

ST. JARLATH'S CATHEDRAL, TUAM.

HISTORY of THE ARCHDIOCESE OF TUAM

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HISTORY OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF TUAM

VOLUME TWO

CHAPTER I.

JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

The Archdiocese welcomes Dr. MacHale.

IN October, 1834, Dr. MacHale bade farewell to the priests and people of Killala at Ballina, and then proceeded by road to Castlebar to take possession of his Archdiocese at Tuam. He left amid general regret, for his native diocese felt proud of her brilliant son, and the people's pride in his fame and in his high preferment tempered somewhat their regret at his departure. His biographer maintains that 100,000 persons followed the new Archbishop's carriage between Ballina and Pontoon. Nor did many thousands turn back until they reached the bridge between the two lakes, Cullen and Conn, which marks the boundary between the diocese of Killala and the Archdiocese of Tuam. But his biographer is fond of talking in superlatives in everything concerning Dr. MacHale, and a liberal discount may be allowed from his figure of 100,000. We may believe, however, that many thousands followed from Ballina, and turned home only when the shores of Lough Cullen had been reached. It is also true that large numbers came from Castlebar, headed by the chief laity and by the delegates of the priests, the Vicar-Capitular, Archdeacon Nolan, and the Chancellor, Dr. Martin Loftus, P.P., of Dunmore. There, at the junction of the two dioceses and at the junction of the two lakes, the Archbishop turned to bid farewell to the priests and people of Killala, after having first greeted the priests and people of Tuam.

At Castlebar his reception was enthusiastic. Crowds came

to see the new Archbishop, who had already acquired such fame; there was a banquet in his honour; and there were speeches recalling what he had done, and predictions as to what he would do in the future. And at Tuam there were crowds and a banquet and speeches also, and the Archbishop's praises were sounded as loudly as they had been at Castlebar. Nor did Dr. MacHale leave his new subjects in any doubt as to what his views were on public events, nor did he give any indication that the opinions he held in Killala would undergo any change in his higher position at Tuam. He would, he promised at Castlebar, be "the friend of the poor, the guardian of the orphan and the widow, the comforter of the afflicted, the scourge of the wrong-doer, and the messenger of peace; and he would scourge the wrong-doer, uninfluenced by the smiles or the favours of the powerful."¹

At Tuam he gloried in having stood between the Tyrawley peasant and his oppressors. If in so doing he had committed a crime, "it is a crime which I openly avow. But sorrow for it I have none." At the same time he denounced tithes, and he repudiated in advance any proposals for providing Government pensions for the Irish bishops. "While our flocks are left without suitable places of worship we can't help regarding with distrust any attempt to pension their pastors." A little later he told the Duke of Wellington that he had leased a little farm to qualify him for rating at Parliamentary elections, and he added: "I must, therefore, declare that, after paying the landlord his rent, neither to parson nor proctor nor landlord nor agent will I consent to pay in the shape of tithes or any other tax a penny of which shall go to the greatest nuisance (the Established Church) in this or any other country."² In Killala he had often assailed the Established Church, and it was evident that in Tuam his attitude would be the same.

One of Dr. MacHale's first duties as Archbishop was to see that a successor was appointed to himself in the See of Killala, and for that purpose he presided at a meeting of the

¹ O'Reilly, I, pp. 276-7.

² *Ibid.* I, p. 305.

Killala priests in November, 1834. The diocese consisted of twenty-four parishes, and in his *relatio status* to the Prefect of the Propaganda, written in 1832, he bore willing testimony to the excellent character of the Killala priests. They were men of piety, of ardent zeal, poor but generous, and had shown great generosity in aiding him with the new cathedral at Ballina.³ In his farewell address to them on leaving for Tuam he repeated what he had written in 1832. A bishop who has not the zealous co-operation of good priests is seriously hampered in his work. But Dr. MacHale was able to say that such co-operation he had got, and that he was handing over to his successor "a flock not only undiminished by the prowlings of the wolf, but increased by many accessions of strayed sheep returning to the fold."⁴ A little later he described the Killala priests as good, learned and pious priests.⁵

The Diocese of Killala.

Yet among these good and learned priests, whose piety and zeal were thus so highly extolled, Dr. MacHale did not profess to find even one who was worthy to wear the mitre of Killala. Father Costello was Vicar-Capitular, and got some votes, as did Father Donnelly; but Dr. MacHale strongly recommended Father O'Finan, of Rome, and his appeal to the assembled priests was so strong that O'Finan's name was put first on the list. Subsequently Dr. MacHale was equally strong in his recommendation before the Bishops of the province, and again his recommendation carried such weight that Father O'Finan was unanimously recommended by the assembled bishops. Not content with this, Dr. MacHale wrote to Cardinal Weld, an English cardinal then residing at Rome, and very influential, and the Cardinal answered the appeal by materially assisting Father O'Finan. Finally, there is a letter from Dr. Cullen, then Rector of the Irish College, stating specifically that the

³ O'Reilly, I, pp. 328-32.

⁴ MacHale's "Letters," pp. 521-23.

⁵ O'Reilly, I, p. 352.

appointment was due to Dr. MacHale's letter to the Propaganda. And there is a letter of Father O'Finan himself to Dr. MacHale, in which he declares that he can't find words to express his gratitude to his Grace. Such powerful influences could not be otherwise than successful, and Father O'Finan was appointed Bishop of Killala early in 1835.

He was then sixty years of age, born near Ballina, and a member of the Dominican Order, which he joined as far back as 1792. His student career had been a distinguished one, and after his ordination he taught theology in the Diocesan College at Waterford, and then in the Dominican College at Lisbon. Subsequently he was Prior of St. Clement's at Rome, then for seven years—from 1824 to 1831—Confessor to the Duchess of Lucca, sister of the Emperor of Austria, after which he was Socius to the General of the Dominican Order. He was a scholarly, cultured man, a man of learning and piety and humility, and without the least desire to be a bishop, even if the diocese were, to use his own words, the first diocese in Europe. These qualifications for the episcopacy were allied with serious defects, and it soon appeared that Dr. O'Finan was but *poorly equipped for episcopal work, and was an unfortunate selection for Killala*. Bred in the cloister, he had little knowledge of the world, and no skill in reading character; he was self-willed and obstinate, and refused to seek advice or take it from those who would have directed him rightly. On the contrary, he was ready to put himself under the guidance of one who was certain to lead him astray, a man well qualified to be a blind leader of the blind.

This was the Rev. J. P. Lyons, Parish Priest of Bangor-Erris. He had somehow ingratiated himself with Dr. O'Finan, and had gone to Rome to pay his respects to him. Henceforth he was the new Bishop's confidant and adviser. Even before leaving Rome for Killala, Dr. O'Finan had been meditating to erect a Chapter in Killala, but was dissuaded by friends from doing so until he had actually taken possession of his diocese. He was determined, however, to act in some things on his own initiative, and appointed Father Lyons

Dean and Vicar-General of Killala. He could hardly have done worse. The Dean was a quarrelsome, turbulent man, clever, ambitious and unscrupulous—a sort of Ishmael in his diocese, with his hand against every man and every man's hand against him. With his own parishioners he had been repeatedly at law in the civil courts; and though he had money and land, he refused to subscribe a penny to the new cathedral at Ballina.

Before his appointment as Dean he had urged the priests of Killala to protest against the extra episcopal charge for dispensation in banns in the diocese, the charge being ten shillings and sixpence, while it was but five shillings and sixpence in the other dioceses of the province. But with the honours showered upon him there came a change, and when the Killala priests held a meeting in Ballina, in August, 1835, respectfully remonstrating with the new Bishop against a continuance of the existing scale of charges, the Bishop, under the Dean's influence, answered them in anger. They were a factious, disaffected and ignorant body of priests. They must not oppose, or even criticise, either the Bishop or the Dean, and those who did were marked men, and when possible were removed from their parishes.

Such was the state of terror amongst them that Father Barrett, Parish Priest of Crossmolina, when summoned to appear before the Bishop to answer for some abuses in his parish, was afraid to do so, convinced that he would not be heard but condemned. Others were equally in fear. In these circumstances there were appeals to the Archbishop, both from Father Barrett with reference to his parish and the charges made against him, and from other priests on the question of banns. The Archbishop made a moving personal appeal to Dr. O'Finan to settle amicably all these differences, and thus obviate the necessity of interference from outside. But he appealed in vain. Then he asked Dr. O'Finan to attend a meeting of the Connaught Bishops at Dublin, after the Annual Episcopal Meeting in Maynooth, early in 1836. Dr. O'Finan protested that such a meeting was an illegal

synod of the Connaught Bishops, held outside the province. And he protested against the Bishops' resolution. This called for uniformity in Connaught with regard to episcopal fees, the Bishops adding that such a change "would tend much to dry up one of the sources of dissatisfaction in Killala."⁶

Later in the same year the Pope sent the Primate, Dr. Crolly, to Killala to investigate and report, and Dr. Crolly reported that Dr. O'Finan could do better work in Rome than in Killala. But the Bishop of Killala had powerful friends, among them the General of his own Order, Lord Clifford and Cardinal Weld, and these were able for a time to neutralise the Primate's decision. Matters at home, however, became worse. A Killala priest, Father Flannelly, had written in a Castlebar paper an anonymous letter, attacking his Bishop and his administration. But he had manfully confessed his fault, and was willing to suffer punishment. This, however, was not enough for Dr. O'Finan and Dean Lyons, and the Bishop brought an action for libel against the paper in which the letter appeared.

To the scandal of the people, the whole administration of the Killala diocese, the harshness of the Bishop, the avarice and arrogance of the Dean, the conduct of several priests were reviewed at length in open court. Dr. MacHale himself, three other bishops, and many priests and laymen were compelled to give evidence, and to be cross-examined by Protestant lawyers, and all this in Passion Week. Dr. MacHale brought these matters under the notice of the Propaganda, adding that Dean Lyons was constantly absent from his parish, and constantly fighting with both priests and people; that from being formerly the firebrand of a parish he had now become the firebrand of a diocese; that Dr. O'Finan himself was grievously neglecting his duties; and that from the day that he entered Killala he had never administered Confirmation, never visited a single parish, never preached to the people.⁷

To end this scandal was a matter of urgency, and again Dr.

⁶ O'Reilly, I, pp. 340-354.

⁷ *Ibid.* I, p. 362.

Crolly was sent to Killala by the Prefect of the Propaganda. Again he had to report adversely to the continuance of Dr. O'Finan in the diocese. The Bishop apparently had no will of his own, no will independent of Dean Lyons; and the Dean went on his old way, quarrelling with his parishioners and with his fellow-priests, and domineering over them, adding to his landed property and to his store of ready cash, and going to Rome and intriguing there instead of attending to the spiritual welfare of his poor people in Bangor. A bishop who persisted in having such a man as his chief adviser, and allowed himself to be led by him in all diocesan matters, was blind to the interests of the diocese he was sent to rule. Nor could any change be expected, for Dr. O'Finan was wrong-headed and obstinate, and would not change. In these circumstances nothing was left but to put the administration of Killala into other hands, and this the Connaught Bishops requested should be done in a joint letter to the Prefect of the Propaganda. They thought it would be best that a Coadjutor should be appointed, that he should be from an outside diocese, and should be chosen by the Propaganda without consultation with the priests of Killala or the bishops of the province. This was in accordance with Dr. Crolly's report, and was done by the Propaganda in 1838. Dr. O'Finan was then ordered to return to Rome, and resided there in the Convent of St. Clement till his death in 1847. His successor at Killala was the Very Rev. Thomas Feeny, who then held the double position of Parish Priest of Kiltulla and President of St. Jarlath's College, a man of proved wisdom and capacity. Dean Lyons was deprived of his title, and ceased to weary the whole diocese, and an end was thus put to those troubles which had agitated Killala so long.⁸

Dean Burke, of Westport, had been friendly with Dean Lyons, and had recommended him to Dr. O'Finan, and for so doing had incurred the serious displeasure of Dr. MacHale. During Dr. Kelly's last years the Dean had been Administrator at Westport, and had been paid the unusual compliment

⁸ O'Reilly, I, pp. 352-98; II, p. 102; Cardinal Cullen's Letters.

for an Administrator of being appointed Dean of the Archdiocese. But Dr. Kelly did more, and a few weeks before his death he obtained through the Propaganda a Papal Brief appointing Dean Burke Parish Priest of Westport. This arrangement was to last only for the Dean's lifetime, as Westport was a mensal parish, and after Dean Burke's death would revert to its old position.

The Archbishop and Dean Burke.

When Dr. MacHale paid his first visit to Westport as Archbishop he was enthusiastically received, and made an eloquent speech, and it was then he learned for the first time that Dean Burke had a Papal Brief, giving him the parish of Westport. The Dean was Dr. Kelly's executor, and found this Brief among the late Archbishop's papers. Not knowing of its existence, Dr. MacHale had appointed Dean Burke to the vacant parish of Kilmeena, and then the Papal Brief was produced. Dr. MacHale, however, was not satisfied, and there is a letter from him to Dr. Loftus, Parish Priest of Dunmore, showing that he had appealed to Rome. He was quite ready, he said, to recognise vested rights, however acquired. "But it is a different thing to acquiesce in an arrangement of the Holy See, authenticated and properly communicated, from leaving it in the hands of any individual without such a claim."⁹ This letter is dated February, 1835, and two months later there was a letter from Dr. O'Finan to Dr. MacHale showing that Dr. MacHale had written on the matter to the Prefect of the Propaganda. In spite of Dean Burke's Brief the Archbishop had applied for Westport as one of the appendages of the Archiepiscopal See. But the Dean's title was good, and Dr. O'Finan had to report that the matter was disposed of in favour of the Dean.¹⁰

It was about this time that Dean Burke brought under Dr. O'Finan's notice the name and qualifications of Father Lyons, of Bangor. Then followed the latter's appointment as Dean

⁹ Feeny MSS.

¹⁰ O'Reilly, I, pp. 339-42.

and Vicar-General of Killala, with all the troubles that ensued. Probably Dr. MacHale's contest with Dean Burke about the Westport parish, and his defeat at the Dean's hands, embittered him a little. Whatever be the reason, it is certain that he was embittered, and wrote of the Dean with great asperity. This letter was written in 1837 to the Prefect of the Propaganda, and was chiefly concerned with the troubles in Killala, part of which he attributed to Dean Burke. "The Dean of this diocese," he says, "was the first to deceive the Bishop of Killala by recommending to him the Rev. Mr. Lyons. It saddens me to think that in this the Dean had not consulted for the good of religion; for no one had expressed greater indignation than he had against Mr. Lyons's avarice, excessive violence and litigious temper, when he saw in his own town of Westport the succession of lawsuits set on foot by the latter, and some twelve of his parishioners thrown into jail by these parties. Assuredly Dean Burke could never have entertained the hope that a priest so given to law proceedings could be the man to promote peaceful measures."¹¹ These are strong words, though not entirely undeserved; for Father Lyons was a strange sort of man to recommend as the recipient of high ecclesiastical honours.

Distress in Tuam.

During these years there was poverty and distress in Tuam as well as in Killala. Connemara was as bleak as Erris, and its soil was as poor, and all over Tuam the landlord exacted what was often a rack-rent, and the parson's tithe-proctor went abroad, with the sanction of the law and the aid of its officers, to seize on the people's stock and crops. Within the Archdiocese there were parishes with no Protestant except the parson and his family, and where both Protestant church and Protestant clergyman were maintained by the Catholics around. Such sights did not goad the people to madness, as the people were goaded at Rathcormac and Carrickshock. But the discontent was deep-seated, and the distress and

¹¹ O'Reilly, I, p. 342.

suffering were great. Nor was the landlord or parson, except in rare cases, moved to compassion or to relief in these seasons of frequently recurring distress.

In his first pastoral, after coming to Tuam, Dr. MacHale had to complain that the landlords in his diocese, though sparing enough of their money when there was question of their tenants' poverty, were willing enough to be generous if they could purchase the poor man's vote. And he denounced this conduct in language that was severe. He warned the poor people that they must not yield to such seductions. "The freehold is not a property to be set up for sale. It is held in trust for the benefit of the people." And he ordered his priests to announce that whoever received a bribe for his vote was to be excluded from the benefits of the Sacraments until he made restitution of the money received.¹² He had, of course, no authority over the landlord or parson, so as to be able to restrain them; but he could and did show up their oppressive greed, their callousness in the midst of widespread and bitter want, and their readiness to relieve only in exchange for the people's votes. Their purses were closed while hunger and death stalked abroad, but were freely opened at election times "to debauch the integrity of the people."

They were ready also to spend thousands of pounds in proselytism, alleging that all Ireland's ills came from her people's attachment to Popery. This was the fruitful cause of ignorance and poverty, of nakedness and cold; and to wean the Catholics from the faith they loved, money was poured out like water. It was hoped it would purchase at least their outward adherence to the tenets of Protestantism. But the money was wasted, and failure was the only tale which the proselytisers had to record.

Proselytism in Achill.

In Achill Island a determined effort was made. Achill has always been poor, nor could it be otherwise, where nature has given its gifts with such a niggard hand. From Achill Head

¹² O'Reilly, I, p. 306.

to the Sound, from Slievemore to Achillbeg, there is bog and heather and rock in abundance, and the roar of the ocean as it breaks on the cliff is incessant. In the fifty square miles of the island the proportion of arable land is but little. There are mountains commanding a wide view of land and sea; there are precipitous cliffs; there is a strand beautiful to look at at Keel; and if wild and picturesque scenery were sources of wealth, Achill would be rich. But the population has always been large, the fishing industry undeveloped, and a desperate struggle has always been the Achill man's lot wrestling with a barren soil. Immersed in chronic poverty, and remote from cities and civilisation, such a place, it was thought, would be a suitable ground for the proselytisers' zeal, and thither, in 1834, came the Rev. Edward Nangle, to spread the gospel light.

The son of a Catholic who had abandoned his faith for that of Luther, he had the pervert's zeal and the pervert's insolence. He had first come to the island in 1831, on a steamer bringing meal to the starving islanders (Seddal's "Nangle," pp. 31-2). Returning to Dublin, he proposed to some rich and zealous Protestants to convert Achill from Popery. A committee was formed, and subscriptions received; the landlord of the island, Sir Richard O'Donnell, of Newport, was willing to co-operate, and gave the Achill Mission Committee 130 acres of land at Dugort for £1 a year rent, and in 1834 Mr. Nangle, accompanied by a Scripture reader, began his work.¹³ If we accept his own story, his success was little short of miraculous. Under his benevolent supervision, fencing and draining and building were done, barren land was reclaimed, rock and heather were replaced by growing crops, a school and church arose, and for the first time in the history of Achill the light of knowledge and faith was brought to the half-pagan inhabitants who dwelt under the frowning shadow of Slievemore. Within a year of his arrival, there were schools in Slievemore, Dugort, Cashel and Keel, and pious Protestants in Great Britain were edified at the apostolic

¹³ Seddal, pp. 58-61.

zeal of Mr. Nangle and its wonderful results. And to quicken their generosity they were told that there were 198 islands near Achill, with a population of 150,000, not one of whom had ever heard of the name of Christ.¹⁴

Sober reality was quite different from this. There was, of course, but one island, and its population never exceeded 5,000. Nangle himself admitted that there had been parish priests—Father O'Malley before his own time; then Father Connolly, and then Father James O'Dwyer, and under all these there were churches and schools. Indeed, Nangle's complaint was that they were too zealous, and he specially arraigned the teacher, Mr. O'Donnell, and was angry with the National Board for not having dismissed him because, with a green branch in his hand he had welcomed Dr. MacHale to Achill, and because he had sometimes confounded in controversy Mr. Nangle's Scripture reader. Nor was Nangle himself the meek and persuasive apostle of Christianity his admirers would have him to be. On the contrary, he was coarse and offensive to Catholics and their faith. The Mass he called a blasphemous fable; transubstantiation the source of many superstitions; the Eucharistic body of Christ an idol. A mouse eating the Blessed Sacrament; cattle solemnly hearing Mass, were some of the pictures he published in his paper, "The Achill Herald," and in the "Protestant Penny Magazine." And his coarse slanders on the priests and their flock showed him to be an envenomed fanatic who knew nothing of Christian charity.¹⁵

The National Board had no difficulty in deciding that the case he made against the teacher, O'Donnell, was not proved. And it was easy to see that it was the cottage and plot of ground and the constant wages which so often attracted poor Achill families to Dugort.

But starvation is not usually followed by conviction, and in 1835 Dr. MacHale rightly described the Achill Mission as "another tale of the numerous failures of fraud and fana-

¹⁴ Seddal, pp. 66-72.

¹⁵ "Evidence Before the Lords' Committee," Appendices.

ticism."¹⁶ In 1837 Nangle himself had to admit that he had then in his schools little more than half the number he had two years earlier.¹⁷ Nor had the Protestant writer, Mr. Hall, a different tale to tell in 1842. The Colony at Dugort had an income of £3,000 a year, and yet, eight years after its foundation, it had but 56 Protestant families. Of these, 11 were originally Protestant, and of the remaining 45 only 19 belonged to Achill. "So that as for Protestantising Achill only 92 individuals have been converted in nine years." Mr. Nangle's tales of success were but so many fables, and the pious Protestants who subscribed for the conversion of Achill were getting but a poor return for their money.

The Archbishop and the National Schools.

During these years the National system of education was in full working order. In one of the first letters of "Hierophilos" Dr. MacHale suggested a State grant for education to each of the Catholic bishops, believing that much better results could thus be obtained than through the medium of the Kildare Street Society Schools.¹⁸ It is true that Lord Stanley emphatically declared that, under the National education system there would not be even the suspicion of proselytism.¹⁹ But MacHale's views remained unchanged. He wanted denominational education as the most suited to Irish needs, and distrusted any system of mixed education. Nor was he satisfied when Dr. Kelly of Tuam wrote to him at Rome, in 1832, that Dr. Murray, Archbishop of Dublin, was satisfied. Dr. Kelly added a hope that Dr. MacHale would in time become more reconciled to Lord Stanley's system.²⁰ He could not, indeed, publicly disapprove, where O'Connell and Dr. Murray approved, but he continued to be distrustful.

Nor could it be denied that there was reason for his dis

¹⁶ Seddal, pp. 72-3; O'Reilly's "MacHale," I, pp. 310-312.

¹⁷ "Nangle's Evidence Before the Lords' Committee."

¹⁸ MacHale's "Letters," p. 8.

¹⁹ O'Brien's "Fifty Years of Concessions," I, p. 129.

²⁰ O'Reilly's "MacHale," I, pp. 196-7.

trust. Although five-sixths of the Irish people were Catholics, five out of seven of the Education Commissioners were non-Catholics, three being Protestants and two Presbyterians. One of the Protestants was Dr. Whately, Archbishop of Dublin, an Englishman and a bigot. In his book, "The Errors of Romanism," he described the Catholic Church as a mystery of iniquity, its ministers as adepts in priestcraft, its public worship as a kind of incantation, and its sacraments as nothing better than superstitious charms.²¹ As Archbishop of Dublin and Education Commissioner he was considered less unfriendly to the Catholic Church than he had been when he wrote "The Errors of Romanism," and in the House of Lords he defended the National Board against the assaults of Irish and English bigots. But he was a secret if not an open enemy. He favoured the National education system because he believed "it would gradually undermine the vast fabric of the Catholic Church"; and if the Protestants gave up the National schools, as some of them wished, "we give up the only hope of weaning the Irish people from the abuses of Popery." These were the views of an able and insidious enemy, worthy of him who wrote "The Errors of Romanism."

Mr. Carlisle had been a Scotch Presbyterian minister, and had patronised bible societies. He was a strong man, and in his position of Resident Commissioner he had the threads of the whole national system in his hands. Nor was he ever favourable to Catholics. He compiled the school lesson books himself, taking care that they contained nothing that could nourish Irish national feeling. He objected to a proposal that the Board would supply at cost price the Protestant children with their own Bible, and the Catholic children with the Douay version, because he had scruples about assisting a false religion. He objected to the facilities given in mixed schools to the different ministers of religion, and to the time allowed for religious instruction; and he succeeded in preventing Catholic priests giving instruction in mixed schools in

²¹ O'Brien's "Fifty Years of Concessions," I, p. 177.

Ulster under Presbyterian management. Finally, in spite of the preponderance of Catholic children in the schools, he appointed a disproportionate amount of non-Catholic officials. Twelve of the fifteen chief inspectors were Protestants; and in the model schools every one of the five professors were of the same creed.²³

The toleration of the National system by O'Connell and Dr. Murray kept Dr. MacHale in check for some years. But in 1838 his patience was exhausted, and in a series of public letters he fiercely assailed the National Board. He told Lord John Russell, then the ally of O'Connell, that to no authority on earth, except the Pope, would he submit the books from which the children in his diocese were to derive their religious instruction, and that over these books, "without regard to any Board," he would exercise exclusive and absolute control. And he told O'Connell that the books prescribed were calculated to place the religious education in the hands of the Crown. Nor had he any patience with high ecclesiastics, no matter how pious, who remained silent because they disliked to embarrass the ministry.²⁴

His views were soon shared by the other Connaught bishops, who resolved in 1839 to withdraw the Catholic children from the schools. This would be an implied censure on Dr. Murray and on many other bishops who shared his views. In these circumstances a meeting of the entire episcopacy was held in Dublin early in 1840, and three bishops favourable to the National system, and three unfavourable to it, were appointed as a small committee to formulate a united Catholic demand. They asked that the Catholic clergy should be patrons of all mixed schools having a majority of Catholic children; that they should be empowered to appoint and dismiss teachers, and select school books; fix the time for religious instruction; that the lectures on religion and history in the training college should be Catholic; and that on the National Board there should be one Catholic bishop and two Catholic

²³ O'Reilly, I, pp. 417-19.

²⁴ Perraud's "Ireland Under English Rule," pp. 378-87.

laymen from each province. As these demands were promptly rejected by the Lord Lieutenant, nothing remained for the bishops but to await the decision of Rome, to which recourse had been had in the preceding year.²⁴

Dr. MacHale, it was plain, did not agree with Dr. Murray. But he was thoroughly distrustful of Dr. Murray's fellow-commissioner, Mr. Blake, whom he considered an unreliable type of Catholic, ill-fitted to defend Catholic interests. For he favoured Government interference in Irish episcopal appointments, and payment of the clergy, and he had publicly declared that the Pope had too much power in Ireland. Dr. MacHale thought it intolerable that in schools exclusively Catholic no pictures could be hung on the walls, no religious emblems displayed. Nor could a Catholic bishop entering a school ask a Catholic child a question in the Catechism without first obtaining the permission of the lay teacher. Rather than this, he thought that the Catholics, poor as they were, would prefer to build and equip their own schools, and pay their teachers. He had already severed connection with the national schools in his diocese, some few cases excepted, and had established schools under the care of the Franciscan Brothers in many places, and had found that the number of pupils in attendance was greater than it had been in the national schools.²⁵

There were nine other bishops who shared Dr. MacHale's views; but on the other side were fifteen bishops and three archbishops. These latter were able to make a very plausible case. They would have been well pleased if their demands had been conceded by the Lord Lieutenant, though they were not sanguine that such demands would be conceded. Even as it stood they considered the National system tolerable. In the vast majority of cases priests or Catholic laymen were patrons of the schools frequented by Catholics, and these could appoint or dismiss the teachers. Only secular books were completely controlled by the National Board; religious books

²⁴ O'Brien's "Fifty Years of Concessions," I, pp. 183-4.

²⁵ O'Reilly, I, pp. 443-5.

could be objected to and rejected by the Catholic bishops. Of 1,200 National schools, just half had priests as their patrons, and as almost all the children were Catholics the administration and atmosphere could not be hurtful to Catholic belief. Finally, these bishops did not believe that Dr. MacHale's plan of one bishop and two Catholic laymen from each province was practicable. The National Board met once a week, and it would not be possible for these bishops to attend so often in Dublin.²⁶

Dr. Murray, of Dublin, being one of the Education Commissioners, considered himself specially aggrieved by the opposition of Dr. MacHale, and by the language used by him. He complained that Dr. MacHale, in his Lenten Pastoral of 1840, had held him up to public odium, as unfriendly to Catholic education, and he asked the Congregation of the Propaganda to curb Dr. MacHale's intemperate zeal. These points were put at Rome by agents sent by Dr. Murray and those who agreed with him, and they had the sympathetic support of the British Government agents at Rome. But Dr. MacHale had also an agent, the Very Rev. Dr. Loftus, Parish Priest of Dunmore, a man of considerable ability, who put Dr. MacHale's case with moderation and prudence. And when Dr. MacHale was charged with having indulged in personalities and bitter invective, Dr. Loftus replied by handing in the Archbishop's Pastoral, and asking was this a fair description of it. Further, he did not omit to mention that Dr. Murray had used strong language about Dr. MacHale, while he had used words of praise of Dr. Whately and Mr. Carlisle.²⁷

Early in 1841 Rome gave its decision. All books offending against Catholic faith or good morals were to be removed from the schools; Catholic teachers should be appointed wherever possible. Books professing to give the "articles of common Christianity" were unsafe, being too full of danger. It would be useful to have the school-houses vested exclusively in the

²⁶ O'Reilly, I, pp. 437-8.

²⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 458-63.

bishops or parish priests. A better and more equitable order of things was to be sought for, but meanwhile the National school system was to be tolerated, and controversies as to its merits or demerits among the bishops were to cease.²⁸

This closed the controversy for the time, and a private letter came to Dr. MacHale from Dr. Cullen, the Rector of the Irish College at Rome, respectfully suggesting that he should make no mention of the National education system in his Lenten Pastoral of 1841.²⁹ The temptation to do so was great, for Dr. MacHale expected a different decision from that of the Propaganda. But Dr. Cullen's advice was sound, and Dr. MacHale acted upon it. He contented himself with ignoring the National Board, and in his own diocese set up as many schools as possible under the religious orders. The Franciscan Monks were already established at Mountbellew, Brooklodge, Roundstone, Clifden, Kilkerrin, Partry, Annaghdown, Cummer, Achill and Kiltulla. The Christian Brothers were established at Tuam and Westport. And the Sisters of Mercy were established at Tuam, Westport, Clifden and Castlebar. This was but to partially supply the educational needs of his Archdiocese; but it was a good beginning, and he hoped that the wants of the other parishes would be adequately supplied in the coming years.³⁰

The Charitable Bequests Act.

Dr. MacHale's respect for the decision of Rome shielded the National Board for some years from attack. But in 1844 a new question became the subject of discussion and controversy, and again Dr. Murray and Dr. MacHale found themselves on opposite sides. This was the Charitable Bequests Bill of Sir Robert Peel. The days when Catholics could not possess or inherit landed property were passed, but they had much to complain of still. One of the last Acts of the Irish Parliament, passed in 1800, was to give statutory recognition

²⁸ O'Reilly, I, pp. 463-5 (Letter of the Congregation).

²⁹ *Ibid.* I, pp. 467-8.

³⁰ *Ibid.* I, pp. 471-474.

to a Board of Commissioners to deal with charitable donations and bequests; and though these Commissioners were empowered to deal with Catholic charitable bequests, not a single Catholic was among them. Nor was there as late as 1844 but one Catholic among the fifty Commissioners; thirty-two of them were Protestant ecclesiastics, and twelve were Protestant laymen; but the ecclesiastics were left in command by the laymen, who rarely attended the meetings of the Board.

These Commissioners were empowered by the Act of 1800 to sue for the recovery of every charitable donation or bequest which might be "withheld, concealed or misapplied"; and to apply the same when recovered "according to the intentions of the donors." But in case they thought it "inexpedient, unlawful or impracticable to apply the same strictly to the intentions of the donors, then to apply the same to such charitable and pious purposes as they shall judge to be nearest and most conformable to the directions and intentions of the donors."³¹ How a Board manned by Protestant ecclesiastics would interpret this provision when there was any ambiguity in the words of a charitably-minded testator, can be readily imagined. The Commissioners would readily consider it inexpedient to have the Catholic money used for Catholic charity, and would have little scruple about diverting it to non-Catholic uses. In 1840 the Catholic bishops at their annual meeting protested against this injustice, but in Ireland such abuses are long-lived, and nothing was done until 1844.

In that year O'Connell proposed in Parliament that the Catholic bishops and parish priests should be put in the same legal position as the Protestant bishops and rectors. But O'Connell was soon after prosecuted and imprisoned, and Peel, who was his jailer, had no wish to give legislative sanction to his proposals. Had he done so, the Catholics would be content. Peel, however, had his own proposals, and these were embodied in the Charitable Bequests Bill, which he introduced and passed in the session of 1844. This Act,

³¹ Dr. Walsh (Archbishop of Dublin). O'Connell; Archbishop Murray and the Board of Charitable Bequests, pp. 4-5.

abolishing the old Charitable Bequests Board, transferred its property to a new board of thirteen commissioners. Three of these would be Judges, and usually Protestants, and of the remaining ten, five at least would be Catholics. Should a question arise concerning the doctrines or discipline of the Protestant or Catholic Churches, Catholic questions would be referred to Catholic Commissioners, and Protestant to Protestant Commissioners. The power to sue and recover charitable bequests, withheld, concealed or misapplied, was given to the Commissioners, and they were to apply the bequests according to the intentions of the donor. They were not, however, to have a discretionary power of judging of the inexpediency of doing so. The Act did not remove the disabilities left by the Emancipation Act of 1829; for the religious orders were still unlawful bodies, and bequests to them would be invalid, though the Act did not impose on them any new disability, nor render invalid any bequest which, but for this Act, would be lawful.³² Finally, the Act declared invalid the pious or charitable bequests of lands, if made by will or deed within three months of the testator's death. If the donation was by deed it should have been registered within three months of its execution.

This last provision was eagerly seized upon by O'Connell, who hated Peel. Influenced by prejudice rather than by fair play, he assailed Peel's measure, declared that it was meant to plunder the religious orders; that the new Board would be worse than the old one; and that in the hands of such a Board no Catholic charity would be safe.³³

Dr. MacHale, assuming that O'Connell, as a great lawyer, accurately interpreted the Act, was vehement in his condemnation, describing it as surpassing in its odious provisions the worst enactments of the penal times, and developing a maturity of wicked refinement in legislation which the more clumsy artifices of the anti-Catholic code could in vain attempt to rival. He could not think it possible that any Catholic would accept

³² Walsh, pp. 10-15.

³³ *Ibid.* pp. 18-21.

a seat on the board, and, above all, any Catholic ecclesiastic, and if there were any such, they would earn the reprobation of the Christian world.³⁴ In common with twelve other Irish bishops and nine hundred priests, he publicly protested against any such measure, describing it as one "fraught with the worst consequences to religion"; and if any bishop or archbishop accepted the office of commissioner, he would be interfering in spiritual matters belonging to the jurisdiction of other bishops, which would be "a flagrant violation of the Canons of our Church."³⁵

Dr. MacHale's views were not, however, held by all the bishops, and at their meeting in November the following resolution was passed: "That, as the prelates have taken different views of the new Charitable Bequests Act, it is the opinion of this meeting that every prelate be left at perfect liberty to act according to the dictates of his own conscience respecting that measure."³⁶ The resolution fell so far short of what Dr. MacHale wished that he wrote to the Prefect of the Propaganda, asking that he should at once condemn the Bequests Act. If no Catholic joined the Board the Act could not be worked, and he could not see how any bishop could join the Board. If they did, they would join in robbing the religious orders, and they would incur such odium as never had been felt in Ireland towards the dignitaries of the Catholic Church.³⁷ Without waiting for the judgment of Rome, he again attacked the Bequests Act in a Pastoral issued at the beginning of Advent; and in this he used some strong language. He described the Act as an execrable and cursed measure; nor could he believe that any member of the episcopacy would be found to accept the office of Commissioner. "It must be a gross calumny on the members of that body."³⁸

Following quickly on this Pastoral came the appointment as Commissioners of Dr. Murray, of Dublin; Dr. Crolly,

³⁴ "Freeman's Journal," July 4th, 1844.

³⁵ Walsh, pp. 24-26.

³⁶ *Ibid.* p. 33.

³⁷ O'Reilly, I, p. 556.

³⁸ Walsh, pp. 76-77.



Archbishop of Armagh; and Dr. Denvir, Bishop of Down. Then came a Pastoral from Dr. Murray, written with much feeling and dignity. He was plainly hurt by the hard things said of him by O'Connell and Dr. MacHale. But he was a strong man, satisfied in his conscience that it was his duty to work the Bequests Act in the interests of religion and of the poor. He freely admitted that O'Connell's proposal to make each bishop and parish priest a corporation sole would have been ideal; but he was equally convinced that Peel's measure, though in part objectionable, would, on the whole, improve the legal status of his fellow-Catholics. He repudiated the notion that his duties as a Commissioner would oblige him to interfere in the affairs of any other diocese; and he was fortified by competent legal opinion in holding that O'Connell's view of the law was wrong. The fact was that O'Connell's dislike of Peel blinded him to the realities of the case; and his declining powers, no doubt, rendered him less capable than of old to give a safe legal opinion.

Even after the publication of Dr. Murray's Pastoral, Dr. MacHale did not cease from his attacks, though the Prefect of the Propaganda had written to him, warning him of the evils of dissensions among the Irish bishops, and exhorting him not to speak harshly of prelates who were merely obeying the dictates of their own consciences.³⁹ But Dr. MacHale was not easily restrained. He relied on the judgment of O'Connell as to the effects of the Bequests Act, and in January, 1845, he asked Sir Robert Peel to at once repeal the Act if he wished to restore tranquillity in Ireland.⁴⁰ As might be expected, the appeal was disregarded, and the Act remained, and was administered by a mixed Board of Catholics and Protestants. And Dr. Walsh, himself a Commissioner for a long term of years, has put it upon record, that, in his experience, there has never been any desire on the part of the Board to have Catholic interests suffer.

³⁹ Walsh, pp. 128-9.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* pp. 137-8.

The Queen's Colleges.

Pleased, apparently, with the working of a mixed system of education in the primary schools, Sir Robert Peel in 1845 brought and passed a bill setting up a mixed system of education for university students. Bigotry and privilege would not allow Trinity College and its powerful friends in Parliament to share its benefits with the Catholics; and Peel was compelled to leave Trinity College all it possessed. But he would give the Catholics a chance of getting university education, and set up three Queen's Colleges—one at Belfast, one at Cork, and one at Galway—with a university, of which these three were to be constituent colleges. The colleges were to be non-residential, open to those of any religion or of no religion, were to have no religious teaching, and no religious tests for professors. These must not, however, make any attack on any religion, and Catholics could make provision within the walls of the colleges for religious teaching, but at their own expense.

It was probably Peel's intention in bringing in this bill to sow dissension in the Catholic ranks, and if so, he succeeded. For O'Connell attacked the proposals; while the Young Irelanders, led by Davis, were in their favour. Nor was there unanimity among the bishops. At a special meeting, held in Dublin, in May, 1845, a resolution was passed that Peel's Bill, as it stood was dangerous to the faith and morals of Catholics. A second resolution was passed, calling for radical amendments, so that the Bill might be made acceptable. These amendments were: that a fair proportion of the professors should be Catholics; that there should be separate Catholic Chairs in Philosophy and History, and a Catholic Chaplain or Dean of Residence; and that the bishops of each province should be visitors.

In spite of the fact that no such concessions would be given by Parliament, and that Peel's measure passed without substantial amendment, a minority of the bishops were in favour of giving the scheme established a trial. Among these were Dr. Crolley, of Armagh, and Dr. Murray, of Dublin. On the

other side, however, was the majority, numbering nineteen bishops, among them Dr. Slattery, Archbishop of Cashel, and Dr. MacHale.⁴¹ They would have nothing to do with the Queen's Colleges, and Dr. MacHale very willingly adopted the language of an English M.P., which described the whole scheme as a gigantic scheme of godless education.⁴² Both sides appealed to the Pope. Dr. Murray suggested that it would be well to tolerate the Queen's Colleges—under ecclesiastical supervision—rather than to reject them altogether.⁴³ But Dr. MacHale and those who agreed with him would have none of them; and they asked the new Pope, Pius IX., in 1846, as they had already asked his predecessor in the preceding year, that Peel's Colleges should be condemned. They wanted a Papal condemnation at once, as the best means of safeguarding the faith and "repress other assaults on our holy religion."⁴⁴ Not at once, however, but in due time, Rome spoke, and its condemnation of the Queen's Colleges was emphatic. For the Colleges were declared worthy of condemnation because of "their serious and intrinsic dangers."⁴⁵ This condemnation was repeated by the National Synod of Thurles in 1852.

⁴¹ Healy's "Maynooth College," pp. 449-450.

⁴² O'Reilly, I, pp. 591-594.

⁴³ Healy's "History of Maynooth," p. 448.

⁴⁴ O'Reilly, I, pp. 585.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* II, p. 147—Letter dated October, 1847.

CHAPTER II.

THE FAMINE AND AFTER.

The Famine.

THERE were famines in Ireland in the sixteenth century, produced by the desolation of Munster in the Desmond war, and in Ulster by the long war against Hugh O'Neill; and in the next century thousands perished by hunger under the merciless rule of Cromwell. There were famines also in the eighteenth century and in the nineteenth century; in 1821 and in 1831. That of 1821 was caused by floods which submerged the growing crops; and that of 1831 was caused by the greed of landlords, who seized upon everything for rent, leaving their tenants to starve. But in 1845 it was neither floods nor landlord greed which caused people to die, but the failure of the potato crop, which was attacked by the blight, a disease hitherto unknown. From the atmosphere it discharged its poisonous breath on leaves and stalks, and then, penetrating beneath the soil, it struck with fatal effect, and the potatoes rotted and became unfit for human food. A paternal government would have at once taken adequate measures to grapple with what was a national calamity, and merciful landlords would have for a time forgotten their legal rights and left the people their corn and cattle. But the Government was not paternal, nor the landlords merciful, and the famine, which began in 1845, and continued its ravages for nearly four years, swept a fourth of the population of Ireland off the face of the earth.

Some of the greatest horrors were seen within the bounds

of the Archdiocese of Tuam. The poverty of much of the land, the small extent of holdings, the want of employment made the tenants' condition one of chronic misery, and already in 1842 famine had appeared. In that year Dr. MacHale had to record, and from personal observation, that numbers in his diocese went without a morsel of food during the entire day, "and some pass the second day doomed to the same experiment."¹

But these scenes of suffering only feebly foreshadowed the horrors of 1846, 1847, 1848, and 1849. Then the failure of the crop was complete and widespread, and the country was in presence of a national calamity. The Devon Commission had reported that more than four millions of human beings in Ireland were dependent on the potato for their food. Their only drink was water, their houses admitted the rain, their beds were the bare floor, their condition was more wretched than that of any other people in Europe.² The potato stood between them and hunger, and when the potato failed, there was nothing for them but hunger and death. O'Connell urged the Government to stop distilling and the export of provisions, and to set up reproductive works, such as draining and road-making and the building of railways.³ In Connaught especially this ought to have been done; for the province had 67,000 labourers with little or no employment, willing to work for sixpence a day, and there were nearly two millions of waste land, two-thirds of which could be reclaimed.⁴ But O'Connell's advice was unheeded, and only partially followed when Lord John Russell replaced Peel in 1846. Works were then begun, but they were neither useful nor reproductive, and too often were monuments of folly. The wages given was pitifully inadequate to sustain life, and the cost of these works was thrown upon the rates. What that

¹ O'Reilly, I, pp. 606-8.

² "Devon Commission Report."

³ O'Rourke's "History of the Great Famine," pp. 52-3, 59-74.

⁴ Tuke's "A Visit to Connaught in the Autumn of 1847."

meant may be judged by the fact that of the 56,000 families in the County of Mayo, 46,000 were on the public works.⁵

Towards the end of 1846 a deputation from Achill, headed by their parish priest, Father Monahan, went to Dublin to ask from the Government Commissary General, Sir R. Routh, a supply of food from the Government stores. They were able and willing to pay a reasonable price, but were told that the Government could not undertake to undersell the provision merchants—such a thing would be against the enlightened principles of political economy. Father Monahan, however, could not understand how the Government could be fettered by notions of political economy when the people were starving. But Sir R. Routh was obdurate, and advised Father Monahan to read Edmund Burke. The newspapers commented sarcastically on this heartless fooling, and reminded this Government official that his advice was not even original. It was founded on an Eastern story, which related that on a certain day a deputation of Sheiks came to the Calif to say that all their date trees had withered, and that his subjects were starving. But an old Mullah anticipated the Calif's reply by advising the Sheiks to go home and study the Koran.⁶

Lord George Bentinck, in the end of 1846, brought in a Bill proposing that a sum of sixteen million pounds would be voted for the building of Irish railways. But the Government opposed and defeated it, and of the sixty-six Irish members who voted, twenty-seven voted against the Bill.⁷ This would have been useful and reproductive work instead of the works of folly that in so many cases were set on foot. The fact was that the Government was callous where Irish peasants were concerned, and had no regret at seeing them perish off the face of the earth. Grudgingly, the extent of the calamity was admitted, and the remedies applied were entirely insufficient. Everything was ill-thought out, and much of the relief given was swallowed up by a horde of grasping officials.

⁵ O'Rorke, pp. 203-210.

⁶ "Freeman's Journal," October 12th, 1846.

⁷ O'Rorke, pp. 358-60.

Hunger and Evictions in the Archdiocese.

The destitution was, indeed, great, and the suffering, and especially in the Archdiocese of Tuam. In the parish of Islandeady, Patrick McLoughlin, being with his wife and family starving, was ordered by the Relief Committee to get a relief ticket. For this he had to wait for five days, and then, having got his ticket, went to work, but got no pay for three days. Meantime his wife died of starvation, but he could not purchase a coffin till he had got two more days' wages. Then, being assisted by the priest, he buried his poor wife at night, so that his starving children and himself would not lose the wages of a single day, lest they also might perish of hunger. In the same parish one Bridget Joyce, a poor widow, died of starvation, and so poor were her neighbours that they could not purchase timber for her coffin, and her body remained unburied for eight days. "No one could travel any considerable distance in Mayo at this period without meeting the famine-stricken dead by the roadside."⁸

In 1845 there were deaths from famine, though only half the potato crop was lost. In 1846 there was a total failure of the crop, and deaths from starvation were of daily occurrence. In 1847, taking Ireland as a whole, the failure was only about half the normal; but in Connaught it was much higher than in the other provinces, and in the Archdiocese of Tuam it was highest of all. The seed potatoes given in charity had been in good part consumed, and large tracts of arable land remained untilled. Of the 160,000 acres in the Castlebar Union, there were in 1847 only 20,000 under crops; in Westport Union only 16,000 out of 330,000; and in Clifden only 5,500 out of 189,000 acres.⁹ When the crop sown by charity was saved it was often seized for rent, and sometimes even for rates. "In every direction the agents of the landlord, armed with the full powers of the law, are at work—everywhere one sees the driver or bailiff carting the small patches of oats or potatoes, or keepers placed over the crop, whose charges, in

⁸ O'Rorke, pp. 269-270.

⁹ "Halliday Pamphlets."

some cases amounting to as much as the rent distrained for, must be paid by the unfortunate tenant."¹⁰ Corn, cattle, pigs, poultry and eggs had been seized or sold; even the furniture and clothes disappeared, and in 1847 there was want of clothes as well as want of food.

