically an exact portrait of our one-time Brosna parish priest—an humble, saintly, scholarly priest, who delighted to take a fall out of the pride of newly ordained levites that had a habit of spreading their youthful wings when crowing about their up-to-date learning.

A predecessor of Father Pat's, the Rev. Father Toohil, was P.P. of Brosna in the time of the famine.

His successor was the Rev. Father Naughton, a wise and good priest, who died greatly respected and regretted by his flock. The Rev. Father Nelligan succeeded Father Moriarty, he was a zealous pastor, a scholar, and a true friend of his people. Of the late Canon Arthur Murphy I have written elsewhere.

But the predecessor of all these priests in the parish of Brosna, whose memory is still green in the hearts of the faithful people of East Kerry, was the Very Reverend Bartholomew Shine, O.P., who was the first Dominican to appear in Kerry after the Order was driven out of Ireland to the continent by the penal laws. Father Batt, over a hundred years ago, was an assistant priest to the grand old sagart of the Diocese of Kerry—Father Maurice Fitzgerald, the then parish priest of Castleisland.

In the middle of the eighteenth century, when the penal laws were in full blast, the whole of East Kerry, from Brosna to Gneeveguilla, including the present three parishes of Castleisland, Scartaglin and Cordal, and parts of Currow and Clogher, were under the sole administration of one Catholic priest, who, strange to say, was under the protection of the Protestant Chute family of Chutehall, where the hunted sagart found a refuge with that fine old Protestant family. It must always be remembered that it was only the lowest class of Protestants—bigoted fanatics—that pursued the souls of our people with the soup pot. The great majority of Protestants lived amongst our fathers in the greatest amity and affectionate friendship. They stood stoutly by their own Faith, but they never

showed any bigotry towards the Faith of their neighbours. There were exceptions, of course, but generally Catholics and Protestants lived together as good friends and kind neighbours.

But, to return to the great Dominican saint of Cork and Kerry—Father Bartholomew Shine. After helping Father Maurice Fitzgerald, then an old man, in the administration of his huge parish, Father Batt was made Parish Priest of Brosna. His fame as a holy minister of the Church of Christ soon spread over the whole diocese, so much so that he was often consulted and asked for his advice by the then Bishop of the Diocese, Dr. Sugrue. And thereby hangs a tale. When getting on in years, Bishop Sugrue asked Father Shine, of Brosna, for his advice about asking Rome for a Coadjutor to help him. "Keep the reins in your hands, my Lord," said Father Batt. Some time later Dr. Egan was appointed assistant Bishop, and, on the assumption that he heard of the Brosna counsel, that may explain why such a saint and scholar got no further promotion in Kerry.

But we must go back to the beginning. Father B. Shine, O.P., was born about the year 1755, at Lis-carroll, near Drumcollogher. His father, although belonging to the highest class of farmers, was a classical teacher of great repute. The Shine family of Lis-carroll had established a bourse in the College of Louvain, and it was there Father Batt was educated and afterwards ordained. His own dear country being then under the heel of tyrants, he served the Church of France until driven out of that unfortunate country by the Revolution. Then his thoughts turned to green Erin in chains, riveted by fanatical heretics. When

the penal laws were being somewhat relaxed, at the time of the French Revolution, Father Batt was the first Dominican Father to venture back to his native province in Munster.

Other fathers following, Father Batt and three other members of his Order made a heroic attempt to restore their old Abbey at Knockanure, and with the help of the good people around, they made the ruin habitable after the rude fashion of the time. Many of God's houses—when there was a house instead of the side of the glen—were like those of God's children, thatched with straw; but the Fathers had the great happiness of once more singing Mass within the four walls of their ancient dwelling, which had been often wrecked by the heretic despoilers of Elizabeth and Cromwell. Tradition has handed down to us one very interesting item of news relating to this temporary restoration period. The four Fathers were, indeed, living then in the midst of holy poverty. Their principal food was oatmeal porridge twice a day, the same diet as the peasants among whom they lived. Their house-keeper, an old woman of the place, happened by some good fortune of charity to get from a neighbour a big lump of fat—dripping, lard, or butter, we do not know which—but as she saw her holy family growing visibly thinner on this meagre diet, she resolved, unknown to the Fathers, for it was Lent, to add a little fat every day to the porridge. Alas, it did not last long, and, when the lump of fat was exhausted, she was secretly amused when listening to the mild growls of the Fathers about the patent deterioration of the porridge! Here we are in touch with the real thing. People nowadays talk lightly about the bad times.

But here is the holy poverty of St. Francis of Assisi—real holy poverty and genuine discomfort, bravely borne and meekly accepted for the greater honour and glory of God and the salvation of souls.

The great adventure for the restoration of the House of God at Knockanure failed, and the Fathers had to go out of their humble but loved enclosure into the secular Mission. Father Batt was appointed assistant priest to old Father Maurice Fitzgerald, of Castleisland.

After labouring in the vineyard for some time in the Castleisland parish, Bishop Sugrue appointed him to the parish of Brosna. A big slice was taken off Father Maurice's parish, which it could well afford to lose, for the Castleisland parishes were then much larger in area than at present.

Father Shine's administration of his new parish was, needless to say, a great success; besides the fame of his great learning he was a true Father in God to his people. The saintly life he led in Castleisland and in Brosna earned for him not only many special favours from his Master, but also the love and esteem of his flock, the great confidence and regard of his Bishop, and a name for holiness of life that has come down from our fathers in the three counties of Kerry, Cork, and Limerick.

My old friend, Mrs. Ellen Long, of Sandville, now in her eighty-sixth year, said to me the other day (note that she had not the least idea that I was then taking notes for this chapter): "When I was a little girl," said Mrs. Long, "eighty years ago, I often heard my parents talking about a holy priest that they had in Brosna, one Father Shine. Before he went to Brosna,

I think, a widow's son had died. The young man was washed and laid out, and the people were all ullagoning over the corpse. The holy Father was passing along the road on horseback and heard the loud crying and ullagoning in the cabin in the hillside above. He went up, and there he found them all crying and lamenting. Then he put on his stole and he turned all the people out of the room. When he allowed them to come back they found the young man alive and well, sitting up on the bed! "Praise be to God, and in the sight of all! Did you ever hear the like of that?" These are her actual words. Let us consider the matter briefly. Let us assume that the boy was only in a trance, or that he had fainted, or that the incident never occurred. Well, even assuming all this, and it is entirely contrary to probability—the fact remains that eighty years ago in Castleisland and Brosna, Father Shine had the reputation of being a saint. The annals of the Dominicans say that "Father Shine had the gift of miracles." Even at the present day people go to his tomb and use the dew or rain that falls on the flag that covers his grave as a cure. After making a round and saying prayers, they dip their fingers in the moisture that gathers in the sculptured chalice on his tombstone. A year after his burial in the Brosna churchyard, his coffin had to be taken up in order to fit the sculptured stone over his remains. His body was found to be incorrupt, and a smell of roses perfumed the air around.

There is a tradition that once when Father Batt was going to an urgent sick call, that he was blocked by a big flood in the river Feale. It is told that the messenger who accompanied him back from the

Presbytery to the home of the sick man, saw the waters of the river divide to let them pass. It is noted in the annals of the Dominican Order that but for the great storm on the day of his burial his remains would have been carried to Cork. It was little Christmas Day, 1827, and as soon as the body of the holy Father was put in the grave it was covered with a mantle of snow—a fitting symbol for the purity and sanctity of a well-spent life in the service of God.

While parish priest of Brosna, Father Batt baptised a grand-nephew of his—the late Father Patrick Shine—one time P.P. of Fossa. After pouring the water over the head of the child, he said: "This babe will baptise many." Many in East Kerry will remember the gentle, saintly parish priest of Fossa, who died in Castleisland at his niece's (Mrs. John O'Leary's) place, over twenty years ago. Father Patrick Shine was brokenhearted after the awful trials and sorrows experienced by him at the time of the Famine. He was one of that grand and noble band of priests who served, and who suffered with, their people during that terrible time. Like Dean MacInerney, of Tralee, Father Shine would take the shirt off his own back to give it to God's starving children. And, *Deo gratias*, they have their reward, for they are now saints in heaven.

Now, come down to the present day, and see how blood and breeding always tell, and what God can do for those families who love him. Down the generations of men, as they appear for a time in his world and pass away to their Maker, the grace of God can move away mountains of difficulties. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man

soweth that shall he also reap . . . he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting."

Is it not extremely significant that a grand-niece of this Rev. Patrick Shine, and in the direct line from Father Bartholomew, is now in Chicago, U.S.A., a Master of Arts and a Doctor of Philosophy in the great Catholic University there? She is a Professor and lecturer on Education in that high seat of learning, and a Director of Studies for most of the convent schools in that great Catholic diocese. It is a long way from Liscarroll, Co. Cork, and Brosna, Co. Kerry, to Chicago; but this distinguished daughter of the Church in Chicago is a blood relation of the little boy, Batt Shine, who was born in Liscarroll 175 years ago, who was educated and ordained to the priesthood at Louvain, and who was working miracles among the persecuted peasants of East Kerry over a hundred years ago. . . .

Sixty years ago Castleisland was in a transition stage between a village and a town; a little over one hundred years ago it was a village of thatched houses, with only a few shops. Most of its then inhabitants got their living from the land, as the manure heaps in front of the dwelling houses showed. Mrs. E. Brown remembers the time when the wheat and oats used to be threshed with the flail in the main street of the village.

Before the bridge across the Maine in the New Line, now Church Street, was built, the people went to Mass *via* the old Chapel Lane. Down there towards the river, before the Presentation Convent was built, the people worshipped in a thatched chapel.

The convent was founded by Rev. Mother Joseph

Hartnett, whose brother, belonging to the landed gentry, lived at Castleview. In fact, the beautifully situated residence—now entirely reconstructed and improved, was offered to the Bishop of Kerry by the Hartnett family as a site for the convent, but Archdeacon O'Leary (Father Darby) who built the old presbytery, refused it; and the convent was built near the right bank of the river Maine. The rich and powerful Hartnett family has become extinct long ago. One of the most pleasant memories of childhood is to recall the time we used to wheel old Rev. Mother Joseph, then retired and probably 90 years of age, around the convent grounds in her invalid chair. When we finished up at the hall door, we had to join our hands reverently, and devoutly repeat a "Hail Mary" and many holy aspirations.

Ah, but what an influence for good that dear old lady was for town and country. She brought Castleisland its most precious possession. She was a saint still living in the world, beyond her due time. To see a group of boys and girls gathered around her chair drinking in her heavenly words of wisdom—always smiling even while praying—was a foretaste of heaven.

Her sister, Miss Hartnett, who lived in the convent during her last years, was a most charitable lady. In the terribly bad year of '79 she clothed and fed all the poor children of the town. May God give her a crown of glory in heaven. Even the travelling tinkers' children got a little religious education from this kind lady; for she went out into the highways and byways in search of the stray lambs of the flock. One tinker's son, a hard case, used to shock her when reciting the

Act of Contrition, by always saying: "Because they please Thee, my God" instead of displeasure.

One would need a whole chapter to do justice to Market Place. The Market House was built by the descendants of the "Six Undertakers," who in the reign of Elizabeth owned the whole of the Valley of the Maine, and who paid a head-rent to the English lord of Castleisland, Herbert of Cherbury, for the confiscated lands of the Geraldines. The town with its immediate park lands was divided into six sections, each section owned by the heirs to the six original "Undertakers." The Market House, with its Assembly Room upstairs, was the common property of the famous six landlords.

Sixty years ago this Market House, now the Emporium, a finely decorated shop, equal to any in the City of Dublin, had three institutions housed within its great walls. The central portion was the Market proper, where farm produce of all kinds was weighed, bought and sold. Three huge gates fronted the main street.

In those days the Market was held on Tuesdays, and, in the height of summer, inside and outside as far as the fountain were occupied by firkins of butter with their golden tops exposed, but protected from the dust by green cabbage leaves. The butter-buyers from Tralee and Cork went round, with auger-like scoops, smelling and tasting the butter. Some of the big farmers would have as many as three firkins, while smaller farmers had to combine to make one. Before the advent of the railway train from Gortatlea, in the early seventies, the butter was despatched by car to Tralee, and to Cork *via* Farranfore. Earlier than that

it was carried by car and "sleds" all the way to Cork by road. The "sleds," and sometimes the horse, were sold in the city, and the carriers came back home in a Bianconi car.

On the left, as you entered the Market House, was the local dispensary, where Dr. Nolan and his assistant dispenser, Mr. Thomas Burke, attended to the wants of the sick poor. On the right, where Mr. M. J. O'Connor now has his store, was the Court of Petty Sessions, where people who indulged too freely in the then "two-penny half-ones" had to appear before the magistrates. The police barrack was then next door to the Crown Hotel, now occupied by the Misses O'Sullivan.

The section of the town between Wren's and the old Post Office at the corner of Church Lane was composed of substantial slate houses—one might call it the aristocratic quarter of the town, where the local gentry and gentleman farmers loved to congregate. At the opposite corner of Church Lane, there was a row of thatched houses as far as the present site of the National Bank. These little houses, then far in towards the old church-yard, were knocked down and the present fine buildings owned by Messrs. Brosnan, O'Grady, and Browne, were erected in their place, in alignment with the National Bank.

One of these buildings, then called the Chute Arms Hotel, was built by Mr. J. Bonguellemi, who made a big fortune in the gold fields of Ballarat. He was a native of Switzerland who had married a Castleisland woman in Australia.

On the opposite side of the street, the section from Barrack Lane to Church Street—sixty years ago the

best business part of the town—was built in the early part of the last century. The only one now left of the "old stock" in this quarter is Mrs. E. Browne, whose husband was then the owner of the finest shop in the whole town.

Everything on this old planet of ours undergoes constant change: one generation pushes the previous one off the stage: and one by one we drop out of sight into the silent grave.

During the bad times, in the eighteen-forties, a temporary poorhouse was built to shelter our famished people. That long rambling building still stands—a melancholy reminder of an evil time. I must tell my readers of an amusing incident that happened here in Castleisland at the time of the famine. Sean Feen was a character, the town crier, a voluble talker in Irish and English; he had a long neck and a movable Adam's apple that shot up and down with a speed proportionate to that of his loud talk. Well, this poor man had a very rough time of it during the famine. He and three others stole the fine fat goat belonging to the parish priest, Archdeacon O'Leary, affectionately known by all as Father Darby. After the deed, the trouble stared them in the face—what will happen when they will have to confess it? Sean, many years after the beloved old pastor was dead, in spite of all the rules and regulations of the Church, used to tell all and sundry about his interview with the Archdeacon in the Confessional. Of course, this telling of it was a bigger sin than the stealing of the goat; for Father Darby knew that it was no grievous sin for four starving men to steal and eat his goat. But he had

to make a show of severity lest he should encourage Sean and others to fall into the habit of goat-stealing.

"And how did you get on with the Archdeacon?" people would ask him. "Well," he would answer, "although his Reverence was very severe at first, he gave me Absolution in the end. I told him that we were starving. It didn't loosen him a bit; he refused to give me Absolution! 'Then,' says I, 'if you don't my sins will be on the top o' your own.' Well, faith, after what I thought was the last word, he covered his face with his hand, and, thanks be to God, he there and then absolved me."

Many were at that time dying of hunger. Mrs. Ellen Long, of Sandville, now in her 86th year, tells me that when she was a little girl she remembers seeing a poor man dying of hunger near the old market house. He had come in from the country, and was waiting his turn to go before the Relief Committee, when he collapsed, and died. As she went down home to Barrack Lane, after witnessing this distressing sight, she called into a neighbour's to tell him the sad news. He was an old man living by himself, and she saw him preparing his one and only meal for that day. He had a small turnip stewing in a skillet, and he put one fistful of yellow meal in to thicken it. That was to be his only food for twenty-four hours! No wonder that when she told him about what she had seen at the Market House, he sat and looked at her, as the tears came to his eyes. God help us all; he supposed that the child's chatter was only a warning call to himself to get ready.

" Oh, the famine and the fever!
 Oh, the wasting of the famine!
 Oh, the blasting of the fever!
 Oh, the wailing of the children!
 Oh, the anguish of the women!
 All the earth was sick and famished;
 Hungry was the air around them,
 Hungry was the sky above them."

CHAPTER V.

IN BOYHOOD'S DAYS.