To darken still further this picture of unrelieved gloom, tenants were evicted from their wretched cabins. At Keel, in Achill Island, forty families were sent adrift. One old grey-bearded man, carrying in his arms his bed-ridden wife, and putting her down at the feet of Mr. Tuke, pointed with agony to his roofless dwelling from which he and his wife had been driven. A man with five motherless children had sold his boiling-pot for 3s. 6d.; another family had sold their little sheep, all they possessed, for 5s. 6d. Nor did any of these families owe more than three half-year's rent, and in many cases they owed only one half-year's rent. One hundred and fifty persons were thus cast forth, without shelter or possessions. The prospect before the poverty-stricken peasant, whose cabin stood on the rocky and sterile soil overlooking the bay of Keel, was cheerless at the best of times. But even the poverty and smoke of such a cabin was now denied to the evicted, and they could no longer count on the turnips and seaweed which had been their unwholesome diet since famine fell upon the land.¹¹

Those who had still the shelter of a famine-stricken home, and were able to work, flocked to the public works. But they had often a long journey to go; the wages were meagre, and not always punctually paid, and the price of food at the Government stores would not be lowered. Provision merchants must not be undersold, and the provision merchants were but too often shameless profiteers. There were, indeed, large contributions of food and money from the charitable and humane at home, and America, out of her abundance, gave with a generous hand. But though many lives were thus saved, the saved were but a small proportion; nor could any

¹⁰ Tuke's "A Visit to Connaught in 1847."

¹¹ *Ibid.*

private benevolence cope with such an appalling national calamity.

Death Everywhere.

People perished everywhere, and they perished by thousands and hundreds of thousands in that fatal year. Men and women died of hunger, or of fever and dysentery. They died in their houses and in the fields, after eating turnips or grass. They died on the roads going to the public works, or going to the Government depôts for food. They died going to the workhouse, or at the workhouse doors. Not infrequently the dead and dying were lying together in the same wretched house, where there was neither bed nor food, nor clothes nor fire. And the dead, often buried at night, for there was no one to attend the funeral, were buried without a coffin, and with no covering but straw.

In Clifden district 5,000 persons were trying to live on field roots and seaweed. There were so many deaths that each of the four graveyards in the parish had to be enlarged, and a fifth one also became necessary. The priests had a perpetual round of sick-calls, and one of them, returning from a sick-call, observed a poor man, weakened with hunger himself, endeavouring to bury the naked remains of his wife and two children, all dead of hunger.¹² Car and coach-drivers, as they drove along, saw the roads littered with dead bodies, and often drove over them at night.¹³ In the parish of Balla, a woman, to provide food for her husband and enable him to continue at the public works, pawned her cloak for one stone of meal, and when her husband died of hunger, she and her four children lived on rape, which she was allowed to gather in a neighbour's field.¹⁴ Near Claremorris, a horse, dead of disease, afforded sustenance to a whole family for a whole week, and this case does not stand alone.¹⁵

The toll of victims by famine was largely increased by

¹² O'Rourke, pp. 378-79.

¹³ Tuke.

¹⁴ O'Rourke, pp. 386-7.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* p. 390.

famine fever, and in the official reports we find it recorded that "fever is committing fearful ravages in Ballindine, Ballinrobe, Claremorris and Westport," and that "fever continues to rage with unabated fury at Castlebar." The country had become a charnel-house; mute despair was in every heart; over everything was a settled gloom; laughter had ceased, and the playing of little children, and music and song were unknown.

Those who were able to pay their fare to America fled from a land stricken with famine and disease. More who had neither money nor food tottered to the workhouse, until the workhouses were filled to overflowing. In Castlebar, in one day, 2,000 sought admission, and some of them had remained at the workhouse doors for a day and a night, in the midst of rain and storm. But the guardians had neither food nor money, and there seemed little use in admitting these.¹⁶ To Westport Union the evicted tenants from Keel had walked a distance of forty miles. In one day there were 100 admissions, half of them evicted tenants from Achill. These latter brought a recommendation from their landlord—it was his way of compensating them for eviction; but the Union was on the verge of bankruptcy, and the rates were too heavily burdened already. The master of the workhouse protested against further admissions, and declared that he had neither clothes nor bedding for the women and children already in the workhouse.¹⁷ Clifden Union was bankrupt. The inmates driven forth had no shelter but some gravel-pits near the town, where, starving and half-naked, they cowered in the dark and dreary winter days. And Mr. Tuke's heart was wrung at the sight of a poor lad of fourteen who, with a hollow and choking voice, begged for a little meal to keep the life in him. He was but a breathing skeleton, wasted with hunger and sores, and there could be little doubt that a merciful Providence would soon end his sufferings. The surrounding estates had

¹⁶ Colonel Moore's "G. H. Moore," p. 119; Letter of Rev. James Browne, P.P., Carnacon.

¹⁷ Tuke, pp. 10-12.

a large rent-roll, but were heavily mortgaged, and the owners were poor, and neither landlords nor mortgagees aided the starving tenants.¹⁸

Some Charitable Landlords.

Not all the landlords, however, were unheeding, and not a few whose hearts were filled with pity made heroic efforts to save their people. A good part of the money which Mr. G. H. Moore of Moorehall won on the racecourse, he turned over to the relief of his tenants. Day after day he attended the meetings of the Relief Committees at Ballintubber and at Partry, going over lists, and voting relief. Mr. Moore asked for no rents from his tenants, and he paid their poor rates, which were twenty shillings in the pound. Further, he joined Sir Robert Blosse and the Marquis of Sligo in importing a cargo of meal, costing £10,000. It was sold to the tenants at half its cost, and when the famine was over, Mr. Moore had the satisfaction of knowing that, mainly through his exertions and his sacrifices, not one of the five thousand persons on his estate, had died of hunger.¹⁹

Nor was this all. He gave free of rent for ever nearly thirty acres of land at Tourmakeady to found a monastery. The land was handed over to Father Conway, then curate at Partry, for the Archbishop and his successors, in trust. Before the end of 1847 Dr. MacHale laid the foundation stone of the new building, and in the following year two Franciscan Brothers, Bonaventure and Sylvester, entered into possession. Almost ruined by the extent of the sacrifices he had made, Mr. Moore was compelled to sell 6,000 acres of his lands. The Tourmakeady portion was purchased by Lord Plunkett, Bishop of Tuam, a zealous bigot, who sought to purchase Catholic souls for money and food, and when persuasion failed, he often evicted them. But he could not disturb the monks, who in these dark days gave valuable assistance to the parish clergy in the battle waged for the faith.²⁰

¹⁸ Tuke, p. 14.

¹⁹ "G. H. Moore," pp. 118-125.

²⁰ Moore, pp. 125-132.

The Archbishops and Priests.

The times called for sacrifice, and there were other landlords as well as Mr. Moore who made sacrifices. There were landlords who lived on Indian meal themselves in order to give more generously. Dysentery and fever attacked those in attendance on the sick and dying, and doctors and nurses often paid the penalty of their devotion with their lives.²¹ The priests suffered most of all. Night and day they were kept busy, attending to the sick, consoling the dying, burying the dead. How their hearts bled when they heard the dying crying vainly for food, or saw the dead lying unburied. Living on the offerings of the famine-stricken, they were necessarily poor, and often, when the hungry came to their door, they were unable to relieve. There were cases where a priest stayed in bed in the morning because he had no breakfast to get, and cases where the priest gave up his own meal to the starving, and went himself supperless to bed.²² Want and hunger and exhausting work, the unrelieved gloom and depression in which they lived, weighed upon their spirits, and undermined their health, and when the horrors of the famine were over, the ranks of the priests of the Archdiocese of Tuam were sadly thinned.

What one great prelate could do was done by Dr. MacHale. Neither the Government nor the landlords would help. Let the people go, said the "Times" in 1847, and let beasts take their place; and it gleefully noted that one Mayo landlord was evicting 600 of his tenants.²³ Nothing remained then but the help that came from the generous and charitable in many lands. A good share of this was sent to Dr. MacHale, and was by him distributed through the priests to the starving people. Hour after hour and day after day the Archbishop sat at his desk attending to the letters that came from near and far, from all parts of Europe, from America, and from distant Australia. No donation was left without prompt acknow-

²¹ "Transactions of the Relief Committee of the Society of Friends."

²² O'Rorke, pp. 414-415.

²³ O'Reilly, I, p. 651.

ledgment, and no genuine application for relief went unrelieved.²⁴ He had no secretary, doing all the work himself. He added to what he received many hundreds out of his own limited income, and the families were many who but for the relief Dr. MacHale administered would have disappeared off the face of the earth.

Death of O'Connell.

It was in the midst of the famine, when the hearts of the people were broken with suffering and sorrow, that O'Connell died. For many years he was the foremost Irish layman, as MacHale was the foremost Irish ecclesiastic of his time. They were close personal friends, both intensely patriotic, both men of strong wills and independent minds. On public questions they did not always agree. O'Connell wanted the Tithe Bill of 1837, but MacHale publicly opposed it, and in deference to his wishes, its most objectionable clause was dropped.²⁵ MacHale disliked the alliance of O'Connell with the Whigs, and thought he would have done better by a policy of independent opposition.²⁶ Nor could it be denied that such miserable measures as the Tithe Commutation, the Corporation Act, and the setting up of Workhouses were poor results of co-operation with the Whigs. On the other hand, O'Connell and MacHale were in complete accord on the Bequests Act and on the Queen's Colleges, and when they differed, they did so without rancour. It was O'Connell who described MacHale as the Lion of the Fold of Judah. He spoke of him always with reverence and respect, and was profoundly grateful for his political support.

On his side Dr. MacHale was proud to be the trusted friend of the great man who had done so much for Ireland, and when O'Connell died in 1847, the Archbishop, in a Pastoral to his people, gave expression to the sorrow that he felt for the man "the fame of whose glory extended to the ends of the earth";

²⁴ O'Reilly, I, pp. 653-4.

²⁵ "O'Connell's Correspondence," II, p. 90-95.

²⁶ *Ibid.* pp. 164-5, 173-4.

who, like another Moses, had brought the people out of the land of bondage. Dr. MacHale asked the priests, themselves suffering the severest privations, to console the people, bowed down beneath the weight of this fresh sorrow; and he ordered that in each deanery there should be High Mass for O'Connell. To him the choicest liturgies of our emancipated temples were due, "for, under God, it was O'Connell who had set our altars free."²⁷

Dr. MacHale and Lord Shrewsbury.

In 1842, when want and hunger were severely felt in the Archdiocese of Tuam, and when Dr. MacHale's anxieties were great, he was attacked in Rome by an English Catholic nobleman, Lord Clifford. He was one of these pestilent intriguers who have so often skulked within the shadow of the Vatican, ready to blacken the character of Irish bishops and priests. But Lord Clifford soon became conscious of the wrong he had done, and he made a very humble apology to the Archbishop.²⁸ In 1847 the famine had again come, and again the slanderer was at work in the person of another English Catholic peer. This was Lord Shrewsbury. In the House of Lords and in the "Times" Irish priests had been accused of incitements to murder, and Dr. MacHale vigorously defended them from such calumnies.²⁹ But Lord Shrewsbury, who had already been castigated by O'Connell, again came forward to charge the Irish Church with conniving at injustice and promoting crime. He was severely handled by the Archbishop, who denied his right to patronise the Catholic Church and calumniate its clergy, though he had no words of pity for its famishing poor. "In the course of last week," said the Archbishop, "I was surrounded by a group of persons whose misery could melt the soul even of an alien calumniator of the Irish priesthood; if the pride of caste had not steeled him against all appeals to pity." There were twenty persons, all

²⁷ O'Reilly, II, pp. 5-11.

²⁸ *Ibid.* pp. 47-54.

²⁹ *Ibid.* pp. 63-69.

hungry and in rags, and all freshly evicted from their miserable cottages in the depth of winter.³⁰

Lord Shrewsbury acted out of pretended zeal for his Church, but he had also a personal object in view. The Whig Ministry were anxious to establish diplomatic relations with the Holy See, hoping thus to make the Irish bishops and clergy submissive to British rule. This was the old project of pre-Union days, and again, as in 1799, the suggestion was made that the Irish clergy should be paid by the State. Lord Minto, the British Ambassador, objected to the existing system of supporting the clergy, as making them too dependent on the people.³¹ Matters had proceeded so far that a Bill to establish Diplomatic Relations with the Papal Court was introduced into Parliament. If it passed, Lord Shrewsbury hoped that the Pope's Ambassador at London would be his son-in-law, Prince Doria. This, in part at least, will account for his mischievous activity.

British Intrigues at Rome.

The danger was real. The Whigs approved of Shrewsbury's action. Dr. Wiseman was sympathetic.³² Lord Minto, the British Ambassador, was intriguing at Rome. And a minority of the Irish bishops, notably Dr. Crolly of Armagh, and Dr. Murray, of Dublin, were in close touch with the Lord Lieutenant, and to some extent were influenced by him. They were anxious, as he was, to have the Queen's Colleges tolerated, and the condemnation already sent from Rome withdrawn. For this purpose they sent as their agent to Rome Dr. Nicholson, Archbishop of Corfu, a meddlesome sort of person who seems to have had no episcopal work to do, and who was quite ready to undertake a mission to Rome. Dr. Cullen was uneasy, and wrote to Dr. MacHale. Frederick Lucas was angry, declaring that, as the Whigs could not

³⁰ Archbishop's Letter, January 13, 1848.

³¹ Dr. Cullen's Letter to Dr. MacHale, January 28th, 1848.

³² "Greville's Memoirs," III, pp. 107, 180.

govern Ireland through justice they would govern it through Rome.³³

The majority of the Irish bishops, feeling that Dr. Cullen's anxiety and Lucas's indignation were justified, drew up a statement, which was conveyed to Rome by Dr. MacHale and Dr. O'Higgins, of Ardagh. Father Prout, then a newspaper correspondent at Paris, humorously described them as passing through to Rome, armed with two shillelaghs, to reduce Pius IX. to due submission. The statement they brought lacked nothing in vigour, and it was supplemented by their own personal exertions at Rome. They denied that Irish churches had been profaned by political harangues, by incitements, or even excuses for murder. They objected to Dr. Nicholson putting his sickle into other men's harvest. They expressed their strong distrust of the Viceroy, Lord Clarendon, and renewed their objections to the Queen's Colleges. They asked the Pope to beware of the English, even when the English came with gifts; and warned him that the question was, whether the Irish Church was to be ruled by the Pope or by the British Government. They did their work, and when they left Rome at the end of 1848 all danger of diplomatic relations with England and of a pensioned Irish clergy had passed away. And a Papal Rescript was issued condemning afresh the Queen's Colleges because of their "serious and intrinsic dangers."³⁴

The Archbishop and Dr. O'Higgins left Rome not a moment too soon. For a revolution broke out, and the Pope had to fly from the city. The majority of the bishops, who disliked the Queen's Colleges, were rejoiced at the Papal condemnation, and not less at the defeat of the English faction, with their proposals of a pensioned clergy and an episcopacy controlled from Westminster. At Tuam the Archbishop was met by cheering crowds, who unyoked the horses from his carriage, and themselves drew it to St. Jarlath's. Then he was entertained at a public dinner, where much was said in his

³³ "Life of Lucas," I, pp. 94, 295, 300-1.

³⁴ O'Reilly, II, pp. 122-133, 150-51.

praise, and much satisfaction was expressed at the good work he had done at Rome. After this he settled down to work, summoned a provincial synod, which was held at Tuam in the last days of January, 1849, and at its conclusion issued, with the other Connaught bishops, a joint pastoral, condemning afresh the Queen's Colleges, calling, in accordance with the Pope's wishes, for the establishment of a Catholic University. The bishops also invited public subscriptions for the Pope, a fugitive and an exile, and as such left without the revenues of the Papal dominions.³⁵

Widespread Misery.

During the Archbishop's absence in Rome, conditions at home had not improved. In 1847 Mr. Tuke had noted that the sea round Achill abounded in herring and mackerel, and he believed that an expenditure of £100 on the part of the Government would equip ten fishing-boats, and keep 1,000 persons in food.³⁶ The same year the Society of Friends were able to put up fish-curing stations both at Clifden and at Achill, which gave some employment and some relief, though it was all too little.³⁷ The potato crop in 1848 was far worse than that of the preceding year, and in the Archdiocese of Tuam it was a total failure. In that year three-fourths of the whole population of the Clifden Union were in receipt of relief. In the Catholic Union there were 1,561 inmates, and 8,509 persons receiving outdoor relief; and in Westport Union there were 1,528 inmates and 9,250 receiving outdoor relief.³⁸ The parish priest of Clifden had to report that some of his people were glad to eat dead horses and dead dogs.³⁹ Driven to desperation, some men had shot down landlords and agents, but no such murders had been committed in Tuam, though

³⁵ O'Reilly, II, p. 173.

³⁶ "Halliday Pamphlets."

³⁷ *Ibid.* "Transactions of the Relief Committee of the Society of Friends."

³⁸ "Halliday Pamphlets."

³⁹ O'Reilly, II, p. 96.

there were cases in which the landlord had taken the last meal from his tenants.⁴⁰

Nor did the clouds lift with the passing of the old year. On the contrary, a new and terrible visitation came with the appearance of cholera. The people had still to combat famine, and now they had fever, dysentery, and cholera. The landlords continued to evict, and the people lay down and died, or fled in terror across the ocean from a famine-stricken and plague-stricken land. All classes were becoming involved in ruin—the labourers, farmers, landlords and merchants—and the Archbishop of Tuam, as he stood amid the ruins, was reminded of Raphael's picture of the Deluge, "where all classes, sexes and ages are swept away and submerged gradually in one indiscriminate destruction."⁴¹

He suggested that the tenants should get fixity of tenure, with compensation for improvements and eviction, and that the surplus funds of the Established Church should be diverted to education and works of charity.⁴² But the Government were unheeding. They passed an Act suspending the Habeas Corpus Act, and they viewed with complacency the decimation of the people by famine and emigration. And the Irish Members of Parliament, corrupt and incompetent, were only intent on personal quarrels, and were indifferent to the people's fate. One victim of eviction and hunger Dr. MacHale saw near Kilmaine, as he passed from Ballinrobe to Tuam. The man, dead from hunger, was lying on the roadside, with two others, starving, but still living, by his side. A little later, and again near Ballinrobe, a poor woman died of the cholera. The young priest who attended her had also died of the same disease, and the woman's daughter, having no one to assist her, carried her mother's corpse a distance of a mile to the grave, and then buried it. The following day the daughter herself was attacked by the cholera, and within a week both mother and daughter were laid side by side.⁴³

⁴⁰ O'Reilly, II, p. 65.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* p. 168.

⁴² *Ibid.* p. 171.

⁴³ *Ibid.* pp. 175-180.

With sights such as these before him, Dr. MacHale was ill-disposed to agree with Dr. Murray, of Dublin, in 1849, that a loyal and dutiful address should be presented by the bishops to the Queen on her visit to Ireland in that year. If an address were to be presented, it should, he thought, be manly and dignified, telling the Queen that already a fourth of the people had been swept away. He would have nothing to do with the address presented by Dr. Murray and a few other bishops, and hoped that the suggested address to Prince Albert would never be presented by a Catholic bishop. The Prince was well known to be bitterly anti-Catholic, and the Queen herself had never a word of sympathy for the Irish people.⁴⁴

The Archbishopric of Armagh.

In April, 1849, the Primate, Dr. Crolly, died of the cholera. For years he had been much under the influence of Dr. Murray, and, like him, tolerated the National Education system and the Queen's Colleges. But he did this because he thought it best for the Church, and not from any selfish motive. There is, therefore, no justice in throwing at him, as O'Reilly does, the opprobrious name of Castle bishop, as if he was animated by corrupt motives, or sought for any personal favours from the Castle. On most questions, it is true, Dr. MacHale was in disagreement with him, and he was, therefore, anxious that his successor would be less under Dr. Murray's influence.

For the vacancy, Dr. MacHale's own name was mentioned, but not seriously,⁴⁵ and the contest lay between Drs. O'Hanlon and Dixon, of Maynooth, and Dean Kieran. By the priests they were placed in order—Dixon, O'Hanlon and Kieran.⁴⁶ The first and third were priests of Armagh Archdiocese. Dr. O'Hanlon was from Kilkenny, and in natural ability and theological attainments was easily first; and though the priests

⁴⁴ O'Reilly, II, pp. 195-7.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* p. 206.

⁴⁶ Healy's "History of Maynooth College."

put Dixon's name first, the Northern bishops gave first place to O'Hanlon. The Archbishop of Cashel would not interfere in the selection, it being outside his province; but Dr. MacHale had no such scruple, and actively interfered on behalf of Dr. O'Hanlon. He saw the Nuncio at Paris, and defended O'Hanlon from some aspersions cast upon his character. And when the question of the appointment was referred by Rome to the three Archbishops, Dr. MacHale was strongly on O'Hanlon's side.

He was a man of the highest talents, far above the other two. It was high praise, but the Archbishop did less than justice to Dr. Dixon when he described him as only qualified to teach the younger students in Maynooth. And he described Dean Kieran as well fitted to be a parish priest, but unequal to a higher dignity. At most he would not place either above a suffragan see, and considered them entirely unequal to the burden of the primatial see.⁴⁷ Partiality for Dr. O'Hanlon evidently blinded the Archbishop; for Dr. Dixon was an eminent professor and author, and Kieran was a brilliant pulpit orator; and in after years both became Primate, and filled even that eminent position with credit and success.⁴⁸

Failing the appointment of Dr. O'Hanlon, Dr. MacHale suggested to Propaganda the appointment of Dr. Paul Cullen, Rector of the Irish College, "a man not only admirably qualified, but who would be most acceptable to the entire body of bishops and the Irish clergy." This recommendation was acted on, and early in 1850 Dr. Cullen was consecrated, and came to Ireland as Archbishop of Armagh and Apostolic Delegate, and in this capacity he presided at the National Synod of Thurles in August of the same year.

The Synod of Thurles.

Dr. Cullen was an old friend of Dr. MacHale, with whom he had confidentially corresponded for many years. He disliked the National Schools and the Queen's Colleges, and

⁴⁷ O'Reilly, II, pp. 216-20.

⁴⁸ Stuart's "Historical Memoirs of Armagh"—ed. Coleman, pp. 306-12.

when he presided at the Synod of Thurles, and Dr. MacHale preached before it, both chairman and preacher were at one on the main business of the Synod. Nor was there any ambiguity about the Synod's decrees. It was decreed that no Irish bishop could take part in the administration of the Queen's Colleges; that no priest could accept or retain any position on the College staff, without incurring suspension, and that the Colleges were to be shunned by all Catholic students. Lastly, that measures should be taken to establish a Catholic University.⁴⁹

There were other decrees, such as those regarding the administration of Baptism in the churches rather than in private houses, and the care of the Blessed Sacrament, about which there was little difference of opinion. But Dr. Murray and others opposed the condemnation of the Queen's Colleges. There was some opposition in the Synod, some loose writing in the newspapers, some protest in Rome against the sanction of the decrees. But it is entirely incorrect to say, as O'Reilly does, that these decrees were at any time treated by Dr. Murray with contempt.⁵⁰ He was, it is true, tenacious of his opinion and not easily convinced; but he was a holy man, and submissive to the authority of Rome; and when he died, early in 1852, he left a name which even his opponents respected and revered.

Members of Parliament.

The political troubles which affected so many countries in Europe found an echo in Ireland in the futile rebellion of 1848. But in this Tuam had no share. There was suffering and discontent, and there were secret societies. But the people had not the spirit to rebel. They looked to God for consolation and for deliverance, and though there were attacks on landlords, and even murders in other parts of Ireland, there were none such in Tuam.⁵¹ This was all the more remarkable because of the number and harshness of the evictions,

⁴⁹ Decrees of Synod of Thurles.

⁵⁰ O'Reilly, II, pp. 243-5.

⁵¹ Dr. MacHale's Letter to Lord Shrewsbury.

and because nothing could be hoped for from Parliament. O'Connell had a worthless party to lead, a party unreliable, factious and corrupt. Nor had he any more worthless followers than the two Repealers from Mayo.

In 1846 they were Mr. Mark Blake and Mr. Dillon Browne. In that year Mr. Blake resigned, and Mr. Joseph McDonnell took his place, defeating Mr. Moore, of Moore Hall, who had the landlord support. McDonnell was a Repealer, and had the support of O'Connell and Dr. MacHale. He was, indeed, a strange specimen of a patriot member. He could drink more whiskey than any man in Mayo, was reckless and impecunious, and generally remained indoor at Doo Castle where he lived, because if he ventured out he would be arrested for debt. At last he came into the Insolvent Court, and though his debts were large, his entire assets were sworn to be a flute, a bagpipe (on which he played well), and a setter dog. A poor speaker, he had no capacity for parliamentary work, and at the general election in 1847 he was at the bottom of the poll.

Mr. Dillon Browne was much superior in ability; was, in fact, one of the finest speakers in Parliament. But he drank heavily, though not so heavily as McDonnell; was a fire-eating duellist, and was so poor that he was sometimes unable to appear in the House of Commons for want of decent clothes. O'Connell appointed him Inspector of Repeal Wardens in Connaught, at a salary of £300 a year—a salary all too little for his expensive tastes. In London he had once recourse to an ingenious stratagem, whereby he obtained the wine of which he was so fond, and for which he was unable to pay. Passing by an undertakers, and seeing an announcement, "Funerals supplied," he entered, sad and sorrowful, as became one recently bereaved. The undertaker was sympathetic, and replying to his questions about coffins, hearses and mutes, assured Browne that he would provide everything satisfactorily. After he had drunk copiously of the undertaker's wine, he was asked about the remains, and then reminded the undertaker that, as he had promised to supply everything, he had better supply the corpse. Browne died in

1850, after having represented Mayo for many years, and with little advantage either to Mayo or to Ireland.⁵²

Mr. Moore, who was returned at the head of the poll in 1847, was a far different man. He was neither impecunious nor intemperate, wanted no office, and might be relied on to keep any promises he made to the people. He was a man of wide reading, an accomplished writer and speaker, and he soon made his mark in Parliament. He despised the wretched gang of dishonest tricksters, who, with professions of patriotism on their lips, were then betraying the people; and when these Irish Members met in Dublin, in 1848, and passed resolutions which they had no intention of keeping, Moore warned Dr. MacHale that they were only fooling the people. His ideal was an Irish party, looking to Ireland alone, prepared to help any British party who passed Irish reforms, but equally prepared to oppose any British party who denied such reforms.⁵³ Parliament was generous only in Coercion Acts, refusing to pass Sharman Crawford's Bills of 1848 and 1850, which merely proposed to extend the Ulster Custom to the rest of Ireland. But it passed the Encumbered Estates Act of 1849, which sent adrift the insolvent, but often kind-hearted, landlords, and replaced them by grasping landlords, who raised rents and evicted without mercy. And while Parliament was unheeding, and Irish Members corrupt, secret societies grew, and murders took place. The landlord's writ was answered by the peasant's gun.

Independent Opposition.

In 1850 North and South were brought together, and at the Tenant Right Conference in Dublin, Gavan Duffy, of the "Nation," Maguire, of the "Cork Examiner," Dr. Grey, of the "Freeman," Lucas, of the "Tablet," and Protestant and Presbyterian editors and politicians from Down and Antrim and Derry, found themselves on the same platform. Resolutions were passed demanding for the tenants fair rents, fixity

⁵² "O'Connell's Correspondence," II, p. 372.

⁵³ "Life of G. H. Moore," pp. 159-61.

of tenure, and free sale; and in future all parliamentary candidates should pledge themselves to oppose any and every British party which refused to concede the tenants' claims. This was the policy of independent opposition, which received the hearty support both of Dr. MacHale and Mr. Moore. And such was the progress made by the new movement that at the general election of 1852, forty members were returned to Parliament, pledged to Tenant Right and Independent Opposition. Among them were such able men as Lucas and Duffy, Maguire and Moore.⁵⁴

Meantime trouble arose in ecclesiastical affairs. In the end of 1850 the Pope restored the Catholic Hierarchy in England, and Dr. Wiseman became Cardinal and Archbishop of Westminster. This in no way interfered with the English Protestant Church, but it roused English Protestant bigotry. The Bishop of Durham complained to the Premier, Lord John Russell, of this Papal aggression, and the Premier agreed it was intolerable. All over England meetings of protest were held, at which the vilest language was used against Catholics. Men like Gladstone were disgusted at this bigotry, and the Queen did not approve. But the storm continued, and when Parliament met, early in 1857, the Premier brought in the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill, making it penal for any ecclesiastics to assume titles conferred by a foreign power.⁵⁵ Moore and others fought the Bill, and on Imperial questions joined the Tories, and so weakened the Government that Lord John Russell resigned, though he resumed office. In several letters to Dr. MacHale Moore urged that the Irish Members, acting together, should obstruct legislation generally unless the Bill were dropped, but his colleagues were insincere, and the Bill passed.⁵⁶ In a public letter Dr. MacHale defied both the Act and its author, and invited prosecution by signing himself, "John, Archbishop of Tuam."⁵⁷ The challenge was not

⁵⁴ Duffy's "League of North and South."

⁵⁵ "Annual Register, Queen Victoria's Letters"; Greville's "Memoirs," VI, pp. 375-8.

⁵⁶ Moore's "Life," pp. 182-7.

⁵⁷ O'Reilly, II, p. 255.

accepted, and "Punch" caricatured Lord John Russell as having written "No Popery" on the dead walls, and then having run away from what he had written.

Sadlier and Keogh.

Dr. MacHale spoke with enthusiasm of the noble band of twenty M.P.s that struck such terror to the Ministry. The people spoke of them as the Irish Brigade fighting for Ireland abroad; while in England they were derisively described as the Pope's Brass Band. Next to Moore the two most prominent of them were Mr. John Sadlier, an attorney with money and speculating instincts, and with social and political ambitions; and Mr. William Keogh, an impecunious barrister, able and eloquent in Parliament, and all-powerful on a public platform. The Brigadiers, as they came to be called, readily joined with Dr. Cullen and Dr. MacHale in founding the Catholic Defence Association in 1851, and at the inaugural meeting Keogh vowed that he would have no terms with any Ministry until the Titles Act was repealed. At the general election in 1852 all the Brigadiers were returned. But they had little enthusiasm for independent opposition, and in the first days of 1853 they forgot their promises to the people by accepting office. Keogh became Solicitor-General, and Sadlier a Lord of the Treasury; Moore had been offered the Chief Secretaryship, but declined.⁵⁸ Dr. MacHale was surprised, though Moore was not, as he had described Keogh, in the previous year, as "an expectant of office," and Sadlier as "an unscrupulous attorney looking out for a place."⁵⁹

Dr. MacHale and Dr. Cullen.

So far Dr. Cullen and Dr. MacHale had agreed. They were the best of friends at the Synod of Thurles; they worked together for the Catholic University; they favoured the Tenants' Defence Association, and were present at its inaugural meeting. But when Keogh and Sadlier betrayed

⁵⁸ O'Reilly, II, p. 271.

⁵⁹ Moore's "Life," p. 183.

the cause they had sworn to defend, the two Archbishops came to the parting of the ways. Mr. Moore consulted Dr. MacHale on the immorality of violating public pledges made by the representatives of the people, and Dr. MacHale answered in no ambiguous terms that their conduct was immoral. They had entered freely into solemn covenants with the people, and were bound by the obligations of fidelity which these covenants imposed. They had no right to make promises which they did not intend to keep, and had thrust themselves into the place of honest men who would have kept their solemnly plighted word. The people did not understand this perfidy, "not yet being reared in the school of political deception."⁶⁰ Such men deserved to be hunted from public life, and it was with Dr. MacHale's entire approval that Sadleir's re-election was opposed in Carlow, and that Keogh was opposed at Athlone.

Dr. Cullen took a different view. He was born in Kildare, where such poverty and landlord oppression as existed in Mayo and Galway were unknown. As a student and priest he had lived in Rome for thirty years, chiefly in an academic atmosphere. Politics gave him no concern; but when, in 1848, he saw a liberal-minded Pope driven from Rome by atheists and assassins, he conceived a horror of popular movements and a distrust of popular leaders, and this distrust he brought back with him to Ireland. It was not that he had any sympathy with oppression, and did not feel for the poor. But he did not understand Irish conditions, and had not at any time the political acumen of Dr. MacHale. His first concern was always for the Church, and he too readily placed a high value on the professing zeal for religion of Sadlier and Keogh, and too readily confounded the liberal views of Lucas and Duffy with the revolutionary violence of Garibaldi and Mazzini. Hence he condoned the pledge-breaking of Keogh and Sadlier, because he thought that even in office they would be useful to the Church. On the other hand, he grew lukewarm in support of the Tenant Right movement, because Moore and Lucas

⁶⁰ Letter to Mr. Moore, February, 1853.-

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and Duffy were identified with it; and he disliked priests in any part of Ireland appearing on Tenant Right platforms. In this direction his attitude was fatal to the Tenant Right movement, as it was to independent opposition in Parliament. In 1856 Lucas was dead, and Duffy in Australia, and Ireland was like a corpse on the dissecting table.

Dr. MacHale was on the friendliest terms with Lucas, and gave Duffy a warm letter of commendation to the Irish in Australia. Nor was this the only matter in which the two Archbishops disagreed. Both were zealous for the establishment of the Catholic University, both anxious that it should attain in time to the greatness of its model at Louvain. But they disagreed in the working out of the details. Dr. MacHale disliked having the management of the University in the hands of a small committee of the bishops. He complained that he was not furnished with details of the expenditure, though he was expected to sign cheques. He wanted the University to be more Irish, and disliked Newman's idea of having it a cosmopolitan University, where the youth of all nations would gather together to acquire knowledge. And he wanted less Oxford scholars in the University Chairs. Here, as on the question of Tenant Right, there was want of harmony between the Archbishops, and the effect in both cases was similar.

Disheartened with his task, Newman, the first Rector, resigned his position in 1857. The Irish Catholic University but feebly realised the intentions of its founders and supporters, and Irish Catholics seeking higher education were left for a further half-century in a position of inferiority.

CHAPTER III.

PROSELYTISM AND EVICTIONS.

Dr. MacHale Criticised.

O'CONNELL once described Dr. MacHale as the Lion of the Fold of Judah, and the title fitted him well. For Dr. MacHale was as brave as a lion, fearing nobody, ready to differ from anybody, and ready to attack anybody, without counting the cost. He attacked the National Education system, the Queen's Colleges, the Established Church, and rackrenting landlords; more than once he differed with O'Connell; and he frequently, and in very grave matters, differed with Dr. Murray and Dr. Cullen. Too independent to be a courtier, he could never have been called a Castle bishop. He could always count on the enmity of British Ministers, whether Whig or Tory, and was often seriously misrepresented by their agents at Rome.

In spite of English intrigue, his views prevailed on the questions of a pensioned clergy, of diplomatic relations between the Vatican and London, and of the character of the Queen's Colleges, and the amount of toleration to be given them. But English intrigue continued, and at last an impression was made in Rome unfavourable to the Archbishop. He was represented as a turbulent ecclesiastic, overbearing and tyrannical in his manner, intolerant towards his opponents, too fond of the Press and of the political platform; and while thus engaged, neglecting the duties of his office, and allowing the enemies of his faith to make inroads on his flock. Pius IX. told Mr. Lucas that from the very beginning of his

Pontificate, in 1846, he had been hearing complaints against Dr. MacHale. He said they had been made by English agents, whose motives he appreciated, and that he gave no heed to them, and remained silent.¹ But though the Pope did not credit all that he was told by these English agents, he was to some extent impressed, and in 1852 he sent a personal letter of advice and remonstrance to Dr. MacHale.

Proselytism in the Archdiocese.

A quarter of a century before this date a Protestant writer noted with regret that "the Roman Catholic faith is in Connemara so predominant that no Protestants are to be met with except in the families of two or three resident gentlemen," and that the Protestant clergy were distrusted by the people, "their ministry being unacceptable, and even odious."²

Since then the famine had come, and the hovels of Connemara had known death and desolation. What hunger had spared the evictor had struck down, and in the hovels that remained the widows and orphans were often naked and hungry. It was the proselytiser's chance. Rich Protestants, both in Ireland and in England, who would scorn to relieve the bodily necessities of the despised Papists, were quite ready to subscribe for the purchase of their souls. Protestant clergymen, with loud professions of zeal and distinterestedness, were not unwilling to share among them the money thus subscribed, and came to Connemara to supplement the feeble efforts of the State-paid clergy. The Catholics, driven to desperation, were sometimes willing to frequent the Protestant schools and churches, and conform, at least outwardly, to a religion they hated, because by so doing they received food and clothes. These successes were loudly trumpeted in Protestant newspapers and on Protestant platforms, and while they attracted Protestant subscriptions, they caused no little alarm at Rome.

Dr. MacHale described these new ministers of the Gospel

¹ "Life of Lucas," II, p. 116.

² "Letters from the Irish Highlands," pp. 90-1, 127.

as roving imposters, trading on English credulity by lying reports of their successes.³ But undoubtedly they had made some progress, and in 1852 Dr. Plunkett, the Protestant Archbishop of Tuam, made a visitation of his diocese, and pointed with pride to the successes of his zealous missionaries. He had confirmed 1,294 persons, of whom 840 were converts from Catholicity. He had consecrated three new churches, and eleven others were in process of construction. These, when completed, would accommodate more than five thousand persons. Meantime the schools were being used for services on Sundays, the difficulty being to find room for the number of benighted Papists who were finding salvation in the Protestant fold within the bounds of the Archdiocese of Tuam.⁴

It was the story of these successes, conveyed to Rome, which called forth from Pius IX. his letter to Dr. MacHale. His Holiness had learned with grief "that many Catholics in your diocese, through the wicked and fraudulent missionaries of their spiritual enemies, are deceived, led into error, and detached from the Catholic faith and worship." The Pópe urges the Archbishop to be diligent and watchful, to defend his flock from the attacks of ravening wolves, to lead back the erring to the paths of truth, justice and salvation. He urges him to have retreats and missions and annual retreats for the clergy, and to build schools for the young, where their faith would not be imperilled. Lastly, he complained that the Archbishop, in a recently published letter had written in a tone lacking moderation, and not "in accordance with the prudence which befits a bishop."⁵

As far back as 1827 the Protestant Bishop of Tuam had a series of public controversial lectures delivered in Tuam, which, however, made no converts from Catholicity; and Mr. Nangle had been active in Achill. But when the famine came, the parish of Clifden and the secluded valley of Castlekirke, on the shores of Lough Corrib, became the chief centres of

³ O'Reilly, II, p. 253.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 429.

⁵ O'Reilly, II, pp. 433-5.

missionary activity in the Archdiocese. The principal agent in the work was an Englishman, the Rev. Alexander Dallas. He was a zealous Protestant, who regarded the Irish Catholics as little better than heathens. His friends spoke with enthusiasm of his piety and zeal, and regarded him as little less than a saint; but those whom partiality or bigotry had not blinded were not disposed to rate him so high. Certainly neither modesty nor humility were outstanding features of his character. He represents himself as a man with a mission, unselfish and fervent in God's work, untiring in prayer, seeking always for divine guidance, and so satisfied that he was acting under divine inspiration that he called the first tract he wrote for the Irish people "A Voice from Heaven to Ireland."⁶ It is true that the Scripture says that every man is a liar; and those who recalled Mr. Dallas's jibes at Catholic superstition, Roman deceit, Papal tyranny, and Italian treachery, could not but see that, though his zeal might be unquestioned, his charity was not that of St. Paul.

He first came in contact with Irish Catholics in 1843, when *he delivered a course of lectures in Cork.*⁷ In 1846 he sent thousands of his tract, "A Voice from Heaven," to the Irish Catholics, sending through the recently established penny post.⁸ He was satisfied that "a change was creeping over the spirits of the Romanists of Ireland."⁹ He thought the time ripe for a special effort on the part of militant Protestantism, and with the help of rich friends in England and Ireland he formed, in 1849, "The Society for Irish Church Missions to Roman Catholics." The Committee of Management, consisting of laymen and clergy, with its head office in London, appealed for subscriptions throughout England; while Mr. Dallas, as Secretary, residing at Dublin, arranged all missionary work. By him the missionaries and Scripture readers were assigned their special districts and their special work; and he often visited the several districts himself, occa-

⁶ "Story of the Irish Church Missions," pp. 15, 323-4.

⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 7-8.

⁸ *Ibid.* pp. 18-19.

⁹ *Ibid.* p. 24.

sionally conducting missions, stimulating the local workers, and in general watching over the progress of the whole movement.¹⁰

He had already visited Castlekirke. He had come on the invitation of the resident landlord and his wife, and had been much pleased at their earnestness in the work of making good Protestants of the benighted Papists around them. Priests were then scarce, their ranks having been sadly thinned by the famine, so that the Catholics at Castlekirke had Mass only one Sunday in three. Mr. Dallas procured money from his rich patrons, and built a school for those already converted, or whom he hoped to convert; and his heart was glad at seeing the Romanists, as he called them, coming to his school. He says it was love of Protestantism and hatred of Popish errors that attracted them, though others were ready to say that it was the clothes they got and the food, and that they came under pressure from their landlord. Mr. Dallas's eloquence and piety, translated into unctuous phrases by an Irish-speaking Bible-reader, was indeed fruitful. He had soon as his Sunday audience 160 adults and 147 children, and was received with enthusiasm in the village of Glan, though the priests were having their Stations there on the same day.¹¹ His efforts were appreciated and seconded by Dr. Plunkett, Bishop of Tuam, who in 1848 ordained a minister to take resident charge of Castlekirke,¹² and when Mr. Dallas paid a passing visit in 1850 he addressed a congregation of 400, who had already abandoned the errors of Rome.¹³

Meantime Mr. Dallas had extended his operations to Clifden and its neighbourhood; and there, as at Castlekirke, he had the co-operation of the local landlord. This was Mr. D'Arcy, who had built the town of Clifden many years before, and whose son, Hyacinth, in 1852, took orders in the Protestant Church. Mr. D'Arcy had built a school at Ballyconree, where he gathered together the scattered Protestants of the

¹⁰ "Story of the Irish Church Missions," pp. 74-6.

¹¹ *Ibid.* pp. 28-32.

¹² *Ibid.* pp. 38-40.

¹³ *Ibid.* p. 77.

district, and any Catholics whom he could persuade to attend, and there he held prayer meetings every week. Mr. Dallas describes his first meeting with him in 1847 as "the confluence of two rivulets of prayer for Ireland."¹⁴ The united waters would sweep away all obstacles to the spread of the Gospel, and then the arid wastes of Connemara would bloom under the beneficent influence of this fertilising stream.

Certainly, both the time and place were well chosen for this conjoint missionary effort. Clifden was beautifully situated, the capital of a wildly beautiful land. The valley of Lough Inagh, the shores of Lough Corrib, the myriad lakes of Ballinahinch and the frowning peaks of the Twelve Pins are difficult to match. They ought to be sources of wealth to the natives, because they ought to attract visitors from afar. But the visitors were few, and the jaded resident of the city, or the scholar seeking rest who sometimes came, might benefit a few individuals, but brought no prosperity to the community at large. The marble quarries were left undeveloped because there was neither capital nor enterprise to develop them. In the waters that broke upon the iron-bound coast fish was abundant; and there were numerous inlets from the Killeries to Galway Bay which could furnish the fishing boats and their crews safety and shelter from the passing storm. But there were neither boats nor nets, nor money to buy them; and the helpless people could get neither food nor employment from the surrounding sea. There remained only the land to support a population much greater than the population of later days. But the land, and especially held under such conditions as then prevailed, was unable to supply the people's wants. The valleys covered with stunted grass or purple heather, the rock-strewn sides of the hills furrowed with brawling streams, were ill suited to produce potatoes, on which the people so much depended; and when the potato crop failed throughout Ireland, the failure in Connemara was complete. Nowhere else were there such pitiful scenes. Hunger and cold and nakedness, famine and famine fever were on every

¹⁴ "Story of the Irish Church Missions," p. 37.

side; and in the cabins along the seaboard the moaning of the sea and the screaming of the wind from the hills were mingled with the feeble moans of the dying and the wild wailing for the dead. Such was Connemara when Mr. Dallas and Mr. D'Arcy sat down together in Dublin to discuss plans for its conversion from Popery.

Though both professed to be men of prayer they did not disdain to use less spiritual weapons to attain the end they had in view. From the moneys so liberally subscribed in England, the large sum of £100,000 was to be spent in giving a daily ration of food to the children in the schools of all denominations; and Mr. D'Arcy suggested that in voting the money, Scriptural education, that is Protestant education, should be given. Mr. Dallas agreed, and if the Connemara children wished to have their hunger appeased, or their bodies covered, they must begin by selling their souls.¹⁵ Thus were Catholics gathered to hear Mr. Dallas at Ballyconree, "all bearing the mark of famine."¹⁶ He was able also to attract an audience of famishing Catholics at Salerna, on Cleggan Bay, and in due time established there a school and church and parsonage with a resident clergyman, paid partly by the Church Missionary Society, and partly out of the ample funds of the Established Church. At Errislanan he was well received, and to Errismore he was specially invited, and he preached at Derrygimla and at Streamstown, all in the parish of Clifden. Feeling the great importance of having a suitable teacher at Derrygimla, he sought for him in prayer; and he confesses that the response was remarkable, "like the Angel's word in Daniel." This heaven-sent teacher was one Thomas Moran; but not all the Clifden parish regarded him as coming from heaven, and on his way to Derrygimla he was waylaid and soundly beaten. Mr. Dallas, however, was not discouraged. His patrons furnished him with ample funds, and in a short time there were

¹⁵ Dallas, p. 37.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* p. 40.

mission schools at Ailehack, Duhalla, Ballinaboy, Derrygimla, Streamstown, Salerna, Errismore, and Ballyconree.¹⁷

In 1850 the tale of progress was continued. There were children left by the famine without parents or home, and for these Mr. Dallas set up at Kingstown, near Clifden, the Connemara Orphans' Nursery. In due time these orphans would fill the mission churches and schools, which meantime would be filled with the desolate and the hungry. At every stage Mr. Dallas had the assistance of the local landlord. Money was plentifully supplied, and lately one of his most earnest assistants was an apostate priest, the Rev. Roderick Ryder, who had turned his back on his vow of celibacy and on his faith.¹⁸ On the other hand, Mr. Dallas was greatly incensed with Dr. MacHale, who was, after all, only repelling the attacks of wolves on his fold. Mr. Dallas greatly resented that his converts were known by the opprobrious name of "Jumpers," and he was specially enraged at an attack made on these Jumpers in Clifden after a visitation held by Dr. MacHale. He complained that the local rowdies were aided by some drunken sailors lately shipwrecked on the neighbouring coast.¹⁹

Such was the success of the proselytisers that in 1850 Dr. Plunkett, Bishop of Tuam, divided Connemara into four parishes, instead of being but one; and now the Rev. Hyacinth D'Arcy was Rector of Clifden, and rectors were also appointed to the parishes of Aran, Killanin, and Ballinakill. In these parishes there were 5,000 church-going Protestants, where there had been recently but 500. There were 3,700 children and 2,000 adults in the Clifden district receiving scriptural instruction. There were schools even on Omey Island and on Turbot Island.²⁰ And there were schools at Ballinakill, Letterfrack, Renvyle, and Derrynaclough, where 300 children were being taught.²¹ At Ballinrobe also the faith was assailed,

¹⁷ Dallas, p. 44-52.

¹⁸ *Ibid.* pp. 91-2.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* pp. 80-87.

²⁰ *Ibid.* pp. 99-101.