To illustrate the impetuosity, impulsiveness and fierce determination of Sean Bawn Hussey, an old playmate of mine, I must tell of an event that happened in the New Line when we were boys together. But I must first preface my remarks on my miraculous escape from death in the barley field here fifty-five years ago, by saying that in the Queensland tropics I had many narrow escapes—once from an alligator near the Gulf of Carpentaria, another time from a big serpent, in a dense forest, that only missed me by inches, and again when, riding after a mob of kangaroos, I was pitched head foremost into the dry bed of a deep creek—all these were near calls to the happy hunting grounds; but they were nothing compared to my narrow escape from death when a boy at the hands of my old friend, Sean Bawn. It happened thus: Old "Gubby the Sweets," who fifty-five years ago kept a sweet stall in the Main Street, used to employ Sean Bawn Hussey to bring her a certain strong smelling weed that grew in great bunches in the barley field, where the new convent schools now stand. It was a very soft job; for Sean had only to jump across the stone wall of the field, pluck Gubby's favourite flower, and bring it to her little room in Church Street, then pocket half a dozen fine "bull's eyes." Not one of his comrades would dream of blacklegging on Sean, for he was then

the undisputed monarch of the street. I had an awful fondness for sweets; so some evil genius must have suggested to my untutored mind to offer my services to Gubby to supply her with her favourite herb of the pungent odour. A traitor to me, who wanted to curry favour with the king of the street, told Sean of my offer to Gubby! So, unknown to me, like a second Sherlock Holmes, he watched me making for the barley field. All unconscious of the terrible fate in store for me, I jumped over the stone wall, and was just in the act of pulling my first bunch of spearmint, when Sean, using all his strength, threw the stone wall right on top of me. One huge corrig glanced off my temple, but the rest prostrated me at full length, and I was almost buried in the debris. Had the big stone caught me fairly and squarely, my skull would have been crushed into pulp. As I struggled in the heap I could hear Sean's sardonic laugh ringing out in triumph. For many days after there was not a bit of my body but was bruised, sore and painful. Believe you me, as the old people used to say, I got my warning and took it; thanking the Lord that I had escaped with my life. It must be added that Sean enjoyed that lucrative contract with Gubby, undisturbed by the jealousy of others for many years. He had not only cured me of my infatuation for bulls-eyes, but my cure cured every boy in the street of any sneaking desire to do Sean out of his job.

It was said that the Liberator, the greatest of all Kerry men, had a very poor opinion of all Castleislanders. While all Ireland, except the Black North, used to go wild with delight at a visit from the great O'Connell, Castleisland used to treat him very coolly,

when he stopped in the town to change horses on his journeys between his home in West Kerry and Limerick. But the reason is that they became so used to seeing the Liberator that they took him and his greatness for granted—as a matter of course. I am sure it was not lack of appreciation of his great work for Ireland. Anyway he used to compare old Castleisland to Bandon, where it was said that Jew, Turk and Atheist could enter—but not a Papist. The present generation will be surprised to learn that before 1831 the only outlet from the town to the south, across the Maine, was *via* the old Barrack Lane bridge. About a hundred yards after crossing that bridge the road divided—one branch going south-west to Killarney, and the other east, to Cork—the latter following the present Keelagane-Close road as far as Mr. M. O'Connor's cottage at Coolavany, where it turned south, to Scartaglin and Cork.

About the middle of the last century a well-planned murder took place in this parish; it still remains a complete mystery. At the time it completely baffled our Irish "Scotland Yard," as the murderers were never brought to justice. Our elders had many theories in explanation of the mystery; they remained just guesses, for not a trace of the body was ever discovered. But the most terrible tragedy of all occurred in the town of Castleisland during the Whiteboy troubles of over a hundred years ago. All the old people used to speak of it as the "Murder in the Barracks."

The Yeomen of these far-off days were recruited from the local people of Cromwellian descent. Their job was to keep down the "papist" Irish. It seems

they were a kind of local Volunteers, who were only part-time soldiers. There was always in the barracks the nucleus of a company—officers, non-commissioned officers, and a few privates as a guard.

One night, while the officers were away, a number of Whiteboys raided the barracks and disarmed the guard. In the scuffle the disguises of some of the Whiteboys were pulled off, which meant death by hanging for those who were identified; so they turned back and killed the Yeomen. The foolish posturing and posing of one of their number on the following fair day led to the arrest of all of them, and even one of them, who had fled to England, "Buck" O'Grady, was brought back and executed with the others. They were all hanged; and, according to the savage English custom of the time, their heads were cut off and impaled on the big iron gates of the old Market House. A man named Hogan was flogged through the town at the cart's tail, because he was suspected of knowing the raiders and refused to give evidence against them.

Some time in the eighteen-thirties a company of soldiers on a Sunday morning marched from Tralee to Foyle Pilip and captured a poteen plant in the glen there. Passing through Castleisland, on their way back, they halted in the main street opposite the Crown Hotel, for refreshments. The people coming out from the 12 o'clock Mass gathered round the red-coats, and for a time it looked as if they would attack the soldiers and rescue the still from the gaugers. People then had about as much love for a gauger as for an English soldier. The officers, resenting the demonstration against the Excise men, gave orders to fire; and the

unarmed people were not long in seeking shelter in the houses. An unfortunate stranger, who had just stepped out of a little eating-house near the market, on the turn to the Tralee road, was shot dead, so that the poor traveller paid dearly for the Foyle Pilip poteen.

For the present I shall finish these talks on old times by relating an amusing incident that happened to me and to our present district nurse—Mrs. Ellen Kerins. I was then about twelve years of age. One evening I was upstairs in my own room—a prisoner waiting for a flogging. Mrs. Kerins was then a fine strapping girl of fifteen. She came across the street to where I had my head out of the window, and said in a whisper: "Teigeen, climb out o' the window, hang on to the window sill, and jump down on my shoulders!" No sooner was the suggestion made than it was obeyed. I climbed out—and here happened the first miracle—that I was not brained in changing positions from standing on the sill to hanging from it! When Nell said, as my hands were already slipping from the sill—"Now, you divil," I let go and plumped right down on her shoulders. Not being an acrobat, and having nothing to hold on to, our present district nurse fell outwards on the broad of her back, and nearly cracked her skull on the curb-stone; while I, going on the opposite direction, scraped the wall with my nose before bumping on the pavement! Nell escaped with a big lump on her poll, and I with a skinned nose and a sprained wrist. I did not receive the well-deserved hiding due to me, for my father was so rejoiced that a neighbour's child had escaped death, and that his own scapegrace of a son was equally fortunate, he forgave me.

The Harrington family, once the leading men of the town, had big business shops in the main street, and a large tannery, where our local shoemakers and harness-makers got their leather. The farmers grew flax, and their wives made their own linen. Our people produced their own yarns, and these, after being weaved and dyed, were made into clothes by our own tailors and dressmakers. The wool from the sheep's back was spun and woven into cloths, which sheltered the backs of the people themselves. Why, in the good old days—despite the incubus of the landlords—we were a self-reliant, self-respecting, self-clothing and feeding people. The farmer had his own quern, and he ground his own oats. He fed and clothed himself and his family, as well as the people of the villages and towns, who worked for him in various capacities. To-day, we are no longer self-supporting: we import nearly everything; from the silk stockings of the girls to the cigarettes in the mouths of herself and her brothers. We send millions of money every year to England, Germany and Belgium; England handing us back millions for the agricultural produce we sell to her.

The people then were reared on oaten meal, potatoes, yellow meal, butter, skim milk, drunk out of wooden mugs, and they ate their own bacon—poor people thankful if they got a bit of meat on Sundays. All but the yellow meal was home-grown produce. The farmers grew wheat for local millers to grind into flour. Between Tralee and Castleisland, what fine crops of wheat one could see sixty years ago! What fine men and women the old simple habits and the old-time foods produced!

And above all—with a few well-known exceptions—the habits of industry, hard work, thrift, the punctual payment of debts, and honourable dealing, were firmly established among the people. What is wanted nowadays, more than anything else, is that these virtuous habits be again engrafted in the character of the rising generation; and, as a corollary to the above, we badly need instruction in handicrafts and the technical skill required for cottage and local industries. With these pre-requisites, the great Shannon Scheme will be a success: without them it will be a failure—but another centre for nepotism and inefficiency. With the Shannon power soon coming to every town and village, let us hope that the old-time spirit of patient industry will be developed in our people: that cottage and urban industries will once again flourish in our midst; and that a new generation will arise that will not give so much time and thought to foreign dance, outdoor sports, and gambling; and that politics be put under a cloud for a time. We are a Catholic people, who profess to be true followers of Christ. If we are, then, let us take life more seriously. We are, I fear, losing some of the grand moral fibre of our fathers and becoming imitators of those pagan countries that long ago have thrown off all allegiance to our Lord, the King. But even when we become industrialised, let us hope that we shall never become money grubbers; although, dear knows, we have many examples of this vice before us. To lead simple, healthy, hard-working, pure and honest lives, in modest comfort, should be our aim, and to let Jews and others of high finance wallow in their wealth.

People forget when they point to the population of

eight millions in Ireland before the famine, that the potato was then the staple diet of the people of Ireland, that the small farmers and cottiers grew their own food, and by working in springtime and harvest for their neighbours they earned the cost of their clothing—then also farm made—from the men of the broad acres, from whom they also got plenty skim and butter milk to wash down the flowery potato. The standard of living was, of course, low; although it must not be forgotten that on this staple diet which appears so poor to our comfort-loving age, was reared a peasantry second to none in Europe in stature and physical strength. In the latter part of the eighteenth and the early part of the nineteenth centuries great areas of mountainy or rather hilly land were brought under cultivation by means of two simple agricultural implements—the gruffaun and the spade. The gruffaun was a large sharp steel-headed bent hoe which lifted the heathery scraw from the hillside. It gave the first stroke in the reclamation of waste lands. In dry summers these scraws with the heather or furze, roots and all, were burned. The ashes mellowed the ground, and the spade with the help of farmyard manure did the rest. Potatoes were planted for a few years, then oats; and soon emerged the green grassy field. The hillside, once covered with heather and furze was changed in a few years into green fields and meadows. In this way the green hills of Kerry and Donegal, and in fact all the green hills of Erin, became by the sweat of the peasant's brow the hillside and mountainy farms of the present day. Sheep took the place of grouse and woodcock, and horses and cattle the place of the mountain hare. The hard-working Irishman had

made two blades of grass to grow where none had ever grown before. . . .

Barrack Lane, too, has felt the improving hand of time. Its old bridge was once the only outlet across the river Maine to the south. People going to Killarney in those days had to pass that way; and my lord, the Judge of Assizes, in his grand coach, and accompanied by a guard of yeomen, on his way from Cork to Tralee, had to cross the old bridge and go through Barrack Lane before passing round to Bailey's Hotel for refreshment and a change of horses. When the old Yeomen Barracks, now undergoing extensive repairs, will be completed, and the Bridewell opposite, which at present is being pulled down, is turned into residences, the old Lane will again be restored to its pristine importance, and no doubt will be advanced to the status of a street; it should be called Ashe Street or Collins Street.

One great improvement to the main street—now quite respectable looking since it was steam-rolled—will be the monument soon to be erected to the memory of the brave lads who gave their young lives to Ireland during the Black and Tan war.

The day will come when a row of trees will be planted in the main street; then, with the electric bulbs twinkling among the foliage, our big wide, naked street will be a thing of beauty always, but especially in the carnival days of the future, when, perhaps, a big industrial population will promenade along its avenues.

I saw the telegraph poles being put up in Castleisland in 1871, and the arrival of the first railway train a few years later; now the fixing of the S. S. electricity

poles has set me thinking of the past, and I resolved to add a few extra chapters to the "Reminiscences" which I contributed to *The Kerryman* a few years ago. As a matter of historical interest, I might mention that the first passenger to arrive by train was the late Mr. J. K. O'Connor, who so ably represented East Kerry in the County Council for many years. He happened to be in Dublin when our first little engine, that had a first-class compartment attached to the tender, was despatched to Kerry.

After the advent of the railway train to Castleisland, the town threw off the swaddling-clothes of a village and commenced to grow upwards and outwards rapidly and with great vigour. Take, for instance, the old mill then erected by the late Redmond Roche, of Tubbermeing, who, when I was a boy, was the leading business man in the town and a great employer of labour. It is now the property of a man who, like Mr. Roche, is full of business energy and commercial enterprise—Mr. W. H. O'Connor. Mr. O'Connor is at present one of our great employers of labour; he has added many fine buildings to the mill, and he is now engaged in putting up another huge building of city-factory proportions, which probably will be ready for Shannon current power as soon as it is available.

Old Maurice Wren was a hard case: fond of a drop; and, when under its influence, addicted to the use of strong language. His wife was a very saintly old woman, whom many will remember as the cleaner of the convent schools. At the time of the second mission—Father Foxe's Mission, as the old people called it—old

Maurice, being very sick, was anointed and enrolled in the brown scapular. Old Mrs. Wren was delighted that at last she had another saint in the house; but shortly after being enrolled, Maurice says, at first in a weak tone of voice: "These scapulars are itching me."

"Oh, achree," said his wife, "you'll soon get used to them." After a while again old Maurice murmured, in a less weak tone: "I tell you these are itching me." "Ah, asthore machree, Maurice, lave 'um on and God will reward you." Then he turned rather fiercely to her and said: "Take 'um off. I can't stand it."

"Oh, wirra," said the old woman in alarm, "Maurice, acud, lave 'um on, I implore you, and you will go straight up to heaven."

Then, with one of his old-time roars, he said savagely: "Up or down, they'll have to come off." And that finished that argument.

Has the intellectual life in Oileann Ciarraighe progressed since the middle of the last century? I have serious doubts that it has. As a boy, I used to listen with great delight to the high discourse on intellectual questions between three of the best scholars of the town—Parson Heffernan, Benjamin Rawlings, and Mr. Terence Brosnan, in the latter's shop. I can even remember a syllogism that old Ben the Master tried to impose on the other two—"He that drinks the most sleeps the most. He that sleeps the most sins the least: therefore, he that drinks the most sins the least." But the little parson, who was loved and respected by all the people for the great interest he took in national and antiquarian subjects, soon found the flaw in old Ben's logic. Another trio that I liked

to listen to, when they were discussing politics, trade, and commerce, were Messrs. Jeremiah Nolan, Jeremiah Roche, and Thomas Kearney; their conversation was as good as an open book to young lads who had a thirst for knowledge.

The Castleisland man who was the best equipped, intellectually, for the writing of local history, Mr. T. O'C. Brosnan, died at a comparatively early age. Besides being a life-long student of literature, he made a special study of history, especially of county and local history. All the old seanachies came to him with their stories of the past; so much so that his cultured mind was full to overflowing of local traditional lore. Of his generation, he was by far the most intellectual man in the town. In the days of the Land League, he was an eloquent defender of the man on the land. Had he lived to a ripe old age, he might have written articles of real historical value, that would be of the greatest interest to the present and future generations of Castleislanders. He was a friend and fellow prisoner of Charles Stewart Parnell in Kilmainham.

What has the future in store for "the Island of Kerry?" Its future is, of course, bound up with that of the rest of Ireland. By many signs and tokens: from the records of the courts and the county homes: from complaints of parents, clergy, Press, and Lenten Pastorals, it looks as if we are immersed in the backwash of a wave of moral degeneration. Without Character in the people, no great industrial progress is possible. Improve the character of the people and an advance all along the line is probable. If we have large percentages of slackers, debt-dodgers, and pleasure seekers, we remain as we are to-day—day

dreamers and inefficient. But if we should have larger percentages of hard-working, thrifty, honest people, who are eager to learn and to qualify themselves for better positions in life—in a new industrial life, and who give a willing and obedient ear to the laws of God and man, there will be no limit to our usefulness to the world as a nation. If we remain loyal children of Christ, the King, our welfare is assured and our future will be on the side of the angels.

It is a big advance in material comfort from the days when the wheat and oats were threshed in the street by the flail, to the present day, when we have the electric current ready to do our bidding in our homes, and motors and omnibuses flying past in our streets.

But come weal or woe, may the people of the old town, that was founded by a Catholic knight seven hundred years ago, always remain true to the teaching of St. Patrick—not merely with lip service and mechanical lifeless formalities, but in truth and deed—walking bravely and securely in the footsteps of Our Saviour.

CHAPTER VI.

OLD-TIME RACING, MATCHMAKING, AND GHOSTS.

SEVENTY (or eighty, some say) years ago the Castleisland races were held at Ballyplimmoth, where, regularly every year, the people of East Kerry and the gentry of nearly the whole county, never failed to meet. It used to be a carnival time for the people of the parishes of Castleisland, Scartaglin, Cordal, Currow, Currans, Clogher, Knocknagoshel, and Brosna; for many from Abbeyfeale, and, of course, hundreds came from Tralee, Killarney, and Listowel. They had then three days of racing with stakes as high as £200. All the business people of Castleisland, and even the publichouse owners, shut up shop and made a bee-line for the great sporting event of the year.

In later times, in the early seventies, the races used to be held in the townlands between the new and the old Limerick roads, from the town boundaries to the farms of the Kellihers and Tuomeys of Clounock—a regular cross-country steeplechase.

One of the most famous jockeys in Kerry, nicknamed "the Bweenuck," was killed at one of the races held in Ballyplimmoth. A Castleisland lady, then a girl of thirteen, saw the Bweenuck's horse falling on him. The horse's hoof struck a furze root, and it somersaulted on top of the rider. The Bweenuck was also a famous trainer, and a great favourite of the

Kerry gentry. There are several old people still living who witnessed the death of that old-time sport and fine horseman; but, naturally, opinion is divided among them as to the year of the accident.

Mr. P. O'Riordan, the well-known Land League bandmaster, was also at one of the Ballyplimmoth races, when Griffin's "Orphan Girl" beat Thompson's "Rambler." He has still in his memory the rhyme that the then poet laureate of racing composed on the occasion:—

"The Orphan was cheered when from Rambler she cleared,
And left her behind broken-winded;
Although losing a shoe, to her breed she proved true,
She galloped so gaily and splendid."