²¹ Denham Smith's "Connemara, Past and Present," pp. 112-113.

as it was at Tourmakeady, Newport and Cong.²³ Achill was filled with Bible readers, and schools and a new church and a glebe house had been put up at Achill Sound. And Mr. Nangle had now the whole machinery of the Church Mission Society at his command. Zealous Protestants were so pleased that individual subscriptions of £500 were not uncommon.²³

There was jubilation across the Channel, and "The Times" gleefully wrote that it was pretty clear that a reformation was taking place in Connaught. "We were unwilling hastily to give credence to the numerous statements which reached us on the subject. . . . In the missions of the Irish Protestant Church, which have achieved such signal success, we recognise a great and fair reprisal for the arrogant aggressions of the Pope. In answer to his Bulls they have published the Scriptures, and while he is threatening our Crown and hierarchy, they sap the foundations of his power by disseminating the word of God among his people."²⁴

But if Protestant zealots were jubilant, the Catholics were correspondingly alarmed. "We are afraid," said the "Nation," "that neither the priesthood nor the people of the country have any idea of the system of proselytism carried on under their eyes. . . . Its agents and emissaries from the wealthy fanatics of Exeter Hall down to the meanest Bible reader in Connaught are continually at work; and God only knows all the evil they have wrought. It is full time to cease to ignore such a terrible reality. It is full time to preach a crusade against it. It has had an incalculable success. Ireland is ceasing to be a Catholic nation. In many parishes at present the priest gazes on his empty chapel."²⁵ A little later the "Nation" added: "Shall the soupers and tract distributors accomplish the work which all the forces of England for 300 years had been unable to effect?"²⁶

Dr. MacHale was less pessimistic. He knew the soupers,

²³ Dallas, p. 111.

²³ *Ibid.* pp. 95-7.

²⁴ *Ibid.* p. 104.

²⁵ Denham Smith, pp. 86-7.

²⁶ Dallas, p. 136.

as the proselytisers were called, greatly exaggerated their successes, with the object of attracting generous financial support. They boasted of having established a foothold in the town of Tuam, but Dr. MacHale pointed out that among the 1,400 inmates in the local workhouse, only one was a Protestant.²⁷ In Connemara Catholics had been evicted, and their lands given to Protestants, and the new tenants were put down as converts from Rome. Dr. MacHale knew well that it was want rather than conviction that brought Catholic adults to the new Connemara churches, and Catholic children to the new Connemara schools. When conditions changed he felt that these poor Jumpers would return to the faith they had abandoned, and in answer to the implied censure of the Pope he assured his Holiness that episcopal duties were not neglected in the Archdiocese of Tuam. In 1852 he twice visited the tainted Connemara parishes, bringing with him several priests, who preached to large congregations. He distributed good books among the people. He had set up monasteries in Clifden, Roundstone and Achill, and was building a convent in Clifden; and during his visit to Clifden he had the satisfaction of receiving back many poor Catholics who had temporarily gone over to the soupers.²⁸

In accordance with the Pope's instructions, Dr. MacHale brought missionaries to appeal to the erring. The happiest results followed, and when Fathers Lockhart and Rinolphi left Clifden they put on record in a public letter that they were consoled and edified with what they had seen. The fervour of the poor people was manifest to all, their regular attendance at morning and evening exercises, their close attention to what the missionaries said, their patient waiting round the confessionals. "In one word we can say that in no part of Ireland have we met with a more living faith and greater fervour than in Connemara."²⁹

There was Protestant evidence also to show that Clifden was

²⁷ O'Reilly, II, p. 438.

²⁸ *Ibid.* pp. 448-453.

²⁹ *Ibid.* pp. 458-9.

still Catholic, and that the published reports of Mr. Dallas and his friends were not all true. It was claimed, for instance, that in 1852 Dr. Plunkett confirmed 535 converts from Rome; that in Connemara there were between 5,000 and 6,000 converts; and that there were 5,000 children attending the Protestant schools, all children of converted Catholics, or children of Catholics who allowed them to attend these schools and learn the Protestant Bible. It was, indeed, claimed that Connemara had ceased to be Catholic.

But an English Protestant traveller, with no enmity to the Irish Church Missions, and no friendliness for the Catholics, did not find this to be correct. Connemara contained many multiples of 5,000, and even if there had been 5,000 converts, Connemara might still be considered Catholic. This traveller found in the Clifden workhouse 840 inmates, and of these only 10 were Protestants. In the workhouse female school there were 240, only one of whom was a Protestant, and in the male school there was not a single Protestant boy. Nor were there more than 400 "Jumpers" in Clifden parish, with its population of nearly 11,000. The majority of those attending the Protestant schools were orphans, left destitute by the famine, and clothed and fed by the Church Missions Society. The Catholics admitted that in some cases they allowed their children to the Mission schools, but only for the food and clothes. It was stern necessity, not a desire for religious change. At the heads of those who changed was hurled the opprobrious name of "Jumpers," a term of ignominy and disgrace. The Mission clergy and the Scripture readers were abused as "Soupers," because they often gave soup to the hungry; and because they gave stirabout at the schools their religion was spoken of as the "stirabout creed."³⁰ It was plain that the people preferred the old faith to the new.

Fathers Rinolphi and Lockhart, who had done so well in Clifden against the soupers, had also, in 1853, conducted successful missions at Partry, Headford and Cong, and in that year, in one day, the Parish Priest of Clifden, Father

³⁰ Forbes, "Memorandums Made in Ireland," II, pp. 239-258.

Mr. Manus, had received back into the Church sixteen persons who had temporarily abandoned Catholicism for the soupers' creed.³¹

Tuam Synods.

In 1854 a Provincial Synod was held in Tuam, Dr. MacHale presiding. It was attended by the Bishops of Killybegs, Clonfert, Achonry and Kilmacduagh, and by representatives of the Bishops of Galway and Elphin, and had as its secretaries Dr. Thomas MacHale and Father John MacEvelly, then President of St. Jarlath's College. It approved of the decrees of the Synod of Tuam of 1817, and enacted new statutes dealing with Church discipline, and more in accord with the changed conditions of the time. As the Penal times had been replaced by toleration, it was enacted that baptisms and marriages in private houses should cease, and that henceforth these sacraments should be administered in the church. There were various regulations made about the decency of public worship, and the care of the Blessed Sacrament, and about preaching and instruction of the children; and the national schools were to be replaced where possible by purely Catholic schools. Priests were not to mix themselves up in commercial transactions, or attend at fairs. And there was a special recommendation as to having a hospice for infirm clergy for the province, a project warmly commended by the Holy See.³²

A further Provincial Synod was held at Tuam in 1858, at which again Dr. MacHale presided. The same ground was covered as in 1854. But, in addition, a statute was added, at the request of the Congregation of Propaganda, a statute passed as a resolution of the Irish bishops in 1854, and dealing with the attitude of priests towards public questions. "We remind all the priests of this Kingdom of their obligations to expound to the faithful people on feast days the mysteries of faith, the sacraments, the commandments of God, and all else

³¹ "Irish Catholic Directory—Chronicle."

³² *Decreta Concilii Provinciae Tuamensis.*

which pertains to religion. But inasmuch as there is danger that these duties will be neglected if in the churches they treat of things profane and foreign to religion, we strictly forbid their discussing during the celebration of Mass, or within the church, mere secular matters, such as political elections, which may easily create dissension between the pastors and the people. This, however, is not to be understood as prohibiting priests from speaking about bribe-taking, about avoiding perjury, or dealing with what concerns the rights of the Church, as well as the duties of charity and care of the poor.

“Should any secular or regular priest denounce by name any person in the church, let him be punished by suspension or by some other penalty at the will of the ordinary.

“We, on the other hand, exhort priests to avoid all occasions of dissensions and quarrels among themselves in public assemblies and still more by writing in the public papers.” It was added that priests ought to be solicitous about the proper selection of persons for Parliament and for the office of Poor Law Guardian.²³

Dr. MacHale in Rome.

In the meantime Dr. MacHale had gone to Rome in the end of 1854 to take part in the discussion preceding the definition by the Pope of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. On this occasion there were many tributes paid to the Immaculate Virgin, and in many languages; and Dr. MacHale determined that there should be a tribute in the Irish tongue. The original was read by the Archbishop before the Pope and the assembled prelates, and at the suggestion of Pius IX. it was translated into English. A few stanzas may be given :—

“ A pilgrim from the Sainted Isle
 On which amid the darkest storm
 The Ocean's star ne'er ceased to smile
 And guard its ancient faith from harm;
 'Twould ill become no voice to raise
 To sound the Stainless Virgin's praise.

²³ O'Reilly, II, pp. 479-480.

“ Nor need our harp be here unstrung
 On willows hanging from sad fears;
 That should it breathe our native tongue
 Its tones should melt us into tears.
 On Tiber’s banks no tongue is strange;
 Rome’s faith and tongue embrace earth’s range.”³⁴

Dr. MacHale’s tribute to the Immaculate Conception was appreciated at Rome, but other things he said and did were not appreciated there. Dr. Cullen felt so aggrieved that he appealed to the Pope for an investigation as to the matters in dispute between himself and Dr. MacHale. There were dissensions among the Irish bishops, and Dr. Cullen protested it was not his fault. He had been wrongly charged by the Archbishop of Tuam with violating ecclesiastical discipline, and invading the rights of other bishops. He had been foully abused in the “ Nation ” by Mr. Gavan Duffy, a friend of Dr. MacHale’s, and a petition signed by some Tuam priests had been sent to Propaganda against him. All he asked was that Dr. MacHale should put his charges in writing, and that they should be duly investigated before both left Rome.³⁵

But Dr. MacHale saw no necessity for putting his charges in writing, nor for prolonging his stay in Rome, as he already had his final audience with the Pope, and had obtained the necessary permission to return to his diocese. Nor had he any desire to have any further controversy then, especially as his old friend, Cardinal Frasoni, a Prefect of the Propaganda, was ill, and would be unable to preside at any inquiry. Worse still, Cardinal Frasoni’s place would be taken by the Secretary of Propaganda, Monsignor Barnabo, whom Dr. MacHale disliked, and whose right to lecture bishops he had already repudiated.³⁶

He answered Dr. Cullen’s letter in a letter written to the Pope, in which he disclaimed any desire to describe Dr. Cullen as a fomenter of discord. He did, however, object to the proposed statutes of the Catholic University, and to Monsignor

³⁴ O’Reilly, II, pp. 361-3.

³⁵ *Ibid.* pp. 368-71.

³⁶ *Ibid.* p. 365.

Barnabo's approval of them; because their effect would be to take all power of government out of the bishops' hands and put all power into Dr. Cullen's hands. He defended Mr. Gavan Duffy as a good Catholic and an honest public man. If there had been a petition sent to Rome against Dr. Cullen, signed by some Tuam priests, and if dissension among Tuam priests had broken out on the platform or in the Press, he could only say that such things happened in his absence, and without his knowledge or approval.³⁷

Lucas was then in Rome, and had many conversations with Monsignor Barnabo, who evidently disliked Dr. MacHale. Like Dr. Cullen, he disapproved of priests interfering in politics, and could only see harm in their attacks on Government. In 1856 he became Prefect of the Propaganda, and henceforth Dr. Cullen could always count on having a powerful friend in Rome, while Dr. MacHale could count on having a powerful enemy.³⁸

The Mayo Election of 1857.

This was the condition of things in 1857. Lucas was then dead, Duffy was in Australia, and when the general election of 1857 came there was a hard-fought contest in Mayo, in which the Archbishop of Tuam and many of his priests took a prominent part. The candidates were Captain Palmer, Colonel Higgins, and Mr. Moore. Captain Palmer was the son of an evicting landlord, but was himself not unpopular—a straightforward, honourable man, though with no political experience. The two others had been for years in Parliament, and were both men of ability, with this difference, however, that Mr. Moore was the popular idol, enjoying to the full the confidence of priests and people; while Colonel Higgins was distrusted and denounced as a betrayer of the people. Faithless to his pledge of independent opposition, he had sold himself to the Government, and in return had in his gift the appointment to all Government offices in the county, from the

³⁷ O'Reilly, II, pp. 368-386.

³⁸ *Ibid.* pp. 392-7.

highest judicial office to the smaller positions of village policeman and rural postman.

It was not, however, for trafficking in Government offices that he had been sent to Parliament, and when the bishops of the province assembled in Tuam for the consecration of Dr. MacEvelly as Bishop of Galway, they issued an appeal asking the electors of Mayo to reject Colonel Higgins, who had been unfaithful, and to return Mr. Moore, who had been their honest, faithful, and uncompromising supporter in Parliament.³⁹ Dr. MacHale issued a Pastoral, in which he warned the electors against bribery and intimidation, and asked them, in their choice of candidates, never again to confide in those who had already deceived them. The Mayo priests, assembled at Castlebar, spoke out more plainly than the Archbishop; and while promising their support to Mr. Moore, they recommended their flocks to repudiate the pretensions of Colonel Higgins, "who by his wholesale and unscrupulous violation of the most solemn pledges, has betrayed the interests of a noble but too confiding constituency." Individual priests went far beyond this. Father Luke Ryan, Administrator of Kilmeena, denounced from the altar those who voted for Higgins as traitors and black sheep, and for himself, declared that he would vote for the devil rather than for Higgins. Father Conway, Catholic curate of Ballinrobe, was the most active of all in organising the votes, controlling the mob, appealing to the waverers, and denouncing the opposite side; and he left no doubt as to his low opinion of Higgins, whether he spoke from the platform or from the altar.

When the election was over, Palmer and Moore had been returned, with Higgins at the bottom of the poll. But the latter lodged a petition, alleging on the part of Mr. Moore's supporters, riot, intimidation and undue influence; and before the prejudiced tribunal of a Parliamentary Committee the most was made of what the priests had said and done. The findings were that Mr. Moore was unseated, because "undue influence and spiritual intimidation prevailed to a considerable

³⁹ "Mayo Election Petition," p. 3.

extent." The Committee found that Father Conway and Father Ryan had been specially prominent, and these two were reported to the House of Commons. Mr. Moore himself had not sanctioned undue influence on his behalf, and was not cognisant of much that had been done by supporters.⁴⁰

The effect was disastrous; the ablest Irish representative was thus driven from Parliament; nor did he return to the House of Commons for eleven years. In his absence incompetence and corruption were supreme. The people lost faith in constitutional action, and Dr. MacHale and the priests of his Archdiocese could do nothing but look on while the people turned for redress to secret societies and physical force.

The National Schools.

But if the outlook in politics was dark, in the important matter of primary education there was a favourable turn. Dr. Whately had laboured long and persistently to make the national system an engine of proselytism. He attempted to have his work, "Lessons on the Truth of Christianity," made a reading-book for the children, and was able to get the assent of Dr. Murray to a slightly altered edition. But Dr. MacHale denounced the book as unfit for Catholic children, and dangerous to their faith, and would have none of it, either in its original or in its expurgated form. His views were shared by Dr. Cullen, and in 1853 the Commissioners of Education struck the book off their list, and Dr. Whately in disgust retired from the Board.⁴¹

In the Ulster schools, conducted by Presbyterians, proselytism still continued. The Catholic children, especially in Belfast, who frequented these schools were compelled to receive the same religious instruction as the Presbyterian children—a state of things not contemplated by the originators of the national system. Nor were the Episcopalians satisfied. They no more wanted a mixed system than Dr. MacHale, and asked, as the Catholics did, that the primary schools

⁴⁰ Mayo Election Petition Report.

⁴¹ O'Brien's "Fifty Years of Concessions to Ireland," I, p. 200.

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should be denominational—a request which the Government refused. But the Government recognised the force of one complaint made by the Catholics. The vast majority of the schools and pupils were Catholics, but the management was chiefly in Protestant hands, and from the beginning the majority of the Commissioners had been non-Catholic. In these circumstances the need for concession was apparent, and in 1860, for the first time, the number of Commissioners was fixed at twenty, half of these to be always Catholics. Since then also the Resident Commissioner, who has in his hands the threads of the whole system, has been always a Catholic, and a fair proportion of the higher officials have been of the same creed. Dr. MacHale was still unsatisfied, though he could not deny that the change from the Catholic point of view was salutary. In theory the National Education system has remained a mixed system, but in practice it is denominational.⁴³

The Papal States.

The years that followed were not specially eventful in the Archdiocese of Tuam. It was stirred, as all Ireland was, by the war in Italy in 1859, and the wrong done to the Pope, when the greater portion of the Papal States were taken from him and given to Piedmont. France had aided and abetted, in return for the Italian provinces of Nice and Savoy, and England, ever the enemy of Catholicity, had plotted and schemed behind the scenes. All over Ireland public meetings were held to express sympathy with the Pope, and to denounce the spoliation that had been done. Nor was Tuam wanting, and in January, 1860, a great public meeting was held in Castlebar, presided over by the Archbishop. Eloquent and able speeches were made, not only by Dr. MacHale and Mr. Moore, but also by Father Reynolds, P.P., V.F., Claremorris, and Father Browne, P.P., of Carnacon. Nor was the language used of the tortuous diplomacy of Napoleon III., and the duplicity of England, wanting in vigour.⁴⁴

⁴³ O'Brien's "Fifty Years of Concessions to Ireland," I, pp. 207-15.

⁴⁴ "Dublin Morning News," January 8, 1860.

Failure of the Proselytisers.

At that date there was proselytism in Partry, and in Clifden the Rev. Mr. D'Arcy was much cheered by a visit from the veteran missionary, Mr. Dallas. Visits were paid to the various mission centres, and sermons preached at Salerna and Omey and Ballyconree. Then Mr. D'Arcy and his friend, Mr. Dallas, left for Clifden, "cheered by an immense crowd of converts and children."⁴⁴ Some years later Mr. Dallas was not so cheerful, and lamented that the mission funds were not abundant. He had gone to England to solicit subscriptions, but his appeals must have fallen on deaf ears, as his lament of want of funds was made after his return home.⁴⁵ In 1869 Clifden was again visited by Mr. Dallas, and there was again the usual visitation of schools and missions.⁴⁶ Mr. D'Arcy was as active as ever, but his efforts had been largely neutralised by the energetic Parish Priest of Clifden, Father McManus. And Mr. D'Arcy had to lament that two events occurred in that year which dealt a heavy blow to the Protestant Church in Clifden. One was the death of Mr. Dallas, and the other, which was much more important, was the Disestablishment of the Irish Church.

Nor were Mr. Nangle and his successors able to make Achill Protestant, though all the advantages, except truth, were on their side. In 1851 the whole island was purchased from Sir Richard O'Donnell, and henceforth much more than half of the island was the property of the Church Mission Society. Henceforth the missionaries had the landlord's power as an adjunct to their missionary efforts; and it is easy to see how much was suffered by a poverty-stricken people who refused to frequent the Protestant churches, or send their children to the Protestant schools. Yet, as the years rolled on, the proselytisers were losing rather than gaining ground. In 1854 Fathers Rinolphi and Villas conducted a mission in Achill, and with great success, and in 1858, as Mr. Nangle's

⁴⁴ Dallas, p. 209.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* p. 242.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* pp. 306-7.

biographer had to lament, the number of Protestants on the island had gone down. Part of the decrease he attributes to emigration, and part to the numbers who had left to join the Army and Police.⁴⁷

In 1864 he had "to tell of partial failure, of the banner being held aloft by weary hands."⁴⁸ Many years before, Mr. Nangle had exchanged the smaller position of Dugort for the more lucrative one of Rector of Skreen, and it may be that his successor in Achill had less zeal. It is certain that progress had not been maintained. In 1872 the Orphan Home at Achill was closed, and its few inmates sent to Clifden; and in 1879, Mr. Nangle's biographer speaks of the "almost total collapse of all missionary work." The vision of a Protestant Achill had become as unreal as the fabled island of Hy-Brazil.

Hard Fight in Tourmakeady.

In Tourmakeady a determined and long-continued effort was also made to convert the Catholics to Protestantism. Situated on the shores of Lough Mask, the district is picturesque, with its mixture of mountain and valley and rock and heather. One visitor, the first Lord Plunkett, the great orator of the Union days, was attracted to the place, perhaps by the scenery, perhaps by the solitude, and also by the shooting and fishing. On a holding of land, which he purchased from Pat Connor, he built a shooting-lodge. Then he purchased the surrounding estate, enlarged the lodge, and built other houses for his family, fenced and drained and planted, and so improved the face of the district that his son, who succeeded him, though Bishop of Tuam, loved to spend most of his time in Tourmakeady, rather than in his episcopal city of Tuam.

In these days there was not a single Protestant in Tourmakeady. With no schools but hedge-schools, with a Parish Priest, Father Henry Joyce, simple and unsophisticated, the people were ignorant and poor; and the Bishop of Tuam, who

⁴⁷ Seódal, pp. 213-214.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* pp. 329-30.

was Treasurer of the Irish Church Mission Society, thought that here was a suitable field for his proselytising zeal. He had a school built and placed under the National Board, and in due time it was attended by the Catholic children of his estate, though the Protestant Bible was taught. Nor was there any protest from Father Joyce, nor from his successor, Father Peter Ward, who came to Partry in 1840. His curate, Father Peter Conway, was of sterner stuff, and going into Dr. Plunkett's school one day he turned the children out. This was the beginning of a fierce struggle. A Protestant Church was soon built, and other Protestant schools; a Protestant clergyman was procured, with teachers and Bible readers; and the Bishop's daughters seemed filled with the zeal of the Apostles. During the famine hunger and nakedness brought some famishing creatures, and a few, terrified at the prospect of eviction, frequented school and church after the horror of the famine had passed away.

The greater part stood firm, unmoved by the Bishop's threats or the appeals of the Miss Plunketts and of the Rev. Mr. Townsend. Evictions followed, not for non-payment of rent, but for refusal to frequent church or school. Some died in Ballinrobe workhouse, some emigrated, and others got holdings of land on the Monastery farm or on a little farm owned by Father Ward. It was a hard struggle. The Miss Plunketts and Mr. Townsend visited houses, Bible readers accosted people on the roads, even the Monastery school was visited until the Protestant clergyman was forcibly ejected by a militant monk, Brother Vincent. Tracts were freely distributed, and Dr. Plunkett even brought a degraded priest to Tourmakeady to preach to the people and revile the faith he had abandoned. All this so preyed on Father Ward's mind that he begged the Archbishop to send him to a different mission, and this was done in 1858, when he was appointed to the parish of Williamstown.

His successor in Partry, Father Patrick Lavelle, was a different type of man. At Maynooth he ranked amongst the most brilliant students of his time, and immediately after his

ordination was appointed Professor in the Irish College in Paris. In a short time he quarrelled with his President and lost his Chair, and, coming back to Tuam, was for a time Curate in Mayo, and then took pastoral charge of Partry. But though zealous for his flock, and determined to protect them from Protestant aggression, he was not anxious to quarrel with Lord Plunkett, and on his first arrival in Partry he wrote the Bishop a courteous letter. He was informed that the children of his Lordship's Catholic tenants were being coerced to attend the Protestant schools. "I love to think your Lordship is not fully aware of this sad state of things . . . and I trust to your Lordship's sense of fair-play to leave the children of your Catholic tenantry to the training of the Catholic teachers provided for them."⁴⁹

The Bishop replied that he had in his schools only those whose parents had chosen to send them, and Father Lavelle gratefully acknowledged that he was satisfied with this. With the past he had nothing to do, and was confident that the Bishop's intimation would be "the harbinger of peace and goodwill among all parties in this parish." But Dr. Plunkett did not want peace and goodwill if this imposed on him the necessity of restraining his proseytising zeal; and in a further letter he told Father Lavelle that he feared there was misunderstanding between them. He would not bind himself to any restricted course of action as regards the education of his Catholic tenants. He would do as he had been doing, and he begged to decline any further correspondence in the matter.⁵⁰

Father Lavelle had no difficulty in construing this letter as a declaration of war, though he again appealed to the Bishop's better instincts on the following Christmas Day. The tenantry, he said, were being persecuted for conscience' sake as no other in any country in Europe. Bailiffs, Bible readers, teachers and clergymen were harassing the people beyond endurance. He asked "in the name of the God of Peace,

⁴⁹ Letter dated October 11th, 1858.

⁵⁰ Lavelle's "Irish Landlords," pp. 515-17.

whose birth we all commemorate with love and gratitude," to end this persecution. The Bishop would sacrifice his life rather than allow his own children to be brought up in an alien faith; and all the priest asked was that the poor peasant, who had the parent's right no less than the peer, should not be compelled to sacrifice the faith of his children.

The appeal was in vain. Appalled by the prospect of eviction, some of the tenants of Drimcoggy had already sent their children to the Protestant school, and now the same terror was effective in the village of Gortnacullin. Father Lavelle publicly appealed to the erring parents, in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament and of the congregation on Sunday, to set the proselytisers at defiance, and to face eviction and even death rather than barter the faith of their children. It was a touching scene when he asked for their promise to withdraw their children from the Plunkett schools, asking them in the name and for the sake of the Great Judge of the living and the dead. The appeal was irresistible. The congregation answered with sobs and tears, and the following morning not a single Catholic child attended a Protestant school. And Catholic families who had been attending the Protestant church came back to the faith of their fathers.⁵¹

Dr. Plunkett struck back with vigour. Tenants were summoned and fined for the slightest offence, their cattle were impounded, they were abused by teachers and Bible readers, they were threatened by Miss Plunkett; and the Bishop himself warned them that it was his earnest desire they should send their children to the Protestant schools, and that in each year, previous to the first of May, "a notice to quit shall be served on the tenants throughout the estate. To the well-disposed the notice would prove only a nominal form, to others it will act, Lord Plunkett hopes, as a successful and salutary check." This notice was issued early in 1859, and its meaning was made plain in the following year, when sixty ejectment decrees were issued at the Castlebar Assizes against the tenants of Tourmakeady. A former curate of Partry,

⁵¹ "Tourmakeady MSS."

Father Conway, then Parish Priest of Headford, intervened in the interests of peace, and an arrangement was come to. Lord Plunkett got his decrees, but would evict only one or two specially obnoxious tenants. The others would be undisturbed, but must submit to a striping of their lands. Father Lavelle, at the same time, withdrew his prosecution of the Tourmakeady parson, Mr. Goodison, who had threatened to shoot him with a revolver.

At last peace reigned in Tourmakeady. But the tenants were distrustful of Lord Plunkett, and they had good reason. Lord Plunkett, forgetting what was due from a man of honour and a Christian bishop, broke through the Castlebar arrangement, and in the bleak days of November the little village of Derveeney was made desolate. Nor did the rugged mountains above ever before see such martial pomp as they looked down on the quiet valley of Glensaul. Soldiers from the Curragh, police from everywhere, a mounted escort with sheriff and sub-sheriff, and the whole crowbar brigade began their work early in the morning, and the work of eviction and demolition of houses lasted for three days. In one house a man and wife and four shivering children were thrown out; in another the family numbered ten, and in no case less than three. One man was eighty, a woman was seventy-four, others were small children, one a child in its cradle. One man's crime was that he had insulted a Bible-reader; another had lent a cart to Father Lavelle; all had been warned by the Bishop to send their children to the Protestant school. In all, sixty-eight persons were left without shelter, while the pitiless November rain came down. Already Dr. Plunkett had cleared the villages of Gortfree and Gurteenmore; and within a statute mile of the Catholic church at Tourmakeady not a single Catholic tenant was left but one, and he was under notice to quit. When Father Lavelle, who witnessed these scenes, published details in the Press the public were shocked, and the "Times" described the conduct of the Bishop of Tuam as "a hideous scandal."⁵²

⁵² Lavelle, pp. 522-535.

Though the odds were heavy against Father Lavelle, he was not dismayed. He fought Lord Plunkett in the law courts as well in the Press, and if proselytism and landlord tyranny continued in Tourmakeady, the truth was told to the world by Father Lavelle. For the boys he had the Monastery school; for the girls also a school was built on the Monastery lands. For the evicted the workhouse was the portion of many; for others the emigrant ship; while some found holdings on the estate of Mr. G. H. Moore. In the midst of an unfriendly population the Protestant planters were not happy, and after one such planter had been shot there was an exodus of his co-religionists from the district. In 1862 Lord Plunkett died, but for a little longer his family continued their evil work, and then both Miss Plunkett and the Rev. Mr. Townsend left, and did not return. Finally, the property was sold to an Englishman—Mr. Mitchell, of Bradford—who had no sympathy either with proselytism or eviction. The rule of the Plunketts passed like an evil dream, but in the valley of Glensaul and on the shores of Lough Mask the peasants long remembered that awful time, and half a century after Lord Plunkett's death the name of Plunkett was one which excited loathing and horror.⁵³

Eviction and Emigration.

In other parishes throughout the Archdiocese there was not the same vexatious interference with the people's faith as in Partry; but evictions were common, and the population was steadily thinned. In 1846 there were 2,200 Catholic families in Louisburgh, and in 1870 only 700. In 1841 the population of Castlebar Union was 58,678; in 1857 it was only 36,893.⁵⁴ It seemed as if the Catholic Celt would finally give way to the Protestant Saxon in Ireland. So thought the "Times," when it wrote that "The Celt goes, to yield to the Saxon. This island of 160 harbours, with its fertile soil, with noble rivers and beautiful lakes, with fertile mines and riches of

⁵³ "Tourmakeady MSS."

⁵⁴ Lavelle, pp. 266-8.

every kind, is being cleared quietly for the interests and luxury of humanity." So thought the "Saturday Review," when it wrote: "The Lion of St. Jarlath has growled in grievous dudgeon that bucolic tastes are prevailing in Ireland. Archbishop John of Tuam surveys with an anxious eye the Irish exodus, and in a letter addressed to Mr. Gladstone he sighs over the departing demons of assassination and murder."⁵⁵ It seemed, indeed, that the prophecy of the "Times" would soon be fulfilled—that an Irish Celt would be as rare on the banks of the Shannon as a Red Indian on the shores of Manhattan.

Among western landlords the Marquis of Sligo and Lord Lucan were specially active. Village after village was blotted out, and for miles around the solitude was unbroken by the voice of man. The Marquis of Sligo, false to the religion of his ancestors, sent his Catholic tenants adrift, and a Scotchman named Captain Houston was given, at a reduced rent, a tract of land 200 square miles in extent. Captain Houston was a Protestant and a bigot, and in the school at Delphi, frequented by the Catholic children, he would have no Catholic doctrine taught. Nor would he allow the local curate, Father Ryan, to exercise any supervision in the school, even though teachers and pupils were Catholic. Lord Sligo cleared the whole countryside along Clew Bay, so as to furnish his brother-in-law, Mr. Wilbraham, with ample lands, and from his house at Oldhead this relative could look round on the ruins of many a village, and except for his family and his servants he was alone.

Lord Lucan, with the inherited ferocity of the Bingham, sent out from Castlebar police and military and bailiffs, and cleared off the people to prepare for the consolidation of farms. In later times a racecourse bordering the high road to Ballyheane marks the ruins of the once populous village of Aughadrinagh. A soldier who had won distinction in the Crimea might have some pity for the defenceless and the poor. But he regarded his tenants as vermin to be driven off his lands,

⁵⁵ "Saturday Review," November 28th, 1863.

and all around Castlebar his hand was heavy. Villages and men disappeared, and cattle, branded with the Lucan mark, took their place. The rich lands round Ballinrobe and Hollymount he also cleared. Even solvent tenants, well able to pay their rents, were not wanted. A Bingham had no love for Irish Catholics, and two hundred families were cast out, so that a Scotch Presbyterian named Simpson might have a farm of 2,000 acres.⁵⁶

Another Mayo evictor was Sir Roger Palmer, and in Galway there was a Scotchman named Allan Pollock of Lismany. He boasted that he had dispossessed 5,000 souls from his estate; and Father Lavelle, with grim sarcasm, notes for the satisfaction of the evicted, that the evictor obtained at the Dublin Agricultural Show the first prize for Leicester sheep.⁵⁷ In too many instances the lesser landlords followed the evil example thus given, and with such disastrous results that the population of the Archdiocese, which in 1861 had fallen to 250,963, had fallen in 1871 to 240,576, a loss in ten years of more than 10,000 souls.⁵⁸

What hardships awaited the evicted we know, in the workhouse or the emigrant ship, in the English slum or the American city. But little less miserable was the lot of those who remained at home, those whom the evictors still spared. Entirely unprotected by law, they were entirely at the caprice of the landlord or agent or even the bailiff. On the Lucan estate a man was fined ten shillings for being three days late with his rent. Another was fined for receiving into his house a tenant's daughter while her husband was harvesting in England. On the Ormsby estate fines were inflicted for being absent from duty work, for having an ass straying on the road, for not having the top stone of a gable wall properly whitewashed. Another tenant was fined seven-and-sixpence for not making a drain, though at the same time he was work-

⁵⁶ Lavelle, pp. 268-70.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* p. 271.

⁵⁸ "Catholic Directory."

ing for the landlord. He was fined twelve-and-sixpence for changing a window from one side of a house to the other, and on the same estate the tenants were obliged during the day to cut Mr. Ormsby's oats, and then to cut their own by the light of the harvest moon.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CLOSING YEARS.

The Archbishop holds aloof from Public Movements.

THE treachery of Sadlier and Keogh in 1853 grievously disheartened those in Ireland who had put their faith in Parliamentary action, and when Lucas and Duffy and Moore had disappeared from the scene there was no longer a leader in Parliament, and no longer any confidence in constitutional action.

An attempt was made to start a new movement in 1864 which would further the cause of Tenant Right and Repeal. One of the chief promoters was Mr. John Blake Dillon, the friend of Davis and Duffy, and an honest and most respected man. He made a personal and urgent appeal to Dr. MacHale for his co-operation and good wishes. But Dr. MacHale was unresponsive, and had no hope that the people would view the new movement with favour. The treachery of the Brass Band and the silence of the Press on their misdeeds had fatally affected public confidence. Some of those who readily condoned the treachery of the pledge-breakers were now associated with Mr. Dillon, and with these Dr. MacHale would have no alliance. "I can't," he said, "enter into an alliance with any who manifest no regret for the violation of former solemn engagements." He had been once deceived, and was not willing to run the risk of being deceived a second time. Nor was the Archbishop more responsive to an urgent appeal

from Mr. O'Neill Daunt, though he was glad "to commune with an old and respected friend."¹

Determined to persevere, Mr. Dillon and his friends established the Irish National Association in 1865. But it was short-lived. It had no driving force behind it, no outstanding leader big enough to attract national support; and when Mr. Dillon died in 1866 the Association languished, and finally disappeared.

Men's minds had already turned to secret societies, and long before the National Association was thought of, the Fenian movement had taken concrete form. But with this kind of political action Dr. MacHale would have nothing to do. He could only wait and hope while lamenting that many things cried aloud for reform, even in his own Archdiocese. On the estate of Sir Roger Palmer, Father Lavelle's family had long dwelt. They were among the most respected tenants, had built and improved, and had always been punctual in the payment of their rent as it became due. Yet, when Father Lavelle's mother took in a married daughter, she was promptly served with a notice to quit, and in due time cast out on the roadside. The old woman's husband, son and daughter died within a space of a few months, and as she was then left entirely alone, the married daughter was invited to comfort her mother in her old age. But this was against the rules on the Palmer estate. The daughter might remain with her mother as long as she was unmarried, but, being married, she was prohibited from doing so, and all the appeals made by Father Lavelle, either to agent or landlord, were in vain.²

In his own parish of Partry, Father Lavelle had also reason to complain. A land-jobbing company called the National Land and Building Investment Company had purchased the Portroyal estate from the owner, Mr. Gildea. At once, under the guise of improvements, the tenants' holdings were divided; the rents were raised from ten to fifty per cent.; the mountain commonage, which had hitherto served as an outlet for their

¹ O'Reilly, II, pp. 537-41.

² Lavelle, pp. 394-99.

hardy little cattle, was taken from them; and such was the strictness with which rules were adhered to, and legal rights availed of, that for rents due and unpaid on the first day of November ejectments were issued on the following day. Father Lavelle exposed these acts of severity and injustice, and the management of the Portroyal estate became the subject of much adverse public criticism. But the tenants suffered and were evicted, and some of them, unable to speak a word of English, had to cross the Atlantic in an emigrant ship.³

For such injustice the Archbishop could see no remedy in secret societies, nor in the Irish National Association. He could deplore and, when occasion offered, could condemn the laws and the government under which such wrongs could be done. And he rejoiced when, in 1870, Mr. Gladstone's Land Act gave even a small measure of protection to the harassed tenants, as he rejoiced when, in 1869, Mr. Gladstone's Irish Church Act brought the Irish State Church crashing to the earth.

The Vatican Council.

In 1869 the Archbishop went to Rome to attend the Vatican Council. It met at the close of the year, and continued its sittings until the summer of 1870, and would have continued longer if the Franco-Prussian war had not broken out. For there were many subjects, such as the errors of materialism and rationalism and the defence of the Church against such errors, which urgently called for the attention of the assembled cardinals and bishops. But the subject which engaged their attention most was the question of the infallibility of the Pope, and on this there was some diversity of opinion. Not many doubted the truth of the proposition that the Pope was infallible in certain circumstances. But not a few, while admitting the truth of the proposition, considered the time inopportune for promulgating a dogmatic definition. And among these was Dr. MacHale, who spoke and voted against the definition just then. He had the distinction of being the

³ Lavelle, pp. 401-496.

oldest prelate at the Council, and it was a coincidence that another, also connected with the Archdiocese, was the youngest prelate at the Council. This was Dr. James Gibbons, subsequently Cardinal Archbishop of Baltimore.

But though Dr. MacHale was in opposition, he was no factionist, and finding himself in a minority, readily acquiesced in the decision of the majority. The decision was promulgated by the Pope in the following terms: "We, with the approbation of the Sacred Council . . . teach and define as a divinely revealed dogma, that the Roman Pontiff, when he speaks *ex-cathedra*, that is, when he, in the exercise of his office as shepherd and teacher of all Christians, by virtue of his supreme Apostolic authority, decides that a doctrine concerning faith or morals is to be held by the entire Church, he possesses in consequence of the Divine aid promised him in St. Peter, that infallibility with which the Divine Saviour wished to have His Church furnished for the definition of doctrine concerning faith or morals; and that such definitions of the Roman Pontiff are of themselves, and not in consequence of the Church's consent irreformable."

Before leaving Rome, Dr. MacHale solemnly declared his acceptance of this definition. And when he returned to his Archdiocese he publicly proclaimed his acceptance from the pulpit of his Cathedral at Tuam.⁴

The Galway Election.

A little later Dr. MacHale took for the last time a prominent part in a contested Parliamentary election. This was in 1872, when the Galway County Election was held. For the single vacancy in the representation of the county the candidates were the Hon. Captain Trench and Captain Nolan of Ballinderry, near Tuam. The first-named was the son of Lord Clancarty, and though personally an honourable man, he was the nominee of the landlord and the standard-bearer of reactionary conservatism. To still further spoil his chances in the popular estimation, his family had been identified with

⁴ O'Reilly, II, p. 547.

aggressive Protestant ascendancy, and even with proselytism; and a candidate coming before the electors with such credentials was not likely to secure popular support.

Captain Nolan, on the contrary, was a member of an old Catholic family, a young officer of much ability, who had in deference to Dr. MacHale's wishes withdrawn from the contest in the previous year, so that Mr. Mitchell Henry might be returned unopposed, and the county might be spared the turmoil of a contested election. In addition to being a practical Catholic, and, as such, being acceptable to the priests, he advocated Home Rule, and was ready to support Mr. Butt, and was in favour of greatly extending the meagre concessions given by Mr. Gladstone's Act. And he wanted the ballot substituted for open voting, so that the tenants might vote according to their conscience and as their own interests demanded, instead of voting under the compulsion and terror exercised over them by their landlords.

It was unfortunate that Captain Nolan's record as a landlord was open to impeachment, and in later days the eviction of twelve families on the Portacarron division of his property would have been a fatal bar to his success at the polls. Not one of these families owed a penny of rent; and all of them, according to the estate agent, Mr. Browne, had been always punctual in the payment of their rent as it became due. Yet they were all thrown out on the roadside—one to die in the workhouse, and others to cross the sea in an emigrant ship. Nor were they but poorly compensated for the soil they had enriched.

In extenuation of his conduct it was urged that Captain Nolan was at that time but a young man, and had been little in touch with the people, or with the conditions under which they lived. He had stipulated with the new rich tenant at Portacarron that these twelve tenants were to be continued as sub-tenants, and he had, when made fully aware of the whole facts, left the case of the Portacarron tenants to the decision of arbitrators. These were Sir John Gray, Mr. A. M. Sullivan, and Father Lavelle, three men in whom the public had

much confidence. And when these three decided that the twelve evicted tenants must be restored to their former holdings, and have their ruined homes repaired at Captain Nolan's expense, the young landlord willingly accepted the award.⁵ This was an unusual thing for a landlord to do, and it brought both tenants and priests to Captain Nolan's side.

At a meeting in Loughrea the Bishop and priests of Clonfert passed the following resolution:—"That as the spiritual no less than the temporal interests of our flocks are likely to be most seriously affected by the legislation of the coming session of the Imperial Parliament, we deem it a sacred duty, as it is a constitutional right, to make every legitimate effort that our county may have such representation in Parliament as will most conduce to the advancement of those interests. That with this object solely in view, we declare our full confidence in Captain Nolan; we call on such of our parishioners as are privileged to vote, to record their votes fearlessly and conscientiously for that gentleman in the coming struggle."⁶ The priests of the Galway diocese and those of Kilmacduagh also declared themselves for Nolan, resolving to support him by every legitimate means.⁷ The priests of the Tuam deanery met in Tuam, with the Archbishop in the chair, and passed a long series of resolutions demanding fixity of tenure, the ballot instead of open voting, and Home Rule. And they called upon the voters to poll for Captain Nolan as a declared advocate for these reforms, and as one who had set a remarkable example of justice and fair play in assenting to the Portacarron award.

On Captain Trench's side the landlords were active and enthusiastic, and at a landlords' meeting at Loughrea, with Sir Thomas Burke in the chair, and Lords Clanrickard, Westmeath and Clonbrock, and many others in attendance, a resolution was carried pledging support to Captain Trench. Captain Nolan was described as a humbug, meaning, no

⁵ "Galway Election Petition," pp. 871-873.

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 139.

⁷ *Ibid.* p. 229.

doubt, a landlord who had deserted his class; and though there was no express desire to quarrel with their tenants, it was quite plain what the landlords expected their tenants to do. And it was no small thing in these days to incur his landlord's displeasure.⁸ The landlords, however, were powerless to elect their nominee, and when the result of the election was announced, Captain Nolan had polled 2,823 votes, and Captain Trench only 658.

Galway Election Petition.

This, however, did not end the matter, and Captain Trench filed a petition against the return of Captain Nolan, asking that his election should be declared invalid, and that Captain Trench himself should be awarded the seat. As sufficient grounds for this he alleged that Captain Nolan had been guilty of the corrupt practice of providing meat and drink for the voters; that threats and terrorism had been used to prevent voters from coming to the poll; above all, that there was widespread and "improper exercise of the spiritual influence of the Roman Catholic clergy . . . by denunciations directed by several of the said clergy . . . and threats of spiritual and temporal ruin directed by the said clergy against the supporters and intended supporters of the said petitioner."

Three of the Tuam priests were specially arraigned. These were Fathers Loftus, Conway and Lavelle. Father Loftus was then curate at Dunmore. He was not a man of much culture, and not accustomed to use very select language, especially when under the influence of excitement such as was so plentiful during the election. And yet the catalogue of his offences was not great. He was charged with calling one Mr. O'Loughlin a drunken blackguard; with saying that the local landlord was ruled by his wife, "who wore the breeches"; with calling landlords tyrants; with describing Sir Thomas Burke as a habitual drunkard; and with threatening those who would vote for Trench as being sure to be marked with the brand of Cain. To these charges he answered that land-

⁸ "Galway Election Petition," pp. 867-70.

lords rackrented their tenants, and might, therefore, be described as landsharks; that the brand of Cain was for those who voted against their conscience; and that he had used the expression about Mrs. Griffith, and deeply regretted having done so.

Father Conway had been prominent, and incurred the censure of Parliament for his share in the Mayo election of 1857, and this was now brought up against him; and when he called some landlords shoneens and others renegades, and demanded freedom for the poor tenants to freely exercise the franchise, he was put in the same category as Father Loftus, and solemnly accused.

Father Lavelle was a much abler man than either Father Loftus or Father Conway, and could choose his words with greater care. But he was a well-known advocate of tenant-right, and during the election had described some landlords as shoneens, and denied their right to coerce their tenants when there was question of voting. Further, he had described Sir Thomas Burke, for many years M.P. for Galway, as a brainless baronet, and declared that his recent uncomplimentary references to the priests had sounded his political death-knell.

The language used by these priests, as well as what was said by the Archbishops and Bishops, was held to justify an election petition. And Mr. Justice Keogh, before whom the petition was tried, not only unseated Captain Nolan, but awarded the seat to Captain Trench. It was a decision which might be expected from such a man as Justice Keogh. In Parliament he had betrayed his party, and, as the betrayer of his party and his country, had climbed to the Bench. Once he was a tenant-righter and a friend of the priests, but now his words of sympathy were for the landlords, and he protested that their influence over their tenants and their tenants' votes was safe and salutary.

On the other hand, he deplored that the priests were endeavouring to set up a fatal ascendancy over men's minds and

consciences. They were engaged in an ecclesiastical conspiracy against the Catholic electors. Father Conway he singled out for special reprobation, recalling his conduct at the Mayo election of 1857, and describing his conduct now as scurrilous and blasphemous, the conduct of a quibbler and a liar, of a man who was a rebel against all authority. Father Loftus not only was guilty of all the accusations made against him, but in denying them he was a perjurer. And when Father Lavelle spoke of the political death-knell of Sir Thomas Burke, he was simply inciting the people to murder.

During the trial the Archbishop made his appearance on the witness-table, and, though in his eighty-second year, showed all his old ability and readiness of reply. Nor was he in the least disconcerted by the questions of Serjeant Armstrong, one of the greatest of Irish lawyers, and probably the ablest cross-examiner of his time. The Archbishop would not admit that he had Galway as a pocket borough, that he tyrannised over the priests, that he unduly influenced bishops. And when Serjeant Armstrong mentioned that he was often spoken of as the most influential potentate in Connaught he said that this was as if Serjeant Armstrong himself were to be described as the light of the Bar. "These," he said, "are childish compliments." He remembered everything—persons, places and events, not only of the recent but of the distant past. It was a remarkable achievement for one who was well past four score years.

The Archbishop's Golden Jubilee.

The Archbishop's sympathies were with Mr. Butt's Home Rule movement, and his name was first on its first governing body. But he attended none of its public meetings, and was quiescent during the general election of 1874. The weight of years was telling even on a frame of unusual strength. At the Vatican Council he was the oldest bishop, and in 1875 he attained the very unusual distinction of being fifty years in the episcopacy. For it was just half a century since he had

been consecrated Bishop of Maronia and Coadjutor Bishop of Killala.

His many friends resolved that there should be some celebration of so remarkable an event. At first the clergy of Tuam, then the clergy of other dioceses in Ireland, and finally the laity took the matter in hands; and they determined to have a marble statue of the Archbishop erected in Tuam. In a short time subscriptions sufficient for the purpose were handed in, and in June, 1875, the jubilee celebrations were held in Tuam, and the statue erected and unveiled. And, meantime, letters of congratulation came from far and near; from the Irish at home and from the Irish beyond the sea. A venerable priest, after fifty years toil on the English mission, wrote to remind the Archbishop that he had been his pupil in Maynooth. Another priest had been present at the Archbishop's consecration in 1825, and now sent his greetings, mournfully recording the fact that all but a few then assembled in the College chapel had passed away. Both the secular and regular clergy throughout Ireland sent their good wishes. And not only the Irish bishops, but the bishops in America sent their congratulations and their compliments.⁹

Nor were congratulations confined to the bishops and priests. The Catholic Members of Parliament presented at Tuam a eulogistic address. The Home Rule League, some of them non-Catholics, were equally laudatory in their address, recalling with pride that in the list of those convening the meeting at which the League was formed the Archbishop's name stood first. In unveiling the statue, Mr. A. M. Sullivan, one of the most eloquent of living Irishmen, spoke of the Archbishop's life story as "the chronicle of Ireland for the last fifty years," adding that there was no public man then living "who can so fearlessly look into the past, who can so confidently seek there his triumphant vindication, as the illustrious man beside whose statue I am now standing. As the eagle may gaze on the sun, so may the eye of John of

⁹ O'Reilly, II, pp. 555-567.

Tuam look into the whole of his past life, and find no inconsistency there to dazzle or dim his vision, no public act that he can regret or wish blotted out."¹⁰

The compliment paid by Mr. Sullivan's brother was equally sincere and even more enduring. Mr. T. D. Sullivan was a well-known poet, author of "God Save Ireland," and at the banquet in Tuam he sang some verses specially written for the occasion. They are well known, and are as follows:—

I.

" In our Green Isle of old renown
 In many a bygone age,
 Full pure and clear the stream runs down
 Of soldier, saint and sage.
 But high amid these glories bright
 That shine on Inisfail
 Be ours to write in lines of light
 The name of John MacHale.

II.

" A pastor true and brave is he;
 Beloved by rich and poor,
 A patriot spirit, bold and free
 To dare and to endure.
 No traitor's wile, no force or guile
 With him can e'er prevail
 Whose watch and ward, whose guide and guard
 Is noble John MacHale.

III.

" Oh, men will come and pass away
 Like raindrops in the sea,
 And thrones will crumble to decay
 And kings forgotten be,
 But through all time, in every clime
 The children of the Gael
 Will hear the name and sound the fame
 Of glorious John MacHale.

¹⁰ O'Reilly, II, pp. 589-90.

IV.

“ Long may he live to guide our land
 And glad our hearts as now,
 The crozier in his manly hand
 The mitre on his brow.
 And when God's love calls him above
 For us there ne'er will fail
 The gracious cares, the potent prayers
 Of noble John MacHale.”

The Appointment of a Coadjutor.

Most bishops, long before they have reached four score years, obtain assistance in the work of their episcopal office. But though Dr. MacHale had reached his eighty-fifth year, and the golden jubilee of his episcopate, he still ruled alone. Nor had his strength ever been unequal to the work of even such an extensive and populous territory as the Archdiocese of Tuam. But in 1875 the burden of years was becoming too heavy, the iron frame was showing signs of decay, and help must be obtained or the work in Tuam must be left undone. And if Dr. MacHale had applied to the Pope in the usual way for a Coadjutor the necessary help would have been given him. Instead of this, he asked for a Coadjutor, and he asked that the appointment should be given to his nephew, Dr. Thomas MacHale. Both requests were at first refused, but on being repeated the answer came through Cardinal Franchi, Prefect of the Propaganda, that an election should be held in the usual way, and that three names should be submitted to the Holy See.

The intemperate partiality of his biographer can see no flaw in Dr. MacHale's character, no spot on the sun, and he thinks it quite right that the Archbishop should not at once obey the instructions he had received from Rome. Had he done so, and cast aside his partiality for his nephew, it would have been better for his own peace of mind, and would have saved him from the rebuke administered by His Holiness. For Cardinal Franchi wrote in July, 1876, that the Pope's wishes must be carried out, and an election held as soon as possible.

This was done on the 16th of August following, when the canons and parish priests were assembled at Tuam, and when, as a result of their voting, Dr. MacEvilly, Bishop of Galway, was placed first, with sixteen votes; Dr. Thomas MacHale, second, with twelve votes; and Dr. Carr, of Maynooth, third, with four votes. Some votes were also cast for Canon Ronayne, of Ballinrobe.

In the meantime the Archbishop's regrettable partiality for his nephew, and his regrettable antipathy to Dr. MacEvilly had carried him far. He had already written to Cardinal Cullen, with whom his relations had not only not been cordial, but had been strained, asking his support for Dr. Thomas MacHale; and he had pointed out to the assembled priests at Tuam that one already a bishop must not be promoted to the position of Coadjutor. He followed up this action by writing a further letter to Cardinal Cullen, again urging the appointment of Dr. Thomas MacHale and the exclusion of Dr. MacEvilly, "whom for well-known reasons I can never consent to accept as my Coadjutor."

To this appeal the Cardinal's reply was as follows:—

" 26 Eccles Street, Dublin,
August 26th, 1876.

" My dear Lord,—

" Having been busily engaged on visitation in country parishes during the last few weeks, I could not answer your Grace's esteemed letter immediately. Allow me now to state that, as the election of your Coadjutor is in the hands of the Propaganda, it would not be proper for me to interfere, unless they think fit to consult me.

" As your Grace has been so kind as to write to me on this important matter, I am sure you will pardon me if I state that probably what you mentioned in your letter convoking the clergy, regarding one of the candidates, viz. :— that he had been excluded two or three times—will be very prejudicial to him, and if I add that what you stated in your address to the clergy, published in the *Freeman* of August 17, regarding the exclusion of bishops from any chance of promotion, will perhaps be looked on as interfering with the liberty granted to the clergy and the duty imposed on them to give their votes to the most worthy. Of course, these are

mere conjectures, which I mention without any authority, and with which I hope you will not be displeased.

“ Wishing you every happiness, and praying that the spirit of God may guide the Sacred Congregation in the present case,

“ I remain,

“ Your Grace’s faithful Servant,

“ PAUL, CARDINAL CULLEN.”¹¹

Dr. O’Reilly calls this a most disappointing letter, and it was certainly disappointing to the Archbishop. He was a strong-willed man, accustomed to have his way, and he told the Cardinal in a further letter that he would willingly go to Rome “ to secure Dr. MacHale’s election or to exclude the Bishop of Galway.” He repeated to Cardinal Franchi, who had come to Ireland, that he could never consent to have the Bishop of Galway as his Coadjutor. He followed this up by sending his nephew, Dr. MacHale, to Rome, and there urging the appointment of either Dr. Carr, of Maynooth, or Canon Ronayne, of Ballinrobe. This arrangement, however, was not acceptable to the Congregation of the Propaganda, and Dr. MacEvilly was appointed, though it was agreed that the appointment should not be made public during the lifetime of the Archbishop. The Pope in due course approved and thus matters stood early in 1877.

Towards the end of that year some serious charges were made against the Archbishop’s administration, and he was called upon by the Congregation of the Propaganda to answer. It was said that there was indiscipline among his clergy—no effective control by the Archbishop; that proselytisers had been successfully at work; that priests of the Archdiocese were in the habit of writing against each other in the public journals; and that there were not sufficient priests for the spiritual needs of so extensive an Archdiocese as Tuam. To these accusations Dr. MacHale was able to answer that proselytisers had made little progress, that only two priests, the parish priests of Westport and Claremorris, had at any time brought their quarrels into the newspapers; and he might have added

¹¹ O’Reilly, II, pp. 603-4.

that no great scandal had been given. The Archbishop denied that indiscipline existed among the clergy, and he denied especially that Altar denunciations, without ample cause, had ever taken place. Finally, he denied that there was an insufficient supply of priests, and insisted that the spiritual needs of the laity were supplied.¹²

Dr. O'Reilly plainly insinuates that these accusations were the result of Dr. MacEvilly's intriguing at Rome, and specially emphasises the fact that in that same year of 1877 Dr. MacEvilly had gone to Rome, accompanied by Dr. MacCormack, Bishop of Achonry, and Dr. Gilooly, Bishop of Elphin. But these prelates went to Rome because it was the proper time to pay their visits "ad limina Apostolorum." And if the Bishops of Achonry and Elphin favoured Dr. MacEvilly's appointment, so did every other bishop in Connaught, with the single exception of Dr. MacHale himself. The majority of the Tuam priests agreed with them. These priests had lived since childhood under the MacHale regime, and had no desire to see it perpetuated by the appointment of Dr. Thomas MacHale. Dr. MacEvilly was not a man of much amiability, and not such as could attract personal popularity. But he knew more of the world and of the lives of secular priests than Dr. MacHale—a man who had spent all his life in college, and had at no time been brought into personal contact with the difficulties of the secular mission. He was learned and pious, but austere, unbending and overbearing—a man of the cloister rather than a man of the world—a doctrinaire and a theorist rather than a practical administrator.

The Pope had made up his mind that a prelate in his eighty-seventh year ought to have an assistant in the work of an extensive diocese, and that Dr. MacEvilly was the most suitable for the position, and in the end of 1877 he announced to the Archbishop, what so far had not been done, that Dr. MacEvilly had been appointed. The Pope was, however, unwilling to give offence to the Archbishop, and Father Burke,

¹² O'Reilly, II, pp. 612-15.

the great Dominican, who was a personal friend of the Archbishop, was requested to get his Grace's consent to have Dr. MacEvilly. This consent, however, was not obtained, nor had it been in 1878, when Pius IX. died and Leo XIII. ascended the Papal throne. And the Archbishop, in a letter to the new Pope, reiterated his objections to Dr. MacEvilly.

This being the state of things, Dr. McGettigan, Archbishop of Armagh, was commissioned by the Pope to go to Tuam and induce the Archbishop to yield, and in August, 1878, he sent the following letter to the Archbishop of Tuam:—

“ Armagh, August 31, 1878.

“ My dear Lord,—

“ If your Grace be at home, or at any place near Tuam, next week, I would venture to go and see you.

“ I can conceal nothing from you that touches your happiness, your dignity or your position. The business that brings me concerns your welfare. It is idle to add that it has reference to the question of your Coadjutor.

“ The Holy See has expressed a wish that I should visit your Grace. Without the request of the Holy Father it would be an intrusion on my part to ask for a personal interview relative to that business.

“ I may venture to promise your Grace that I will not occupy your time many minutes, and that my visit will not diminish the sincere respect and esteem which I have ever had, and will continue to have, for the Archbishop of Tuam.”

This courteous and tactful letter was followed by the visit of the Primate to Tuam, and when Dr. McGettigan heard the objections of Dr. MacHale to the Coadjutor assigned him, his kindly heart was touched, and he urged that the sending of the Coadjutor should be postponed. This, however, did not satisfy the Propaganda, especially as reports had reached Rome from Connaught bishops that Tuam was in need of episcopal supervision, and in such dire need that Dr. MacEvilly should be sent “ even in spite of the Archbishop.”¹³

Dr. McGettigan was quite satisfied that Tuam was not in such deadly peril; neither was Dr. Gilooly, Bishop of Elphin, who had no sympathy with what he describes as “ the un-

¹³ Letter of Cardinal Simeoni, June 26, 1879.

seemly and persistent attempts of the Bishop of Galway to go to Tuam *vi et armis*."¹⁴ Dr. McGettigan's further report, which was specially called for by Rome, had been sent in February, 1879, and in this he declares that everything in Tuam was going on satisfactorily. Two Tuam priests who had been giving disedification, had been suitably punished by the Archbishop, and had mended their ways. Two others had been suspended. The Archbishop had also made a regulation prohibiting his priests from writing unseemly letters in the public journals. As to proselytism, figures were given to show that the proselytisers had not succeeded. The Archbishop was really in good health, and Dr. McGettigan strongly advised, and with the full approval of the suffragan bishops of the northern province, that there should be no change; "that nothing but the most serious evils could result from forcing the Bishop of Galway into the Church of Tuam, against the consent of the Archbishop."¹⁵

Even this detailed report did not convince the Roman authorities that all was well. Leo XIII., who had succeeded Pius IX. in the previous year, could not think that in the circumstances complaints sent to Rome were without foundation. Nor did he think that an aged prelate, on the threshold of his ninetieth year, could satisfactorily attend to the affairs of such an extensive diocese. He paused and waited, hoping that the Archbishop would himself invite the Bishop of Galway, especially knowing that it was the Holy Father's wish. But Dr. MacHale had no intention of issuing such an invitation, and the burden of years was necessarily becoming heavier, day by day. At last the Pope took decisive action, and in August, 1879, Cardinal Simeoni notified to the Archbishop that the Pope was giving faculties to Dr. MacEvilly, and was sending him to Tuam to discharge the duties of Coadjutor.

Still unyielding, the old man submitted, but did not acquiesce, and in a letter to Cardinal Simeoni he renewed his objections to the Bishop of Galway, who, he declared, was

¹⁴ O'Reilly, II, pp. 621-3.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* pp. 624-5.

openly and notoriously hostile to him. "If," he added, "in spite of all this, the Apostolic See wills to delegate to the Bishop of Galway the faculties for performing certain functions in the diocese of Tuam, then I shall at once seriously think of resigning the episcopal office and dignity, for I will never be associated with the Bishop of Galway. But inasmuch as the resignation of a bishop is a thing of very rare occurrence, mine will excite surprise both among the clergy and among the people. It will then become necessary for me to give a public explanation of my act. In the documents which I shall then give to the public in connection with this affair, I shall add nothing to the letters written by me, or in my name, to the Sacred Congregation. Historical truth and the necessity of my own reputation require that I should also make public everything in these letters which can throw light on this momentous transaction."¹⁶

Fortunately for his own reputation, these threats were not carried out, and the Archbishop did not lay down his mitre and crozier, or give to the public the correspondence which had been carried on with Rome. The spectacle of an Archbishop on the threshold of his ninetieth year objecting to receive a Coadjutor would not have been edifying. Nor would the publication of documents which dealt with delicate matters of Church government. The Archbishop had done enough, and not too much, in telling the Roman authorities why he objected to the Bishop of Galway. But his reasons for objecting were not suitable matter for the public journals, and if the Pope and the Sacred Congregation overruled these objections, and were satisfied that the Bishop of Galway should go to Tuam, the Archbishop should have ceased to protest, having no further responsibility for what might ensue. The Roman authorities had been patient with him, but at last their patience was exhausted, and in August, 1879, Dr. MacEvilly came to Tuam and took up his residence at St. Jarlath's College.

¹⁶ O'Reilly, II, pp. 626-7.

The Archbishop and Public Affairs.

During these years, though the Archbishop's interest in public affairs never ceased, he rarely appeared on a public platform, or contributed any letters on passing events in the public press. In 1875 he attended a public meeting in Dublin in connection with the project for a statue to O'Connell and met with a most enthusiastic welcome from the assembled thousands. Afterwards he made a speech at the Mansion House, and replied to the toast, "The Memory of O'Connell," and it was in the highest degree appropriate that he should have been selected to speak. For he could speak with an intimate knowledge of the distant past, and had been the close personal friend of O'Connell; and though on public questions he had sometimes differed with O'Connell he did not forget the magnitude of his services, nor his claims to the gratitude of his country. In his speech the Archbishop lamented that O'Connell's mantle had not fallen on any other like himself who would continue to lead his people with the same courage and success. "As it has not been given to us," he said, "to see his mantle falling on any other, it was a most wise and providential move to inaugurate this centenary festival in his honour. . . . It is by worthily celebrating such exalted patriotism that a succession of genuine and sterling patriots is to be kept up to the everlasting benefit of our country."¹⁷

Once again the Archbishop was called upon to do a similar honour to the memory of a noted Irishman, when he was invited, in 1878, to unveil the statue of Sir John Grey. Again he could speak, as in the case of O'Connell, of a close personal friend, and although Sir John Grey was a much smaller man than O'Connell, he was a distinguished Dublin citizen and an honest patriot. And the Archbishop bore willing testimony to the fact that Sir John's activities in Parliament had contributed largely to the solution of many Irish questions.¹⁸

¹⁷ Report of the O'Connell Monument Committee.

¹⁸ O'Reilly, II, pp. 651-4.

The Archbishop looked with some suspicion on the policy of obstruction in Parliament, especially as it led to dissension, and in 1879 he made a public appeal calling on the Irish members to close up their ranks.

“Let the errors of the past,” he said, “be generously forgiven, and let the opening year (1879) usher in the dawn of a brighter era, dispelling for ever the dark and dreary prospects of our downtrodden people. . . . Let the existence of Home Rule be vigorously insisted on. Let unity of action among the members as far as possible be insured by summoning them in due time for seasonable deliberation in London, whenever great measures for the benefit of Ireland or of the British Dominions are about being introduced into Parliament, as well as during the progress of such measures through both Houses.

“Let the deliberations of the consulting assembly in London be duly submitted from time to time by means of the Press to the discriminating appreciation of the Irish people, who never fail to distinguish between their real and their fictitious friends. Neither will they fail to consign to suitable retirement those members who prove themselves more interested for the well-being of Great Britain or their own than for the freedom and the religious and social amelioration of the people whom they faithlessly represent.

“Above all, even with the sacrifice of what may be deemed by some public duty, let the views of the able and learned chief of the party receive from all the consideration to which they are justly entitled.

“Great measures are needed for Ireland which must be wrung from a powerful, overbearing and hostile adversary. For this end union and combination, of which the English and Scotch members in the hour of need furnish striking illustrations, are absolutely needed on the part of the Irish representatives.”

There is evidence here of the Archbishop's well-known political sagacity, as there is of his kindly feeling towards the Irish leader, Mr. Butt, though there is none of his approval

of the newer and more vigorous policy of Messrs. Bigger and Parnell.¹⁹

The Land League.

Nor did the Archbishop approve of the Land League agitation which began with the meeting at Irishtown, early in 1879. Mr. Davitt, who might be regarded as its founder, had been a Fenian, and most of those who organised the first meetings belonged to the Fenian movement; and Dr. MacHale always disliked secret societies. They were, he knew, condemned by the Church; nor did he think they could advance the cause of Irish reform. He liked activity in Parliament, and unity and honesty among the Irish members, and believed that nothing more was required to ensure success.

But this was not sufficient in 1879. A crisis had come, and if the tenants were to be saved from extermination, action in Parliament must have behind it the driving force of fierce agitation in Ireland. Whether the Archbishop changed his mind in 1880 or 1881, or whether he was ready to admit that the Land Act of 1881 was the product of the Land League agitation, the public had no means of knowing. But it is certain that in 1879 he looked askance at Mr. Davitt and the Sunday meetings; and he vigorously protested against a proposed meeting in Westport, which was attended both by Davitt and Parnell.

His letter, the last public letter he wrote, was as follows:—

“ Westport, June 5, 1879.

“ To the Editor of the *Freeman*.

“ Dear Sir,—

“ In a telegraphic message exhibited towards the end of last week in a public room of this town, an Irish Member of Parliament has unwittingly expressed his readiness to attend a meeting convened in a mysterious and disorderly manner, which is to be held, it seems, in Westport, on Sunday next. Of the sympathy of the Catholic clergy for the rack-rented tenants of Ireland, and of their willingness to co-operate earnestly in redressing these grievances, abundant evidence

¹⁹ O'Reilly, II, pp. 666-7.
(D 705)

exists in historic Mayo as elsewhere. But night patrolling acts and words of menace, with arms in hand, the profanation of what is most sacred in religion—all the result of lawless and occult association—eminently merit the solemn condemnation of the ministers of religion, as directly tending to impiety and disorder in Church and in Society. Against such combinations in this diocese, organised by a few designing men, who, instead of the well-being of the community, seek only to promote their personal interests, the faithful clergy will not fail to raise their warning voices, and to point out to the people that unhallowed combinations lead invariably to disaster and to the firmer rivetting of the chains by which we are unhappily bound, as a subordinate people to a dominant race.

“ Faithfully yours,

“ JOHN, *Archbishop of Tuam.*”

Mr. Davitt suggests that this letter was not written by the Archbishop himself, but by some relative, perhaps Dr. Thomas MacHale, under whose influence he then was. This may or may not be. At all events, the Sunday meetings continued to be held, and not a few in the Archdiocese of Tuam, and the Archbishop did not again interfere.²⁰

Nearing the End.

But now the long life was nearing its end; the shades of evening were falling fast. Unwilling to share his authority with the new Coadjutor, the Archbishop appointed his nephew Vicar-General of the Archdiocese, and this nephew, Dr. Thomas MacHale, lived in the Archbishop's house, attended to his correspondence, and interviewed his visitors. He could, of course, give no assistance when Confirmation was to be administered, and little when visitations of the deaneries or parishes were to be made. Nor did he unduly interfere in the administration of the Archdiocese. Nor was he a popular person with the priests or with the College students who lived next door. His manners were brusque, his notions of duty rigid and strict, and he had little patience with the priest who erred, or with the student who idled his time.

²⁰ Davitt's "Fall of Feudalism," pp. 152-4.

Even during the years 1880 and 1881 the Archbishop punctually said his morning Mass, and as he returned from the Cathedral to his house he was always accompanied by an escort of beggars, who were voluble in asking, and seldom if ever went away with empty hands. Always a student, the Archbishop still read a little, and took pleasure in occasionally visiting the classes in St. Jarlath's College. And it was noticed that he was specially interested in the Greek lessons. Nor could anything exceed the embarrassment of some young student who was called upon to construe Xenophon or Homer, while the old man had his hand to his ear so that the text and translation should not be missed. But the Archbishop, though a capable critic was a kindly and indulgent one, and loved to help the poor student, blundering along through his often unfamiliar Greek. Nor was the Archbishop reluctant to give exemption to the students from their classes; and when a students' deputation requested a free day so that they might have a walk in the country, he seldom refused. And then there was a rousing students' cheer.

In 1881 the visits to the College were gradually lessened, and finally altogether ceased. Dr. Thomas MacHale was compelled to see most of the visitors who called, as his uncle's hearing had become very defective. The preaching in Irish at the Sunday's Mass, hitherto never omitted, became too much for the Archbishop, and as the year advanced the morning Mass even could not be said. Finally, exhausted nature gave way, and after a brief illness the Archbishop, in the month of November, quietly passed away.

Nearly seventy years a priest, fifty-six years a bishop, and all but fifty years an Archbishop, was a record without parallel. Those who had known from personal knowledge of the Rebellion of 1798 or the Union of 1800 had long since passed away, and the young men of Emancipation times, if they still lived, had passed beyond life's allotted span. But here was a man who had seen the French pass from Killala to Castlebar; who was a priest when Napoleon went down at Waterloo; and was a bishop when Emancipation was won.

Since J. K. L. died in 1838, Dr. MacHale was without a rival, or even a second in the public life of the Irish Church. He was the close friend of O'Connell, the patron of Lucas and Moore and Butt, and, on the other hand, the scourge of every backslider and betrayer who had traded on the credulity of the people.

As he looked back, what a panorama passed before his gaze—the Rebellion of Emmet, the battle against tithes, the horrors of the famine, the infamies of evicting landlordism, the oppression and persecution of an alien Church. These saddening recollections were softened by the knowledge that he had seen the righting of many wrongs. Tithes were no longer paid; the ballot had replaced landlord terrorism at elections; the alien Church had met the fate of the barren fig-tree, and no longer cumbered the earth; and just before the final scene an end was put by law to the horrors of capricious eviction.

It would have been better for his fame as well as for his peace of mind had he passed away a few years earlier. He had become almost a legendary figure, no longer in touch with living realities, and was made to appear out of sympathy with the movement led by Davitt and Parnell. And his peace of mind was sadly disturbed by the arrangements made for the government of his diocese in his closing years. He was a great man and a great ecclesiastic, without any doubt the greatest who had ever filled the throne of St. Jarlath.

THE FOUR LAST ARCHBISHOPS.

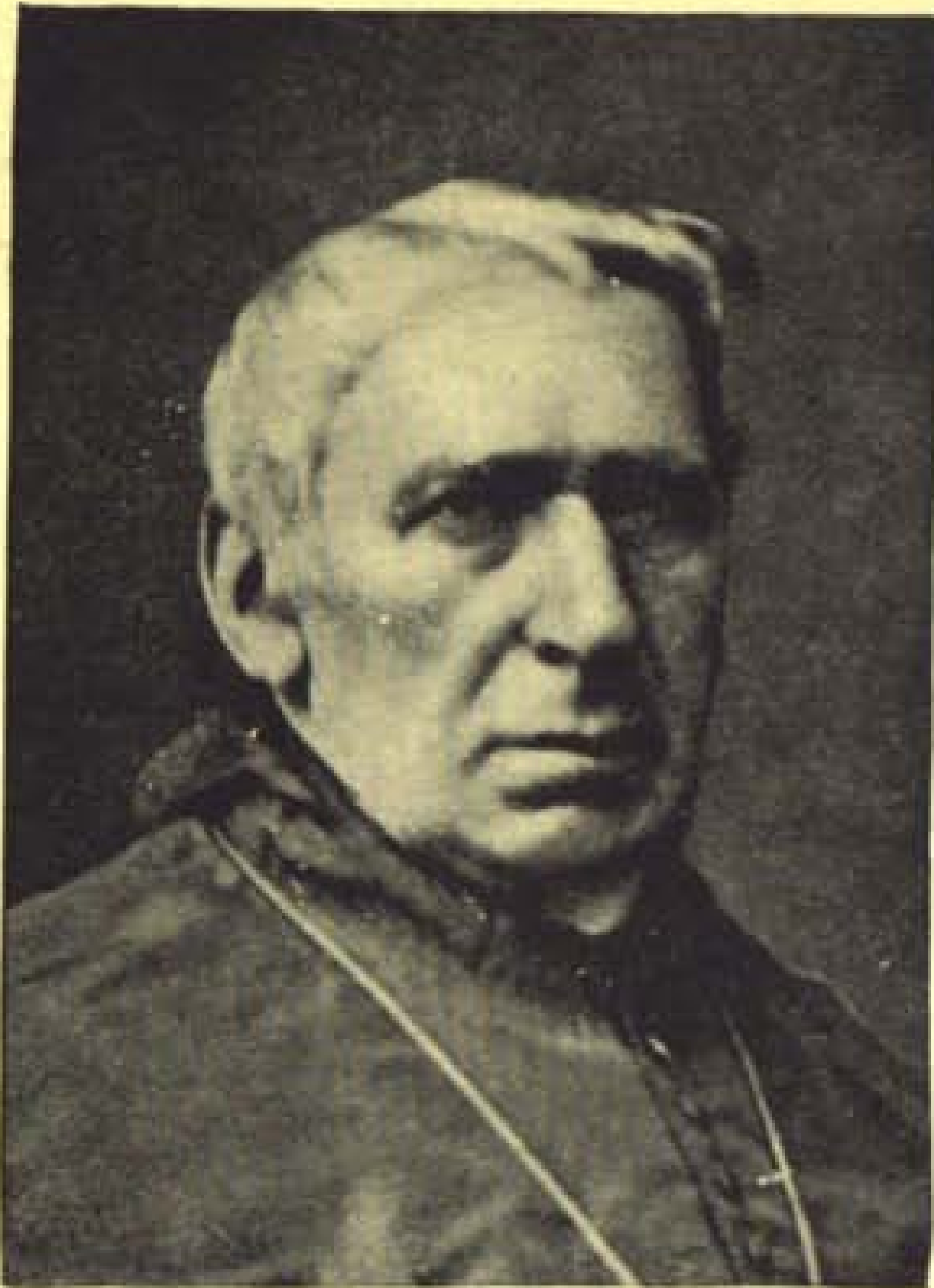
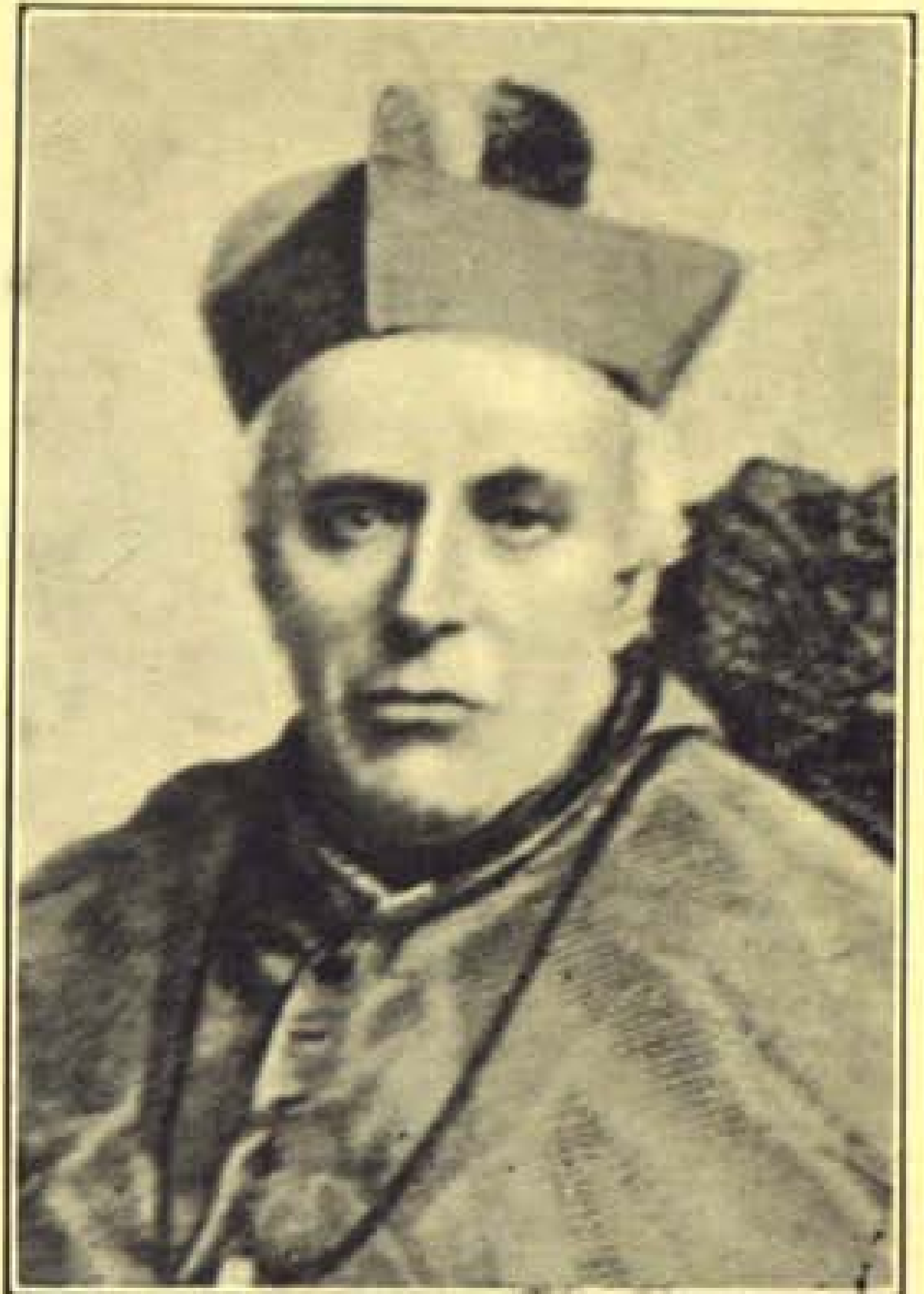


Photo by [Lawrence
DR. MACHALE (1834—1881).



DR. MACEVILLY (1881—1902).

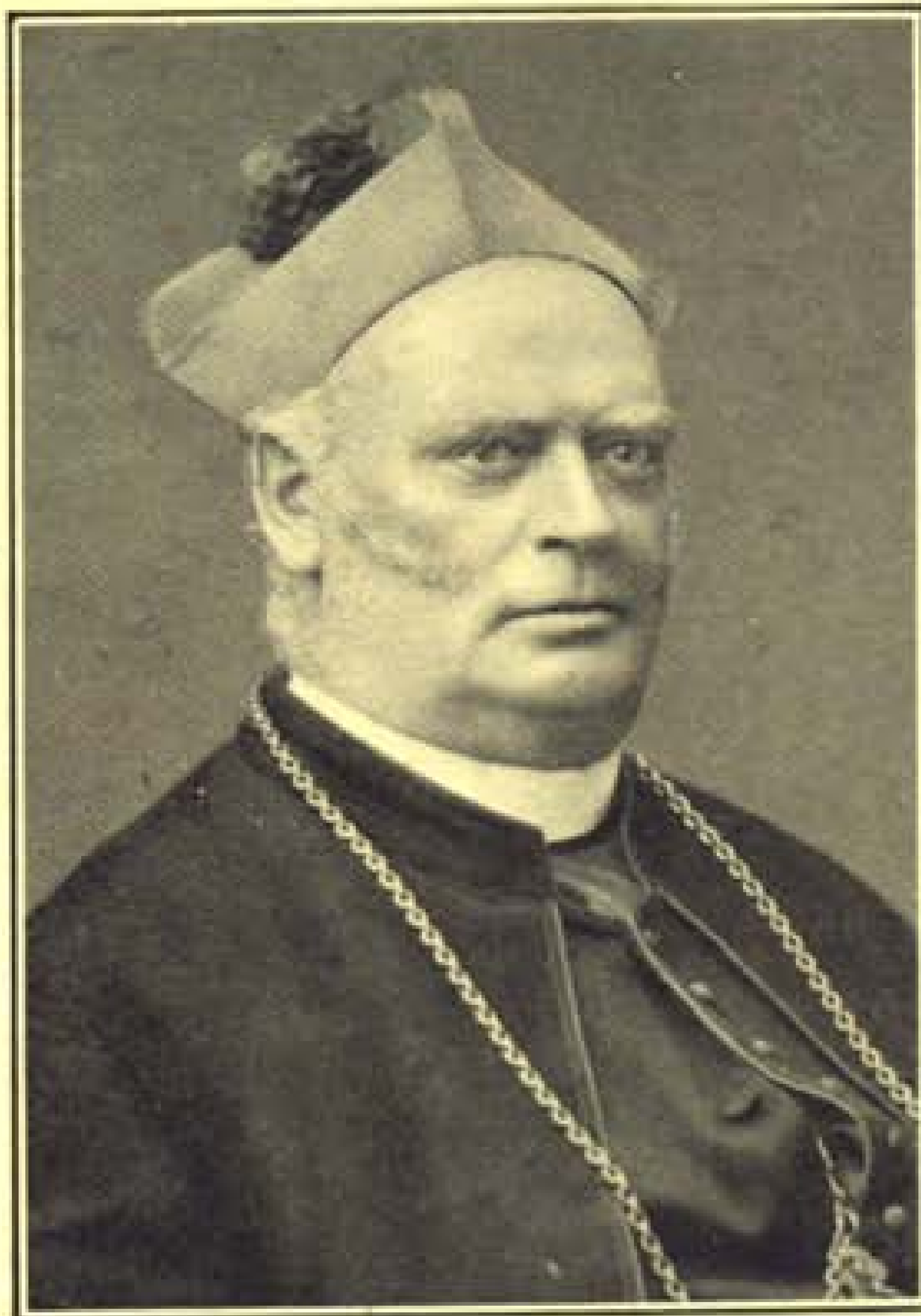
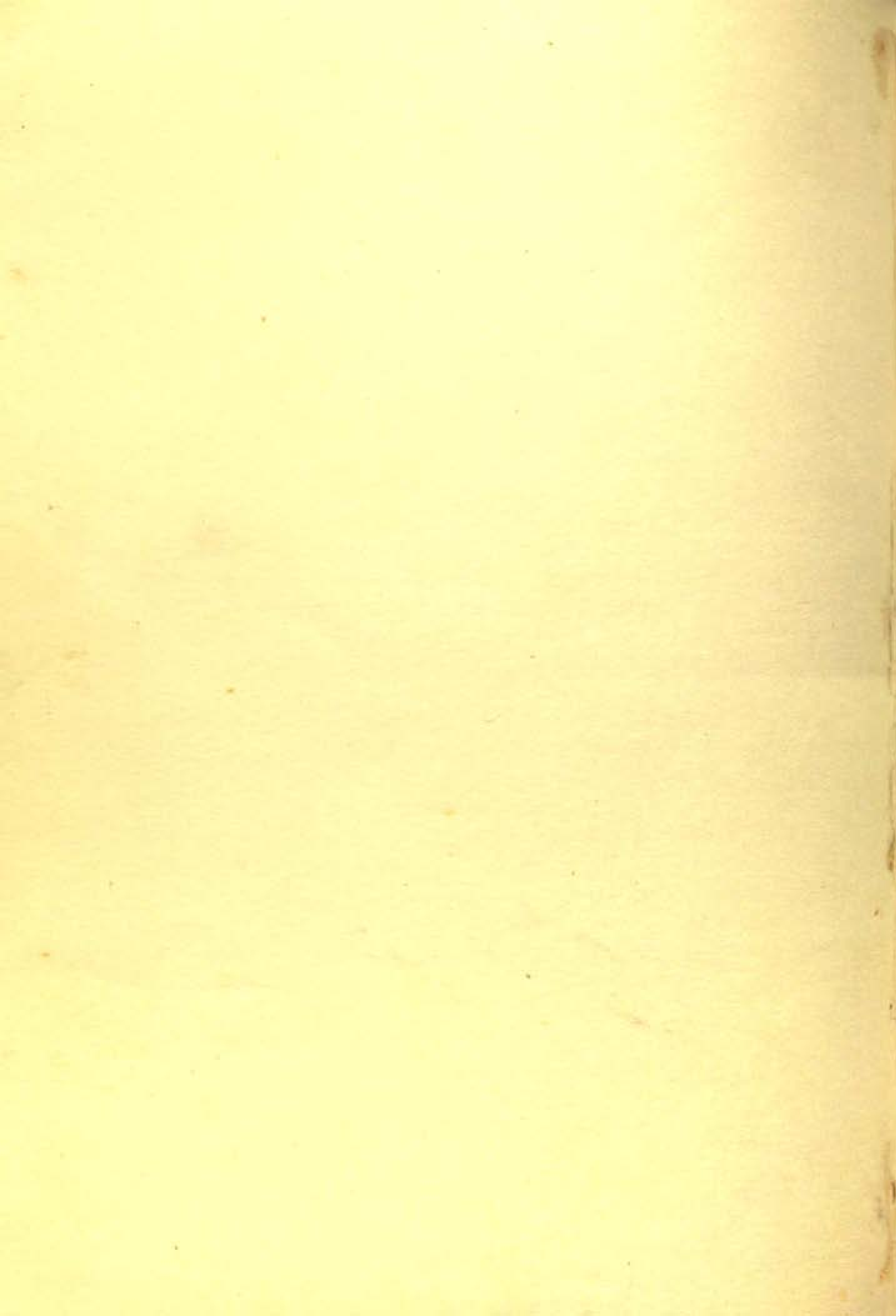


Photo by [Chancellor
DR. HEALY (1903—1918).



Photo by [Lawrence
DR. GILMARTIN (1918—).



CHAPTER V.

THE NEW REGIME.

Dr. MacEvilly's Family.

ON the death of Dr. MacHale, the Coadjutor, Dr. MacEvilly, became at once Archbishop of Tuam. He was then in his sixty-fourth year, having been born in the parish of Louisburgh, in April, 1818. His parents were respectable, and of the farming class, and had been long settled in that part of Mayo, in which their ancestors had once held the position of petty chiefs. They were of English origin, and had come with the De Burgos to Connaught, and, like the Burkes, were firmly planted in Mayo in the fourteenth century. At that date they bore the English name of Staunton. One branch of the family had been guilty of throwing the son of the Earl of Ulster into Lough Mask, and in consequence, it is said, some at least of the Stauntons, ashamed of their relatives and of their crime, changed their name to MacEvilly, meaning son of the knight, or son of the soldier. For they were able to do their share of fighting. But a sufficient reason for the change is to be found in the revolt against English law and English influence at the period. The De Burgos ceased to be English, and became Burkes; the De Exeters became Jordans; the Nangles became MacCostellos; and in these circumstances it might be expected that the Stauntons would assume an Irish name. Not all of them, however, did so, for there are many still in Mayo bearing the English name of Staunton.

In the reign of Elizabeth, Sir Henry Sidney met the Mayo

chiefs at Galway, and mentions MacEvelly as chief of his name. He belonged to the barony of Carra, and must have been considered of some importance, else he would have got no mention from Sidney. The Binghamms seized upon the MacEvelly lands, and broke their power; and the MacEvellys of Louisburgh, in the nineteenth century, had none of the power and none of the lands held by their ancestors of Sidney's time. Like so many others they held the ancient faith and suffered for it.

His Early Years.

At an early age John MacEvelly entered St. Jarlath's College to be trained for the priesthood. He made rapid progress, and entered Maynooth College in 1833. This, however, casts some doubt on the date given as the date of his birth, for it would mean that he entered Maynooth when only fifteen years of age—a very unusual age for any student to matriculate at Maynooth. However this may be, he was certainly a clever and industrious student—one of the very foremost in all his classes. He was ordained priest in 1842; but even while still a senior student he entered as a competitor for the Chair of English and French, in November, 1841. His only opponent was the Rev. M. Kelly, of Ossory, who in after years did much valuable work in the field of Irish ecclesiastical history.

The concursus was to open on the evening of the 2nd of November, and Father MacEvelly's friends held that Father Kelly had not complied with the statutes, as he had not lodged the necessary documents by two o'clock on that day. When therefore the Trustees of the College met on the 3rd, Dr. MacHale proposed, and Lord French seconded, "that the Reverend Father MacEvelly, having complied with the regulations of the statutes in obtaining the sanction of the Council to compete for the Chair of English Elocution and French Language, and there being no other candidate legally qualified to offer himself at the hour of two o'clock, the time announced to the aforesaid candidates by the President, as

fixed by the Council, we present him as the sole qualified person for the examination required by the statutes, previous to an election to the aforesaid Chair."

To this an amendment was moved by Dr. Murray, Archbishop of Dublin, which was seconded by Dr. Egan: "That the Rev. Mr. Kelly, having presented himself as candidate for the Chair of English Elocution and French, with all the requisite qualifying documents, within the day appointed for the concursus, and before the concursus commenced, was, in the opinion of the Board, eligible as a candidate." The amendment was carried, and then Father MacEvilly withdrew from the contest, and Father Kelly, having been examined and pronounced qualified, was appointed to the vacant Chair.

But Father MacEvilly was persevering, and on two subsequent occasions he was a candidate for a vacant Chair at Maynooth. In 1844 he was one of four who competed for the Chair of Theology, the successful candidate being the Rev. George Crolly. In after years he acquired much distinction as a professor, and indeed was one of the great ornaments of the Theological Faculty of Maynooth.¹ In 1845 Father MacEvilly competed for the vacant Chair of Rhetoric, his chief opponent being the Rev. Daniel MacCarthy, afterwards Bishop of Kerry. There were in all four candidates, Father MacCarthy being the successful one. This was Father MacEvilly's last attempt to enter Maynooth as a professor.²

Professor at St. Jarlath's College.

Meantime, in 1844, he had been appointed to a Professorship in St. Jarlath's College, and for many years filled the position with success. His subject was Sacred Scripture. Studious and hardworking, he soon became so proficient, and acquired such a knowledge of his subject, that he published in 1855 a Commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul. Other commentators had done this work in Latin; and the ordinary student, content with much less than a scholar's knowledge of

¹ Healy's "History of Maynooth College," pp. 351-3.

² *Ibid.* p. 424.

the text, found it irksome to plough his way through the intricacies and obscurities of Latin commentators. Such students welcomed a work which explained in plain English the great difficulties of St. Paul. Nor could it be denied that great credit was due to the author. It was no small task to bring out a work of such magnitude, involving, as it did, such an amount of research; and not the least of his difficulties was, for a poor man, to publish two large volumes at his own expense.

During these early years in St. Jarlath's College the relations between the young professor and his distinguished Archbishop were most cordial. Father O'Regan was President of the College, and Father Peter Reynolds was Administrator in the town. But in 1849 Father O'Regan resigned his position for an American mission, and subsequently became Bishop of Chicago; and it was Father Reynolds from the Presbytery, and not Father MacEvilly from the College who became the new President. This, it was said, irritated Father MacEvilly, who resented being placed under a priest brought in from outside. And yet he had not so much reason to complain. Father Reynolds was a man of very remarkable ability, a fine theologian, a redoubtable logician, who wrote English with much greater elegance than Father MacEvilly; and he was Father MacEvilly's senior, though only by a couple of years. In 1852 he was promoted to the pastoral charge of Claremorris, and then Father MacEvilly became his successor as President of the College. In this position he continued until 1857, when he was promoted to the vacant See of Galway.

Bishop of Galway.

The new Bishop was energetic and painstaking, and acquired so good a reputation for diocesan administration that he was, on the recommendation of the bishops of the province, appointed to take charge of the united dioceses of Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora, while still remaining Bishop of Galway. The Bishop of Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora was in such fail-

ing health that he was compelled to ask for a Coadjutor, and at the time of his appointment it was suggested that Kilfenora should be permanently united with Kilmacduagh. But no change was made, and instead of a Coadjutor being appointed for the united dioceses, Dr. MacEvelly was, in 1866, appointed Apostolic Administrator of Kilfenora "durante beneplacito sanctae sedis," a position he held till his transfer to Tuam.

During his early years in Galway the new Bishop passed through difficult and troublous times. The most noted priest of the diocese at that date was Father Peter Daly, who was in pastoral charge of one of the parishes in the city. He was able and energetic, with great administrative capacity, an outstanding figure, not only in the diocese and among his fellow-priests, but in the public life of Galway. He was Chairman of the Town Commissioners, prominent in every public project for the good of the citizens, and even yet one of the bridges spanning the Corrib perpetuates his name. As an unsuccessful aspirant for the vacant mitre in 1857 he was not disposed to be unduly friendly with Dr. MacEvelly. On the other hand, Dr. MacEvelly was impatient of the dominating influence in Galway of one of his priests. He was jealous of his power and dignity, and as there cannot at the same time be two suns in the heavens, these two strong men violently disagreed. The ordinary faithful were not edified when their disagreements became public, and great numbers of people became violently incensed against the Bishop when Father Daly was suspended by him. But Dr. MacEvelly did not quail even in the teeth of great unpopularity, and when the case of Father Daly went to Rome the decision was against him and in favour of the Bishop of Galway. Subsequently there was apology and submission. Father Daly was given back his faculties and restored to his position, and long before Father Daly died the angry feelings roused by the dispute had passed away.

At the Vatican Council Dr. MacHale and Dr. MacEvelly took opposite sides on the question of Papal Infallibility.

³ Fahy's "History of Kilmacduagh," pp. 438-9.

Nor was this the only question on which they disagreed. In manner and temperament and outlook the two were entirely different men. When Dr. MacHale was asked at the trial of the Galway Election Petition what he would do if one of his priests uttered denunciations from the altar against any individual, he replied that "if any overt act comes before me I take cognisance of it in my judicial capacity." But Dr. MacEvelly's reply to a similar question was that he "would suspend him on the spot." Covering with coarse and vile abuse almost every ecclesiastic who took part in the election, Judge Keogh had words of praise for the Bishop of Galway, and though he included him with the Archbishop of Tuam among those guilty of undue influence, he eulogised him as learned, pious and prudent and straightforward; a man "who was no dumb guardian of the faith of his people." It was, indeed, quite clear that Dr. MacEvelly had no enthusiasm for Captain Nolan, and in this he differed from Dr. MacHale.