The highest rock on the farm was the grand stand; and it was none of the rocks that Finn McCool threw from Sleeve Mis all over the valley, but a rock that could hold thousands, "for along with being a rock it was a hill."

Then there were the refreshment booths, and the pie stalls, the maggies, the trick o' the loops, and the ballad singers: and in later years, the brass band, under the baton of P. O'Riordan, discoursing sweet music. To think of it makes the old heart feel young again.

Races! aye, these were races that for weeks before had made the blood of the lads and lasses, and even that of the aged, tingle with the expectation of three days of pure sport, fun and jollification. The fields used to be black with the huge crowds of people, and when a favourite won what roars and salvoes of

cheers echoed from the rock that was nearly a mountain!

The famous old-time horse, May Morning, ridden by a great English jockey, Noble, was one of the favourites at the Ballyplimmoth races. May Morning was in the mouths of all the ancients when I was a boy: therefore, she must have been one of the best. Besides the Orphan Girl and the Rambler, already mentioned, we had in later years, Griffin's grey mare, the Kerry Lass, and the Liberator, belonging to Mr. John O'Connell, of Gurteen. These two local horses were great favourites all over Kerry. It was all steeple-chasing then, cross-country race over very stiff fences. Mr. Tom Griffen, of Ballymacdonnell, and Mr. Geoffrey O'Connell, of Gurteen, were great rivals at these steeplechases. Both of them were expert riders, and splendid athletes as well. I saw a challenge race at Dysart between Geoffrey O'Connell on the Liberator and "Bang" Griffin on the Kerry Lass. I do not remember the winner. The O'Connells also owned the Maid of Gurteen. Once at the Tralee races at Mount-hawk, I saw Geoffrey's horse falling at a fence. He turned head over heels over the fence, but he still held on to the reins! Running along beside the cantering horse, at a bound he vaulted clean into the saddle and continued the race. Again I cannot remember if the Liberator won the race or got a place, but I do remember that the huge crowds cheered and cheered again at this fine feat of horsemanship. Guiney's Mountain Hare, from Brosna, was another great favourite in East Kerry and West Limerick.

Shall Castleisland ever again see such races? Well, we have lost our old aristocracy, and the times are not

too prosperous, but our new Racing Committee are enthusiasts, and one can never tell what youth, combined with true sportsmanship can accomplish. The prizes at the Ballyplimmoth races and at those held near the town between the Limerick roads, and at Carew, near the Parson's Glebe, ranged from £40 to £200. At that time all the business people of the town used to give a subscription of a pound each to the race fund.

The Harrington brothers were then the principal business men in the town, and Mr. Jerh. Harrington, who was also the owner of the Lockfudar farm, was the chief collector. The local rhymer above mentioned gave him the honour of a verse, still retained in the memory of the old Land League bandmaster—P. O'Riordan:

" May Jeremiah's name be blended with fame,
For to sport and to game he's indented;
He collected away by night and by day,
And wherever he went was befriended."

But a friend living near old Tubbermeing gave me another four lines that changes from the praises of Mr. Harrington to a vigorous invective against the judge who, in the opinion of the thousands present, gave a wrong verdict in one race:

" Shame and disgrace to X—— and his race;
That traitor, that Judas, that sinner,
For thousands were there that would solemnly swear
That Griffin's grey mare was the winner."

Now, strange to say, this last line and the beautiful line, " She galloped so gaily and splendid," were in

my own memory, but detached entirely away from these verses, which I often heard quoted and sung when a boy. Well, we must bid good-bye to these old sporting days and to the memory of the grand old folk of the past.

During Shrovetide—from little Christmas until Ash-Wednesday—seventy per cent. of the marriages in rural Ireland take place. In the country districts Shrove is the appointed time for match-making and for marrying. The agricultural year begins in February; farm servants are taken on, and preparations are made for the Spring planting. It is, therefore, the right time for the newly married man to take over the management of the farm from his father.

Match-making in Ireland is a very serious affair, with very little romance, as a rule, attached to the business. Yet, it is safe to say that ninety per cent. of these "made" marriages turn out a success. The so-called "love matches" of England and America very often end disastrously in the divorce courts.

Briefly put, the matrimonial preliminaries are as follows:—It has become known in the parishes that a certain "ould couple," the father and mother, have decided to give up the farm to their eldest son. Another farmer, perhaps living in a distant parish, hearing this, and desirous of settling his daughter for life, sends "word of a match" through a friend, to the father of the young man. This friend must have a very smooth tongue and a nice manner, for he has to undertake a very delicate task, indeed. A boasting or a foolish word thrown in, in the wrong place, might nip the affair in the bud.

If there be no objection to the character of the girl, or to the health record of her family, that is, the absence of any bad *dúthchas* or hereditary taint, a day and place are appointed to meet in town or village in order to find out definitely the amount of money the father of the girl will give her as a marriage portion. The parents of the boy and girl, together with the match-maker, discuss the preliminaries: the fortune demanded by the young man's father is strictly proportional to the number of cows on the prospective bridegroom's farm. If he has a big farm of good quality carrying, say, thirty-two cows, the fortune demanded would be about £1,000. For a ten-cow farm the dowry expected would be about £300.

If the parties come near a settlement on the amount of the "fortune," a day is appointed for the girl's father and a good judge of land to visit the farm of the proposed "boy." They will carefully examine the house and the out-offices, have a look at the agricultural implements, and walk over the fields of the farm to judge the quality of the land. If everything is found satisfactory, both parents agree to visit the local solicitor, and he draws up a memorandum of agreement between them. Then the greater part of the fortune is paid over, they interview the parish priest, and a day is fixed for the marriage.

But sometimes, in spite of the elders concentrating on the questions of land, cows, dowries, and reserved livings for themselves, romance finds an opportunity to intervene. A friend of mine happened to be in a shop in a small town one day when he noticed that a big good-looking young farmer, the only son of a widow, was enjoying a flirtation with the shopkeeper's

daughter. The young man was being mercilessly chaffed by the handsome young lady behind the counter; but in spite of the chaffing my friend noted the ardent glances of admiration exchanged between the shy countryman and the smart town-bred girl. Now, no one—least of all the parents of both, would propose a match between these two young people. It would be considered extremely unsuitable. How could a town-girl manage the affairs of a big farmer? "Impossible: not to be considered for a moment," the wiseacres would say.

My friend was well acquainted with the young man's mother; so after this casual encounter with romance in a shop, he interviewed the widow and said to her:—"Your son will soon be marrying; that means that you will have to hand over the rule of this house, which you have so admirably managed for over forty years to your daughter-in-law. Should your son marry a farmer's daughter, you will have to step aside at once and hand over the reins to the strange woman. You are still strong and active; you will not like to be superseded. Now, *per contra*, if your son should marry a town girl, and assuming that the girl has sense—it will be some years before she is capable of taking charge. You will still be the chief officer here: Mollie becomes a learner and an obedient pupil for you to train. Your son will marry the girl of his choice, and you remain the captain of the ship."

That was many years ago. The "match" suggested by my friend came off, and, contrary to the forebodings of the local prophets, it proved to be a great success. The girl that showed common sense in the shop showed the same good sense on the farm; and

instead of becoming hostile to her husband's mother, as many daughters-in-law do, they became the very best of friends, and their perfect co-operation in the domestic duties of a large farm brought many years of happiness to that farmer's home.

Two things destroyed the old-time rural weddings, with their processions of jaunting cars and horsemen racing to the church, the "drag home," and the gargantuan banqueting in the bridegroom's home: first, the greedy and unruly "straw-boys"—uninvited guests dressed in straw, who, when the custom degenerated, ate and drank up everything in the house and monopolised the dancing. But it was the increasingly high price of porter and whiskey that gave these wedding entertainments the final *coup-de-grace*. In pre-Land League days the straw-boys visited the house where the wedding entertainment was held; they had a dance and a drink, and then departed quietly to their homes. After the "troubled times" they became bolder in their demands, and practically monopolised everything, which often led to great disorder and free fights. At last things became so bad that the old-time wedding entertainment has become a thing of the past.

Nowadays the marriage is celebrated in the early morning, and the happy pair slip away quietly to Cork or Dublin for the honeymoon. In this way the greedy and disorderly straw-boys of the early twentieth century succeeded in killing off one of the oldest and jolliest marriage customs of Ireland. As a rule life is a very drab affair for the Irish peasant; so it is with regret we have to record the fact that one of the brightest days in his calendar has been abolished.

Before I came to the use of reason I was very much afraid of ghosts, as the following incident will show.