Dr. MacEvelly's friendship for Cardinal Cullen was another cause of difference between the two; and when Dr. MacHale protested against his appointment as Coadjutor, and he was, nevertheless, appointed, the breach between them became impassable. Such was the state of things when Dr. MacEvelly came to Tuam in 1879, armed with full faculties. He was still Bishop of Galway and Apostolic Administrator of Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora, and remained such until November, 1881, when Dr. MacHale died, and when, by right of succession, he became Archbishop of Tuam.

Coadjutor of Tuam.

Since his arrival in 1879 he had his residence in St. Jarlath's College. There he mixed with the college professors, dined in the college refectory with the students, sometimes visited the students' classes and examined the students. Occasionally he visited Galway and discharged the duties of Bishop of Galway and the two other dioceses over which he ruled. In Tuam he did some of the work of the Archdiocese, but he never met the Archbishop, and was hampered in

diocesan administration by the presence of Dr. Thomas MacHale, who was the Archbishop's Vicar-General, and was not forgetful of his powers. But when the old Archbishop died, his nephew left Tuam, and the old palace next the college was soon occupied by Dr. MacEvelly, and henceforth his pastoral charge of the Archdiocese was uncontrolled.

If we could accept as strictly accurate the accusations made at Rome against the dead Archbishop, Tuam was in an unhealthy condition, and badly required the use of a sweeping-brush in the hands of the new ruler. But Dr. MacEvelly did not find very many glaring abuses in existence. The writing of public letters against each other had been set down only against two priests—Father Reynolds, of Claremorris, and Dean Burke, of Westport. But the supposed scandal given by these letters was ancient history, had been greatly exaggerated, and, in addition, the two priests named had already passed away. Proselytism had done its worst in Achill, and had been badly beaten. And in Clifden, in the years following 1870, it had been encountered with great energy by Dean MacManus, and still more by his curate, Father William Rattigan. Even in Clifden the subscriptions from pious old ladies in England were not coming so freely as of old, and there were empty benches in the Protestant churches of the parish and in the proselytising schools. In some parishes, it is true, additional assistance was required if the work of the parish was to be satisfactorily done. But this want was soon supplied by the new Archbishop, who ordained several young priests, though their course at Maynooth was not finished.

State of the Archdiocese.

In recent years many of the outstanding priests of the Archdiocese had passed away. Dean MacManus had died at Clifden, and for some years the vacancy in the Chapter remained unfilled until Dr. MacEvelly appointed a new Dean in the person of Father McLoughlin of Kiltulla. The new Dean was at the same time appointed Vicar-General and a Domestic Prelate to the Pope. At Castlebar Canon Magee ruled in

place of the Venerable Archdeacon Browne, the dignity of Archdeacon going to Father Kavanagh of Knock. Father Reynolds had died at Claremorris in 1875, and was succeeded by a professor from St. Jarlath's College, Father Richard MacHale. But his tenure of the place was short, and when he died in 1878 he was succeeded by Canon Ulick Burke, for many years President of St. Jarlath's College. To the parish of Athenry, vacant by the death of Father John O'Grady, Dr. MacEvilly appointed Father O'Brien, a former colleague of his own in the college, and his successor as president. Father Hardiman of Ballinrobe had died in 1876, and had been succeeded by Canon Ronayne, whose name had gone to Rome in connection with the appointment of Coadjutor of the Archdiocese. In Dunmore Father Duffy had died at a patriarchal age, and was succeeded by Canon MacEvilly, a brother of the new Archbishop. Besides these, one priest of outstanding ability still lived in the person of Father Lavelle of Cong, though of late years his activities in the Press or on the public platform had been negligible. His interest in the land question had apparently ceased, and not even the agitation connected with the Land League could rouse him to activity.

The Land League Movement.

This movement began in the Archdiocese. On a small estate near Irishtown, in the parish of Ballindine, the tenants' position was serious, and could not be continued without radical change. The estate had been purchased from the landlord in 1857 by Mr. Walter Burke, and he at once doubled the existing rents. With the lapse of time heavy arrears inevitably accumulated, and in 1879 the tenants were unable to pay the rents demanded, still less to pay the arrears due. The landlord had just died, leaving as his executor his brother, Canon Geoffrey Burke, who was then the parish priest of Ballindine. His position was specially difficult. He was a kindly man, with no desire to deal harshly with the tenants, who were his parishioners, and as such entitled to his special

protection. But he was merely holding the estate in trust for others, and felt unable either to reduce the rents or wipe out arrears; and as the tenants could not meet his demands they were threatened with eviction. And the spectacle of a parish priest evicting his own parishioners from their homes would be a shock to public opinion, and an unheard-of event in Ireland.

It was in these circumstances that the tenants appealed to Mr. Davitt, and that a great public meeting was organised to protest against the threatened evictions. It was held at Irish-town, was attended by 7,000 persons, and addressed by several speakers, including Mr. Davitt and Mr. O'Connor Power, M.P. for Mayo. Strong speeches were made, though nothing offensive to Canon Burke was said, and resolutions were passed demanding a general reduction of rents on all estates, and the final abolition of landlordism. The immediate result of the meeting was that Canon Burke gave his tenants an abatement of five shillings in the pound, that the question of arrears also was settled, and that the threatened evictions never took place. This was the beginning of a great land agitation. In the same year meetings were held at Westport, Milltown, Claremorris and Tuam, and a Land League was formed at Castlebar which rapidly developed into a national movement, with Mr. Parnell at its head, and with branches not only in Ireland but in Great Britain and America. Canon Burke, of Claremorris, and Father Joyce, of Louisburgh, were members of the first committee in Dublin, and among prominent members in the early days of the movement were Father McPhilpin, C.C., of Athenry; Father Corbett, C.C., of Claremorris; and Father John O'Malley, P.P., of The Neale.

Among the bishops, Dr. Duggan, of Clonfert, became a supporter of the Land League; but Dr. McCabe, Archbishop of Dublin, was a strong opponent, and gave vigorous expression to his views, especially when the Ladies' Land League was formed.⁴ While Dr. MacHale lived, Dr. MacEvilly took care not to publish what he thought; but it was well known

⁴ Davitt's "Fall of Feudalism."

that he agreed with Dr. McCabe rather than with Dr. Duggan, and he was, like Dr. McCabe, specially severe on the Ladies' Land League. Nor did he, after he became Archbishop, hesitate to show to priests like Father McPhilpin, Father Corbett and Father O'Malley that he disapproved of their conduct. Parish priests, being irremovable, could not be changed about; but they soon learned that their presence on Land League platforms was not a passport to episcopal favour. Curates, however, could be changed, and were changed, and those who favoured the Land League were not promoted when changed. This was Dr. MacEvilly's attitude in the period from 1881 to 1885. It would be incorrect to say that he had any sympathy with landlord oppression, but he was certainly anxious to stand well with the landlords of his diocese, many of them Catholics, and he was in favour with them as he was with the Government at Dublin. He was an old friend of Dr. Duggan, but would not agree with his politics, knowing that Dr. McCabe was more powerful at Rome. And Dr. MacEvilly was always careful to look to Rome, and conform to whatever were the prevailing views about Ireland among the influential classes there.

The Maamtrasna Murders.

In 1884, however, an event happened which considerably modified his views. Among the many brutal murders of the year 1882, one of the most brutal was that of Lord Ardilaun's bailiffs, the Huddys, whose bodies after the murder had been thrown into Lough Mask. The murderers suspected a family named Joyce of an intention to betray them, and in the wild and desolate valley of Maamtrasna this family was set upon at night and ruthlessly butchered. Even the little children fell before the murderers' fury. Lord Spencer was then Lord Lieutenant, and the Government, maddened by the Phoenix Park murders, was a Government of savage and ruthless coercion. To be suspected of crime was dangerous, and might easily prove fatal. In this temper four men were arrested for the murders at Maamtrasna. A packed jury, unscrupulous

Crown prosecutors, and a partisan judge did the rest, and the four men were found guilty and hanged. One of the four, a poor old man named Myles Joyce, protested his innocence in the dock, as he did subsequently on the scaffold, and the others also declared that he was an innocent man. Nevertheless he was hanged, though public opinion was shocked, and loudly declared that there was a gross miscarriage of justice.

Two years later Dr. MacEvelly was administering Confirmation in the parish of Clonbur, in which parish Maamtrasna is situated, and a man named Casey, who had played the rôle of informer at the trial, now declared that Myles Joyce was innocent, and had been foully wronged. This man was stricken with remorse for what he had done, and had confessed in writing and in solemn form before the Archbishop. As one who had consistently and unsparingly denounced murders and other outrages, and had, in consequence, earned and received words of commendation from the Government, the Archbishop assumed that he had only to demand an inquiry into the Maamtrasna case, and the inquiry would at once be granted. But instead of compliance there was refusal. Lord Spencer curtly refused, and in language which might easily be more courteous, especially to one holding such a high ecclesiastical position. The result was that Dr. MacEvelly changed his attitude towards the Government and to the popular movement in Ireland, and henceforth he might be counted as among the supporters of Mr. Parnell.

His conversion was welcomed by the Irish Party. But there were many who doubted if it was sincere, and in the pages of the "Nation" Dr. MacEvelly was assailed by a writer who signed himself "An Irish Catholic Layman," and he was assailed with some asperity. The writer lamented that the days were gone when the Irish people could look for light and guidance to St. Jarlath's. Dr. MacEvelly was put down among the few ecclesiastics who deserved and received the title of "Castle Bishop," and his want of sympathy with the masses of the people was emphasised. Even his diocesan

administration was made the subject of attack, and the curates whom he so often changed from one parish to another were described as "migratory curates" who were arbitrarily shifted about from Aran and Achill to the Twelve Pins.⁵

Diocesan Administration.

Within the Archdiocese itself these changes were often the subject of criticism and complaint. And it was noticed by the laity, as well as by the clergy, that these changes seldom or ever meant promotion when there was question of the relatives or friends of Dr. MacHale. Father John MacHale, for instance, a grand-nephew of the great Archbishop, had been a Professor at St. Jarlath's College, and was changed to the curacy of Newport at his own request. But he was subsequently changed to the very poor curacy of Annaghdown, and feeling that his talents were not appreciated, nor his services rewarded, he left the Archdiocese altogether, and died a prominent and respected pastor in the diocese of Cleveland. Father William Rattigan, who in Dr. MacHale's time had fought the proselytisers in Clifden with such zeal and such success, was moved about from one poor curacy to another, and finally he, too, crossed the ocean and found a home in the diocese of St. Paul's. Father Livingstone, a priest of unblemished character, and with a noted record of good service, also left the Archdiocese, and died a much respected pastor in the diocese of Albany. Father Ganley also found the rule of Dr. MacEvelly irksome, and found shelter and recognition in distant Melbourne.

A more striking case was that of Father John Stephens. He had been a member of the Order of the Holy Ghost, was a native of Claremorris, and brother of a respected priest, Canon James Stephens, who died Parish Priest of Ballinrobe. Before becoming a professed member of his Order, Father John Stephens had been given a mission in the Archdiocese by Dr. MacHale. Subsequently he had been curate at Castlebar, Aughagower and Monivea, and everywhere he had left

⁵ "Letters of an Irish Catholic Layman."

the impress of his energy and zeal. With remarkable organising capacity he filled schools hitherto unfilled, established even in country districts flourishing sodalities, and the little church in Monivea, decorated and improved, was a lasting monument to his memory. But he had been a friend of Dr. MacHale, and sometimes was a critic, though not a severe one, of Dr. MacEvilly. Perhaps it was here his fault lay. Anyhow, Dr. MacEvilly discovered some flaw in his letter of incardination, and Father Stephens was informed that he could no longer be recognised a priest of the Archdiocese of Tuam. He then accepted a mission from his friend, Dr. Carr, Archbishop of Melbourne, but he subsequently rejoined his Order, and died a member of it at Blackrock College.

Other priests who left the Archdiocese for foreign fields were—Father Mannion, from Knock; Father Butler, from Clonbur; Father McDonnell, from Partry; but in some at least of these cases it was not discontent with Dr. MacEvilly's administration that caused them to change to foreign lands.

There was more difficulty in dealing with parish priests than with the migratory curates described by the "Irish Catholic Layman." But parish priests, though immune from arbitrary changes, were not immune from incurring the Archbishop's displeasure, and, in consequence, were not immune from attack. The schools of the parish might be neglected; the church not everything that the house of God ought to be; the parochial house out of repair; or there might be a dispute with a parishioner, in which the pastor had been imprudent, and shown a want of temper and tact. In such cases, if the parish priest in question had been an old friend of the Archbishop, one who welcomed his coming to the Archdiocese, the deficiencies and drawbacks of his parish would be leniently passed over. But if it were otherwise, if the parish priest had taken sides with Dr. MacHale, and was a supporter of his nephew, he might expect to hear words of disapproval, and perhaps of strong condemnation. He would be reminded that he was not doing his work, that he was unfit for the position he filled, that he required more help in the work of his

parish; and he could count himself lucky if he did not get an extra curate whom he did not want, and to whom personally he might have a decided objection.

The Castlebar New Church.

In the parish of Castlebar a state of things existed which called forth much criticism, and did not tend to edify the laity. Some years before Dr. MacEvilly's advent to Tuam, the parish priest of Castlebar, Archdeacon Browne, a much respected man, had died; and in due course the vacancy was filled by the appointment of Canon Magee, who was transferred from the charge of Mountbellew. Like his predecessor, Canon Magee was a cultured and zealous priest, and seeing the necessity for a new church in Castlebar, determined to build one. It was, indeed, badly required, for the old church was a ramshackle building which had long outlived its time, and was entirely unsuited to the needs of the county town. But to build a suitable new church a good sum of money must be available, more than could be expected from the people of the parish; and Canon Magee went to America to beg for subscriptions. He was an eloquent preacher, and often used the name of John MacHale in appealing to the people; and he was successful in obtaining a good sum for his contemplated work from the generous Irish in America, and especially from those who had come from Castlebar. In due time the foundation of the new church was laid, and the building went on until the greater part of the stonework was finished; and in an admirably elevated site a beautiful church would soon be complete. But Canon Magee died in 1885, leaving the church still unfinished, leaving it even unroofed, and meantime Dr. MacHale's long life had ended, and Dr. MacEvilly had become Archbishop of Tuam.

Canon Magee was a relative of Dr. MacHale, and the church in process of construction was often referred to by the people as the MacHale church. This perhaps did not specially appeal to Dr. MacEvilly, though it could hardly be the sole cause of his disapproval. It is certain, however, that he

had no words of encouragement for the MacHale church, and no wish to see it completed, and when Canon Lyons was appointed to succeed Canon Magee he made no effort to finish the work which his predecessor had begun. It was said that the new church was too big, and would be too expensive; it was said that a new and more suitable church could be built from the beginning for less money than would be required for the completion of the unfinished church; it was even said that the foundations of the MacHale church were faulty and insecure. But an architect, brought specially to examine and pronounce judgment, and probably condemn, declared that the foundations were quite sound, and that the church could be completed for a reasonable sum, not at all beyond the resources and generosity of the parish of Castlebar.

Yet, Canon Lyons would not proceed with the work; the old church became more dilapidated with the lapse of time, and finally both the old church and the MacHale church were pulled down, and a new church was begun. For a time it seemed as if there would be a second ruined new church. For a large section of the people were hostile to the new arrangement, and little if any help could be expected from America. Yet, with indomitable energy, and against obstacles that would have discouraged most men, Canon Lyons persevered until the new church was completed. The public noted with curiosity that the new church, which was sometimes called the MacEvilly church, was larger than the church begun by Canon Magee; and all the world could see that the site of the second new church was less suitable, at least less commanding, than that of the MacHale church, which stood upon the opposite hill. This contest of names it was which disedified the people, who knew well that a new church was sadly needed, not, indeed, to perpetuate the name of MacEvilly or MacHale, but to serve as the temple of the living God. Nor can it be denied that the new church is a credit to Castlebar and a credit to the Archdiocese of Tuam, and that it is a noble monument to the energy and zeal of Canon Lyons.

The Archbishop and His Priests.

When Dr. MacEvelly became Archbishop of Tuam he was well past his sixtieth year, and had all but reached the silver jubilee of his episcopate. His temper had never been sweet, and had not been sweetened by advancing years. He was autocratic, and often had little regard for the feelings of others; and it was often said that here was found the all-sufficient reason for his many troubles. As age came on his kindly consideration for others diminished rather than increased. He became peevish and querulous, and had no reluctance in saying what was offensive and hurtful to his priests, nor in finding fault with them, and even humiliating them, even in public and in presence of the people. This did not tend to make him loved, and he was certainly not popular in his old age. At first his hard words were reserved for those who were opposed to his coming to the Archdiocese, and among these were the friends of Dr. MacHale. But afterwards, he sometimes turned on his own friends, and several priests who had been at one time in high favour with him seriously incurred his displeasure at a later date, and without any strong reason except caprice.

Killanin Parish.

Yet there was no public quarrel, except with Father Coyne of Killanin, and in this case it was not the Archbishop who was most to blame. There was much need for a readjustment of boundaries between the Archdiocese of Tuam and the diocese of Galway, and it was agreed between the Archbishop and Dr. MacCormack, Bishop of Galway, that the parish of Killanin should be transferred from the Archdiocese of Tuam to the diocese of Galway, the parish of Carraroe being given in exchange to Tuam. But here Father Coyne of Killanin, interfered. He protested that he was parish priest of Killanin, and could not be changed without his consent. He protested that he was a Tuam priest, and did not desire to be affiliated to Galway, though he added that he would prefer being under

Dr. MacCormack than to serve under Dr. MacEvelly. Finally, he protested against the parish of Killanin being transferred to Galway at all, alleging that the people there were opposed to the change, as well as himself. When the matter was referred to Rome, Father Coyne vigorously protested, and even went to Rome himself, fighting stubbornly in one court after another, until a final and irrevocable decision was given against him.

At first Dr. MacEvelly demurred to recognising Father Coyne as parish priest of Killanin, alleging that the letter he had from Dr. MacHale (he was once addressed as P.P.) did not give him the equivalent of the usual collation. On this point, however, the decision was adverse to the Archbishop, and if Father Coyne had peacefully acquiesced in the rectification of boundaries and the transfer of Killanin to Galway, he would have sufficiently safeguarded his position as a parish priest of the Archdiocese. For though he would cease to be parish priest of Killanin, he could not be forcibly transferred to another diocese. Nor would Rome consent that he should, though Dr. MacEvelly would have parted with him without any regret. But Father Coyne would stick to Killanin, and when he was defeated under this head at Rome, he refused to submit.

A section of the people supported him, and helped him to keep possession of the parochial house and church, and though he was suspended, he continued for a long time to say Mass and administer sacraments. At last force was used to eject him by Father Conroy, appointed P.P. by the Bishop of Galway, and then Father Coyne had recourse to the civil courts; and in one of the supreme courts at Dublin learned lawyers were employed for some days with the provisions of the canon law. The civil courts, however, could do nothing to give relief to Father Coyne. Nor would his obstinacy yield to any decision unfavourable to him. For a further time he clung on, and then gradually ceased to interfere with the parish priest appointed by the Bishop of Galway. Finally,

his death put an end to a state of affairs which had long been a public scandal.

Some Noted Priests.

With the close of the old century some well-known figures among the priests of the Archdiocese had disappeared. In 1886 Father Lavelle died at Cong, having long outlived his fame. In all truth he belonged to the Church militant. In his college days he would easily find a cause of quarrel in the refectory or the class-room or in the recreation ground. As a professor in the Irish College in Paris, he disputed with the President about so many things, and with such acrimony, that the two men could not continue in friendly co-operation, and Father Lavelle was compelled to return to Tuam, leaving the President in undisputed possession of the field.

A man with such a disposition, and with talents far beyond the ordinary, was a good selection for the parish of Partry, where hard fighting was to be done; and during the years Father Lavelle spent there he gave little rest to unscrupulous proselytism or oppressive landlordism. His vigorous pen exposed in the Press the whole Plunkett family of Tourma-keady, with their Bible readers and souper schools; as it did the agent and the bailiffs of the Portroyal estate. The fighting qualities of this militant pastor, loving his people, and hating oppression, were soon recognised far beyond the bounds of his parish, and in a short time few men in Ireland were better known than Father Lavelle, of Partry. He was the special friend of George Henry Moore, as he was of A. M. Sullivan and Sir John Grey, and at the time of the Galway election he was joint arbitrator with them in the Portacarron award.

He was then parish priest of Cong, and it was noticed that from his advent to that parish he was less militant than of old. He had not, it is true, either proselytism or landlordism to fight with, at least in no aggressive form; and it might be said that he had grown older, and had acquired the moderation and restraint that comes with years. But it was also said that he

had come too much under the influence of Lord Ardilaun, and that this influence was potent in producing the change that had come. After the Galway Election of 1872, when he was fiercely assailed by Judge Keogh, Father Lavelle dropped out of public life. He took little share in the Home Rule movement, and none in the Land League agitation. Not even the coercionist regime of Forster or the fierce struggle under Lord Spencer, roused him to activity. He stood no longer on a public platform, and wrote no more letters to the "Times," and when he died in 1886 he was already forgotten.

A very different type of man died in 1888 in the person of Canon Ulick Burke, of Claremorris. Without a tithe of Father Lavelle's abilities, he had spent almost all his life in St. Jarlath's College. He was always a student, diligent and persistent, and had some ambition for literary distinction. But he produced nothing worthy to survive, if we except his "College Irish Grammar" and his "Easy Lessons in Irish." These were written by one who knew Irish well; but when he wrote in English we have nothing but his "Aryan Origin of the Irish Race" and a "Short Life of Dr. MacHale," and these were but poorly done, and such as were not likely to bring fame.

Belonging also to the Claremorris deanery was Canon Waldron, who died at Ballyhaunis in 1892. He left the substantial sum of a thousand pounds to help to build a church which was badly required. He had the reputation of being rich, and sometimes priests shook their heads and muttered the word "avarice." But they forgot that Canon Waldron had been bequeathed a substantial sum by his relative, Father Waldron of The Neale, and that he had greatly increased this sum by sound and fortunate investments. He could not be said to be penurious, for he was hospitable and kindly, and had none of the miser's peculiarities; and if he could easily leave £1,000 for a new church, it was chiefly because he was gifted with a special aptitude for finance.

Types of fine old priests were Dean McLoughlin of Kiltulla, and Canon Geraghty of Began, both of them venerable

in appearance and courtly in manner. Archdeacon Kavanagh, P.P. of Knock acquired a certain amount of celebrity in connection with the supposed apparitions at his church at Knock. It was said that the Blessed Virgin had appeared there, and had been seen by many; and it was certain that the Archdeacon himself, who was a very holy man, and very devoted to the Blessed Virgin, fully believed in the apparitions. But an ecclesiastical commission, set up by Dr. MacEvilly, could not find convincing evidence. The matter has never been decided, though pilgrims have gone to Knock, and go there still.

One of the most noted figures among the old priests was Canon O'Dwyer, who died at Dunmore in 1898. Like Dean McLoughlin, his very appearance commanded respect, and, unlike Father Lavelle, he had no aptitude for the public platform or for the Press. His whole energies were directed towards the hard work of the mission, to the building of schools and churches, to preaching and catechising, to the reform of the hardened sinner. With such his methods were sometimes rough and ready; but they were always kindly, and always the outcome of zeal. Nor could anything exceed the appreciation of the poor people of the parish of Killeen, where he laboured so long. The erring among these poverty-stricken wilds he exhorted, and often abused; but he helped them in their ignorance and in their poverty, and a generation after he left them they poured benedictions on his name. Subsequently Canon O'Dwyer ministered at Clonberne, Kiltulla, and in Dunmore. Even in his old age, when he was little short of four score years, he built a substantial church in the rural district of the Dunmore parish, so that he was the builder and the zealous missionary to the last.

The Troubles of Captain Boycott.

Belonging to the Ballinrobe deanery was Father John O'Malley, P.P., of The Neale, who died in 1892. Like Father Lavelle, he was of the militant order, and had considerable sympathy with all those who held extreme views on Irish poli-

tical questions. He was known, indeed, to have very friendly feelings even towards the physical force section, and, unlike Father Lavelle, was in entire sympathy with the Land League movement. His brother-in-law, Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien, was an old Fenian and a Member of Parliament in Parnell's Party, and to the home of Father John, as he was affectionately called, Mr. Davitt and the chief Land League leaders were frequent visitors. One of the first big League meetings was held at Mile Hill, in The Neale parish, and one of the first big struggles between landlord and tenant was fought out in the same parish.

This was on the estate of the Earl of Erne. His agent was Captain Boycott, well known on the turf, and not unpopular until the division between landlord and tenant became so sharply defined. In 1880, not only was Captain Boycott a land agent who insisted to the full on the landlord's rights, but he was also an employer of labour, and paid those who cultivated his fields with a niggard hand. The men struck for higher wages, and intimidated others from labouring for the Captain. The consequence was that the harvest of 1880 could not be gathered in, and gloom reigned in the agent's house, picturesquely situated on the shores of Lough Mask. The irritated agent then struck at the tenants by refusing any abatement in their rents, and the whole population around, taking sides with the tenants and labourers, refused to do anything for the agent. They would not shoe his horses, or milk his cows, or drive his carriage, and the oats was left uncut and the potatoes rotting in the ground.

At last some Orange labourers came from Orange Ulster. They came under the protection of 2,000 British soldiers. When Captain Boycott's potatoes were dug and saved, the British taxpayer had a good bill to pay for its troops; and when the Lough Mask Expedition, as it was called, was all over, and the Orangemen had gone back to their native Ulster, Captain Boycott was so disgusted at the expense involved in saving his crop, and at the unpopularity he had himself in-

curred, that he resigned the agency and went back to England, where he was born.

It was during the progress of this struggle near Lough Mask that a new word was added to the English language by Father O'Malley. One day at dinner in the parochial house, an American journalist, a Mr. Redpath, was a guest, and told Father John that in writing for his paper he was much puzzled for a suitable word. "When the people ostracise a grabber," he said, "we call it social excommunication, but we ought to have an entirely different word to signify ostracism applied to a landlord or agent like Boycott. Ostracism won't do—the people would not know the meaning of the word—and I can't think of any other." Father John tapped his forehead, and said, "How would it do to call it boycott him?" Mr. Redpath was greatly pleased, induced the Land League speakers to use the word, and did so himself in his American letters. Finally, the word obtained recognised currency, and became incorporated in the English language, whence it passed into the languages of other countries, and in a few years we had "boycott" in every European language.⁶

The Archbishop's Last Years.

Dr. MacEvilly was past his seventieth year when Father O'Malley died in 1892, and he had passed his eightieth year when Canon O'Dwyer died in 1898. Strongly and sturdily built, and always careful of his health, he had then outlived almost all his contemporaries; nor was it until the new century had come that he showed any symptoms of failing bodily powers. Mentally, he was as alert at eighty-two as he had been at the age of thirty, though he had acquired to the full the garrulity of old age. And while he told the same old stories in the same old way, the priests at table were bound to be attentive and interested, or pretend to be. For the Archbishop had become not only garrulous but impatient and irritable, and if any priest, and especially any young priest, broke in on his well-worn narrative, he was met with a

⁶ Davitt, pp. 274-5.

withering glance of disapproval from the Archbishop. Even old priests were often treated with great asperity, their failings and defects shown up, their past services to the Church and to the Archbishop entirely forgotten.

To his own relatives the Archbishop was often partial, and rarely unkind. His nephew was promoted to a parish after a very few years of curate life, while others, much older, were still left in obscure positions. Nor were other relatives overlooked, though their advancement was not so rapid as that of the Archbishop's nephew. Such a course of action was not calculated to win the approval of the priests, and the Archbishop, who had never been popular, became more unpopular than ever in extreme old age. Nor was it unusual to have some priest express surprise that so many old men, like Bismarck and Gladstone, had passed away, but that their example had not been followed in the Archdiocese of Tuam. It was not, they avowed, that they wished the Archbishop's death, but they were anxious to see the Archbishop promoted to heaven. Dr. MacEvilly seemed to appreciate the peculiar estimation in which he was held; and when his health was proposed at public functions his thanks were perfunctory, and he always added, as if to console his audience, that he was feeling well, and believed he would live for many years. Nature, however, could not be cheated of her due, and in the last days of 1902 the Archbishop got suddenly and seriously ill, and after a few days' illness breathed his last. And thus Tuam was left without an Archbishop with the passing of the dying year.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

Dr. Healy, Archbishop.

LONG before his death, Dr. MacEvelly felt the burden of years falling heavily upon him, and it was freely said that if he could be sure of getting as his Coadjutor his friend, Dr. MacCormack, Bishop of Galway, he would have applied to Rome. But he could not count on having his own friend and nominee appointed, no more than Dr. MacHale could count on having his nephew appointed in his time. Dr. MacEvelly feared he might get Dr. Healy, of Clonfert, and Dr. Healy would not be acceptable to him. Therefore, he struggled on, going to conferences and administering Confirmation, and discharging the heavy duties of the episcopacy in an extensive diocese until all the world could see that his physical powers were failing under the strain. With Dr. MacCormack his years might have been prolonged, for the heavier work would have been borne by the younger man; while the old man, jealous of power and reluctant to share it with anybody, would still be at the helm. With Dr. Healy, on the contrary, he feared there might be a want of cordial co-operation. The Archbishop and the Coadjutor would see things from different standpoints, and the Archbishop, accustomed to rule, and impatient of criticism, would have been hampered by his episcopal assistant. That Dr. MacEvelly's fears of not getting Dr. MacCormack, and of getting Dr. Healy, were not groundless, soon appeared after his death. For though Dr. MacCormack got the vast majority of the votes of the priests of

the Archdiocese, it was Dr. Healy who was appointed to the See of Tuam.

His Early Years.

The new Archbishop was a native of the diocese of Elphin. His parents were respectable and in decent circumstances, and lived at Ballinafad, on the shores of Lough Arrow, in the County of Sligo, and here John Healy was born in November, 1841. After going through the local school he passed on to the Diocesan College at Summerhill, near Athlone, where he showed himself to be possessed of uncommon ability. From Summerhill he went to Maynooth College, and there, during his whole student career, he was among the foremost students of his time. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1867. For a young priest with such an academic record the proper place was the Diocesan College, and immediately after his ordination Father Healy was appointed a professor at Summerhill. It is said that his notions of discipline were not very strict, and it may be that this brought him unfavourably under the notice of Dr. Gilooly, the Bishop of Elphin, who was himself a strict disciplinarian. At all events, the young professor was not many years in Summerhill until he was changed to the country curacy of Cliffoney, near Sligo, and there he remained for more than seven years. The parish priest, Father Monaghan, was old, and unable to do much of the active work of the mission, the burden of which fell on the curate. But, though compelled to devote most of his time to the missionary work of an extensive parish, Father Healy managed to find time for his books. He not only read but studied, and studied hard, and with such success that he felt able to compete for a Chair in Maynooth in 1879.

Appointed Professor at Maynooth.

His success on the occasion was remarkable. There were two Chairs vacant—Theology and Rhetoric. It was for the Chair of Rhetoric Father Healy entered, and for this position there were three other candidates, one of whom, Father

Scannell, of Kerry, was a very formidable opponent. For the Chair of Theology there was but one candidate, Father Connington of Achonry, an extremely able man, admirably fitted for an academic position, and if he had no opponent and were appointed, as he certainly would be, it was represented to Father Healy that even if he himself were superior to his opponents for the Chair of Rhetoric, the bishops might hesitate before appointing at the same time two professors from the same province. In these circumstances, Father Healy, at the last moment, also entered for the Chair of Theology. It was very unusual to see one man standing for two Chairs, one concursus following another; but it was unprecedented to see the same man successful for both Chairs, and this is what happened. Father Healy was informed that he had come first in both contests, and might choose between Rhetoric and Theology. He chose the latter, and was unanimously appointed, as was Father Scannell unanimously appointed to the Chair of Rhetoric.¹

Father Healy taught the senior classes of Theology, and in 1883, on the death of Dr. Murray, he became prefect of the Dunboyne Establishment. The same year he became editor of the "Irish Ecclesiastical Record," in succession to Dr. Carr, who left the College to become Bishop of Galway.

His Controversy with Newman.

In the next year, and in the columns of the "Record," Dr. Healy, as he then was, had his controversy with Cardinal Newman on the inspiration of Sacred Scripture. There was no difference between them as to the fact that all the canonical books of Scripture were inspired. Newman fully accepted the Church's dogmatic definition that all these books, with all their parts, were inspired Scripture. But he wanted to know "if the Church insisted on her children's acceptance on certain Scripture informations on matters of fact, in defiance of criticism and history. Scripture was in all matters of faith and morals certainly divinely inspired throughout. But he sug-

¹ "History of Maynooth College," pp. 504, 545.

gested that there were certain 'obiter dicta,' which he defined as 'unimportant statements of fact which were not necessarily inspired'; though he admitted, when pressed by Dr. Healy, that not only matters of faith and morals, but also historical facts connected with matters of faith and morals, were inspired.

Dr. Healy was not satisfied with this as an accurate description of the limit to which inspiration went, and added that the "merest tyro in the schools of Catholic Theology" knew this description to be inaccurate. God was the Author both of the Old and the New Testament, and when the Council of Trent defined His work as inspired Scripture, no distinction was made between matters of fact and matters of faith and morals. If the Cardinal's word *throughout* meant the same as "libros integros cum omnibus suis partibus" he was satisfied, but nothing less than this would satisfy him. He was ready to admit that God did not necessarily choose the *exact words*, but the words selected were adequate to convey His meaning. A human agent was employed, but he was directly and constantly under Divine guidance while he wrote. Dr. Healy had not much patience with the Cardinal's "obiter dicta," which he took to be uninspired, merely human, and therefore possibly erroneous statements, though coming from an inspired writer. His conclusions were:—

(1) It is *de fide* that the entire books of Sacred Scripture, with all their parts, are inspired.

(2) *Throughout* must mean "entire books with all their parts."

(3) The expression "Sacred Scripture is in all matters of faith and morals inspired throughout" is inaccurate as involving exclusion.

(4) "Obiter dicta" in Newman's sense are inadmissible.

Dr. Healy was a vigorous writer, given to plain speaking, and the bluntness of his language gave the Cardinal some offence. Not that Dr. Healy wished to give offence, and he expressly declared that he did not; but the Cardinal was sensitive, and certainly felt hurt, and was not slow to say so. But the difference between the two was little. The Cardinal

was an honest inquirer rather than a critic of the sacred books; and Dr. Healy, on his side, was specially anxious to state clearly what the Catholic teaching was. Controversy ceased between them, and charity triumphed.

Just then Dr. Healy was appointed Coadjutor-Bishop of Clonfert; and the Cardinal, fearing that he himself might have offended his late opponent, inquired privately of Dr. Walsh, then President of Maynooth, if the new Bishop-Elect would accept some little gift from him. Dr. Healy readily assented, and the Cardinal sent him an Episcopal Canon, with the following letter:—

“ Birmingham, July 3rd, 1884.

“ My dear Lord Bishop-Elect,—

“ I thank you for your kind message through Dr. Walsh, and for your acceptance from me of the offering which I proposed to make to you.

“ That a long life and a career of successful and happy service in the Church of God may be granted to you from above is the sincere prayer of

“ Your faithful Servant,

“ JOHN H. CARDINAL NEWMAN.”

Dr. Healy gratefully acknowledged the gift, and in his letter of thanks expressed regret for any expression of his in the recent discussion which might have caused any annoyance to His Eminence.²

Dr. Healy, Bishop of Clonfert.

For nearly twenty years subsequent to this date Dr. Healy lived in the diocese of Clonfert. Until Dr. Duggan's death in 1896 he was Coadjutor, but after that date he was in full charge of the diocese. They were stirring times. Since 1879 a fierce agrarian war had been waged, and from 1880 there was a desperate struggle between the Irish Party and the Liberals, until, in 1885, the Liberal Government was overthrown. Then there was a lull while the great Liberal statesman tried by his Home Rule Bill to end the quarrel between the two nations. But Gladstone was overwhelmed, and then

² Healy's "Papers and Addresses," pp. 404-445

the long, almost uninterrupted period of Tory coercion supervened. These years also saw the Revolutionary Plan of Campaign, the fall of Parnell, and the disastrous period of disintegration and weakness which followed. In the public journals of the time Dr. Healy was often described as a reactionary and a Castle Bishop—one whose entire sympathies were with the landlords and the coercionists. This, however, was doing him an injustice. He disliked the Plan of Campaign, as he disliked revolutionary agitation; he had no love for Parnell, and still less for Mr. John Dillon; and in an electoral contest his vote would go to Balfour rather than to Gladstone. But he had no approval for Tory coercion, especially when unaccompanied by remedial measures; and he welcomed Mr. Gladstone's Land Act and other Liberal reforms. He was friendly with the landlords, but he hated landlord oppression, and had a real love for the masses of the people.

The fact was that he had little love for the rough and tumble contests of political life. His tastes were academic, and his bias was for the lecture hall rather than for the political platform; for the pages of a review rather than for the columns of the daily paper, which dealt with events of the passing hour. The scenes of his boyhood recalled many great events of Irish history; and his leisure hours for many years were spent with the saints and scholars and heroes of the ages that had long since passed away. He wrote a stirring poem in which he undertook to give the address of Red Hugh O'Donnell on the eve of the Battle of the Curlews. He published many articles on the ancient schools of Ireland; and in 1890 he published a large volume, "The Ancient Schools and Scholars of Ireland," a work which has had a large circulation, both in Ireland and in America, and which has long since reached the position of a standard work on the subject with which it deals.

Dr. Healy was also prominently identified with the fight for higher education for Irish Catholics, and on this subject he spoke with authority. He was a Senator of the Royal University, a Member of the Royal Irish Academy, and a

Fellow of the Royal Society of Antiquaries. He was a member of the Robertson Commission on University Education, a member of the Commission for the Publication of the Brehon Laws. And he was given the degree of LL.D., *Honoris Causa*, by the Senate of the Royal University. At the request of the Irish bishops he wrote the "History of Maynooth College," and he preached the centenary sermon of the College; and when the Catholic Truth Society was formed he became its first President. A man of such outstanding abilities, a scholar and a writer of eminence, was a formidable opponent of Dr. MacCormack, too formidable, as it proved; and though Dr. Healy was only second on the list for the Tuam mitre, and far behind Dr. MacCormack in the number of votes, it was he, and not Dr. MacCormack, who became Archbishop of Tuam. He was appointed early in the year, and made his formal entry into Tuam on St. Patrick's Day, 1903.

Dr. Healy in Tuam.

In his new position it soon appeared that he had not the aptitude for diocesan administration that his predecessor had shown. No doubt it was an advantage to Dr. MacEvilly that he was a native of the Archdiocese, that he knew the priests and the parishes well, and that he was necessarily familiar with the records of the young priests, both in college and outside. Dr. Healy, on the other hand, only knew those who had been his contemporaries in college—a necessarily limited number—and a few others whom he had casually met. Apart from this, he had no taste for clerical gossip, and not much taste for clerical society. When he met individual priests he was courteous, and he was always hospitable, but he rarely visited a parish except on official occasions, and when his official duties of Confirmation and visitation were done, his main desire was to find out what historical and especially ecclesiastical ruins were in the neighbourhood, what holy wells, and were there any traces of St. Patrick or his contemporaries. Such subjects

always interested him. He wrote a bulky volume on the "Life and Writings of St. Patrick," which was published in 1906. He was one of the founders of the Galway Archæological Society, contributed to its journal, and lectured at its meetings, and he contributed many articles on kindred subjects to the "Catholic Encyclopædia."

But though he loved to work on Irish historical subjects himself, he had not much encouragement for any of his priests who entered the same field. One such had undertaken to write a History of Ireland, and had the first volumes ready for the press when Dr. Healy entered the diocese as Archbishop. It was a heavy task, especially for one who had to do the often exhausting work of a curate, whose means were so little that he was unable to purchase the necessary books or visit libraries, and who more than once had to lay down the work, because the necessary books could not be procured. As Dr. Healy himself had passed through a similar experience, it was thought that all his sympathy would be with the struggling author; and when he undertook to write a preface for the new History of Ireland it was taken as a certainty that he would give the author a helping hand. These hopes were not realised. Dr. Healy evidently thought that the author had undertaken too much, a work beyond his powers, and his preface was not sympathetic, nor calculated to help.

But when all difficulties had been overcome; when the work had been carried to completion, and had met with a large measure of success, the Archbishop was more generous. His commendation was then not wanting, and his promotion of the author to one of the most prominent positions in the Archdiocese was tangible evidence of his recognition of what had been done.

Passing of Some Noted Priests.

Dr. Healy had not been long in the Archdiocese when more than one well-known priest died, and indeed before the close of 1903 Dean Ronayne of Ballinrobe had passed away. His brother, who died nearly sixty years before, was a young priest

of great promise, and stood very high in the estimation of Dr. MacHale, and the younger brother, partly because of his brother, and largely also because of his own personal merits, was also in high favour with the great Archbishop. He entered college late in life for a student, and without having gone through the usual length of preliminary training. But his talents overcame obstacles which to others would be a fatal bar, and in Maynooth he was among the first students of his time. Ordained priest in 1861, he was appointed to the curacy of Westport, where he became after a few years Administrator, and a little later a Canon and Vicar-Forane of the Westport deanery. In 1876 he was appointed to the important parish of Ballinrobe. His predecessor was Father Hardiman, a fine type of an intellectual Irish priest, a sound scholar, an eloquent preacher, one who in any diocese would hold a foremost place. And Dean Ronayne was no unworthy successor. Unlike Hardiman, he was not an eloquent preacher, and he had no taste for politics, and a horror of the political platform. But he knew his theology well, was a diligent student, and a great admirer of Newman; and his general information was extensive. His personal character did the rest. He was never petty, never inclined to quarrel, was a fine conversationalist, abounding in wit and humour, and either in clerical or lay society always attracted attention and commanded respect. He was one of those whose names were submitted to Rome for the Coadjutorship of Tuam; and when the diocese of Galway was vacant in 1887 his name would have again been sent before the Roman authorities had he not himself interposed a very emphatic *nolo episcopari*. In 1892 he became Dean of the Chapter, and when he died in 1903, Canon Barrett of Headford succeeded to the vacant dignity.

In 1906 one of the late Dean's great personal friends passed away at Hollymount in the person of Father Richard Prendergast, P.P., one of the best of priests, and one of the most estimable of men. He was the Dean's executor, and had been his life-long friend. Just a year before another well-known priest of the Archdiocese passed away. This was Canon

Gibbons, P.P., of Balla, and Vicar-Forane of the deanery of Castlebar. He was also Chancellor of the Chapter. Ordained in 1847, he was a curate in Clifden during the horrors of that and the following year, and his descriptions of the scenes of these years, of the hunger, the disease, the intensive suffering, the corpses on the roadside, and the coffinless graves, were thrilling. It used to be said that the Irish priests educated abroad had not infrequently something of the courtly manners of the French Abbés. But Canon Gibbons was never in a foreign college; he was a son of Maynooth, home bred and home educated, and yet his manners were as courtly as could have been desired. His appearance, especially in old age, with his well-marked features and silver hair, was quite in keeping with his courtly and even pompous manner; and strangers often asked who was the distinguished-looking priest. And if the old man was told this he was much pleased. He could not, and did not, pretend to be above the infirmities of human nature, though he would be reluctant to admit that he was vain.

Some New Churches.

During these years there was some church building done in the Archdiocese, and many houses built for the accommodation of the priests. In Ballyhaunis the old church on the hill had outlived its time, and was scarcely a decent place for divine service. Knowing that a new church was badly needed, the late parish priest, Canon Waldron, had left the sum of £1,000 to serve as the nucleus of a building fund. His successor, Canon Canning, with this sum as a beginning, appealed to the people at home, and to their friends abroad. His two envoys to America, Father Greally and Father Walsh, worked hard, and were eminently successful, and Canon Canning was able to build a beautiful church—a church well placed, lofty, well lighted, well furnished, a great advance, indeed, on the old church of other days.

At Claremorris, also, the old church had long ceased to be suitable, and a new and commodious and costly church was

erected by Archdeacon Kilkenny. A few years later the almost ruined church of Balla was replaced by a larger and costlier and much more beautiful church. It was begun by Father John McDermott, and was, after his early and lamented death, completed and decorated with great taste by Father Reidy. In Newport the need for a new church was not great, for the old church was still in good repair, and adequate for the needs of the congregation. But a rich merchant of the town, Mr. Martin Carey, wanted God to have a better house, and at his death left the fine sum of £10,000 for a new church. Large as it was, it was found inadequate for the plans of the new parish priest, Canon McDonald. Much more than the sum named was spent on the new structure, which occupies a commanding position, and is, both exteriorly and interiorly, one of the finest parochial churches in the west of Ireland.

In all this work of church building Dr. Healy took a deep interest, and was always willing to lend a helping hand. And on the occasion of laying the foundation stone of a church, or its dedication when complete, he was always ready to deliver one of those stirring and eloquent addresses which recalled the glories of the ancient Irish Church.

Dr. Healy preaches in Armagh Cathedral.

Nor were his efforts in this respect confined to his own Archdiocese. It was he who preached the consecration sermon in Armagh Cathedral in 1904. Begun more than sixty years before, during the primacy of Dr. Crolly, the building had necessarily to be suspended when the famine and all its horrors came. But it was suspended, not abandoned. Under each Archbishop something was done, until finally it was completed, exteriorly and interiorly, by the first Archbishop of Armagh who ever wore the red robes of a Cardinal. The occasion was also memorable as being the silver jubilee of Cardinal Logue's episcopate, and to this Dr. Healy made a graceful allusion in his sermon.

There was a great muster of priests, hardly an Irish diocese being unrepresented. The Irish bishops were present in great

strength. There were also bishops from across the Channel. From Rome had come Cardinal Vannutelli, specially sent as Cardinal Legate by the Pope. And among the distinguished laymen was the Duke of Norfolk, the premier Duke of England. Nor could it be denied that the Archbishop of Tuam preached a sermon which was worthy of the occasion and of the audience he addressed. He was an eloquent man, and on great occasions could acquit himself well. He spoke in enthusiastic terms of the Pope, and of Ireland's devotion to the Holy See. He was complimentary to the Cardinal Legate and to Cardinal Logue. And he referred to the Duke of Norfolk among the British peerage as "noblest in blood, but nobler still in unswerving faith and stainless honour." With fulness of knowledge he had much to say of the See of Armagh and of its trials and triumphs in the past. And of St. Patrick, whose biographer he was, he had also much to say, of his courage, his humility, his faith and zeal, his spirit of prayer, his austerities, his trials, and the enduring character of his work. The occasion and the place demanded a pulpit effort of the first rank, and the audience were very ready to acknowledge that a suitable orator had been found in the Archbishop of Tuam.

Discourse at the Eucharistic Congress.

Another notable occasion found Dr. Healy contributing an eloquent discourse, when, in the Albert Hall in London, in 1908, he addressed those who had taken part in the Eucharistic Congress of that year. Again there was a distinguished audience. The Archbishop of Westminster was in the chair; a Cardinal Legate had come from Rome; from America had come Cardinal Gibbons; from Spain the Cardinal Archbishop of Toledo; and from distant Melbourne had come a son of Tuam, Dr. Carr, Archbishop of Melbourne.

Dr. Healy had been asked to propose the following resolution:—"The Nineteenth National Eucharistic Congress proclaims the unalterable fidelity of all its members to the Apostolic See, and their desire to conform themselves in all

things to the instructions of the Holy Father." On such an occasion, and before such an audience, an impromptu speech was out of the question, and Dr. Healy had carefully prepared what he had to say. It was well said. Speaking with well-chosen words of the attachment of the Catholics, both in England and in Ireland, to the See of Peter, a hush came upon the thousands assembled in the hall. The big Irishman, it was easily seen, had his share of the eloquence of his race, and made an impression which no other speaker made. At the close, raising his voice until it reached every individual in the hall, he turned to the Papal Legate and bade him carry a message from London to the Pope. "Tell him," he said, "how we admire his lofty purpose, so faithfully carried out, of restoring all things to Christ. Tell him we are grateful for his vigorous and authoritative condemnation of the recent errors of Modernism, which are utterly subversive of Christianity. Tell him that we are specially grateful for his Encyclical on Holy Communion. Tell him, above all, how we love him for his unflinching courage in maintaining the liberty of the great Church of France, and spurning the proffered doles of its Godless Government, which were only to be purchased at the price of a new enslavement. Moreover, we ask your Eminence to tell our Holy Father what you have seen and heard in this city of London during the progress of this Congress. We think you may tell him that you have seen here no sign of wavering faith or timorous loyalty towards the Holy See; that heart and soul, beyond the mountains as within the mountains, we are its devoted children; that in this, the new churches and the old churches, the churches beyond the ocean, and the ancient churches of Patrick, Columba and Augustine, are animated by the same spirit and inspired by the same devotion to the See of Peter; and you can truly tell him also that we are to-day as ready to fight, and, if necessary, to die for our Lord in the Blessed Eucharist, and for the Primacy of the Pope, as our fathers were in the past; and you may add that we promise faithfully to put in practice the instructions

contained in his beautiful Encyclical on Frequent Communion. Tell his Holiness also that we shall never cease to pray for him, and that with yearning hearts, on bended knees, we implore his Apostolic blessing for ourselves and for our flocks, for our families and for our friends, that we may be united hereafter in heaven as we are all united here to-day, in love and devotion to the Blessed Eucharist, and loyalty to the Holy See."³

Compulsory Irish.

When the University Bill of 1908 became law, and there came into existence, as a result, the National University of Ireland, with its Constituent Colleges of Dublin, Cork and Galway, Dr. Healy was appointed a Senator of the University and one of the Governors of the University College at Galway. In the controversy on compulsory Irish at matriculation his position was clear and unequivocal. Though he knew but little of the Irish language himself, he strongly favoured its cultivation and its revival. He was ready to establish a Celtic Faculty and to endow a Chair of Irish in each University College, and to establish scholarships. He would encourage, but not compel. The time was long past since Ireland was an Irish-speaking country. English had certainly taken its place when the twentieth century dawned, and if we except certain districts where the ancient language was still secure, and was still the people's speech, it was English, and only English, that was spoken. Dr. Healy knew that the Irish Catholics had long suffered gross injustice in the field of higher education, and now he asked were they to be rudely repelled from the doors of the National University for which they had waited so long. Over the greater part of the country Irish was not taught in the schools, nor spoken in the home. In these circumstances was it fair to blame the boys and girls who were ignorant? and was it just to punish where there was no culpability? Dr. Healy was uncompromising, and though he was assailed in newspapers and on public platforms, and

³ Healy's "Papers and Addresses," pp. 330-31.

often by men and women who knew little Irish themselves, his attitude of opposition remained unchanged. On every occasion when compulsory Irish was the subject of discussion, either in University College, Galway, or in the senate room, he spoke and voted on the side of the opposition, and was much displeased when the advocates of compulsion triumphed.

Land Troubles in the Archdiocese.

During these years the beneficent changes effected by the various Land Acts were felt all over the land. Gladstone's Act of 1881 was followed by the Ashbourne Act of 1885, and this again by the Act of 1891 setting up the Congested Districts Board. Most important of all was the Wyndham Act of 1903. Nor were the happy effects of these various measures anywhere more keenly felt than in the Archdiocese of Tuam. The hapless tenants in Galway and Mayo, who for centuries had groaned under landlord oppression, at last had the chains of a degrading servitude taken from their limbs. By the Act of 1881 they were made co-partners in the land; but it was the land purchase begun by the *Ashbourne Act*, which, by eliminating the landlords, completed the happiness of the occupiers by making them, subject to a temporary State charge, the owners of the lands they held. Henceforth, if they drained and fenced and built, and in some cases turned the barren mountain into fertile fields, they were not enriching the landlord, but themselves.

But all this did not settle the land question in the Archdiocese of Tuam. Within its bounds were many comfortable holdings which, when purchased gave the tenant all he could reasonably desire. The vast majority of holdings, however, were small, too small and too poor, even if held free of rent for ever, to enable the tenant to live. And within sight of these uneconomic holdings there were often large tracts of untenanted land, over which only sheep and cattle roamed. It was the declared object of the Congested Districts Board to increase sufficiently the amount of these small tenants' land, and this was done by purchasing the untenanted land, and by

migration of some of the poorer tenants. All this necessitated the making of houses, fences and roads; the adjustment of many conflicting claims, and the employment of much money and of many officials. And the progress made was slow, too slow indeed for many impatient tenants and landless men.

Coveting the untenanted farms in their midst, they broke out into many lawless acts, drove off the cattle and sheep of the graziers, and demanded the surrender of the larger farms, so that these lands could be given to those so sorely in need. In the years after 1906 Athenry was the centre of this agrarian disturbance, which however spread to other districts, and called down upon the offending people prosecutions and imprisonment. As usual, however, coercion was followed by concession, and a new Land Purchase Act was passed in 1909 which was intended to end the agrarian trouble for ever.

Dr. Healy had no sympathy with this lawlessness, preferring the milder measures of persuasion and argument, and he had words of censure for any of his priests who identified themselves with intimidating graziers or driving the cattle off their lands. He did not, however, actively interfere, and he even gave public expression to his desire to see the untenanted lands given to the people. The fact was that he had little taste for the discussion of such questions. He preferred to attend university meetings and those of the Catholic Truth Society. And he preached at Maynooth College on the occasion of the consecration of Dr. Mannix, Archbishop of Melbourne, though it was painfully evident that he was not then the Dr. Healy of other days. His language was less happy, his eloquence less apparent, his voice less resonant than of old.

An Auxiliary Bishop.

Dr. Healy had then passed his seventieth year, and he was himself so conscious of the burden of years that he had already asked for and obtained assistance in the episcopal work of the Archdiocese. In 1910 the parishes of Newport and Dunmore became vacant, the former by the death of Canon Greally, and the latter by the death of Canon Lynskey. Both parishes were

soon filled—Newport by the appointment of Canon McDonald, and Dunmore by the appointment of Canon Macken. In the next year Canon Stephens of Ballinrobe died—a highly respected priest—and he, too, was soon provided with a successor. But when Canon Lyons died in the last days of the same year, the important parish of Castlebar was left vacant until many months had elapsed, and then it was filled by the new bishop, who was required to lighten the labours of the Archbishop.

Heretofore, when there was question of obtaining episcopal assistance, the usual procedure was to call the parish priests of the Archdiocese together, and have a vote taken for a Coadjutor *cum jure successionis*. If this had been done in 1912 it is almost certain that the appointment would have come in due course to Dr. Gilmartin, Bishop of Clonfert, or to Dr. O'Dea, Bishop of Galway. Dr. Healy would have probably preferred the Bishop of Clonfert; but in reality he was averse to having a Coadjutor at all, though he certainly felt the need for assistance. A Coadjutor would necessarily succeed, except in the very unlikely event of the Coadjutor dying first; and the priests might, he thought, be induced to turn from the old and failing Archbishop to the coming man; they might turn from the setting to the rising sun. But an auxiliary bishop would be, as his title implied, merely a helper and a subordinate, a parish priest with a mitre on his head. And when it was objected that the auxiliary bishop might not succeed at the Archbishop's death, Dr. Healy answered that he would have a good parish, as the parish of Castlebar certainly was, and that as such he would have little reason to complain, no matter who the next Archbishop might be.

For these reasons, Dr. Healy preferred an auxiliary to a Coadjutor, and he had influence enough to have his request granted by the appointment of his own selection. This was Canon Michael Higgins, who was then in pastoral charge of Cummer, near Tuam. The new bishop was a native of the parish of Castlebar, and was then about fifty years old. In the usual way he proceeded from the local primary school to

St. Jarlath's College, and thence to Maynooth, where he was ordained in 1887, so that at his consecration he had just reached the silver jubilee of his priesthood. In college he had got a good many distinctions, and was indeed among the foremost students of his time. Afterwards he spent some years on the mission as curate at Westport, Castlebar, Hollymount and Clifden. The remaining years were spent in St. Jarlath's College, first as Professor, and then as President, whence he was promoted, in 1910, to the pastoral charge of Cummer. From Cummer, on becoming Auxiliary Bishop, he was appointed to Castlebar.

His distinctions at college would seem to foreshadow some future eminence as a scholar, and perhaps as a writer. But if such expectations were entertained by his friends they were not realised. Dr. Higgins had, in fact, not much taste for reading, and no aptitude for writing. He confined himself to merely professional studies, and was accurate as a theologian, though probably not profound. He had also a good knowledge of Sacred Scripture and of Church ceremonies. But he had no taste for general literature, and of works of poetry and fiction, and even history, he knew little. Had his tastes gone in that direction he would have remembered much, for his memory was quick and retentive. He had, however, a strong inclination for administrative work, and his administration of the affairs of St. Jarlath's College was fruitful of great results. Under his guidance the college at the Intermediate Examinations made rapid progress, and came to the very front rank among the colleges of Ireland. The finances of the college he also left in a healthy condition, and, had he lived longer, he would probably have cleared off much of the debt on the new church of Castlebar. As Bishop he at once relieved Dr. Healy of much of the routine work of the Archdiocese; but he did not interfere much in the appointments made, though he was usually consulted. He was humble and unassuming and kindly, and always on the best of terms with the priests of the Archdiocese.

Public Questions.

The great public question of these days was Home Rule, and in this question Tuam took the same interest, but no more, as the other dioceses throughout Ireland. The priests were all Home Rulers, and so was the Archbishop, though he was not at any time an enthusiastic Home Ruler. He considered the land question and the education question of greater importance, and thought, if these questions were settled, that the necessity for Home Rule would cease. He disliked the leaders of the Irish Party, and this lessened for him the attractiveness of the popular demand. For he would have little faith in an Irish Parliament in which Mr. John Dillon and his friends would be supreme. Above all, he hated the thought of a partitioned Ireland, and when he spoke of Mr. Dillon's attitude on this question his language was unusually strong.

Throughout the Archdiocese there was no sympathy with Germany in the Great War, and here, as elsewhere, the Prussian was not loved. All thoughtful men knew well that if a German victory brought freedom to Ireland it would be freedom of a German type, and that in accordance with their ideals. For these reasons the side of England was taken in the war, and many went from the towns of Galway and Mayo to swell the ranks of the British Army; and not a few of those who went to the war never returned. Gradually enthusiasm for the British side cooled. There was resentment at the tolerance of the Government for Carson and his Ulster Volunteers; resentment at the attempt to partition a country which Nature intended to be one and undivided; resentment that the Home Rule Act, poor as it was, was not to be put in force.

This resentment took concrete shape in the enrolling of Volunteers and the passing of resolutions, but not in rebellion, and it was only at Athenry that any attempt at armed rebellion took place in the Archdiocese. In that quarter, however, the feeble attempt at rebellion was soon quelled, and the few hundred young men who went out to conquer the British Empire were glad to escape arrest and imprisonment, and quietly returned to their homes. But the revulsion of feeling which

swept over the country after the executions of the Dublin insurgents and the savageries of General Maxwell was soon felt in the Archdiocese of Tuam. The local representatives in Parliament lost ground, and the Sinn Feiners made rapid progress, and it was no matter of surprise in 1918 that the Sinn Feiners in Galway and Mayo as elsewhere swept the field.

Both the Archbishop and the Auxiliary Die.

Meantime, while these exciting public events were taking place, Dr. Healy got seriously ill. He had built a new episcopal palace at Tuam, and in 1914 had held a bazaar to help to pay off the debt incurred, and it was then it was noticed by all that he was physically losing ground. He had a second house, not far from Clifden, on the shores of the Atlantic, and hither he frequently went. But change of scene, which had always been beneficial to his health in his early years as Archbishop, ceased to be beneficial now, and after 1914 he rarely attended the meetings at Galway University College, and he resigned his position on the University Senate. In 1916 he returned to Tuam, and ceased to visit his Connemara home, and in the next year he became an enfeebled old man, unable to go out, unable to leave his bed, his body weakened and shrunken and his mind obscured.

As hope of his recovery was abandoned, for the doctors pronounced him incurable, the advice of the Roman authorities was sought, and early in 1918 Dr. Higgins, the Auxiliary Bishop, was appointed Apostolic Administrator of the Archdiocese. A few months later, in April 1918, Dr. Healy quietly passed away, being then in his seventy-seventh year. He was remembered not unkindly in the Archdiocese. He was a big man, big in body and in mind, kindly, hospitable, and generous, always a scholar and a student, a commanding figure not only in Tuam but in the Irish Church.

Dr. Higgins, the Apostolic Administrator, was then comparatively young, not more than fifty-six years of age. He had always enjoyed good health, and ought to have many years before him, and it might be he would reach a higher

position in the Church than Bishop of Temno in the East and Auxiliary Bishop of Tuam; but he had lately been losing ground, and had been, for several months before the Archbishop's death, in the doctor's hands. He had, however, improved in health, judging by his appearance, and was able to act as celebrant of the Mass at the obsequies of Dr. Healy. The disease, however, from which he suffered was more serious than was generally thought, and to the astonishment and regret of the whole Archdiocese, the end came suddenly, early in May, just the day before the assembling of the priests at Tuam to select a successor to Dr. Healy. Dr. Higgins died at his residence at Castlebar, and was interred in the parochial church, where there is a beautiful slab erected to his memory.

A New Archbishop.

Left without an Archbishop, or an Apostolic Administrator, the Chapter named Archdeacon Kilkenny of Claremorris, as Vicar-Capitular, and in due time a new Archbishop was appointed in the person of Dr. Gilmartin, Bishop of Clonfert. The secrecy surrounding episcopal elections has been made inviolable by recent legislation; but from observations heard from the priests, both before and after the election at Tuam, it was known that Dr. Gilmartin was a strong favourite with the priests. He was a native of the Archdiocese, long and favourably known, with a fine record as a student and as Professor at St. Jarlath's College. Subsequently he filled the position of Dean in Maynooth College, and ultimately was promoted to be Vice-President; and this was his position when he became Bishop of Clonfert in 1910. That he ruled well and wisely in his diocese was attested by the regret of both priests and people of Clonfert at his departure. He therefore brought to Tuam the recommendation of having proved his administrative capacity in the diocese which he left, a capacity which, it was expected, would not desert him in the larger sphere of work which lay before him in the Archdiocese of Tuam.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CHAPTER OF TUAM.

The Early Church in Tuam.

IN Tuam, as elsewhere in Ireland, the outstanding feature of the early Church was its monastic character. In the Patrician churches of Aughagower and Kilbannon there was community and collegiate life; the clergy under the rule of the abbot, not always a bishop, going forth from the monastery and church to wrestle with the still unconquered forces of paganism. Their successors followed the lead thus given. St. Enda, when he had established Christianity in Aran, visited and preached on the mainland, sailing over a frequently tempestuous sea. Annaghdown was a centre of missionary activity for those who dwelt on the islands and shores of Lough Corrib. St. Fechin, with Cong as centre, spread the faith west, and then established another centre of missionary activity on Omey Island. Those who looked to St. Colman as their master crossed the sea from Boffin to the mainland, and the new establishment set up by him in Mayo became a great teaching centre, and ultimately developed into a diocese, and as such survived the great changes effected by the Synod of Kells. And not far from Mayo the memory of St. Mochua was revered, and his work carried on in Balla.

In some of these churches, as at Kilbannon, the rule observed was that of St. Patrick, and this would be also true of Aughagower. In Annaghdown the rule observed was that of St. Brendan; in Cong, that of St. Fechin; in Tuam, that of St. Jarlath; and in Mayo, that of St. Columba. As all these

rules have not come down to us, we are unable to see in what they differed. But the government was necessarily similar. The abbot was the ruling ecclesiastical chief, the ferlegind or rector of the college came next; and unless the bishop was also abbot he occupied only the third place.¹ To aid the abbot a few of the community, the ablest and wisest no doubt, were selected as an advisory body to aid in the work of administration. A body of rules and regulations for government was gradually elaborated, and at meetings of this select few a chapter of these rules or regulations was read. The transition was easy from what was read to those who listened, and in time the assembled monks came to be called the Chapter of the Monastery or Abbey, and the house, or portion of the house, in which they met came to be called the Chapter House.

The Position of the Archbishop.

The change, begun at the Synod of Rathbresail, and completed at the Synod of Kells, was a complete break in the form of government with the Church of St. Enda or St. Jarlath. The bishop was no longer in a subordinate place. The monasteries remained, and in the next century two new great monasteries were established in the Archdiocese of Tuam, in addition to those at Cong and Mayo and Annaghdown, which had survived the wreck of ages. Nor was there any interference with the abbot and his chapter within their monastic walls, and within the limits prescribed by their monastic rules; nor any alienation of the property with which the liberality and piety of past ages had endowed them. Beyond these limits, however, the Archbishop of Tuam was supreme over the wide extent of his Archdiocese, and the Bishop of Mayo and Annaghdown over the smaller territories in which they could exercise episcopal authority. And when these two smaller dioceses disappeared, being merged in the Archdiocese and forming part of it, the jurisdiction of the Archbishop was unquestioned over what once was Annaghdown and Mayo.

¹ Knox's "Tuam," p. 81.

These two dioceses, however, long survived the Synod of Kells, and battled long and earnestly against losing their separate and independent existence. Nor was the Archbishop of Tuam always successful in the contests that arose. There were also causes of friction with the abbots of the great monasteries, such as Cong and Ballintubber and Knockmoy, and sometimes the intervention of Rome was sought in order to have conflicting claims reconciled. There were other causes of anxiety—appointments to parishes, the conferring of prebends, the enforcing of discipline among the priests scattered over a wide area, the administration of Church property, and the care of Church buildings; and, perhaps, more troublesome than all, the encroachments of turbulent chiefs and nobles in an age of disorder, when religion had lost much of its influence over the minds of men, and it was often the rule rather than the exception to have serious lapses from the moral law. If the abbot within his monastery had need of a chapter to advise and guide and help in administration, the need was much greater in the case of the Archbishop who had so much a heavier burden to carry. We may, surely, assume that the bishop who ruled in Tuam in the days of Turlogh O'Connor, and even earlier, had some priest, or body of priests, whose advice he sometimes sought. But there was no chapter as it appeared in a later age, no body of ecclesiastics to act as the Archbishop's senate. Nor is there any known record of such in the time of the first Archbishops of Tuam.

The First Chapter of the Archdiocese.

It is said that there was a Chapter of Tuam in 1201,² and this is not unlikely; nor is it unlikely that Chapters were formed immediately after the permanent establishment of diocesan episcopacy by the Synod of Kells. It is quite certain from the Papal Letters now accessible to us that there was a Chapter in the diocese of Leighlin as early as 1198,³ and if such a diocese had a Chapter there is no reason to suppose that a

² Knox's "Tuam," p. 81.

³ Bliss "Calendar of Papal Registers," I, p. 53.

Chapter would be wanting in the Archdiocese of Tuam. Certainly there was an Archdeacon of Tuam in 1227, for in that year the Archdeacon of Tuam was appointed by the Pope to act with the Archbishop of Cashel, and examine the credentials of one Master John for the See of Emly.⁴ This was, perhaps, because the Archbishop of Tuam was old and feeble. He was accordingly relieved of his office by the Pope in 1233, and a Papal Mandate was issued to the Archbishop of Dublin to receive the resignation of the Archbishop of Tuam, "who has begged on account of age and infirmity to be relieved of his charge." The Archbishop of Dublin was also commanded to enjoin the Chapter of Tuam to elect a fit successor, and to assign a pension to the retiring Archbishop out of the income of the See.⁵ There is mention of the Chapter of Annaghdown at 1247;⁶ and ten years later the Chapter of Tuam were ordered by the Pope to receive the Dean of St. Paul's in London, Walter de Salerno, who had just been appointed to the See of Tuam.⁷ The Pope added that he did not admit the postulation of James Hualathdune, a Friar Minor, who apparently claimed to be the new Archbishop. The same year there was a Papal letter sent to the Archbishop of Tuam, the Dean and Chapter, ordering them to give a prebend to Thomas, Archdeacon of Killala.⁸

So far all we know definitely is that there was a Chapter, and that among its members were the Dean and Archdeacon, but who the other members were, who were the officers and who the canons, we do not know. In 1289, however, when the See of Tuam was vacant, the Chapter met to elect an Archbishop. The assembled members decided to leave the selection to the Archdeacons of Tuam and Mayo, the Precentor, Treasurer, Chancellor, and two Canons; and these few selected William de Bermingham, Rector of Athenry, who was then only a subdeacon, and whom it was necessary first to ordain

⁴ Bliss, I, p. 118.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 132.

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 232.

⁷ *Ibid.* p. 345.

⁸ *Ibid.* p. 347.

priest, and then have him consecrated Archbishop.⁹ At Dr. Bermingham's death the whole Chapter made the selection of his successor, and their choice fell on the Dean. But the Dean was then engaged in rebuilding the cathedral—a work begun by the late Archbishop—and he shrank from the burden of the higher office. Then, as his refusal was found to be final and irrevocable, the Chapter delegated a small body to act in their name, and these, consisting of the Dean, Archdeacon and three Canons, selected Malachy MacHugh, Bishop of Elphin, who was forthwith transferred to Tuam.¹⁰

Composition of the Chapter

In some dioceses in these past centuries the head of the Chapter was the Provost, and even in modern times this arrangement is sometimes found, though not in Ireland. But in Tuam the Archdeacon seems to have always held a prominent place; and whatever the order of precedence was immediately after the Synod of Kells, by the end of the thirteenth century the Dean held the first place. If there was a Provost among the higher dignitaries of the Tuam Chapter, his name does not appear in these Papal documents until the end of the fourteenth century. Nor does he then fill but a place second to that of the Dean. For in 1401 there is a letter making provision of the Provostship of Tuam to Raymond de Bermingham. The value of the place was not more than three marks, and it was rendered vacant by the promotion of William Ranney to the deanery of the Archdiocese—a position which William Ranney had obtained by "Papal collation."¹¹ He was a zealous man who, shocked at the carelessness of the priests under his charge in Tuam, brought their conduct under the notice of the Chapter, and then, jointly with the Chapter, complained to the Pope. Several of these priests, they said, were wasting Church property, and several others refused to live in their churches, meaning, of course, the presbyteries

⁹ "Papal Calendar," I, p. 498.

¹⁰ "Calendar of Papal Registers," II, p. 108-9.

¹¹ "Papal Registers," V, pp. 342-3.

attached to their churches. These priests were also leading disordered lives outside their common house of residence, and as such earned the condemnation of the Dean and Chapter, and, no doubt, of the Pope, though it was much easier in the year 1401 to point out abuses than to end them.¹²

The Higher Offices.

The Dean was often called upon to do what was more usually done by the Archbishop, and, acting in the name of the Pope, as his mandatory, and in conjunction with the Bishop of Elphin, he collated one Peter in 1407 to the perpetual vicarage of Dunmore. It was a benefice, with cure, in the patronage of laymen—no doubt one of the Berminghams—valued not more than eight marks, and has so long been vacant, since the death of the last vicar, William Setman, that “its collation has by the Lateran Statutes lapsed to the Apostolic See.”¹³ The same year the Dean was again a Papal mandatory, this time acting in the Pope’s name, with Bermingham, a Tuam canon, and the Abbot of Holy Trinity, Tuam. ~~On this occasion the collation was given to one~~ Patrick MacCasserly, of the perpetual vicarage of Addergoole, value not exceeding five marks. The place had become vacant, because Maurice Breathnach (must be Walsh) “has obtained by authority of the ordinary, and held therewith for a year and more the perpetual vicarage of Mycindfilend (perhaps Moylough) in the same diocese.”¹⁴ In 1411 he was again collating in the name of the Pope, and this time to the perpetual vicarage of the Church of the Relics of St. Jarlath, called Tempuil na Scrin.¹⁵ The next year he collated to the perpetual vicarage of Kilkerrin.¹⁶ Again, in 1414, he was collating in the Pope’s name, this time with the Bishop of Aosta and with Philip, a canon of Tuam. The person promoted was John Butler, a priest of the Archdiocese, and the

¹² “Papal Registers,” V, p. 399.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.* II, p. 119.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* p. 260.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* 268.

position given was the perpetual vicarage of Ballinrobe. The value of the vacant position was five marks a year, and it is specially mentioned that it was Roba among the Conmaicne, and not Roba in Carra; in other words, it was Ballinrobe south of the river rather than that part of the parish north of the river.¹⁷

The Provost also was often a Papal mandatory, acting for the Pope, and collating to offices and parishes. In 1411, for instance, the Provost of Tuam, associated with the Archbishop of Tuam and the Bishop of Veszprém (probably some titular bishop) collated one Carbry O'Farrell to the Archdeaconry of Ardagh, "who is by both parents of noble race, and has studied canon law for about seven years in places where there is no university."¹⁸ There was a new Provost in 1421 in the person of Raymond Bermingham, and he owed his collation to the Abbot of St. Michael's, Mayo, the Archdeacon of Annaghdown, and the Bishop of Ciudad Rodrigo, a rather curious combination. He had been already appointed a Canon of Tuam by the Archbishop; and had been collated to the parish church of Killererin by the Dean of Tuam, who was also the Vicar-General of the Archbishop in spirituals, and had got from him special powers. Now, the "Pope having learned that the provostship of Tuam, a non-major, non-elective dignity, without cure, is void, and that the parish church of Dunmore of the patronage of laymen had been so long void by the death of James Cahir, that its collation had by the Lateran Statutes lapsed to the Apostolic See, he orders the above ecclesiastics to collate and assign both, value together not exceeding 28 marks, to Raymond, who has studied canon and civil law for eight or nine years, and is in his twenty-fourth year only, after he has duly resigned the above canonry and church. He is hereby dispensed to be promoted to all higher, even holy orders, and to hold the provostship and rectory for life, and to resign them simply or for ex-

¹⁷ "Papal Registers," p. 436.

¹⁸ *Ibid.* VI, p. 241.

change."¹⁹ He was, indeed, a young provost; but he belonged to the powerful family of the Berminghams, and this, no doubt, explained his rapid promotion in the Church. And his appointment to Dunmore would be explained by the fact that Dunmore was the great stronghold of the Berminghams, and that the parish church was in the patronage of his family.

Like the Dean and Provost, the Archdeacon was one of the outstanding officers of the Chapter, and, like them, was often a Papal mandatory. As early as 1227 the holder of the office in Tuam was appointed by the Pope to act for him instead of the Archbishop, and in the previous year the intervention of the Pope had been sought in the case of a Premonstratensian canon who illegally held the Archdeaconry of Annaghdown.²⁰ On many subsequent occasions mention is made in the Papal Letters both of the Archdeacon of Annaghdown and of the Archdeacon of Mayo; and both, like the Archdeacon of Tuam, often collated to benefices and held inquiries, acting for the Pope.

In 1398 we have it recorded that one Thomas O'Kelly was collated and assigned the office of Archdeacon of the Tuam Chapter. He was then only a sub-deacon, but the Abbot of Cong and Dermott, Canon of Tuam, were directed to see that he was promoted to all the necessary orders without delay.²¹ This same Archdeacon was involved in a complaint made to Rome only two years after his appointment. It appears that the Archbishop of Tuam and the Bishops of Elphin and Killybegs, accompanied by their three Archdeacons, had made a visitation at the Abbeys of Ballintubber and Cong, and, not satisfied with being entertained, had, it was alleged, extorted money. The abbots of these two establishments had appealed to Rome, and the Pope directed that the moneys exacted should be returned, the reason being that these prelates and their archdeacons were not entitled to money, but only to entertainment.²² There was a similar complaint a few years

¹⁹ "Papal Registers," VII, pp. 160-161.

²⁰ "Calendar," I, pp. 50, 110.

²¹ "Papal Registers," V, p. 177.

²² *Ibid.* p. 324.

later from the Augustinian Abbey of Mayo, and probably it was the same Archdeacon who was involved. It was in 1412, and the Abbots of Aughrim and Annaghdown were ordered by the Pope to protect the Abbot of Mayo against excessive pecuniary exactions on the part of the Archbishop and the Archdeacon of Tuam. The Pope had then taken the Abbey of Mayo under his special protection, and this, no doubt, added to the gravity of the accusation and to the severity of the rebuke.²³

The Lesser Offices.

The other officers of the Tuam Chapter are not specially mentioned, and we do not find during this period that they acted in their individual capacity as Papal mandatories. The treasurer, precentor and chancellor are seldom mentioned, and only in conjunction with other members of the Chapter, and when they were deputed by the Chapter to act in the Chapter's name. Such a case occurred when the Archdeacons of Tuam and Mayo, and the Precentor, Treasurer and Chancellor of Tuam, with two Canons, selected William de Bermingham in 1289 to be the Archbishop of Tuam, and were ordered by the Pope to see that he was duly consecrated. But though neither the treasurer, precentor nor chancellor were ordered to collate to benefices, there is more than one case where a canon of the Chapter was given such power from Rome, always however, like the dean, archdeacon and provost, acting in conjunction with others.

In one of these Papal letters, bearing date November, 1421, and addressed to the Abbot of St. Michael's, Mayo, and to the Archdeacon of Annaghdown, the Pope mentions that one Raymond Bermingham, "a clerk of the diocese of Tuam," had petitioned setting forth "that formerly John, Archbishop of Tuam, made collation and provision to him by his ordinary authority of a canonry of Tuam, in which church there is no fixed number of canons nor distinction of prebends."²⁴ Two

²³ "Papal Registers," VI, pp. 277-8.

²⁴ *Ibid.* VII, p. 275.

years later, the same Pope, Martin V., sent a mandate to the Abbot of Cong, ordering him to admit one Cornelius MacEgan, Rector of Lough Mask, as an Augustinian canon to the Abbey of Ballintubber. And in making mention of the fact that Ballintubber was in the diocese of Mayo, it was added that in the diocese of Mayo there was no definite number of canons. MacEgan was a secular priest, and was entering the Abbey of Ballintubber, ceasing to be a secular, and vacating a benefice always assigned to seculars, and hence the necessity for the intervention of the Abbot of Cong, acting as the mandatory of the Pope.²⁵

The Number of Canons.

After Mayo and Annaghdown had been definitely united with Tuam, the Archdiocese had added to its own Chapter the Chapters of Annaghdown and Mayo, and absorption must have necessarily been followed by a rearrangement of canons and prebends. After the lapse of centuries it is impossible to ascertain with exactitude what this rearrangement was. In due time the officers of the chapters of the two united dioceses disappeared, and there was no longer a Dean or Archdeacon of Mayo, or a Dean or Archdeacon of Annaghdown. The canonries, however, did not entirely pass away, and those of mediæval times still remain, though the prebends attached to them have disappeared. In 1413, for instance, the prebend of Kilmeen in Tuam was illegally retained by two Clonfert priests, and the Pope ordered the Abbot of Knockmoy to remove them, "and to collate and assign the canonry and said prebend, value not exceeding six marks, to Richard Macmilod, clerk of the diocese of Tuam."²⁶

A longer Papal document, about the same time, has reference to another prebend not easy to identify. The mandate sent to the "Abbot of Mayo in the diocese of Tuam and the Provost of Achonry," was in answer to a Canon of Tuam named Murianus, who had petitioned the Pope in 1418, stating

²⁵ "Papal Registers."

²⁶ *Ibid.* VI, p. 423.

that " Archbishop John seeing that the fruits not exceeding in value a mark and a-half of the prebends of Kylmygany, Cluaynmore and Kylcurrnan (which were wont to be assigned sometimes to one canon as a single prebend, and sometimes to more than one as separate prebends) were on their becoming void unduly held possession of by certain persons, ordered that these prebends should be a single prebend under the name of Kylmygany." He further united to the said prebend of Kylmygany the vicarage of Balla in the diocese of Tuam, formerly Mayo, and the Church of St. Jarlath's Shrine in Tuam. All these were given to Murianus by the Abbot of Mayo and the Provost of Achonry, acting in the Pope's name. These small prebends must have been poor if they were worth but a mark and a-half. Their location is not easy to determine accurately, but they must have been near Crossboyne, as the people living in these localities were ordered in the Pope's letter to go to Mass to the Church of Crossboyne, which would henceforth be their parish church.²⁷

The Various Prebends.

It is easier to identify the canonry of Faldown, which, in 1430, was collated to David de Burgo by the Abbots of Cong and Mayo and Ballintubber,²⁸ and the prebend of Balla, which, on the testimony of Malachy O'Flanagan, Vicar of Breaffy, was in the hands of an unworthy occupant in 1432. The Abbot of Ballintubber was ordered to investigate the charges made against him, and if he found them true, to deprive the unworthy occupant of his prebend, and to collate it to O'Flanagan, who would then be Vicar of Breaffy and Prebendary of Balla. The same year mention is made of the prebend of Kylloneayn, which is identified as Kilmainemore, the seat of a Patrician Church, and as such would be among the prebends of the Archdiocese.²⁹

Another of these prebends was Killabegs, to which was

²⁷ " Papal Registers," VII, p. 95.

²⁸ *Ibid.* VIII, p. 453.

²⁹ *Ibid.* VIII, p. 425.

collated, in the last year of the fourteenth century, one Malachy O'Kelly, who was already a canon in the diocese of Clonfert.³⁰ In 1415 its location is defined as the prebend of the small churches in the country of the Conmaicne Cuil Toladh and of the Conmaicne Mara, that is, the small churches in the Kilmaine barony of modern times, and those also of the wilder and less fertile district of Connemara. The churches must have been the lesser and poorer churches, the value of each being very little, for the value of the combined churches was only twelve marks. On this occasion—it was in 1445—the new prebendary of Killabegs was “James Joyce, priest of the diocese of Tuam.” The vacancy was caused by the entry of John to the Abbey of Cong, from which he emerged to become Archbishop of Tuam, and the prebend had been so long vacant in 1445 that its collation had lapsed to the Apostolic See.³¹

The prebend of Teac Saxon is also mentioned in these documents as having been conferred in 1448 by the Pope on one Thady O'Cluran, of the diocese of Clonfert. Its location is easily identified in modern times as being situated in the parish of Athenry.³²

There is no mention in these letters of Lackagh, which was taken over by Tuam from the diocese of Annaghdown, and was one of the chief prebends of that diocese. Nor is there any mention of Kilmoylan, which was an important church. But these would not appear unless they had been at some time long vacant, and their collation would, therefore, have passed into the Pope's hands.

The Papal Letters of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries have not yet (1927) appeared, and it may be that when they do the remaining prebends of modern times will be found in them. Meantime, however, we find mention of Lackagh in the State Papers, and under the date 1559 we find an entry that the prebend of Lackagh was given by the Queen to

³⁰ “Papal Registers,” X, p. 179.

³¹ *Ibid.* IX, p. 508.

³² *Ibid.* X, p. 395.

William Leahy, Dean of Tuam. For honours and emoluments he was willing to accept the spiritual supremacy of Elizabeth. He was rewarded by being appointed by her as Bodkin's successor, and thus became the first apostate Archbishop of Tuam.³³ Kilmoylan alone is not mentioned, but it finds a place among the prebends mentioned in the late years of Elizabeth's reign.

Meantime, an inquiry had been held by Cardinal Pole, in 1555, to ascertain who was really Archbishop of Tuam, the contestants being O'Frighil and Bodkin. On this occasion it was ascertained that the Tuam Chapter consisted of a dean, an archdeacon, a provost, and ten or twelve canons.³⁴

The Canons' Revenues.

It was at a later date, and in Elizabeth's reign, that fuller particulars were given, and then, not only were the various prebendaries given, but also the emoluments that each had. The dean, for instance, had the rectory of Belclare and part of the rectorial tithes of the parishes of Tuam, Clonberne, Templetogher, Dunmore, Liskeavy, and Crossboyne; and he had some lands in Dunmore and Tuam, and shared the profits of these lands with the provost. The latter had a share of the tithes of the same parishes as those from which the dean's revenues were derived. The archdeacon had part of the tithes of Aughagower, Oughaval, and Kilgeever, and the rectory of Knock. The prebendary of Kilmoylan had the rectory and vicarage of Kilmoylan, and the prebendary of Kilmeen had the rectory and vicarage of Kilmeen, with part of the rectory of Fahy in Clonfert. The prebendary of Lackagh had the rectory of Lackagh and part of the rectory of Killascobe; the prebendary of Kilmainemore, the rectory of Kilmainemore; the prebendary of Balla, the rectory of Balla; the prebendary of Faldown had part of the rectories of Burrishoole, Kilmaclasser and Kilmeena; the prebendary of Teac Saxon the tithes of Teac Saxon; and the prebendary of

³³ "Carew Papers."

³⁴ Knox's "Tuam," p. 123.

Killabegs, as befitted the holder of a composite prebend, had part of the rectories of Aughagower, Oughaval, Kilgeever, Kilmeena, Kilmaclasser, Burrishoole, Ballyovey, Crossboyne, Kilmainebeg, Cong, and Ballinachalla.³⁵ In the case of Kilmeen, Kilmainemore and Balla the prebendaries had the care of souls in return for the emoluments received, but in the other cases named there was no such responsibility attached, and the prebendary might employ a vicar, and give him only a small share of the revenues, while retaining the remainder for himself.³⁶

During the Penal Times.

With the Catholic Church proscribed, Catholics declared outlaws, and bishops and priests in exile, the history of the Chapter of Tuam, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, is difficult to trace. There were, however, members of the Chapter at Dr. O'Queely's Synod of Tuam in 1631, for Walter Lynch is mentioned as the dean, and John Lynch as the archdeacon.³⁷ Nor is there any reason to doubt that the Chapter of Tuam, scattered and poor as its members must have been, dragged on a feeble existence during the long night of the Penal times. This appears from a return made for the Government in 1801, when the Penal Laws had already been somewhat relaxed, and there was an intention on the part of the Government to make provision for those bishops and priests so long persecuted. There are, says this report, in the several provinces twenty-nine deans. They have no emoluments as such. They are appointed by the Pope on the presentation of their respective prelates, from among the parish priests. The Chapter may be considered as the bishop's council. Their principal function is the electing a vicar-capitular for governing the diocese, *sede vacante*. The several members have no emoluments whatever as such. They are, for the most part, parish priests. There are no cathedral

³⁵ Knox, p. 89.

³⁶ *Ibid.* pp. 100-101.

³⁷ Renehan's "Archbishops," Appendix D.

or collegiate churches. There is not any service performed by the Chapter, nor have they any fund or treasury.³⁸

The Church lands had long since passed into the hands of those who were strangers to the people in race and faith. The tithes were still paid by the Catholics, but they were paid to the ministers of a religion which the people abhorred. Fal-down and Killabegs, Balla and Kilmaine and Lackagh, and the other prebends had survived, but without lands or tithes, or even decent churches; the endowments of ancient piety had been grasped by avarice and heresy; and though the fervour and faith of the people were still living realities, the bishops and priests and their flocks were seriously hampered, and in the new century had to build up where so much had been destroyed.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the Dean of Tuam was Dean Egan, P.P. of Dunmore. He was a nephew of a recent Archbishop of Tuam, Boetius Egan, and belonged to a family which had once owned large estates in the County of Galway. The uncle had been educated at the College of Bordeaux, and it is probable that the nephew also got his education abroad. He was a tolerant, kindly, cultured man, on good terms even with the Protestants, and a special friend of the Protestant clergyman at Dunmore. It is strange that so respected a man had no monument erected to his memory, and that his grave in the Dunmore churchyard is unknown. His contemporary as Archdeacon was the Venerable John Nolan, P.P. of Balla, who, when the voting of the priests took place for the selection of a successor to Dr. Kelly, was placed third on the list. He was then an old man, and probably had little expectation and little desire for a mitre. And he heartily and cordially welcomed the younger and greater man who was appointed Archbishop.³⁹

The Modern Chapter.

This was in contrast to the attitude of Dean Burke, of West-

³⁸ Burke's "Archbishops of Tuam," p. 221.

³⁹ O'Reilly's "MacHale," I, p. 269.

port, who had succeeded Dean Egan as head of the Chapter. He had been a special friend of the late Archbishop, Dr. Kelly, who had appointed him Dean, and also had given him the collation to the parish of Westport, an appointment subsequently challenged by Dr. MacHale. Dean Burke was a more formidable opponent for the Archbishopric than Archdeacon Nolan, having been placed first on the list. Yet, he must have recognised that he was outclassed by one who was already a bishop, and had won such fame as Dr. MacHale had already won. Nor did he hesitate to welcome the new Archbishop on his first coming to Westport.⁴⁰ This did not prevent Dr. MacHale from questioning Dean Burke's title to the parish of Westport, which almost to the time of Dr. Kelly's death had been a mensal parish. Dr. Kelly however had procured the necessary Papal collation, and the Dean was able to prove that his rights were unassailable. Some friction subsequently arose when Dean Burke assisted Dean Lyons, the special friend of Dr. O'Finan, the new Bishop of Killala. Dean Lyons was a turbulent, quarrelsome man, and it was regrettable that Dean Burke should have any sympathy with him.⁴¹ For Dean Burke was a much respected priest, who brought the Sisters of Mercy to Westport, and vacated his own house to give them shelter until time was given to build the present beautiful convent. He lived until 1861, and must have then reached a good age, having been Parish Priest of Westport so long.

Meantime, Archdeacon Nolan died, shortly after the Archbishop had come to Tuam in 1834, and the Very Rev. James MacHale, who had been President of St. Jarlath's College, and then Parish Priest of Hollymount, was transferred to the parish of Castlebar, and was appointed Archdeacon of the Chapter. When he died, in 1857, he was succeeded as Archdeacon by the Very Rev. Martin Browne. Like his predecessor, Archdeacon Browne had also been President of St. Jarlath's College. Thence he was transferred to the pastoral

⁴⁰ O'Reilly's "MacHale," I, p. 313.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* pp. 342-5.

charge of Balla in 1831, and from Balla he went to Castlebar on the death of Archdeacon MacHale. In 1856 he was one of three Tuam priests recommended by Dr. Feeney, Bishop of Killala, for the vacant See of Galway, Dr. Feeney adding in his letter to Dr. MacHale, that "Martinus Browne, parochus de Balla," though perhaps less learned than the two others named, Dr. MacEvelly and Dr. Whitehead, of Maynooth, was yet a worthy man, and had, what was of great importance in Galway, a good knowledge of Irish.⁴³

When Dean Burke died in 1861 he was succeeded as head of the Chapter by the Very Rev. Michael Waldron, P.P., of Cong, a man who seems to have had small claim to any distinction. At his death, about 1870, the position rendered vacant by his death was given to the Very Rev. Patrick MacManus, P.P., of Clifden. He was a zealous, active man, in spite of his years, and struck some hard blows on the proselytisers, who were then very active in the parish of Clifden. Dean MacManus must have been an old man when he died in 1880, for we have in the Feeney MSS. a letter of condolence sent to Dr. Feeney on the death of his mother. The letter was dated 1843, and Father MacManus was then Parish Priest of Louisburg. His contemporaries as Archdeacon were Archdeacon Browne, P.P., of Castlebar, and Archdeacon Kavanagh, of Knock, who survived until 1898. To him succeeded the Very Rev. Dr. Kilkenny, P.P. and V.G., of Claremorris, who for many years had been President of St. Jarlath's College. He came from Tuam to Claremorris as successor to the Very Rev. Canon Ulick Burke, and had pastoral charge of Claremorris for a long space—from 1887 to 1921—when he died. His successor as Archdeacon was the Very Rev. John Fallon, who also had been President of the College, then became Parish Priest of Knock, subsequently Parish Priest of Mountbellew, and a member of the Chapter, and finally, on the death of Dr. Higgins in 1918, got pastoral charge of the very important parish of Castlebar. He was thus the third Parish

⁴³ "Feeney MSS."

(D 705)

Priest of Castlebar in recent times who was also Archdeacon of Tuam.

In the intervening space of time since the death of Dean MacManus four filled the premier position of Dean. On the death of Dean MacManus there was a short interregnum. Dr. MacHale had died, and Dr. MacEvelly took charge of the Archdiocese. One of his first acts was to appoint his old friend, Father MacLoughlin, Parish Priest of Kiltulla, to the premier dignity. He also appointed him Vicar-General, and obtained for him the added dignity of a Domestic Prelate to the Apostolic See. This was in 1881, and in 1891 Dean MacLoughlin died. He had been offered by Dr. MacEvelly the pastoral charge of Castlebar, when Canon Magee died in 1885; but he preferred to end his days in Kiltulla, where he had spent as curate and parish priest the greater part of his priestly career. At his death, it was said that the Archbishop intended to appoint Canon Greally, of Newport, as Dean; but on further consideration he resolved to appoint Canon Ronayne, of Ballinrobe, a man of long service and of first-class ability, who was in fact equal to any position in the Church. He had been already mentioned in connection with the position of Coadjutor of Tuam, and again in connection with the Bishopric of Galway in 1887. But he had no ambition for a mitre, and entered an emphatic *nolo episcopari* in connection with the vacant See of Galway.

When Dean Ronayne died in 1903, Dr. Healy was Archbishop of Tuam, and Dr. Healy selected for the premier position in the Chapter, Canon Barrett, P.P. and V.F., of Headford, whom he also appointed Vicar-General, and had promoted to be a Domestic Prelate to the Pope. Dean Barrett had been an old friend of Dr. Healy, and the friendship had continued since their college days. He was a man of far more than average ability, a man of fine character, straightforward, honest and kindly, and always held in the highest respect by his fellow-priests. In his earlier days he had been curate in Ballinrobe, both under Father Hardiman and Dean Ronayne, and was held there in grateful remembrance by the people.

Dr. Healy judged that he would like to return to Ballinrobe, and end his days there; but the Dean had long lived in the seclusion of a country district, and preferred the continuance of such a life. A few years after being appointed Dean he became seriously ill, and gradually became quite helpless and unequal for any parochial work. And in this condition he remained until his death in 1919, when he was succeeded by the Right Rev. Monsignor Macken, then Parish Priest of Dunmore. In 1922 he was transferred to Claremorris, on the death of Archdeacon Kilkenny. Like his immediate predecessor in Claremorris, he was also appointed Vicar-General, and also became a Domestic Prelate to the Pope.

In the revised Chapter of the Archdiocese, as we find it in the nineteenth century, such offices as those of provost, precentor and treasurer do not appear. There was a dean, archdeacon, chancellor, and eight canons, and that was all; and this was the constitution of the Chapter until the death of Dr. MacEvilly, in 1902. But when Dr. Healy became Archbishop of Tuam in 1903, one of his first acts was to add to the Chapter a precentor, a canon theologian, and a canon penitentiary. He appointed no provost nor treasurer, and with these additions the Chapter has remained.

CHAPTER VIII.