I was one of five Castleisland boys that left the town after eleven o'clock at night, bound for the Killarney Races. Our average age could be about fourteen and a half. One of the five, an optimist, told us that we would be put up for the night at his aunt's place, near Currow Hill. He, moreover, enumerated in detail all the money he would get from his uncles and aunts at the racecourse—to the amount of 12s. 6d.; and he polished off the alluring picture by telling us that the breakfast at auntie's the following morning would be bacon and eggs! We signed on like a flash.

Passing Dysart churchyard, at the witching hour of midnight, our optimist, who was moggalore, suddenly said he wanted to see his father!—who was dead many years!

We naturally objected to the interview, but Cudeen said in a voice loud enough to wake the dead—"Leave me alone, will ye? *I do want to see my father!*"

We did a record sprint to Lisheenban, leaving poor Cud all alone at the wailing wall, but he soon got up to us. At the races the following day, Cud did not get a penny from anyone; and when we approached Aunt Mary's about one o'clock the night before, a huge savage dog soon put us on the straight road to Killarney.

And, first, I must preface my remarks on this question by saying that, when a young man—when I first began to think and read seriously—I was very sceptical about the reality of ghosts. In fact my neighbours were often in despair when I used to explain away all their ghost stories and show them, as a result of my reading, that

all such appearances were pure delusion, and I proved, to my own satisfaction at least, that our senses can be deceived, and that all this ghostly phenomena were purely subjective—the figments of our own imaginings. They were all really good neighbours in those days, and we were all like one big family. They only smiled at my learned ignorance.

But this sceptical mood got a severe shock in later years, when I read an article in that high-class, philosophical magazine, *The Hibbert Journal*, that set me thinking and forced me to give up my disbelief in the reality of ghosts.

Briefly the *Hibbert Journal* story is as follows: Two agnostic English writers—husband and wife—were having a long holiday in Switzerland. Both had entirely shed their religious beliefs, being victims of the prevailing false science and agnosticism of the time. Not liking the villa residence they occupied, they took a short lease of a villa which belonged to two Danish ladies, recently deceased, who had lived in that part of Switzerland during the latter part of their lives. It was a furnished residence, just as the old ladies had left it.

In a room upstairs was an *escritoire*, a heirloom that belonged to their very ancient family. While she was alive, this particular piece of furniture was the special care of one of the old ladies. From the walls of this room hung the oil paintings of the two sisters. The tenants of the villa—our pagan, literary, pair—therefore knew the features of the Danish ladies very well.

Late one night husband and wife were packing up in the hall-way leading to this room; for on the

following morning they were going for a few days' excursion to the opposite side of the lake. While they were packing they heard footsteps, as if some person was climbing the stairs, and a moment or two later both were horrified to see one of the old ladies come up and pass between them into the "heirloom" room!

The husband wrote an account of this apparition; and in that he stated that he and his wife, both for many years agnostic, were now Christians. This article completely cured me of my scepticism about ghosts.

The first case dealing with Kerry ghosts, although less spectacular than the others, that I shall narrate, is given here because of the character of the man to whom the ghostly incident was revealed. He was, perhaps, the finest Catholic Irishman that I ever met at home or abroad. An educated man, distinguished by common sense in a high degree, physically stalwart and enduring; a splendid specimen of our working farmers; and such a pious Catholic, that it would do anyone's heart and soul good to listen to him praying when he thought he was alone—surely one of the few that are marked for heaven.

On his wedding night, a fire burning brightly in his bedroom, for it was a new house set apart from the ancestral home—he saw the chair, which was standing by his bed, being lifted quietly and taken over three or four paces away, and placed before the fire!

A man of meaner mould would have cried out in alarm, and would have thus frightened the wits out of the newly-made bride. But he did not flinch or turn a hair.

"But were you not afraid?" I said.

"I was not," he answered, "because I knew that whoever was there would not injure me or mine. I lifted up my heart to God—and there was no danger of any kind!"

Here we have the sort of Faith that moves mountains.

The remaining cases might be labelled "Protestant ghosts," for they all belong to the class called by our fathers, "the gentry"—a class that at the present day has wholly disappeared.

When we were boys, to raid an orchard belonging to these gentry, Protestant or Catholic, was not considered a great crime, that is, of course, if you only stole a few to eat—to carry a bag with you was an altogether different story. All the world over boys will be boys, and they will always be anxious to sample forbidden fruit.

A boy attending our national school, in the later eighteen-seventies was going home late one fine moonlight night. As he came near a gentleman's home, he made up his mind to treat himself to a few stolen apples, from the orchard of the big house. He was just about to climb the wall when, to his utter astonishment, he saw the one-time owner of the place standing at the entrance gate. One can understand the scare the young fellow got, when it is stated that this particular old gentleman was dead for many years! The young lad of fifteen stood as if he were petrified; and he was about to faint or cry out when the apparition went through the closed gate, walked up the flower-bordered drive, and disappeared through the closed door of the mansion! No apple was touched that night or ever after, and the young fellow got

home, a mile further on, in record time. This may be well called unimpeachable evidence, as there could be no illusion, for the young lad, being as hard as nails, and none of his nerves being out of order, there was no psychological cause that his mind should begin manufacturing hallucinations, or subjectively seeing a wraith that was not there. At that particular time he was only thinking how easy it would be to get a feed of rosy apples from the orchard of the big house.

About seventy years ago, when many of our houses were roofed with thatch, three labouring men left Castleisland at 11 o'clock at night, armed with reaping-hooks, and each carried a rope for bringing a bart of rushes, that they intended to steal for mending the roofs of their humble cottages. They had, it is feared, no qualms of conscience about the morality of their adventure, for that particular farm then carried enough rushes to mend half the roofs of the parish.

They were just about to commence operations with the hooks, when who should they see bearing down on them but the old "Major," who had been dead for more than ten years. They got home in remarkably quick time, with a great *saother* on them, and their clothes steaming from the sweat that was running off them. Needless to say, they brought home no barts of rushes, and two of them had to go back the following morning for two ropes and one reaping hook.

All this shows how the old Protestant gentry looked after their properties even after passing away; and, like the old Danish lady in Switzerland, how their hearts were set on the beautiful homes which their ancestors had robbed from the Gael.

But the above two instances of ghostly protection

of the goods of this world, are hardly to be compared with the "lengths" the old Colonel went to when anything belonging to his one-time estate was in danger of being stolen.

For the facts in the Colonel's case I am indebted to an old friend, whom we shall call Seamas Og. As the saying in Kerry goes—"Seamas Og is my author." "The Ould Kurnel was so seavere," Seamas used to say, "that he'd follow the apples into your father's house, and kick up the devil of a row the very night you stole 'um." He used to give me several examples of the Colonel's severity; and it was Seamas himself that told me about the stealing, or should one say, half-stealing, of an ash tree from the Colonel's demesne. The Squire's youngest son, a gay spark, it seems sold an ash tree to a local carpenter—"unbeknowngest to his father, for five shillings." No one in the place but a man of another trade, who had a great fondness for whiskey, would go along with Michael, the carpenter, to cut down and bring home the tree. This job, under the circumstances, had to be done at the dead of night. Michael got the loan of a horse and cart, and with his dipsomaniac assistant, and armed with a cross-cut saw and a naggin of whiskey, they went to the demesne at midnight. All went well until the tree fell with a great thud on the ground.

The assistant's eyes became double width—I am quoting Seamas—and his face turned to ashes when he saw the old Colonel coming in a great fury at them! The assistant sawyer fell in a heap, and only for a slug of whiskey he would have died there and then. The whiskey put Dutch courage into both of them, and they began cutting up the trunk of the tree,

although the old gentleman was sitting on it! Now here I part company with Seamas. He maintained that Mick and his comrade, after finishing the whiskey, made a cut on each side of the Colonel, and left him only a "seisteen," about the breadth of a chair to sit on! Whiskey or no whiskey, flesh and blood could not do it; unless of course that, having a great terror of the dead Colonel in their minds, the wraith on the log in this case was only a subjective image, made in the shape of the Colonel, by their excited imaginations.

I can vouch for the first two Protestant ghosts; but, although Seamas Og was an honest man of the old school, who thought all the good men of the world died in the nineteenth century, I fear he exaggerated the courage of Mick and the assistant-sawyer and the strength of the naggin of whiskey.

CHAPTER VII.

ANTICIPATIONS.

WHAT will the world be like 800 years hence or shall it be still existing? No one but the Creator Himself can answer that question; but it is a legitimate exercise of the imagination to try and picture the future, however much the passing of Time may prove it to be out of perspective and far away from subsequent reality. And first let us consider "Time" itself. How mysterious, intangible, and fleeting it is; although we classify it into past, present, and future. The past is gone for ever—just as if it never existed—only great structures and the memory of events remaining. And the present time—just this moment? As soon as it is mentioned it is gone into the limbo of the past; when you approach it, it disappears; when you reach out to it, it is gone; for a newly-born moment has taken its place.

And the future? Well, as the saying goes, the future is in the lap of the gods. We can only form a faint idea of the future by a consideration of the past. What happened is our only guide to what will happen.

This universe in which we live has been a continuous growth or development, from a gaseous nebulae to a solid planet revolving round a star; and we are planetary passengers journeying through space-time. The old Gaelic seer compared our lives to a bird flying

at night through the King's Hall—in one door, for a moment in the light, and out the other door, into eternity.

Although the idea of progress has been questioned by learned men, one cannot be far wrong to assume that since man appeared on this planet there has been a continuous rise towards a better world. There may be periods of retrogression—here a set-back and there a degeneration—but, on the whole, man has been on an ascending grade. At least in science, that is, in the knowledge of the universe, there has been a great and steady advance. And we may fairly assume that this advance shall continue in the future. In spite of present appearances to the contrary, we can also assume that man will advance in virtue. Of course, morals are bound up in the question of the preservation of religion.

The two main questions then to consider, when we let our imagination loose into the future, are:—(1) Will the religion revealed to us by Christ survive? And (2) Shall what we now call the "social problem" be solved? I am firmly convinced that the time will come when the whole world shall be under the benign rule of Christ the King: and to believe that is also to believe that, under His guidance, the present "class war" throughout society shall be swallowed up in a perfect social peace.

Christ the King ruling in all lands through His Vicar, the Pope, and the perfect harmony of social justice in being throughout human society—these two great events one can confidently predict to take place during the next thousand years: for Christ is sure to conquer; and where He rules justice prevails.

Now, let us briefly consider man's great scientific achievements. He can now drive his ships under the sea; he can fly over the oceans through the air; he can send his voice and a picture of himself to the most distant corners of the earth. Consider this last scientific marvel. Standing in a theatre in New York a great singer bursts into song, and in the next second or moment of time people in Dublin, London or Paris, hear, listen-in, to every note and word of her song, while looking at a picture of the singer thrown on a screen!

Again, consider the atom of so-called matter, that our great men of the last century—blind leaders of the blind—thought "indivisible" and "indestructible"—the foundation stone of their atheistic theories. Latter-day science has destroyed the elaborate materialistic theories of these one-time aggressive atheists, who in their intellectual pride thought they had dethroned God. "Look," they said in their folly, "God Himself could not break up or destroy an atom!" And they, in the foolishness of their hearts, added, "the universe always existed; it needed no Creator, and that it was eternal and infinite." The great protagonists of this godless materialism were hardly cold in their graves when it was discovered that the atom was both divisible into minuter parts, and that it was destructible and capable of change into something apparently entirely different—into Light! This means, ultimately, that all matter, even the solid globe itself, is resolvable into light! This brings us back to the solemn declaration of Genesis: And God said, "Let there be Light!" The only comment necessary here is this—"The wisdom of man is but foolishness

to God." We need not pursue this line of argument further: it is enough to say that latter-day science has completely justified the truths of religion.

But apart from all this the discoveries of the physicists and the chemists about the atom is one of the romances of science. The atom is composed of electricity—a nucleus of protons: positive electricity, in the centre of the atom, like the sun; and a number of electrons: the number varying with the element—negative electricity, revolving round the nucleus, like the planets. In fact the atom of matter is a miniature solar system! And relatively, that is considering the size of these inconceivably small particles, the spaces between the planetary electrons and their central sun, the nucleus, can be compared with the spaces between Venus, the Earth, Mars, etc., and our star—the Sun!

And yet we talk of our "solid" earth, whereas there is nothing truly solid: even a solid lump of iron, such as an anvil, is really to the eye of science, full of empty spaces!

When we look at a bit of radium shooting out its rays with an immense velocity, we are in reality looking at the destruction or disintegration of atoms. An electron escapes from its centrifugal gravitation to the nucleus, and the atom has lost its balance—it is on the road to destruction. Millions and trillions of electrons are escaping every moment from the surface of the sun into space. And when you tune-in your radio set, you set millions of electrons working for you to bring you the distant message or picture through the ether.

All the above about atoms is in order to interest my readers in a tremendous problem that is now nearly ripe for solution in the laboratories of the world. A

certain number of scientific experts—Prof. Sir Ernest Rutherford among the number—are at the present time trying to run down the atom and discover its secrets. The chase is keen, the hounds are eager and well trained, and it is only a question of time until the atom is completely conquered. A small piece of radium will go on shooting out its alpha and beta rays for years without any apparent lessening of its bulk. This phenomenon is, as I have said, really a disintegration of the atoms which compose the radium. One can, therefore, easily believe that if the scientists succeed in their task of tapping the tremendous energy stored up in every atom, there would be an inexhaustible supply of power for what soon would be a new industrial world. Coal, peat, and water power, would be superseded by the released atomic energy, which would cost very little; for, if the new giant would be able to do all that the experts say he will do, the energy stored in the atoms which compose an old discarded horse shoe would drive a 40 horse-power Rolls Royce engine many times around the world.

We shall assume, then, that this great revolution has eventuated; that atomic energy is at the call of the engineer, and that, eight hundred years hence, Man has evolved into a rational civilized being—a dutiful and willing subject of Christ The King; and that he is living under social conditions attained under the guidance of His teaching.

Let us confine ourselves in this adventure into the future to our own beloved Kerry. We have the most beautiful spot on the earth as our heritage. Our people who got a new mixture of blood at intervals down the centuries, are a highly intelligent race; so

that we may justly assume that as the whole world progressed industrially, socially, and religiously, the inhabitants of the Old Kingdom of Kerry kept step by step with the advance. If Strongbow's nephew the Norman, Geoffrey De Marisco, who built the "Castle of the Island" in 1226, could revisit Kerry now, what changes he would have to record! His grand castle, a ruin in the back yard of a brand new street; the train running into where his drawbridge led into the courtyard of his fortress; horseless coaches running passengers into that other fortress of Tralee in fifteen minutes; and a young American, Lindbergh, arriving by air from the United States and flying over that great natural fortress that our Knight knew so well—the Slieve Mis range!

Dazed? Yes, indeed, poor old Sir Geoffrey would think himself in an entirely new and up-to-date Kerry. We can fancy him saying: "Yes, certainly, this is Kerry; there are the blue Reeks still nobly on guard in Desmond; and here is the River Maine, the boundary between Desmond and Kerry; and over there are the surrounding hills—Mount Eagle, Croaghane, and Crinna, but, God bless my soul, everything else is different. Men have become as birds; Tralee and Castleisland are almost one; and every serf and kerne is dressed like a gentleman! A new Kerry, my masters; but no place now for a knight who won this land with sword and lance." Seeing the monster railway engine come snorting, steaming, and roaring in and making straight for his old Castle, he dissolved and disappeared again into the invisible Country Beyond.

Let us suppose that some one now living would be

privileged, 800 years hence, to revisit the glimpses of the moon, in the year of Our Lord 2727. We can exercise our imagination in giving an account of his visit to Kerry in that year always supposing that this old world of ours will be then in existence.

It would be awfully consoling to such a visitor if he found *The Kerryman* still going strong in the Old Kingdom. The following then (Chapter VIII.) is the visitor's account of his impressions and discoveries of Kerry in 2727, which no doubt will appear in the columns of *The Kerryman*, dated 25th January of that year.

CHAPTER VIII.

LOOKING BACKWARD.

REVISITING Kerry after an interval of 800 years, I find the experience almost overpowering; it is just like being born again, but in the prime of life this time. Of course, it must be valued as an unprecedented privilege—a rare and precious gift from the All-Wise-Ruler; and a wholly undeserved compliment to an humble member of "the fourth estate." It surely was the love of Kerry that brought me back; for even amid the happiness of the Country Beyond an exile craving was always in my heart and mind for another look at its green hills, its blue mountains, and its enchanting sea-coasts. To be able to recall the year 1927 after a lapse of 800 years! This is a historic vision indeed. It is as if one were metamorphosed into something planetary and had become a part of the cosmos.

Everywhere within the Old Kingdom I find an enormous advance—the one word to convey this first impression is—"staggering." One out of a hundred items will do as a preface to the rest. Between Tralee and Castleisland there is a double motor road, with a beautiful garden path between for pedestrians out for exercise. A low border of flowers at either side of this path marks off the boundary of the roads that carry a constant stream of noiseless cars to and from the county town. There are villa residences with grassy unfenced lawns on either side of this triple road and

there are sub-ways for shade and local traffic at intervals of a quarter of a mile. There is no interval when the suburbs of Tralee end and those of Castleisland begin—a double row of costly bungalows all the way, with every convenience of a great city! This was my first peep at Kerry in 2727.