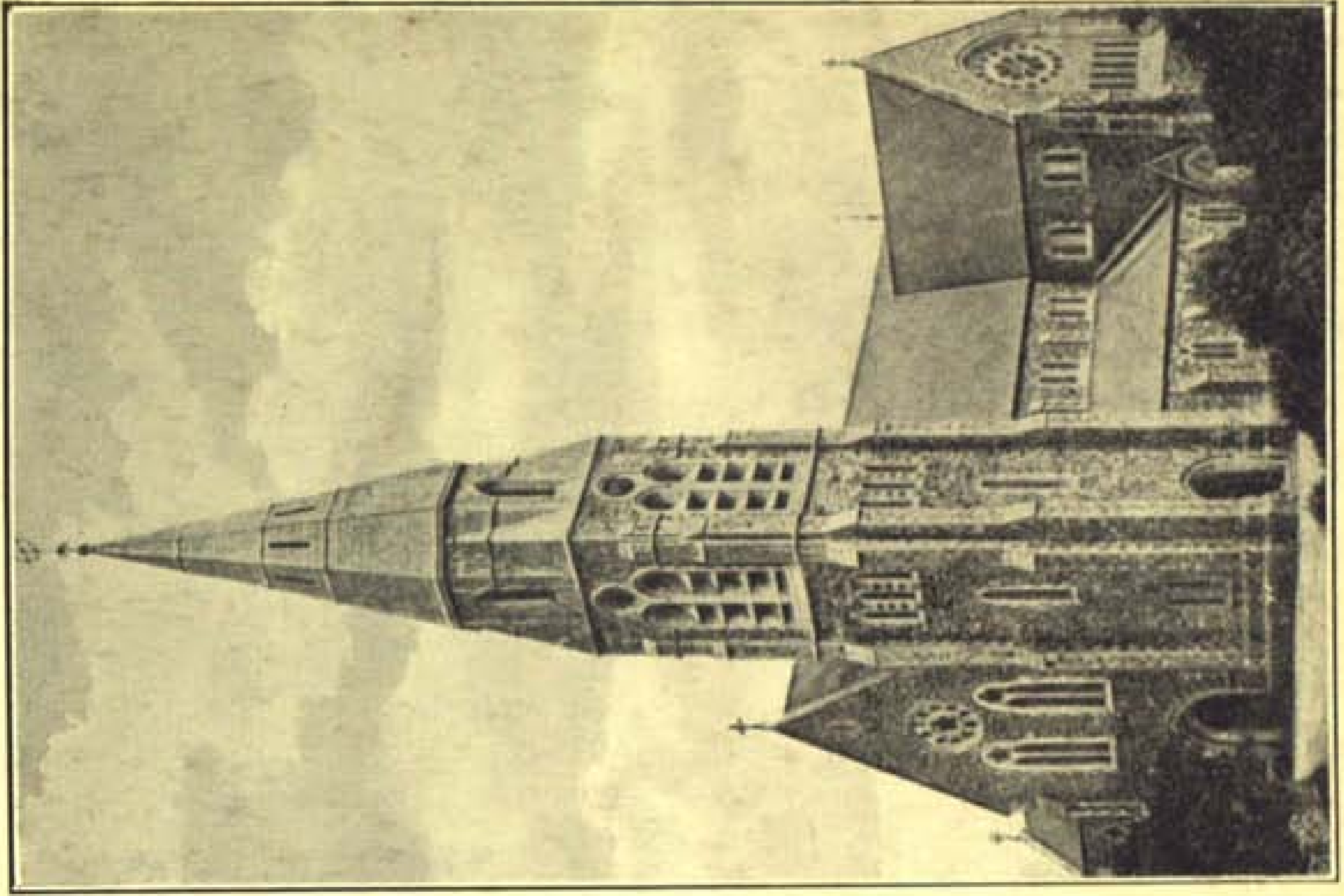
THE DEANERY OF BALLINROBE.

The Position of Vicar Forane.

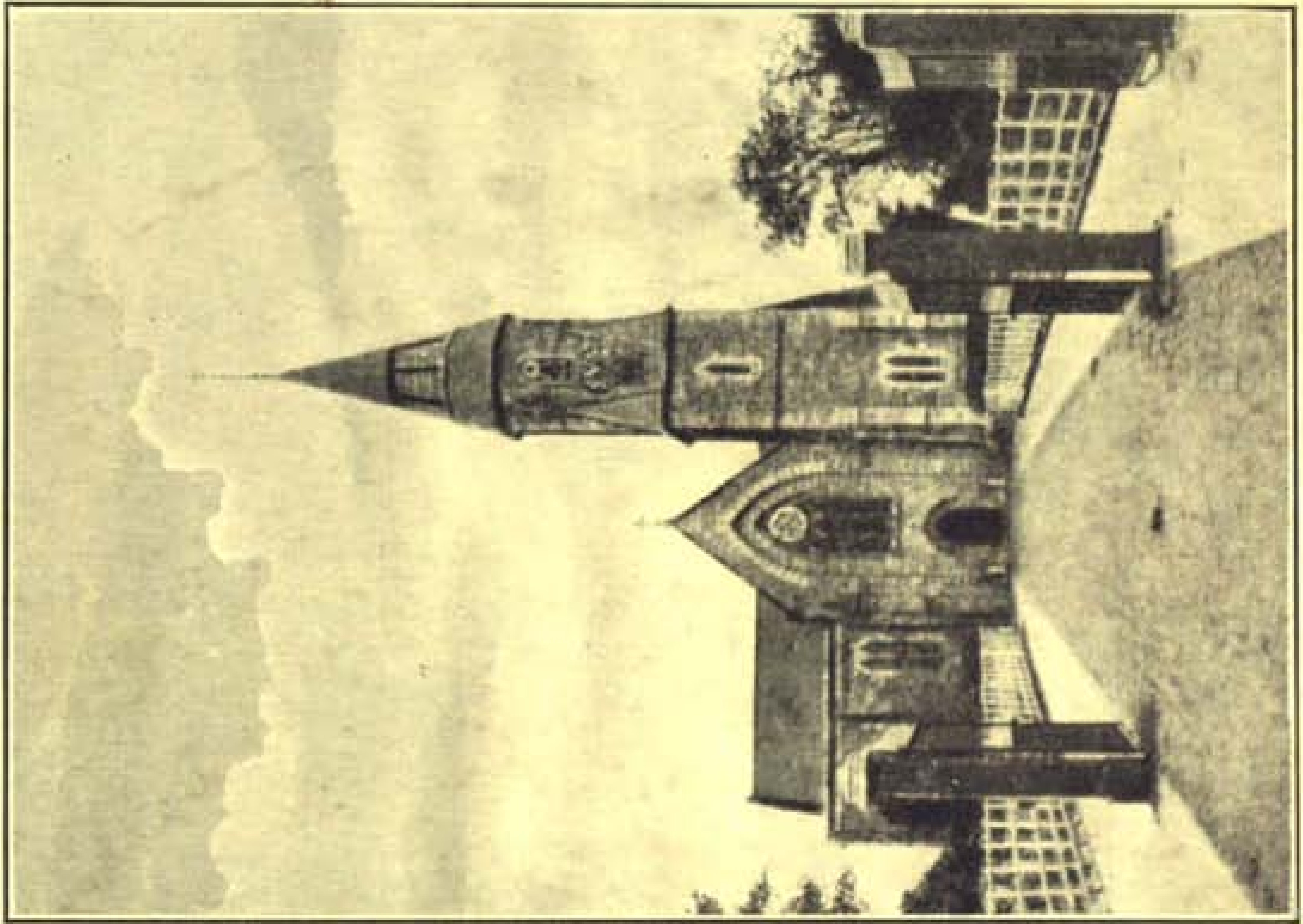
UNTIL diocesan episcopacy was established in Tuam as elsewhere, there were chorepiscopi.¹ They may have been bishops sent out from the larger monasteries to confer orders and do other episcopal work, or they may have been only priests delegated by the abbot of the monastery to rule in his name and in the districts subject to him; and they would have a position analogous to that of the vicar-forane of modern times. They would have specially extensive faculties and a supervising authority over the other priests, but would be confined to certain districts, outside of which their authority would not extend. When diocesan episcopacy supplanted monastic rule, and the bishop, independent of the monastic authorities, was assigned a certain territory called his diocese, the transition was easy from the chorepiscopus to the vicar-forane or rural dean.

We do not however know at what stage in its history the Archdiocese of Tuam was divided as it now is. It would probably be at an early period, for in the twelfth century, as in the twentieth, Tuam was an extensive Archdiocese, and in the earlier days the roads would be poor, so that an archbishop, no matter how active and energetic he might be, would find it desirable, if not necessary, to have seven centres in each of which a priest, specially representing him, would be

¹ Lanigan, III, p. 477.



ST. JOSEPH'S CHURCH, CLIFDEN.



ST. MARY'S CHURCH, BALLINROBE.

placed. Dislocation of work and chaos in administration must have arisen under the repression and terrorism of the penal laws, and the present arrangement would only appear in all its fulness when the pressure of the penal laws had been removed.

Even in penal times the present deaneries had their priests to minister to the people of that particular district, and they would also have some priest specially representing the archbishop, and charged by him to see that both priests and people in the deanery were living the lives that good Catholic priests and people ought to live. Even in the midst of the penal times we know that such was the case in Ballinrobe, for it is recorded that Father Duffy, the parish priest, was discharging the duties of a vicar-forane and even of a vicar-general. With a price set upon his head, it was necessary that he should be disguised and often change his residence, and we find one letter from the vicar-general addressed to him at Liskillen. But it may be assumed that his usual residence was at Ballinrobe, and that he would have permanently resided there if he were not a hunted outlaw.

Ballinrobe District.

Before the advent of the Anglo-Normans the town and district, as well as the whole barony of Kilmaine and the barony of Ross were in the hands of the Conmaicne.² These tribes were dispossessed about 1238 by the De Burgos. Half-a-century later Ballinrobe had passed into the hands of Maurice Fitzgerald, who built Sligo Castle, and from him, through the marriage of his daughter, it passed into the hands of the De Clares, reverting soon after to the De Burgos, by whom it was held for centuries, when it was relinquished to a stronger foe.

Whether or not the Conmaicne built any town where Ballinrobe now stands does not appear. But the De Burgos were quick to see its suitability as a place of residence. The land

² Burke's "Penal Times," p. 240-3.

³ Knox's "History of Mayo," p. 280-1.

around was fertile, the rivers furnished water and fish, and in these disturbed times the lakes and the islands they contained would furnish a suitable retreat from a more powerful foe until preparations could be made to resist him. The place was picturesque too, with Lough Carra mingling its waters with Lough Mask at Keel Bridge, Lough Mask itself extending to Lough na Foohey, and communicating with Lough Corrib. These lakes were studded with islands, and in the distance were the mountains of Partry and Ross, dominated by the taller peaks of the Twelve Pins and the historic cone of Croagh Patrick, recalling the life and works of the national apostle himself.

The Burkes.

In the centuries that followed Ballinrobe saw stirring times. It became one of the strongest places of the De Burgos, and when these turbulent Anglo-Irish threw off their allegiance to England, and changed their name to Burke, they held the town and district, not as English nobles, but as Irish chiefs. They built strong Norman castles at Cloona and Liskillen and on Hag's Island in Lough Mask, and were strong enough with their warlike retainers to hold their possessions against native or foreign aggressor. It was here that the son of the Earl of Ulster, the head of the De Burgos, was taken prisoner in 1338 by his kinsmen, and thrown into the waters of Lough Mask. Henceforth there were two great branches of the family—the MacWilliam Burkes, of Clanrickard, or of Galway, and the MacWilliam Burkes of Mayo.

In 1381, O'Donnell, all the way from Tirconnell, descended on Mayo, and swept with fire and sword the whole MacWilliam country from Ballinrobe to Shrute.* Ten years later it seemed as if the Burkes were about to revert to their old allegiance, for the King's Justices came to Ballinrobe, and held assizes there, and, no doubt, hoped that the reign of English law would endure. But MacWilliam was not to be won so easily, and if he made a pretence in the presence of

* "Four Masters."

superior force of turning to English ways, the change was not permanent or sincere, for he still preferred to rule as an Irish chief. His successors followed in his footsteps, and in 1518, more than a century later, a MacWilliam Burke ruled in Ballinrobe. In 1571, Fitton, then President of Connaught, captured the town and the other Burke strongholds in the neighbourhood. But the triumph of superior force was short-lived, and in 1576 MacWilliam Burke went to Galway as The MacWilliam to pay his respects to the Lord Deputy, Sir Henry Sidney. The Deputy declares in his despatch that MacWilliam was a very sensible man, "wanting the English, yet understanding the Latin," and ruling a territory three times as large as that of the Earl of Clanrickard.⁵ Sidney knighted him, and gave him back all his territory to be held by English tenure. Burke consented to admit an English sheriff, and in 1584 he made a friendly alliance with Malbie, the new President of Connaught, and he was soon on equally friendly terms with the Lord Deputy Perrott.

Sir Richard Bingham.

It was at this date that the Burkes of Ballinrobe met in the new President of Connaught their most formidable foe. This was Sir Richard Bingham who was sworn of the Privy Council in 1585, and came to Connaught in the capacity of President early next year. The fair dealing of Malbie and Perrott had already done much in the cause of peace. They had won the confidence of the Burkes, most of whom had obeyed Perrott's summons to appear in Dublin, and these accepted the Composition of Connaught. Under this arrangement the greater chiefs surrendered their lands to the Crown, and got them back to be held by English tenure. Their demesne lands were given free of all rent and cess: for their other lands they would pay a penny an acre crown rent. They would be also liable to military service, their contribution being fixed. The lesser chiefs were just in the same position, and were freed from the vexatious and capricious contribution

⁵ "Carew Papers."

exacted by the greater chiefs. Inheritance was to be from father to son, and English would replace Brehon law.⁶ Not all the Burkes went to Dublin, but the adherence of those at home to the new arrangement was only a matter of time. Nothing was required but tact and prudence and forbearance, and a continuance of the fair and honest dealing of Sidney and Malbie and Perrott.

But these gentler methods were scorned by Sir Richard Bingham. He despised these Irish chiefs and the whole Irish nation. He was arbitrary and even bloodthirsty; a believer in force, relying on severity, imprisonments and hangings; and thought he was doing well for the Crown, and incidentally for himself and his family, when he was executing the chiefs, and confiscating their lands. Fearful of meeting the tyrant whom they had already learned to distrust, some of the Burkes round Ballinrobe failed to attend Bingham's Sessions at Donamona, and took refuge in their great stronghold, Hag's Castle in Lough Mask. The enraged president attacked them there, but failed to capture the castle, and the Burkes escaped across the lake to the mountains on the other side, where they could not be so easily pursued. In revenge, Bingham desolated their lands with fire and sword, drove away their cattle, and executed all their friends he could capture.⁷ Not content with this, he assembled an army of 1,000 men at Ballinrobe, calling to his aid the Earl of Clanrickard, and when the rebellious Burkes refused to submit he had their pledges taken in from The Neale, where they were kept by Mr. Browne, and had them executed.⁸

The story is told in a Book of Complaints sent by the Burkes to the Lord Deputy in 1589. The pledges were three children; the eldest fourteen, the next in age nine, and the youngest only seven years. The Chief Justice of Connaught, who was then in Ballinrobe, protested against the execution of innocent children; but he was overborne, and while Bingham and the

⁶ "Carew Papers," pp. 393-4.

⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 430-1.

⁸ "Annals of Loch Ce."

Earl of Clanrickard were seated comfortably at supper, the three children were hanged. One of them wished for a priest, but this was denied. One also wept, but was consoled, no doubt, by the eldest, who bade him never fear. "We shall," he said, "be shortly in a better place than here, because we die guiltless of offence." Even stern officials were shocked, but nobody could remonstrate with Bingham, and nobody could control him. He quarrelled with the Deputy, and was sent on foreign service, and he quarrelled with the new Deputy on his return from abroad. He could co-operate with nobody, and none of the Burkes could trust him. Browbeaten and terrorised, they knew not where to turn; and in the period from 1586 to the end of Tyrone's rebellion, the Burkes sometimes joined the English and sometimes joined O'Donnell. And in the confusion we find a MacWilliam at the battle of the Yellow Ford on O'Neill's side, and subsequently a Queen's MacWilliam against O'Donnell, and another MacWilliam, head of his nation, fighting on the side of O'Donnell against the English. Nor is it easy always to understand the epithets applied to some of these Burkes. One was called Richard of the Iron; another, the Devil's Hook; another, the Blind Abbot, though he was a married man, and could therefore have no spiritual jurisdiction within an abbey or outside it. Finally, there was Tibbot na Long, or Theobald of the Ships. He was the son of Richard of the Iron and the notorious Granuaile, or Grace O'Malley. Fickle, wavering and unreliable, he shifted his allegiance in accordance with his interests, and when the great rebellion was over, and O'Neill and O'Donnell were outlaws and exiles, Theobald of the Ships was safely on the side of the English, and became first Viscount Mayo. His son became a Protestant, and lived at Castlebar, and in 1642 he escorted the Mayo Protestants who were seeking refuge at Galway. But the refugees were set upon at Shrule, and many of them murdered, and failing to protect them, and being, it was said, a sharer in their

² "O'Connors of Connaught," pp. 207-8.

murder, the second lord's son, Sir Theobald, who became the third Viscount Mayo, was executed at Galway in 1653.¹⁰

Settlers in Ballinrobe.

Meantime, the Burkes had ceased to be all-powerful at Ballinrobe. In Bingham's time a certain Thomas Nolan settled in the district, and acquired the castle and lands of Creagh from MacTibbot Burke.¹¹ A little later he acted as sub-sheriff to John Browne, of The Neale, and for this and other services he got all the lands of MacTibbot, and resided in Burke's new castle outside the town. MacTibbot may have died without heirs, or more probably had his lands confiscated because of his share, or supposed share, in the rebellion. It is certain, however, that Nolan got by letters patent from James I. a grant of the castle and manor of Ballinrobe in 1655. He was no doubt on the wrong side from the Cromwellian point of view, and in consequence, his estate passed to James Cuff, one of the Cromwellian Commissioners. In 1752 the existing owner was another James Cuff, and restored Ballinrobe Castle, the old residence of MacWilliam, the market town or market house of Ballinrobe, "almost about to perish." Another James Cuff became, in 1797, Lord Tyrawley of Ballinrobe, and he, early in the nineteenth century, sold his house at Ballinrobe to the military authorities, who converted it into a military barrack. By marriage the Cuff estates near Ballinrobe passed to the Knox family.

Lord Tyrawley lies buried in the graveyard attached to the Protestant church in Ballinrobe, his tombstone bearing the following inscription:—"Sacred to the memory of the Right Hon. James Cuff, Lord Baron of Tyrawley, one of his Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council, and late Barrack Master-General of Ireland, who died on the 15th of June, 1821."

¹⁰ Miss Hickson, I, pp. 378-399.

¹¹ Knox's "History of Mayo," p. 219.

Ecclesiastical History.

The ecclesiastical history of the parish is less diversified than the civil history. Ballinrobe was overshadowed by Cong on the one side, and by Mayo on the other. Both these abbeys were so important that they became episcopal centres. There was a diocese of Cong and a diocese of Mayo, and while all Ballinrobe south of the river was subject to Cong and part of Cong diocese, the portion of Ballinrobe north of the river was subject to the Bishop of Mayo. There is nothing to show that St. Patrick visited the parish on his journeys, and it must be that the faith came either from Cong or Mayo, and at a date long before the coming of the Anglo-Normans, probably not later than the seventh century, and perhaps even in Patrician times. In this case it would have come from the neighbouring parish of Kilmaine.

On the Kilmaine road, at Killoshine, there was a church, and there were episcopal lands, and there were churches also at Roxboro, Kilkearan, Inishrobe, at Cushlough, on the Cahernalecka road just outside the town, and in the town itself. All trace of the church at Killoshine has disappeared, and the church lands have long passed into the hands of laymen. There is still an old ivy-clad ruin at Kilkearan, and the same is true of Inishrobe and Tempul-na-Lecka, but the church at Roxboro has followed the lead of Killoshine. Mr. Knox thinks that Inishrobe was filled with some monks from Mayo, and was, therefore, a religious establishment, but the Papal Letters show that this is not correct. There is, in fact, one such letter bearing date 1444, and ordering the Abbot of Ballintubber to investigate certain charges against one John, perpetual vicar of Inishrobe, and if the charges were true to deprive him of his office. The value of the vicarage was only three marks, showing that it was poor, and also showing that the vicar was a secular priest "of the diocese of Tuam," and was, in addition, a man of very questionable character.¹²

The church in the graveyard on the Cahernalecka road was, no doubt, a parish church, but only of Ballinrobe in

¹² Knox's "Tuam," p. 35; "Papal Register," IX, pp. 390-1.

Carra. For there were two parishes—Ballinrobe in Carra, and Ballinrobe among the Conmaicne or of Kilmaine barony. There is a Papal letter of 1413 dispensing one John Butler to hold at the same time the perpetual vicarage of Ballinrobe and the rectory of Ballinrobe in Carra; and there is another, dated 1432, promoting the vicar of Ballinrobe in Carra to the vicarage of Ballinrobe in Kilmaine. The church of the first-named would, no doubt, be the church at Cahernalecka, later called Templeruan, probably from a local powerful family called Ruane. Its valuation in 1591 is put down at £2, so that the buildings and lands attached could not be described as rich.

The only religious establishments were the convent at Kil-leencrava (the church of the devout) in the present Creagh Demesne, the church and house of the Knights Hospitallers, and the Abbey of the Augustinian Hermits. In neither case can the date of the foundation be determined. The convent was originally subject to the convent of Kilcreevanty.¹³ At the suppression its lands were not more than sixty acres, and its tithes, which had been paid to Cong, were only six shillings and sixpence a year. Like Cong, it passed by Crown grant in 1606 to Sir John Bingley.

The Knights Hospitallers.

St. John's House belonged to the Knights Hospitallers at Kilmainham, and was probably the gift to the Kilmainham house of some pious member of the Burke family. Its position is not so easy to define, for the site may have been the ground occupied by the present Protestant church, or this latter may have been the church of the vicar of Ballinrobe in Kilmaine barony. Certainly the Knights Hospitallers were not rich in 1414. In that year there was a Papal Indulgence of five years and five quarantines to those who, on the Annunciation of St. Mary the Virgin, the Nativity, and the Beheading of St. John the Baptist, visit and give alms for the conservation of the Church of St. John the Baptist in Ballinrobe, in the

¹³ Knox's "Mayo," p. 93.

diocese of Tuam, which is without cure, is a member of the priory of the hospital of St. John of Jerusalem in Ireland, and has no rents of its own for the sustentation of the rector.¹⁴ A later date must have brought some endowment, for in 1529 the Prior of Kilmainham granted power of attorney to Stephen Fitzjames Lynch of Galway to lease all the Knights' possessions in Connaught, among them "the chapel and house of St. John the Baptist at Ballinrobe, with a caracute of land and a mill." Probably he leased the land to the Augustinian Hermits, for the possessions of St. John's house and chapel had dwindled in 1584 to "a piece of land called St. John's, Ballinrobe, containing two acres, a water-course and a mill."

The Augustinian Hermits.

Much the more important religious foundation was the Abbey of the Augustinian Hermits. It probably owed its foundation to the Burkes, and it was there that the Earl's son was brought a prisoner in 1338, whence he was taken and thrown into the waters of Lough Mask. In 1400 it was evidently in need of repair, and an order was obtained from Rome granting an indulgence of seven years and seven quarantines to all penitents who would visit the place and give alms for the conservation or repairs, or for the fabric of the Augustinian friar house of Ballinrobe in the diocese of Tuam.¹⁵ And the friars, in 1413, were offered by Edmond Staunton, a descendant of the founder of the Carmelite house of Burriscarra, possession of this Carmelites' house, with "its church, bell, cemetery and gardens." It appears that the Burriscarra house had not been occupied for thirty years, and the Archbishop was now willing to have its possessions transferred to the Ballinrobe friars. The Pope consented, and the transfer took place. Then for many a year we lose sight of these Ballinrobe friars; but they lived on, and in 1584 were found in possession of the chapel and house of St. John the Baptist, once owned by the Knights Hospitallers, with two

¹⁴ "Papal Registers," VI, p. 421.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* V, pp. 269-270.

acres of land, a water-course and a mill. Their lands shared in the confiscation of the time, and to this day are known as Friars' Quarter. The waters of the Robe still turn a mill-wheel, but water-course and mill have long since passed into the stranger's hands.

The Parish Church.

Judging by what remains of the old parish church, its architectural beauty was much less than the Church of the Augustinians. We catch no glimpses of the priests who ministered there during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, except Father Duffy, who lived the life of a hunted outlaw. Nor can we trace the succession of parish priests through the dark days that followed. When toleration came at last, the church now in ruins on the Partry Road was built. It was substantial but plain, and had a steeple which rose high over the surrounding plain. At least three parish priests lie buried within its walls. About the middle of the nineteenth century it was felt to be too small for the congregation, especially as it was the only church for the whole parish. It was also inconveniently situated. Yet the parish priest, Father Hardiman, was reluctant to undertake the building of a new church, believing it would be impossible to obtain the necessary funds. His curate, Father Peter Conway, was more sanguine, and was able to procure an admirable site within the confines of the town. Having done this, he was authorised by Dr. MacHale to proceed with the building, and finished the centre portion, consisting of the nave and aisles. The transepts and sacristy were built by Dean Ronayne, who also laid out the grounds and built the tower.

It was Father Hardiman who brought the Sisters of Mercy to Ballinrobe, bringing them from Westport. One of the young novices who came from Carlow to Westport was Mother Paul Cullen, a sister of Cardinal Cullen, and she afterwards founded Ballinrobe. The nuns were at first housed in the town, but subsequently Father Hardiman procured the

site of the present convent, and the community was a flourishing one before Father Hardiman's death in 1875.

Remains of Ancient Buildings.

With the old buildings of the parish time has severely dealt. Not a stone remains of the Castles of Killoshine and Cloonkeary. The foundations are left of the Castle of Lis-killen, and part of the venerable walls of Cregduff. Hag's Castle, with its walls eight feet thick, would have stood till now if it had not been assailed by the ferocious Bingham. It still stands a substantial ruin. Cushlough was inhabited until the middle of the nineteenth century. Cloona-Gashel, on the contrary, seems to defy all the assaults of time. It is situated now in the demesne of Colonel O'Dowd Egan, having passed away from Bingham as well as from Burke, and is a conspicuous object to the passing traveller. The square tower, formidable and grim, within which many dark deeds were done, stands intact, its forbidding exterior softened by friendly ivy, and no longer inspiring terror as in the days of the dreaded Bingham.

Only a small portion of the castle of MacWilliam Burke is left, and even the building repaired by Cuff and extended by the British military authorities is now in ruins. It was as a barrack in a good state of repair when it was handed over to the Irish Government in 1921. Unfortunately, it fell into the hands of the Republicans, and was occupied by them for a few months. When they were retiring before the Free State troops they burned it to the ground. A stone long since inserted in one of the ruined walls tells the story of the castle and its connection with Cuff and Burke in the following inscription, all of which is not clearly decipherable. As it is in Latin, a translation is added.

“ Deo Opt Max coeptis annuenti, castrum hoc a principe gentis De Burgensis in commitatu Mayonensi electivo antiquitus MacWilliam nominativo inchoatum, possessum manerii domicilium, per varios casus et varias possessiones ruinorum, refici fecit olim Jacobus Cuff, miles, cujus nepos per ordinem

successiionis (heres ex (asse)) illud denuo misere collapsum, nunc recidivum, villam necnon propinquam, emporium pene interituram agrosque mensales restaurari, ampliari, decorari Jacobus Cuff armiger curavit. Haud procul a castro veteris fundamina turris effodiunt opere praetereunte Roba."

TRANSLATION OF THE FOREGOING.

"With the blessing of the Great and Good God on the undertaking, this castle was begun, completed and dwelt in by the elective chieftain of the De Burg clan in the county of Mayo, called by the title of MacWilliam. The manor-house, which through various vicissitudes and a succession of owners was falling into ruin, was formerly restored by James Cuff, a soldier. His descendant in the line of succession (who was the sole heir), James Cuff, High Sheriff, restored, enlarged and beautified the manor-house, which was again in a wretched state of collapse, and was falling down, and also restored the adjoining farm building, and the market-house which was on the point of falling into ruin, and the manor lands. Not far from the castle, on the banks of the Robe, the foundations of an old tower were unearthed by the workmen."

One other relic of the past remains which owes its preservation in recent times to the Rev. John Neary, while curate of Cong. It is a chalice, once belonging to the Augustinian Friars, and found by him in the old house of the Jennings' family in Cross East. It is highly chased, bearing the engraver's name, M. Gandoqui, perhaps a Spaniard, and bears the following inscription: "Pr. F Fran O'Hely Ord Eremit S Aug hunc fieri fecit ad usum conventus oppidi Balerobensis in Hibernia Anno Domini 1663." This would show that the friars were at their posts as late as the reign of Charles II. But the horrors of the penal laws sent them adrift, and in time left the ancient abbey in ruins. Father Neary adds that if the engraving on the face of the chalice represents the ancient foundation, it was a magnificent building, not unworthy of a munificent founder.

Parish Priests.

PARISH PRIESTS OF BALLINROBE.

Father Duffy, about 1700.

Rev. Michl. Greene, died in 1829, and built the church on the Partry Road in 1819.

Rev. Edmond Jennings, 1829-33.

Rev. John Morris, 1833-50.

Rev. Thomas Hardiman, 1850-75.

Very Rev. Dean Ronayne, 1875-1903.

Very Rev. Canon Stephens, 1903-1911.

Right Rev. Monsignor D'Alton, appointed in 1911.

Kilmaine Parish.

Kilmaine has the distinction of being evangelised by St. Patrick. After his labours in the Donaghpatrick district he crossed the river at Shrule, and entered the modern parish of *Kilmaine*. It was the country of the *Conmaicne Cuil Taladh*, and when baronies were formed it gave its name to the whole barony. The Tripartite Life of St. Patrick briefly records the activities of the Apostle. Patrick went afterwards into the lands of *Conmaicne Cuil Taladh*, and established four cornered churches there—one of them in *Ard Niscon*.¹⁶ These churches can be identified. On his journey north, the first of them would be at *Kilmainebeg*, which would be at or near the modern townland of *Kill*, where there is a graveyard and the remains of an ancient church. Already St. Patrick had left *Folartus* as bishop in charge of *Donaghpatrick*, and now he placed the sisters of that bishop at *Kill*. At the modern village of *Kilmaine* he established the mother church of the parish called *Kilmainemore*; further north he founded the church at *Kilquire*, and there he baptised many. Tradition says that he then turned west, passing by *Cross to Maam*, and then returned to *Kilquire*.¹⁷

Through the passing centuries we catch glimpses of these churches. There were no monastic establishments, and the

¹⁶ Healy's "St. Patrick," pp. 223-4.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

parish became subject to the abbey and diocese of Cong; and when that diocese disappeared, Kilmaine became a parish and a prebend of the Archdiocese of Tuam. At 1210 it is recorded that a convocation of the clergy of Connaught was held at Kilmaine, and that on this occasion the Archbishop of Tuam complained that he had been deprived of Kilmaine by the Archbishop of Armagh. In 1265 another conference was held at Kilmaine, this time between the Archbishop of Tuam and Prendergast.¹⁸

The taxation of Kilmainemore in 1306 was £4, and of Kilmainebeg £2, and in 1584 just half the amount in each case. Darkness settled down on the place during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; but the faith survived penal legislation and confiscation of Church lands, and in the nineteenth century the present church was built by Father James Browne.

The civil history of the place was uneventful. The original lords were dispossessed by the De Burgos, who for centuries were the lords of its rich and fertile lands. A branch of this family was called MacSeonin, anglicised to Jennings, and they were in possession from 1400 to 1655, when they were dispossessed by Cromwellian adventurers. Only a few references are in the "Annals." In 1177 Kilmaine was burned by Manus O'Connor and Milo de Cogan.¹⁹ In 1204 William Burke took spoils from the Kilmaine church.²⁰ In 1229 Hugh O'Flaherty and Hugh O'Connor made peace there. In 1280 Felim O'Connor and William Burke camped at Kilmaine. In 1588 the Deputy Fitzwilliam held sessions there, and heard from the Burke chiefs many complaints against Sir Richard Bingham.²¹

A much more important event took place in the parish in 1595, when Red Hugh O'Donnell held a great assembly of all the Mayo chiefs, and appointed one of the Burkes The MacWilliam. The account is given by O'Clery in his life of Red Hugh O'Donnell.

¹⁸ "Annals of Loch Ce."

¹⁹ "Four Masters."

²⁰ "Loch Ce."

²¹ "O'Connors of Connaught."

“ MacWilliam Burke was the chief title of the lord of the territory, and he was not called so for some time, as they were overpowered by the English.” When the pressure from England weakened, and O'Donnell was able to enter Mayo as a conqueror the usual results followed. The Burke chiefs began to quarrel, and William Burke, of Shrule, David and Richard and Oliver of the same name, Oliver Burke, son of John; Edmond, son of Thomas; Theobald of the Ships; John, son of Richard; Theobald, son of Walter Ciatach, all of the Burke family and name, were all aspirants to the chieftaincy and to the title of The MacWilliam. All these were assembled at Rausakeera, and with them the MacCostelloes and the MacDonnells of the Gallowglasses. “ When all these nobles had assembled, Shane Oge O'Doherty formed four lines of troops back to back around the *lis*: 1,800 of his soldiers and mercenaries round the royal rath were the first body: O'Doherty himself and Tadhg O'Boyle, with the infantry of Tyrconnell outside them, in the second circle: the three MacSweeneys with their gallowglasses outside them: the men of Connaught with their party outside them all: O'Donnell himself, with his chiefs and nobles, in a close circle on the summit of the rath, and no one of the nobles or gentlemen was allowed to go into his presence in the rath but whomsoever be commanded to be called to him. When the assembled chiefs had given their opinion, O'Donnell resolved to confer the chieftaincy of the territory on Theobald, son of Walter Ciatach, and he ordered the son of Theobald to proclaim him MacWilliam.²² It was not a wise decision, and led rather to division and discontent than to unity.

There is nothing to mark the spot where O'Donnell and these chiefs assembled on that eventful day in 1595; but there is no difficulty in identifying Rausakeera, which is situated not far from Kilquire, on the left of the road which passes from Kilmaine to Roundfort. Similarly all remains of the Patrician churches have long since disappeared, and even the churches which succeeded them, though there are some

²² O'Clery, pp. 111-115.

remains of an ancient church in the graveyard at Kilmaine. There are also the remains of castles at Turin, Killernan, Ballymartin, Cregmore, and Moneycrower. And there is a great fort in the village of Cregduff, the largest ancient fort in the county.

PARISH PRIESTS OF KILMAINE.

- Rev. James Browne, 1847.
 Rev. John MacHugh, 1847-1862.
 Rev. Martin MacHale, 1862-1864.
 Very Rev. Canon O'Rorke, 1864-1879.
 Rev. Richard Prendergast, 1879-1896.
 Rev. John Loftus, 1896-1908.
 Rev. Martin Healy, 1908-

Parish of Hollymount.

After St. Patrick had baptized many at Kilquire he went to Magh Foimsen, most probably the plain extending eastward from Ballinrobe to Robeen and Hollymount.²³ Who the inhabitants then were we do not know; but in Anglo-Norman times the district, like the neighbouring territory, became the possession of the De Burgos, other Anglo-Norman settlers being the De Rupes and the Prendergasts. At a later date the Burkes brought in the MacDonnells with their gallow-glasses, and the MacDonnell chief got the castle and lands of Togher, which they, the MacDonnells, long retained. There were also strong castles at Robeen, Lehinch, and Hag's Castle in Lough Carra. Of these Lehinch was of great importance. It was attacked by Brien O'Connor in 1412: it was there that Theobald of the Ships, in 1596, gave in his submission to the Governor of Connaught, Sir Conyers Clifford. In the next century it was in the possession of an adventurer named Garvey; but he was turned out by the Cromwellians in 1653, and it passed into the hands of John Porter, who sold it to Henry Blake in 1672. Belanaloob also changed hands more than once. It was a valuable property, more than 10,000 acres in extent. It was taken from the Burkes in 1571 by

²³ Healy's "St. Patrick," pp. 224-26.

Fitton, but given back under the Composition of Connaught in 1585. In that family it remained until it was handed over by John Burke in 1678 to Henry Bingham, to be held in trust for Burke. No doubt Burke was a Catholic, and resorted to this stratagem, as many others did, to safeguard his castle and lands. But the trustee may have proved false, and we find that John Bingham owned Belanaloob in 1800, and was created Lord Claremorris.

At Annagh, on the shore of Lough Carra, a Benedictine convent was established and endowed by MacWilliam. It was subject to the convent of Kilcreevanty. In the sixteenth century it was possessed by the Franciscans, and from them passed to the Augustinian Hermits of Ballinrobe. Sharing the fate of other religious houses, it was suppressed, and the waste castle, chapel and quarter of land called Annies, with the tithes, was given to the Earl of Clanrickard.²⁴ Annies was a vicarage, for the Papal Letters record that John de Burgo, in 1429, was Archdeacon of Tuam as well as perpetual vicar of Ballinrobe in Carra and Annies, all of which he resigned to enter the Abbey of Cong.²⁵

The church and parish of Robeen were attached to the diocese of Mayo, and in 1411 there was a Papal brief issued confirming the Augustinian Canons of Mayo in the possession of the "ecclesiastical fees of Robeen with a mill." In 1455 we find that the rector of Ballinrobe in Carra was also in possession of the perpetual vicarage of Robeen, the value of the latter being given as four marks.²⁶ The subsequent history of Robeen and Kilcommon is obscure; but in 1558 we find from Bodkin's "Visitation" that Robeen was usurped by William Burke, and Kilcommon by Richard and William Burke. After the passing away of the penal times, Kilcommon and Robeen were found to be united, but even now the people of the Robeen district do not speak of belonging to the parish of Hollymount or Kilcommon, but to the parish of Robeen.

²⁴ Knox's "Tuam."

²⁵ "Papal Registers," VIII, p. 89.

²⁶ *Ibid.* XI, p. 208.

LIST OF MODERN PARISH PRIESTS.

- Rev. James MacHale, 1827-1847, promoted to Castlebar.
 Very Rev. Peter Cannon, 1847-1857.
 Rev. Patrick Conry, 1857-1865.
 Rev. Edward King, 1865-1884.
 Rev. Patrick Caulfield, 1884-1896.
 Rev. Richard Prendergast, 1896-1906.
 Very Rev. Canon Begley, 1906-1924.
 Rev. Thomas Morris, 1924.

Parish of Partry.

In ancient times *Partry* included not only the present parish, but also the district from Cong to Lough Mask, and also the stretch of wild mountain country from Croagh Patrick to Lough Corrib. Its chief was called a king, and received for his services in peace from the superior king at Cruachan three drinking-horns, three swords, three tunics, and three steeds.²⁷ At a later date the name Partry was restricted to the present parish, which is also called Ballyovey, that particular district being called Odhbha Cera or Odhbha of Carra. The O'Connors were then the over-lords, and it was to them that the Partry chiefs, the O'Murrays and the MacNeills, paid tribute. But in the thirteenth century these chiefs were dispossessed by the Burkes, under whom a powerful Anglo-Norman family named Staunton ruled. The convulsions which followed the death of the Earl of Ulster and his son, who perished in the waters of Lough Mask, brought many changes. And among them was the repudiation of England by the De Burgos and Stauntons, the former of whom became Burke, and the latter MacEvelly. When MacWilliam went to Galway in 1576 to make peace with Sidney, the Queen's deputy, he was accompanied by the MacEvelly chief, and both accepted the Composition of Connaught, and were secured in the possession of their lands. A few years later these chiefs having rebelled, their rebellion was followed by confiscation of lands and castles.

²⁷ "Book of Rights," pp. 115-116.

Ballyovey was visited by St. Patrick, who passed from there to Triangle and Aughagower.²⁸ The name of St. Finian is also associated with the parish, and also that of St. Columba. Finian was certainly at Ballintubber, and on an island in Lough Carra there was a Kill Finian. On the shores of Lough Mask there is a tobar Columbkille, and in the lake itself an island bearing the saint's name. This, however, might be done by his two friends, Liban and Fortchern, who laboured in Ballyovey. And there is no doubt that St. Mochua was in Ballyovey, and had authority in the parish in the seventh century, for this is specially recorded in the "Book of Lismore."²⁹

At one time or other there were churches at Portroyal, Kilkieran, Aghnish, Islaun-Columbkille, and Churchfield, all within the present parish. But when these were built is uncertain. What is certain is that the faith survived the penal times, and in the nineteenth century the unscrupulous assaults of Lord Plunkett and his proselytisers.

PARISH PRIESTS OF PARTRY.

Rev. Father Kirby, early in the nineteenth century.

Rev. Henry Joyce, 1811-1840.

Rev. Peter Ward, 1840-1858.

Rev. Patrick Lavelle, 1858-1869.

Rev. Thomas McWalter, 1870-1876.

Rev. David Mylotte, 1876-1883.

Rev. James Corbett, 1883-1919.

Rev. Thomas O'Malley, 1919.

The Parish of Kilbride.

The parish of *Kilbride* extends from the valley of Doolough to the shores of Lough Corrib and Lough Mask, and from the Maamturk Mountains to the Owenbrin River. It is extensive and poor, but rich in scenery, in mountain and lake, in rock and heather, over which the sturdy black cattle and horned sheep roam. In early ages it was part of the territory ruled

²⁸ Healy's "St. Patrick," pp. 225-6.

²⁹ *Ibid.* p. 285.

by the Partry chief; later it was possessed by the O'Caddles from the neighbouring barony of Kilmaine; and from them it passed first to Fitzgerald and then to Burke. It was Fitzgerald who brought there and settled the Joyces from Wales—a race of tall men, who under Burke on one side and O'Flaherty on the other made themselves masters of this wild western district, and even gave it their name. The Joyces, for one thing, have always been pious defenders of the Catholic faith. A Joyce was Warden of Galway, and a Joyce was Archbishop of Tuam, and in 1313 one Thomas Joyce gave the lands round Shaunafarahaun to the Abbey of Cong.³⁰

It is possible that St. Patrick visited the parish, and it is certain that his memory is specially revered there. There is a St. Patrick's Well west of Maam and Lough Corrib, to which the people make pilgrimages on the last Sunday in July. There is a stone still marked and venerated as St. Patrick's footsteps between Maamtrasna and Finney. There is also Kilbride and St. Bridget's Well between two arms of Lough Mask. *Finally, there is Kilmilkin, which with its lands once belonged to Kilcreevanty, and, as such, was granted by the Crown in 1570 to the Earl of Clanrickard, and there was once a church at Ultaghbeg.*

In early times Kilbride was a separate parish, and included in the diocese of Cong, but in modern times it was part of the parish of Ross or Clonbur. The two united parishes, however, were found to be too extensive, and a division was made by Dr. Healy. The first parish priest was the Rev. Patrick Forde, and the second the Rev. William Heaney, appointed in 1922.

The Parish of Clonbur.

The parish of *Ross or Clonbur* touches the two great lakes, Corrib and Mask, and has, like Kilbride, an abundance of wild scenery, of mountain and rock and heather. It was probably visited by St. Patrick from Kilquire,³¹ and his steps

³⁰ "Iar Connaught," pp. 16, 44-5, 246-7.

³¹ Healy's "St. Patrick," p. 224.

are still traced at St. Patrick's Well and St. Patrick's Bed, at the foot of Maumeen, in the lap of the Maamturk mountains, about five miles south of Maam bridge and hotel. There is also Oala Phadhraig, or Patrick's Mound, not far from the ruined castle of Ballynonagh, on the shores of Lough Mask, and Rosshill, near Clonbur, is sometimes called Tempul Phadhraig, and sometimes Tempul Brennain. These places are connected in popular tradition with the journeys of St. Patrick, and visited and venerated as such. St. Brendan was not far off at Annaghdown, and could have come to Clonbur down the Corrib, and his name is connected with that of St. Patrick. St. Enda, of Arran, must also have visited the parish, for there is a St. Enda's Well near Doon. But the saint who next to St. Patrick has best left his mark is St. Fechin, who, from his headquarters at Cong, must have finished the work which the other saints left unfinished. There is a Fechin's Well near Doon, where, in the nineteenth century, a determined effort was made to rob the people of their faith, happily without success. There is another Fechin's Well in the mountains, about four miles south of Kilmilkin Church, and there is a third St. Fechin's Well in Doughta, about a mile from Curnamona. The land in this townland was bestowed on the Abbey of Cong by Joyce its owner, and the land round Kilmilkin was given probably by another Joyce to the nuns of Kilcreevanty, and passed in 1570 by Crown grant to the Earl of Clanrickard.

The parish was part of the diocese of Cong, and then was merged in the Archdiocese of Tuam in the twelfth century.

Except the remains of Rosshill Abbey, there are no ruins of ancient churches. One notable ruined building is Castle Kirke in Lough Corrib. It was once a stronghold of the O'Flaherties in the thirteenth century; then, in 1233, it was demolished by Felim O'Connor; rebuilt and re-occupied by Walter de Burgo; and in the sixteenth century was the property of Thomas Joyce, to whom it was granted in the Composition of Connaught. It was subsequently demolished

by the Cromwellians, but part of the ruined castle still remains, and has been preserved from final ruin by the Earl of Iveagh.

MODERN PARISH PRIESTS.

Rev. Patrick Flaherty.

Rev. Peter Waldron.

Rev. James O'Rorke, 1854-1864.

Rev. Richard Hosty, 1864-1884.

Rev. Martin Mellett, 1884-1924.

Rev. Edward Lavelle, 1924-

The Abbey of Cong.

If St. Patrick visited Clonbur parish, and there is a good reason to think that he did, he would necessarily have passed through Cong, situated as it is on the narrow neck between Lough Corrib and Lough Mask. Thus would the foundations of Christianity be laid as early as the fifth century, and there is good reason to assume that the place had shed its paganism long before the seventh century, when a monastery was founded at Cong. The credit of this foundation is sometimes given to Domhnal, King of Ireland, and also to Molocus, or Loichen. The latter is put down as first Abbot, the date of the foundation as 624, and Domhnal's share would, no doubt, be the granting of land as a site and an endowment. He could, therefore, be spoken of as the founder, Molocus being the ecclesiastical founder.

A much more notable name in connection with Cong was that of St. Fechin. He was of royal race on his father's side, being descended from a brother of Conn of the Hundred Battles, and on his mother's side from a King of Munster. He was born in Leyney, in the County Sligo, about the year 590, educated under St. Nathy at Achonry, and then at Clonmacnois, and after his ordination to the priesthood returned to his native district, and founded a church and monastery at Ballisodare about 620. Nearly 20 years later, in 639, he founded a monastery at Fore in Westmeath. His piety and

his austerities were such that he rapidly acquired fame, and in a short time he was Abbot of Fore, with 3,000 monks subject to his rule. There he died of the plague in 664.

Meantime he had been active in his native province, and had laboured at Cong. He is sometimes put down as first Abbot, though Lanigan points out that the Abbot of Cong in later times is not spoken of as the Comharb of St. Fechin. What is probable is that he succeeded the founder, Molocus, perhaps immediately, and that, attaining to such fame as he did, Molocus is forgotten, and Fechin remembered and even accepted as the original founder. There can be little doubt that he was at Cong, in spite of Lanigan's dogmatic denial. His memory through the succeeding centuries has been revered at Cong; the place has been called Cunga-Fechin; his footsteps are traced and his name commemorated in the neighbouring parish of Ross; and he is credited with having founded churches at Omey and Ardoilean, near Clifden. It is not stated that he was a bishop, but at Fore the Abbot was usually a bishop, and the same arrangements would probably hold at Cong.