It must be clearly grasped in the minds of my readers that the atomic energy used in all kinds of machine—on farm, road, factory, and in the air—is to be had at little or no cost. A central generating plant for all Kerry is situated at Farranfore; and from that place unlimited power is distributed to all parts of the county. The greatest engineer of all time was born at Molahiffe in the year 2243. He devoted the first fruits of his early talent to his native county, by organising its industries—giving each town its own special products—then Kerry lent him to the rest of Europe. Given, then, this inexhaustible fund of cheap power, one need not be surprised at the marvellous advance in everything that spells civilisation. One becomes bankrupt in words to describe this astonishing advance in science, industry, manners, and religion. Only for the Old Adam still firmly embedded in human nature, one would think that the millennium had arrived.

In spite of all this incredible comfort in housing, food, and amusements, there is a divine discomfort even with this earthly paradise. No poor, no poverty, no slums, no "nothing-of-1927"; and yet the people are by no means perfect. Sin still remains—aye, and envy and uncharitableness in the midst of overflowing wealth: which goes to prove the truth of the old saying, "that riches never yet made a man or a

woman happy." The old devil is certainly scotched, but he is not killed. Well, apart from the mystery of evil and the contamination of sin, perhaps it is better that great wealth and comfort have not brought undiluted happiness in their train; for if man was perfectly happy here below he would never think of the Country Beyond, and so lose all that God has in store for those who love Him.

Industrial organisation has gone back to the Guilds of the Middle Ages. There are co-operative dairies, for instance, now called "family dairies." Five or six townlands join together and form a Dairy Guild—all friends and neighbours. It is run by themselves as a family co-operative industry: recognised and supervised by a central authority. It is a local enterprise, and there is no danger of bad or fraudulent management. All being highly educated—everyone has passed through the High School—there is no opportunity for speculation or favouritism of any kind. All are real Christians. No one has any desire to become richer than his neighbour; for there is no lack of necessities. The children's future is secure, and old age is secure. There is an abundance of domestic comfort for all. The desire to cheat your neighbour has lost its motive: the motive behind the greed for wealth is atrophied—killed outright. Only a crank would do wrong or attempt to hoard unearned wealth—and the motive for hoarding earned wealth—the welfare of the children is non-existent. Hence the complete cure of 1927 disease—the mad race for riches. The people forming the six-townland dairy guild, work as a unit. Each family, of course, owns its own home; but their meadows are common property, a huge

common byre for milking. The cows are out all the year round, and only rugged when bad weather is forecasted. Labour-saving machinery and cheap power have taken away two-thirds of the drudgery. A few hours a day from everyone keeps the whole co-operative machine running smoothly. Each family has its own car, and when the day's task is done they can refresh mind and body as they will.

There are no farmers and no labourers; all are simply workers. The men in the group that best understand calves have the feeding and rearing of calves; and the men of a mechanical turn drive all kinds of motors. Because of a sheer want of exercise, and a natural craving for self activity, the members are keen on their jobs; and every important job has its understudy. Educated, civilized, Christian people who are well fed, do not try to point on each other or to make trouble. Loafers, idle talkers, gamblers, grumblers, wine-bibbers, are shipped off to a strip of country in the Peninsula, between Castlegregory and Aunascaul which is named Crazy Land—the home of all Kerry cranks. This is the only blot on the fair landscape of the Old Kingdom, but it keeps the rest of the body politic sane and sound.

The Pig-Raising Guild are across the road from the Family Dairy. A little tank tramway carries the separated milk to the bacon producers. There is no muck or stench anywhere in these quarters; for a kind of oilcake is used; and this, with the milk, makes a complete food. The dairyman or the member of the Corn-Growing Guild do not think themselves superior to the pig-raisers. Why should they? Both are equally educated; their education and their religion

made them gentlemen; and only by honest labour is honour earned.

Nitrogenous manures are made from the atmosphere at Headford. These, with crushed limestone chemically treated, in addition to the byre manure, keep the lands up to the virgin soil standard.

In every coum and glen around the Reeks and the mountains of Dunkerron there is a monastery for men. Their orchards and terraced gardens ever climb up the lower slopes of the great peaks. As in the days of old, these monks support themselves by the sweat of their brows; a big surplus of their farm and orchard produce is sent to the big towns. In Corkaguiny there are many convents of enclosed nuns, and the fine needlework from these religious houses grace the shop windows of the fashionable boulevards of Listowel. Christian Brothers are now the only teachers in the national schools. All the little country and village schools have been abolished ages ago—the motor omnibus brings the country children to the big schools in the towns—to both the primary and high schools. The people are bilingual—a world language and Irish—but Gaelic everywhere prevails. New churches are built, old churches are kept in repair, and the priests are paid by the county parliament. Although the whole of Ireland is one State, each county has its own parliament; which, when necessary, sends a delegation to the central parliament in Athlone.

This latter parliament has very little to do, as, D.G. there is now no politics—it merely regulates the interchange of trade between the counties. Each county has its own governor, and he and the bishop sign all the laws.

Radios are, of course, in every home; one has only to put in a plug, turn a knob, and, lo! you are listening-in to New York or Sydney or Singapore. There is a perfect loud speaker in every pulpit. One Sunday at Mass I witnessed a most edifying sight. All the people throughout the land, in the churches or in their homes were listening to a sermon by Pope Benedict XXIV, given at St. Peter's in Rome. While he was speaking all had their eyes on the screen, where His Holiness could be seen plainly—all watching with intense interest his every gesture. At the end, when he raised his hand to bless, the whole world, now Catholic, were on their knees!

From a history book, I quote a few of the chief events: "In 1943 the eastern Orthodox Church was united with Rome, and in 1987 the Anglican Church followed in its footsteps. Opposite 1954 is written, "The Union of Ireland." In the year 1992 a great scientific discovery shook the whole world out of its apathy, which directly led to the conversion of India and China. Africa and America were already within the fold. In 2110 England became a Republic; the social problem was finally solved, and Russian Bolshevism breathed its last. In 2301 Mohammedanism, after showing symptoms of decay for many years, finally collapsed. The world was at last almost entirely Christian and Catholic!

In 2451 a Great Council of the Church was held in Rome, and the united Catholic world again solemnly offered its homage to Christ The King.

The weather is now practically under control. Meteorology is an open book to all, and correct forecasts are made twelve months in advance: in fact

there is a weather calendar in every home, and it is consulted with as much confidence as the people of 1927 looked for the day and date in the yearly calendar of that time. Fog and mist have been entirely abolished, and even thin layers of clouds are dispersed by streams of electrons from power stations on Bautre-gaum, the two Mount Eagles (east and west) and Mangerton. Apart from the big cyclonic depressions all minor meteorological phenomena are controlled. The monks of Magunihy and Dunkerron grow oranges in the sheltered coums on the southern slopes of the Reeks; for now 300 out of the 365 days are sunny.

Should a snowstorm threaten from the north, or an unusually heavy frost occur, they need only telephone to the power stations at Mangerton and Mount Eagle (west) and their orchards are soon after fully protected: the snow or sleet or hail being turned into a soft and gentle rain; and the frost is cancelled out by a warm gas cloud in the form of an artificial fog or mist. In a word the climate of Kerry is now like that of Southern California in 1927.

The network of roads throughout the county in 2727 is really magnificent. With atomic energy for practically nothing, splendid triple roads, like the one already described between Tralee and Castleisland, were made in every direction. The one round the coast from Kenmare to Tarbert, *via* Caherciveen, Castlemaine, Dingle, Castlegregory, Tralee, Ballyheigue, and Ballybunion, is used by tourists from all parts of the world. Air travellers from America land at the Killarney Aerodrome, go to Kenmare by road, and thence round the coasts of Ireland, which has become a summer playground for the Americans.

A fine motor road is made from Tralee round the Valley of the Maine, *via* Stack's Mountain, Barnageeha, Crinna, Croaghane, the Mount of Scart, and Drum-ulton, meeting the Tralee-Killarney road at Farranfore. This "Maine Drive," as it is called, keeps within a few hundred yards of the brow of the encircling hills; and from it magnificent views of mountain and sea are never out of sight the whole way round. On summer evenings and in fine weather all the year round, hundreds of cars bring the tired business men out of the big city to refresh body and soul in God's beautiful country. It has become a kind of fashionable promenade for the people of the three big cities—Tralee, Killarney, and Listowel.

In this peep into the future of Kerry, the wealth and comfort of its people, the splendid organisation of its industries, and the all-prevailing social peace, are things to be thankful for, and are no doubt very impressive; but, after all, the great fact to note, to dwell on, and to rejoice in, is that we find our people, in an ageing world, still loyal and faithful subjects of Christ, Our Only King.

(FINIS)

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