The exalted virtues of St. Fechin added to his royal blood brought endowments to his monastery in his own time and still more in after times. Cormac MacCarthy, King of Munster; Roderick O'Connor, the last Ardri and his family; the Burkes, O'Flaherties and Joyces were all benefactors; and at the dissolution of the monasteries in 1540, Cong Abbey was richly endowed. Among those who died there were Roderick O'Connor himself, and his daughter, Nuala, who died in 1226, his son, Maurice the Canon, who died in 1224, and his daughter, Finola, who died in 1245. Others buried there were Red Thomas Joyce (1307), Edmond Albanach Burke (1375), Thomas Burke (1401), and Hugh O'Flaherty, all benefactors of the Abbey. More important than these were Murtoogh O'Duffy, "Bishop of Connaught" (1150), Flanagan O'Duffy (1165), and Gregory O'Duffy (1176), both Abbots of Cong; and far greater than any of these, Catholicus O'Duffy (1201), who had played so honourable a part in sustaining the last

Ardri, Roderick O'Connor. The Abbey was burned in 1114, and again in 1133 and in 1137. Cahal Crovderg was there in 1201, and for a time at peace with his enemy, William Burke, and both spent the Easter in the Abbey. But they soon quarrelled, and in 1204 we find Burke and O'Connor in alliance burning the Abbey. Another William Burke was killed there by the O'Malleys in 1478.

Among its Abbots we find the names of Gregory O'Duffy, at 1176; Duffagh O'Duffy, at 1210; Domhnal O'Flanagan, at 1245; Niadal and Gillabard O'Duffy, at 1350 and 1400³³ and Tadhg O'Duffy, who wrote the "Rentals of the Abbey." Also Aeneas McDonnell, the last abbot before the suppression in 1542³⁴. These abbots were men of importance even at Rome. In 1321 the abbot was one of those appointed to accompany the Archbishop of Tuam in his visitation of Kilcreevanty Convent.³⁵ An abbot of Cong acting as Papal mandatory collated to the Archdeaconry of Tuam in 1398,³⁶ and another to the deanship of Annaghdown in 1404.³⁷ In 1447 John de Burgu, Abbot of Cong, became Archbishop of Tuam, and the Pope his successor in the Abbey.³⁸ In 1400 the Pope granted the abbot all the liberties and immunities which the monastery had hitherto enjoyed. In 1558 one Edmond of Cong held the tithes and emoluments, which he shared with Hugh O'Donnell, the abbot. In 1640 the abbot was Cornelius Killeen, who attended a Synod at Tuam. In 1660 the abbot was James Lynch, and in 1705 the abbot, John Lynch, died.³⁹ After the dawn of toleration we still find an abbot of Cong in 1795—O'Malley by name—and after him came the last abbot of all, Patrick Prendergast, who died in 1829.

St. Fechin belonged to the Third Order of Saints—men who lived as anchorites, on herbs and alms and on the labour of

³³ "Annals of Loch Ce."

³⁴ Father Neary's "Cong and The Neale."

³⁵ "Papal Registers," II, p. 212.

³⁶ *Ibid.* V, p. 177.

³⁷ *Ibid.* V, p. 612.

³⁸ *Ibid.* X, pp. 334, 580-1.

³⁹ Father Neary's "Cong."

their hands. But time brought developments at Cong as elsewhere in the Irish Church. There might be said to be Canons Regular in Ireland, even in St. Patrick's days, if a canon is one who lives with others in a religious community, and under canons or regulations. But in the seventh century the ardour of the anchorites had outstripped the milder mortifications of St. Patrick's days, and it required time and the acquisition of property to establish community life and less exacting rules. It was noted that St. Augustine lived as a bishop without ostentation, but yet decently. He gathered his priests around him in community, where the offices were in common and the order of duties regularly prescribed. But these priests did the work of secular priests, mixing with the people, baptizing and marrying, preaching and catechising, breaking the bread of life at the altar, and following their people to the grave.

Such an order of men existed from apostolic times, but they were so reformed under St. Augustine for the work of his diocese that though only a reformer and a legislator, he is often regarded as the founder of the Canons Regular, and those canons who adopted his rule were called the Canons Regular of St. Augustine. Abuses crept in with the passing years, but there was a revival in the eleventh century, and before that date the Augustinian Canons were established at Cong. In the twelfth century the abbey rose to special eminence. Turlogh O'Connor took a special interest in its welfare, and helped to make it a noted centre of religious culture. The last Ardri ended his days within its walls, as did two of his daughters; his son was a canon of the abbey; and a community endowed by chiefs and patronised by kings became one of the great religious institutions of the west.

Nor was the abbey building—a good part of which still remains—unworthy of its fame. Built where the Corrib and Mask mingle their waters, it was picturesquely situated, in communication with the sea through Lough Corrib, the neighbouring mountains casting their shadows almost on the abbey and on the valley in which it stood. There was abundance of

fish in the lake; an income from many sources, including extensive lands; and the artist who fashioned the Cross of Cong was not a pupil but a master. These canons ministered to the faithful around, doing everything that the parochial clergy could do, and the abbot exercised authority over the churches of Killarsagh, Kilfrauchaun, Kilmolara, Ballinchalla, Cahernacole, Innishmaine and Inchagoil.

Cong Churches.

Some existing ruins of these ancient churches show that the original buildings were different architectural styles. Kilfrauchaun and Killarsagh were extremely small and cyclopean in style. Cross was rather a chapel attached to the adjoining castle.⁴⁰ Ballinchalla and Kilmolara were parish churches, though neither was sixty feet long. Cahernacole was a rudely constructed chapel or Mass-house belonging to the penal times. At Inchagoil and Innishmaine the ancient and mediaeval were blended. The little church of St. Patrick is of the saint's time, small in size, cyclopean in style, with an obelisk to the memory of St. Patrick's nephew. It bears the inscription, "Lia Lugnaedon Mac Lemnuich," which O'Donovan translates, "the stone of Lugnaedon, son of Lemnuch, who was the sister of St. Patrick," according to O'Donovan the oldest Christian inscription in Europe.⁴¹ In striking contrast is the Church of the Devout Stranger nearby, which is Romanesque in style, with a fairly ornamented doorway. The same contrast presents itself in Innishmaine, where we have the ruins of an ancient cyclopean church and the ruins of a twelfth century church, beautiful even in its ruins. Contemporary with Cong Abbey, it was probably subject to Cong, but paid rents and tithes to the Convent of Kilcreevanty, from which it passed by Crown grant with all the islands in Lough Mask, in 1570, to the Earl of Clanrickard.⁴²

Within the joint parishes of Cong and The Neale were

⁴⁰ Wilde's "Lough Corrib," pp. 152-3, 156-7.

⁴¹ Wilde, pp. 138-9.

⁴² "Patent Rolls."

many strong castles. Nine of these existed in 1574—Houndswood, Cong, Ahalard, Lough Mask, Creevagh, The Neale, Kilmolara, Innishmaine, and Cross.⁴³

Cong Castles.

Like the churches, many of these castles are long since empty and desolate, but a few remain in ruins, and others have been replaced by modern buildings. Ahalard was once the stronghold of the MacDonnells, who came to Mayo as mercenary soldiers of the Burkes, and were endowed with this castle and the surrounding lands. The ruins of Lough Mask Castle, formidable and grim like a sentinel guarding the lake shore, are still in good preservation, recalling the tragedy of the Earl's son in the fourteenth century, and in the sixteenth the bloody contests of Burke and Bingham. It was granted by letters patent to Sir Richard Burke in 1585, and later by new letters patent to Sir Richard's grandson, Captain Thomas Burke, in 1602; and he was to hold castle and lands by knight's service, and was empowered to hold courts leet and baron for the settling of all disputes among his tenants.⁴⁴ The old Castle of The Neale was once the residence of Sheriff Browne, the first Englishman of the sixteenth century who settled in Mayo. His descendant, though not of the people's faith, was often the protector of their priests.⁴⁵ In 1570 Cong Castle was captured from Edmond Burke by Fitton, and in 1586 and in 1589 was plundered by Bingham. It was granted by James I. to John King, but later passed from him to Browne. Part of the lands with the house near the old abbey was acquired by one MacNamara of Cratloe in Clare, whose career of adventure, and a strange career it was, ended in 1760.⁴⁶ Part of the Cong lands also passed into the hands of the Elwoods and the Lamberts. The whole estates of Browne, then ennobled as Lord Oranmore, was bought in 1857 by a rich Dublin brewer, Sir Benjamin Lee Guinness. The por-

⁴³ Knox's "Tuam," pp. 280-85.

⁴⁴ Morrin's "Patent and Close Rolls," pp. 623-4.

⁴⁵ Burke's "Penal Times."

⁴⁶ Higgin's "Life of George McNamara."

tions held by Elwood and Lambert, and the house near the Abbey, once held by Macnamara, was also purchased by him at a later date. Under his two sons, Lord Ardilaun and the Earl of Iveagh, some of the ancient glories of the castle have been renewed. Though Protestant in faith, they had the culture and public spirit to preserve the Abbey ruins, and their new Castle of Ashford, with its towers and turrets and battlements and drawbridge, casts entirely into the shade the splendours of the ancient Castle of Cong.

Pagan Remains.

No account of these parishes would be complete which did not take note of its pre-Christian remains as well as the curiosities of nature with which they abound. On the plain of Magh Ith, stretching from Knockma to Ben Levi, the great battle was fought between Firbolgs and Dananns, in which the kingdom of Ireland was the stake. Near Garacloon was the Plain of the Hurlers, where a picked body from each side engaged in a hurling contest, and a huge cairn still exists as a monument of the game.⁴⁷ At the junction of the roads from Cross and Cong stands the Long Stone of the Neale, marking the spot where the Danann hero fell.⁴⁸ Near the Parochial House is a large circle of standing stones which served as a defence for the Dananns. At Killower is a huge cairn, 2,500 feet in circumference, which was raised in a monument to Eochy, the Firbolg chief. At Inishman is a monument to the Danann defenders who fell back to the shores of Lough Mask, and there finally defeated their assailants. The whole plain in the united parishes is called the Plain of Magh Tuireadh.⁴⁹

PARISH PRIESTS.

THE NEALE.

Rev. Thomas McCormack, 1829-1839.

Rev. Edward Waldron, 1839-1872.

Rev. John O'Malley, 1872-1892.

⁴⁷ Wilde's "Lough Corrib," pp. 216-18.

⁴⁸ Wilde, p. 240.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* p. 244.

CONG.

Very Rev. Dean Waldron, 1845-1870.

Rev. Patrick Lavelle, 1870-1886.

Very Rev. Canon Hennelly, 1887-92.

After 1892 Parish Priest of Cong and The Neale.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VIII.

NOTE I.—THE NEALE CHURCH.

An old parish book of the Neale still remains, the entries in which show what great progress has been made in church building in some parts of the Archdiocese within the last century. No doubt, in many other districts outside of the Neale, the conditions were not dissimilar.

In 1829 we have the following entry:—"At a meeting of the Roman Catholic inhabitants of the united parishes of Ballinchalla and Kilmolara, held in the chapel of the Neale, on Sunday, September 18, 1829, the Rev. Thomas McCormack, P.P., in the chair, the following resolutions were adopted:—"That every married man in the two parishes pay one shilling for erecting the Stations of the Cross.'"

Nothing is here stated to show what was the "chapel" in the Neale from an architectural point of view. But at a later date, August 16, 1845, we have an entry which is informative—Resolved, the Rev. Edward Waldron, P.P., in the chair, "That the chapel is in such a dilapidated state at present that we think it unsafe for the flock to attend divine service in it." The awful shadow of the famine had then fallen on the land and nothing could be done, and some years later we have the following:—"July 2, 1854. Paid for 4,000 scollops 12s. 6d. and for straw for thatching the church £2." In 1858 conditions had not changed for the following entry is found:—"Paid for thatching the chapel £1 10s., for scollops £1 3s. 4d., for straw £3 18s." Again in 1865 there is an entry:—"Paid for scollops 5s. and for straw £1 9s." Even as late as 1869 we find an entry showing that for straw and scollops and thatching a sum of £7 15s. 9d. was spent. The church in

the Neale had not emerged from the catacombs, and the structure that in 1845 was unsafe for the flock was the only one in which the flock could still hear Mass.

In 1874, however, a good beginning of better things was made. The energetic Father John O'Malley then held the reins which had fallen from feebler hands, and a meeting was held in June of that year at which it was announced that a new church was about to be built, and that Father O'Malley had already collected a good sum in the parish itself, and had got as much as £84 in the neighbouring parish of Ballinrobe. This is the last entry in the old book.

The subsequent history of the Neale can be read in the handsome cut stone church which thus replaced the tottering thatched chapel of earlier times. Father O'Malley also built a suitable parochial house in the church grounds. His successor, Canon Hennelly, built a neat church at Cross, and he has done much for the church at the Neale. Here he had the able co-operation of one of his curates, Father James Campell, a man of great energy and taste, and at the present day the church at the Neale is not only a credit to the parish but indeed to the whole Archdiocese of Tuam.

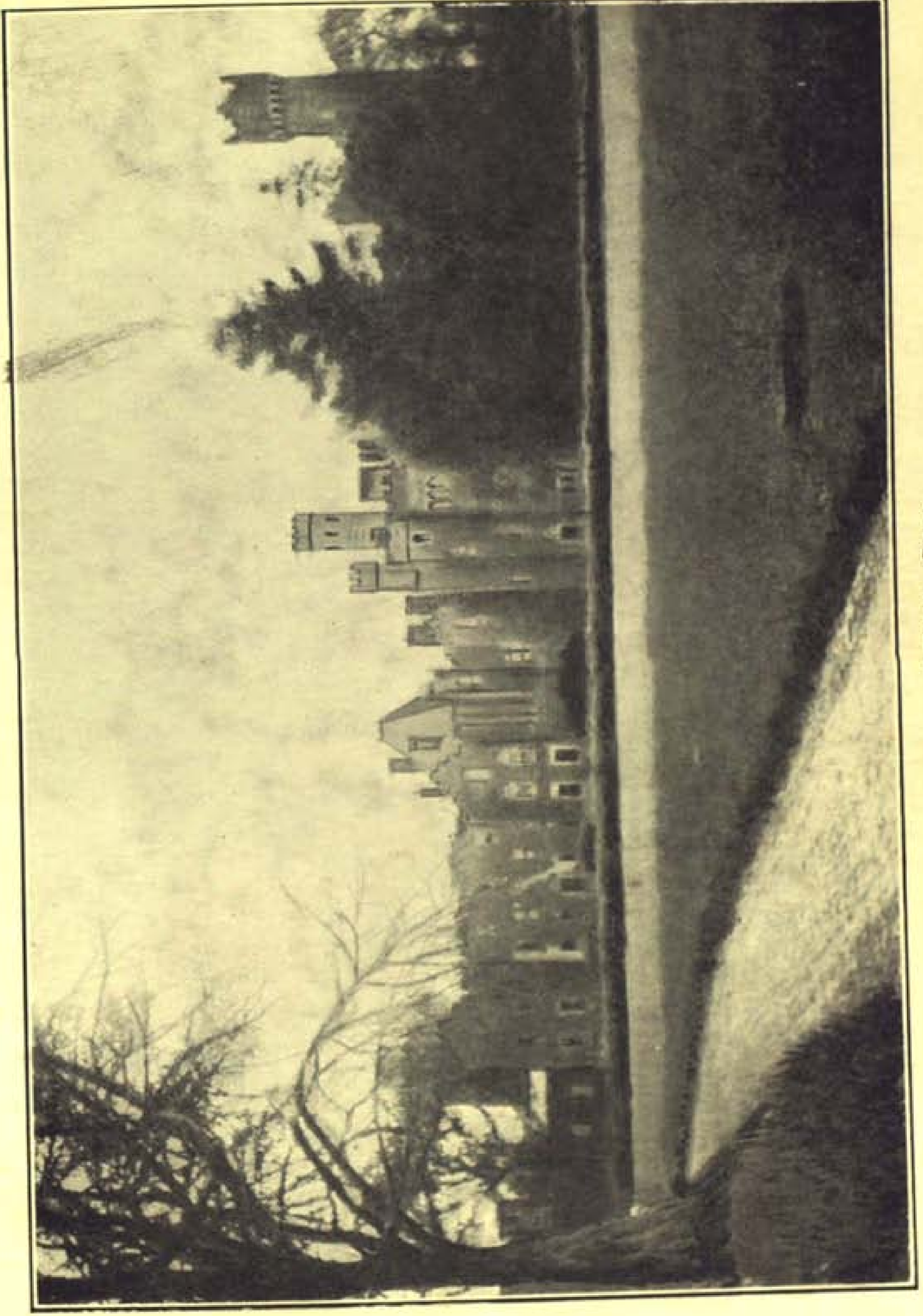
NOTE II.—THE GUINNESS FAMILY.

The Castle and Estate of Ashford, beautifully situated on the shores of Loch Corrib and adjoining the town of Cong, was purchased by the late Sir Benjamin Lee Guinness, Bart., from Lord Oranmore and Browne in the year 1852.

Through the recent death of the late Earl of Iveagh, K.P., Sir Benjamin's son, the estate has now become the property of Lord Iveagh's second son, the Honble. A. E. Guinness.

The Guinness family is descended from one Richard Guinness who, at the close of the 17th century, was living at Celbridge, in County Kildare. Richard Guinness was the agent or receiver for the Most Reverend Arthur Price, Archbishop of Cashel, and his name appeared in documents, until recently preserved in the Record Office at Dublin, as acting for the Archbishop in connection with the grant and transfer of leases of Episcopal lands.

In the year 1759 Richard Guinness's eldest son, Arthur, born in 1725, acquired from Mark Rainsford, Esquire, of Portarlinton, son of Sir Mark Rainsford, Mayor of Dublin in the year 1700, the Brewery at St. James's Gate. The lease of the property was for 9,000 years, at a rent of £45 per annum.



ASHFORD CASTLE, CONG.

On the death of Arthur Guinness in 1803, at the age of 78 years, the Brewery passed to Arthur, Benjamin and William, his second, fourth and fifth sons.

Benjamin Guinness died in 1826 and William in 1842, when the business became vested in their elder brother Arthur.

Arthur Guinness died in 1855, and a few years later, about the year 1858, the sole ownership of the Brewery devolved upon Benjamin Lee Guinness (afterwards Sir Benjamin Lee Guinness, Bart.) Arthur's third son. Sir Benjamin died in 1868, leaving the Brewery to his eldest and third sons, Arthur, and Edward Cecil, afterwards Lords Ardilaun and Iveagh.

In 1876 Lord Ardilaun sold his half share to his brother Edward, and in 1886 the undertaking was converted into a limited liability company and sold to the public for a sum of six millions sterling.

The area covered by the Brewery has very largely increased with the course of years, and the four acres, which were all the estate comprised in 1760, have now, by the absorption of adjoining properties, been increased to sixty acres. The Brewery is now the largest in the world.

In the management of this very extensive business the relations between the owners and the employees have always been most cordial. The wages paid are liberal, and the general welfare and health of the workers and their dependants has invariably received the most sympathetic consideration of the Directors. Free medical attendance, liberal allowances during sickness, and pensions in old age, are features of the system of employment at St. James's Gate.

This note has been kindly supplied by a member of the Guinness family—Mr. H. S. Guinness.

CHAPTER IX.

DEANERY OF CASTLEBAR.

Castlebar Parish.

THE modern parish of *Castlebar* includes the three ancient parishes of Aglish, Ballyheane and Breaffy. It was the ancient territory of Clancuan, and when baronies came to be formed was incorporated in the barony of Carra, of which the town of Castlebar is the capital, as it is the capital of the County of Mayo. When the Anglo-Normans came to Connaught the territory round Castlebar became the possession of the De Barrys and the De Cogans, both of Welsh origin. The Stauntons were strong round Ballyheane, with their castle at Kinturk, and the De Burgos were over all. Castlebar owes its name to the chief of the De Barrys, who built a strong castle there. At a subsequent date Castlebar became the centre of the Burke power in Carra, and in the sixteenth century it finally passed from their hands.

The extent of Corcu Teimne mentioned in the Tripartite Life of St. Patrick cannot be identified with certainty; but there is little doubt that it included Ballyheane and perhaps all the modern parish of Castlebar, and there can therefore be no doubt that St. Patrick visited the parish and laid the foundations of Christianity within its bounds. His progress from Kilmaine was to Robeen, then to Partry, Triangle and Rahins, near Castlebar, whence he returned to Triangle on his way to Aughagower and Croaghpatrick. He returned by way of Triangle, Kilawalla, and Ballintubber, no doubt visiting Ballyheane.¹ He must, therefore, have preached the

¹ "Tripartite Life," I, pp. 3-15; Healy, pp. 225-6.

Gospel near Castlebar, if not in it, and he certainly did so in Ballyheane, for Ballyheane was a Patrician church, and as such was the subject of contention in 1241 between the Archbishop of Armagh and the Archbishop of Tuam.²

Hardly anything is known about the progress of Christianity in Carra from St. Patrick's time to the seventh century,³ nor indeed in the seventh century. There is, however, a tradition that a St. Finian laboured in the district, and founded a monastery at Rahins. But whether this was situated at Rahins, near Lough Lannach, or near Ballyheane in the Plain of Raithin, is not clear. It is, however, certain that Castlebar was Christianised in early times, and that even in these early times, certainly before the seventh century, there were Christian churches at Ballyheane, Breaffy and Aglish, which would probably be where the graveyard is, not far from Lough Lannach. There was also a church at Ballynew, though there never was any great religious foundation within the parish.

The importance of the town was more civil than ecclesiastical. At 1385 it is recorded that the McDonaghs from Sligo wasted all Clancuan, and at 1412 that Brian O'Connor entered the district and burned Castlebar.⁴ It was rebuilt, and in 1576 the Lord Deputy Sidney came from Galway and took it from Edmond Burke.⁵ It was, however, restored to him, and in 1585 he accepted the Composition of Connaught, and was given possession from the Crown of castle and lands. Three years later he gave trouble to the Government, or rather had his lands coveted by greedy adventurers like Bingham, and Castlebar became the property of Brian Fitz-William. From him it was purchased by Captain John Bingham, brother of Sir Richard of that name. The dispossessed Burkes then joined the Queen's enemies, and fought against her troops in Flanders, while John Bingham rebuilt the castle at Castlebar, and secured his family in possession of

² Theiner ; Knox, p. 99.

³ Knox, p. 134.

⁴ "Annals of Loch Ce."

⁵ Knox's "Mayo," p. 186.

the Burke lands. Further confiscation followed the rebellion of 1641, when Lord Mayo's son was charged with complicity in the massacre of Shrute.⁶

Already John Bingham had been knighted, and had got a charter for the town to hold markets and fairs, and also a royal charter giving the town two members in the Irish Parliament. A charter was also granted constituting a corporation with a portreeve and fifteen free burgesses. The Bingham, always Protestant, extended their possessions, and after the death of Patrick Sarsfield, by virtue of some lands, possession of which had passed to the Bingham, the head of the latter family became Earl of Lucan. In 1798 Castlebar was the scene of a battle between the English and the French. It became known as the Races of Castlebar, and for the English was a disgraceful defeat.⁷ But English power was too strong to be replaced by a phantom republic set up under the presidency of John Moore, of Moore Hall, and in 1800 the two members for Castlebar, owing their positions to the Earl of Lucan, gave their votes for Castlereagh and the Union, and Lord Lucan was compensated to the extent of £15,000. Henceforth Castlebar sent no members to Parliament, and gradually also the old corporation ceased to function. After the reform of the corporations there was an urban council which still remains.

In the Papal letters published references to Castlebar parish or any part of it are few. At 1432 there is mention of the vicar of Breaffy, one Malachy O'Flanagan, who found it necessary to expose the evil conduct of two priests of the diocese of Mayo, and to have their cases inquired into by the Pope.⁸ At 1440 it is recorded that one David de Burgo was deprived of the rectory of Castlebar, because he had already the vicarage of Aughagower, and clung tenaciously to both positions.⁹ In 1595 the possession of Ballyheane rectory, with all its glebes, tithes and oblations were given by Crown grant to Edmond

⁶ Miss Hickson's "Ireland in the Seventeenth Century."

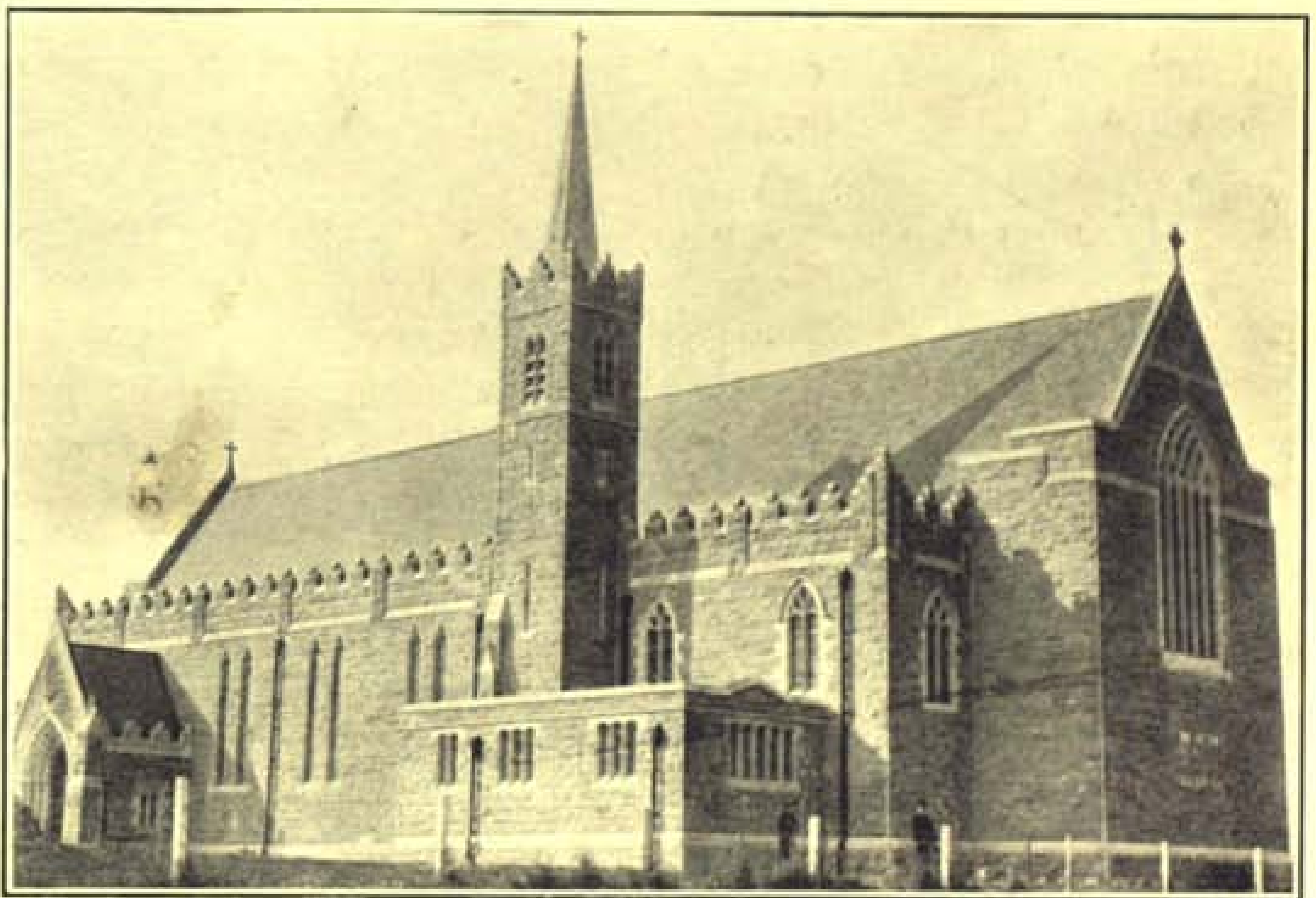
⁷ "Galway Archæological Journal," 1907.

⁸ "Papal Registers," VIII, pp. 453-4.

⁹ *Ibid.* IX, pp. 86-7.



CHURCH OF THE ROSARY, CASTLEBAR.



ST. CRONAN'S CHURCH, BALLA.

Barrett.¹⁰ In spite of all the subsequent persecutions and proscription, Castlebar was Catholic in 1641, and not a few Protestants who flocked to Bingham and Lord Mayo for protection when the rebellion broke out pretended a conversion to Catholicity, so as to save their properties and their lives.¹¹ And the Catholicity of the parish remained through all the horrors of the penal times. But if their religion survived these evil times, confiscation and poverty had been their portion, and even in the nineteenth century there was only a rude church in the town. In recent years, however, this old church has been replaced by a new and beautiful church. It was begun by Canon Magee, who went to America to collect funds, but died in 1885 before the church had been completed. Objections were raised to the new church by his successor, Canon Lyons, and a second new church was then begun, and in due time carried to completion.

PARISH PRIESTS OF CASTLEBAR.

Rev. Denis, Egan, 1799.

Very Rev. Richard Gibbons, 1826-1847.

The Venerable Archdeacon MacHale, 1847-1856.

The Venerable Archdeacon Browne, 1857-1872.

Very Rev. Canon Magee, 1872-1885.

Very Rev. Canon Lyons, 1885-1911.

Most Rev. Dr. Higgins, Bishop of Temno, 1912-1918.

The Venerable Archdeacon Fallon, 1918-

I am indebted to the kindness of Archdeacon Fallon for the following inscriptions, which he copied himself from the several monuments :—

(1) “ *The Good Shepherd giveth his Life for his Sheep.*”

To the Memory of the

VERY REV. RICHARD GIBBONS,

Twenty-one years Parish Priest of Castlebar, Ballyhean, and Breaghy, who died of fever caught in discharge of his Sacred Ministry in the ever memorable year 1847.

¹⁰ “ Patent and Close Rolls,” pp. 314-15.

¹¹ Miss Hickson, I, pp. 375-399.

He was indeed a holy, pious and good Pastor, for he gave his life for his flock. May he rest in peace.

Erected by his numerous friends and parishioners.

Henry Murphy, Esq., *Treasurer.*

Peter Geraghty, R.C.C.,

Michael Curley, R.C.C.,

Secs.

(2)

Orate Pro Anima.

REV. JACOBI McHALE,

Parochi de Aglish et Archdiaconi, Tuam,
qui Spe beatae immortalitatis fretus morte obiit. Die Vicesima
Martii.

Anno Salutis 1856. Aetatis 73.

(3)

Memoriae Sacrum.

AD, REV. MARTINI BROWNE,

Parochi de Aglish V. F. et Archdiaconi Tuamensis.

Divinitus adjutus per quadrigenta et octo annos populo sibi
credito panem assidue impertivit. Pietatis et unbanitatis plenus
omnium vere meruit obsequiam.

Pie Obiit. Die 2a Maii, 1872. Aetatis Suae 73.

(4)

Orate Pro Anima.

JACOBI MAGEE.

Parochi de Aglish, etc. Cancelarii Tuamensis qui obiit. Die
Vigesima Septima Martii.

Anno Salutis 1885.

Parishes of Turlough and Keelogue.

The parishes of *Keelogue* and *Turlough* are separate parishes, but have often been joined under one parish priest. Neither, however, fills much space in civil or ecclesiastical history. Both were probably visited by St. Patrick when he was preaching in Corcu Teimne, and Turlough was certainly a Patrician church. Otherwise there would be no claim to its revenues, as was done by the Archbishop of Armagh in 1241.¹² There was further contention in 1350 when FitzRalph was Archbishop of Armagh, but on this occasion, after an

¹² "Annals of Loch Ce."

appeal to the Pope, the matter was satisfactorily settled by finally incorporating Turlough in the Archdiocese of Tuam. A later Archbishop of Armagh endeavoured to assert his claim, and in the sixteenth century he made over the manor of Turlough and the lands round Kildacamoge by lease to one Henry Turner. Turlough is also mentioned in Bodkin's "Visitation" and in the "Valor Beneficiorum."¹³ Manifestly, Turlough must have been a church of importance, as it was guarded by a round tower which dates back to the ninth century, and is still one of the best preserved in Ireland.¹⁴ The Burkes, who occupied many of the castles in Mayo, occupied Turlough. In 1236 it was looted by Richard De Burgo, both church and lands.¹⁵ In the next century castles and lands round Turlough were in the hands of the Burkes, and in the quarrels of the sixteenth century there was always a Burke of Turlough among the combatants. Outlawry followed when the northern chiefs were overthrown, and the Burkes of Turlough fought in foreign wars. One of them, Sir Walter Burke, was at Aughrim, and gallantly defended the important position of Aughrim Castle until his ammunition was exhausted.

The southern position of Keelogue, or Kildacomoge, its older name, is in the barony of Carra, and the northern part in the barony of Gallen. It finds no place in the history of Patrician times, though there were ancient churches at Ara, Knockatemple, Moyhena or Kildacomoge, and at Caraun or Loughkeiraun. With the latter church the name of a St. Kieran is associated. Nothing, however, is known of him, except that his feast was on the first Sunday in August, and on that Sunday pilgrimages were made up to a recent date to Loughkieraun, and butter was thrown into the neighbouring lake. But why this was done, nobody seems able to tell. It must have been an offering of some kind, but the tradition connected with it has perished.¹⁶

¹³ Knox's "Tuam."

¹⁴ Miss Stokes "Early Christian Art," p. 51.

¹⁵ "Annals of Loch Ce."

¹⁶ O'Hanlon's "Irish Saints," VIII, p. 138.

The churches of Ara, Knockatemple and Kildacomoge are occasionally mentioned in State Papers from 1306 to 1591, but they were certainly of a much earlier date. The parish was then ruled by the Burkes from their castle of Moyhena, and by the Jordans who had castles at Ballyvary and Currane. There were also De Barrys and De Cogans.¹⁷ When confiscation came Turlough and Keelagues became the property of the Fitzgeralds, who changed their faith for castles and lands.

PARISH PRIESTS.

- Rev. Father Lennon, 1790.
- Rev. Thomas Keane,
- Rev. Malachy Kelly,
- Rev. Paul McGreal, 1846.
- Rev. Francis Keogh, Keelagues, 1847-1867.
- Rev. Peter Ward, Turlough, 1847-1867.
- Rev. G. J. Burke, Keelagues, 1867-1872.
- Rev. Edward Griffin, Turlough, 1867-1883.
- Rev. Michael Brennan, Keelagues, 1872-1883.
- Rev. Edward Griffin, Turlough and Keelagues, 1883-1896.
- Rev. Thomas Walsh, Turlough and Keelagues, 1896-1909.
- Rev. Michael Burke, Turlough, 1909-1926.
- Rev. Patrick O'Flaherty, Keelagues, 1909-1921.
- Rev. John Waldron, Keelagues, 1921.
- Rev. John Neary, Turlough, 1926.

Parish of Balla.

The parishes of *Balla*, *Manulla* and *Drum* were once separate, but are now one parish. In ancient times there was a Patrick's road which marked the pilgrims' way from the east going to Croaghpatrick. It was the road traversed by St. Patrick on his way eastward, and passed by Ballintubber, Drum, Guesdian, Loona and Balla.¹⁸ These were churches founded by St. Patrick on his first journey from the West to

¹⁷ Knox's "History of Mayo."

¹⁸ "Tripartite Life," I, p. 123; Healy, pp. 239-42.

Balla, and one of them was probably Drum, where there is still a graveyard surrounding the almost vanished remains of an ancient church. Another church was at Touaghty, or Towerhill, convenient to which is a St. Patrick's well. There was a church also at Guesdian, and another at Loona.

St. Patrick also visited Manulla, then known as Findmagh, and here a church was also founded, over which was placed Bishop Cainnech, Patrick's monk. Till then the place was heathen, and had a well called Slan, or the healer, which the pagan natives honoured as if it were a god. Their belief was that a certain dead prophet had made a coffin for himself under the stone which covered the well, so that the water might wash his bones, because he feared the fire. And Patrick bade them lift off the stone, and they were unable to do so. But Patrick and Cainnech, whom he baptized, lifted it, and he said to Cainnech: "Thy seed will be blessed for ever."¹⁹ The church founded there became the head and centre of Christianity in Findmagh, and in after times was known as Slanpatrick, thus commemorating the name of St. Patrick and the well Slan.

The church of Loona was of less importance, though it was a parish church in the fifteenth century;²⁰ but at Balla St. Patrick's name was commemorated by a St. Patrick's well, convenient to where the old round tower still stands, and probably also near the old church. But Balla is more closely identified with another holy man who in later times carried on the work which St. Patrick had begun. This was St. Mochua. He died in 637 at the age of fifty-six, and was therefore born in 581. He was of the northern province, born not far from Bangor, and educated there under St. Comgal. He and his teacher, however, could not agree, and agreed to separate. In leaving, Mochua asked that Comgal should give him a token by which he could select a suitable place for a church, and Comgal gave him a fountain, which, so the story goes, preceded him as the shining cloud preceded Moses on his

¹⁹ "Tripartite," I, p. 123.

²⁰ "Papal Registers," VI, p. 278.

journey from Egypt. At first Mochua went to St. Fechin at Fore, thence to Durrow, after which he turned west and crossed the Shannon into Hy-Many. Here he met Cellagh, the King of Connaught, who became his friend and patron, willing to give him anywhere in his territory a site for a church. But Mochua did not wish to settle in Hy-Many, and turning his face towards Mayo crossed the Robe into Carra, and finally reached Balla. Here Comgal's fountain, which so far had accompanied him as a cloud, suddenly disappeared, and a rustic of the locality informed him that a new well had mysteriously burst forth. At last Mochua was convinced that he had reached the destined site of his church; but the local chief of the Hy-Fiachrach, apparently disregarding the wishes of the provincial king, opposed Mochua. Nor was it until angels appeared round Mochua that the local chief gave way. His friendship once secured, the necessary land was given, and Mochua built his church, and there as head of the church and abbot of the monastery, he lived for twenty-one years until his death in 637.²¹

If we were to accept as true all that has been written of St. Mochua, the catalogue of his miracles would be a long one. In addition to having a cloud as his guide, he had angels to soften the heart of an unfriendly chief. From a man he expelled a demon; a woman he cured of barrenness; he transferred a tumour from a sick man to his own bell, and the yellow plague from an afflicted tribe to his own crozier; and it is gravely asserted that when a man in Hy-Many was swallowed up by a monster in one of the lakes, Mochua repeated the miracle of Jonah, and the monster threw up the man quite uninjured.

But while rejecting these wild legends as unworthy of credence, we may safely admit that Mochua was a holy man. As a student at Bangor his piety, his charity, his humility, his austerities shone out among those who were holy and austere. It was not ambition, but zeal for God's glory that

²¹ "Annals of Clonmacnoise"; "Book of Lismore," pp. 282-9; O'Hanlon, III, pp. 1017-20.

urged him from Ulster to Connaught, and in Balla, as at Bangor, his piety and zeal were conspicuous. Many came to share his work. Balla became a great religious centre, richly endowed by the piety of the neighbouring chiefs, and after more than a thousand years had rolled by, pilgrims came to the holy well at Balla to pray to the patron of its ancient church.

Meantime the passing centuries had brought many changes. The chiefs of Hy-Fiachrach had been dispossessed by the Anglo-Irish of the thirteenth century, and in the sixteenth century the Burkes had strong castles at Belcarra, Guesdian and Donamona, and a MacEvelly ruled at Manulla. A change of religion brought a change of masters, and in the new order the Brownes and Binghamms, and later still the Blosses, had the castles and lands once held by the Burkes. The civil history, however, is overshadowed by the ecclesiastical, and especially in the case of Balla. Hence we have the following entries in the "Annals":—

637, St. Mochua died.

694, Dochona of Balla died.

779, Balla burned.

1236, Richard de Burgo spoiled Balla.

1306, included in the Taxation of Edward I. are the prebend of Balla, Slan Patrick, Loona, and Drum.

1462, Drum annexed to Ballintubber.

1558, Blind William Burke, a layman, usurped Balla prebend, and held its lands.

1574, 1584 and 1591. Mention made of the prebends of Balla and of Belcarra, Loona and Drum. The prebend of Balla is mentioned more than once in the Papal Letters. It was at first part of Mayo diocese, and then was included in Tuam.²²

The local history of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is a blank page; but when the light appeared in the nineteenth century the old faith was still living at Balla, and the old devo-

²² "Annals of Loch Ce" and "Clonmacnoise"; Knox's "Tuam."

tion of St. Mochua remained. The saint had surrounded the holy well with a wall, and in these primitive times even a rude stone wall was considered so unusual that the people called it "balla aluin," or the beautiful wall, a name which passed to the town which grew up round the church. In 1825 the old church of St. Mochua and the ancient monastery had completely disappeared, and on its site was an unpretentious church, slated and of stone. The walls built round the well had fallen down; the neighbouring round tower had felt the heavy hand of time, and was reduced to portion only of its original dimensions. But the people's faith was unchanged, and on the first Sunday of August in that year there was 20,000 pilgrims performing a Station at Balla holy well. Each pilgrim went round the well and ancient cemetery seven times on bare knees, reciting each time seven Paters, seven Aves, and a Creed, and finally passed round the well praying to St. Mochua and to the Mother of God.

Since then the church of that day has been replaced by a new and beautiful church, which the energy and zeal of its pastor, the Rev. T. J. Reidy, has been able to build—a church which reflects credit on the parish and on the whole Archdiocese.

PARISH PRIESTS IN MODERN TIMES.

Very Rev. Edward Nolan, Archdeacon, 1806-38.

The Rev. Martin Browne, 1838-56.

Rev. Thomas Costello, 1856-1861.

Very Rev. Canon Gibbons, 1861-1905.

Rev. John McDermott, 1905-1913.

Rev. T. J. Reidy, 1913-

Mayo of the Saxons.

Mayo, the Plain of the Yew Trees, has long been a parish in the Archdiocese. It has also been a diocese, but it is better known in ecclesiastical history as the seat of a great monastic establishment—one which attracted scholars and students not only from other parts of Ireland, but from the Saxons across the sea. Its founder, Colman, was Irish, but had long

laboured at Lindisfarne, and had chosen in his old age to return to Ireland and abandon Lindisfarne. And he had brought back with him both Irish and Saxon monks. It was for the latter he had founded Mayo, and it was chiefly from the Saxons Mayo was recruited in the centuries that followed, and hence the place came to be called Mayo of the Saxons. And thus, while Irish were labouring among the Saxons and Britons, Saxons were edifying and instructing the Irish.

They had come to Ireland because of the dispute about the time of keeping Easter. The Irish method was that of St. Patrick and St. Columba, and it was found to be incorrect, and that the Jewish Cycle had to give way to the Alexandrian. This latter was adopted at Rome, and in the seventh century was the one used throughout the world. But the Irish, devoted to the memory of Saints Patrick and Columba, would not change. At length, Irish delegates were sent to Rome in accordance with St. Patrick's canon to have disputed matters referred to Rome, and when these delegates returned, reporting that the Roman system had been adopted in all the churches, the Synod of Moylena was held in 633, and a great part of Ireland abandoned the ancient system for the newer and better system of Rome.

The Columban monasteries, however, held out, fearing that if they changed they would be casting aspersions on the memory of St. Columba. The founder of Lindisfarne monastery was trained in Iona, and so were the two abbots who succeeded him, Finian and Colman. Like him, they were both Irish, and both holy men, pious, humble and austere. But they obstinately clung to the practice at Iona, even while many in Northumbria had adopted the Roman method; and in the palace of the Northumbrian King one section, headed by the King, was celebrating Easter, and the other, headed by the Queen, was observing the Lenten fast. Peace came at the Synod of Whitby in 660, with Colman standing for the ancient method, and for the newer method, Wilfrid, Archbishop of York. Colman maintained that he had Columba with him; Wilfrid could appeal to the still higher authority of

St. Peter; and the King, so long favourable to Colman, sided with Wilfrid. St. Peter, he said, was the doorkeeper of heaven, and he did not want to have him an enemy, lest on presenting himself at the gates he might be left outside.²³

Obstinate and unyielding, Colman abandoned Lindisfarne, and taking with him the bones of St. Aidan, and accompanied by the Irish monks and about thirty Saxon monks, he went first to Iona, and then to Inisboffin, off the Galway coast, and founded a monastery. This was in 664. But his troubles were not yet over. More desolate than Lindisfarne, Boffin became a battleground between the Irish and Saxons. The Irish often went to their kindred on the mainland, while the Saxons laboured, sowed the crops and gathered in the harvest. When the harvest was safely gathered, and work done, the Irish returned from the mainland, and during the winter months helped to consume what the Saxons had sown and reaped. Quarrels arose, and Colman ended the prevailing discord by obtaining at Mayo a grant of land from the ruling chief, and there he built a monastery for the Saxon monks of Inisboffin. This would be about 670, and Colman died in 676. But whether he died at Mayo or at Boffin is not known. What is certain is that he was the founder of both monasteries, and that both have always been associated with his name.²⁴

One of Colman's friends, and perhaps his immediate successor as Abbot of Mayo, was St. Gerald. He was the son of a Northumbrian chief, was educated at Lindisfarne, was in sympathy with Colman's views on the Easter question, and he abandoned his own country and his old monastery to be still associated with the Irish friends he loved. It is said that he came to Ireland independently of Colman, and that before he came to Mayo he founded a monastery at Elitheria, somewhere in Connaught, but not sufficiently identified. This may be so, though Lanigan has scant respect for the Life in which this foundation is credited to St. Gerald.²⁵ St. Colman

²³ Bede's "Ecclesiastical History Book," III, cap. 25.

²⁴ O'Hanlon's "Irish Saints," VIII, pp. 111-120.

²⁵ "Ecclesiastical History," Vol. II.

died in 676, and the " Four Masters " say that St. Gerald died in Mayo in 726, just fifty years later. If so, he must have been a young man when he succeeded St. Colman in Mayo, and must have been a very old man when he died. But there is nothing improbable in either assumption. The son of a Saxon or Anglian chief would get early promotion, especially as St. Gerald was a man of great piety, and if he lived until 726 he need be no more than ninety at most, a patriarchal and unusual but not impossible age.

Meantime Mayo had got many students from across the sea, and in 697 was visited by Adamnan himself.²⁶ In spite of the fact that it was ruled by Saxons, it found much favour with the surrounding chiefs. Its lands were extensive, its churches extended to other districts, and in 768 it is recorded by the " Four Masters " that Aidan, Bishop of Mayo, died. It is also on record that Mayo was burned in 783, and again in 805, and that it was plundered by Turgesius himself in 818.

It was then well established as a diocese as well as a great school, and when diocesan episcopacy was established at the Synod of Kells it was one of the dioceses which survived. But its existence as such was precarious. Some of its parishes were claimed by Armagh as Patrician churches, and the claim was allowed.²⁷ But in 1217 the Archbishop of Tuam, in opposition to the Archdeacon of Mayo, contended that Mayo was but a parochial church, and the parishes given to Armagh were consigned to Tuam. At 1209 the death of Ceile O'Duffy, Bishop of Mayo, is recorded, and he was the last who held undisputed jurisdiction as Bishop of Mayo. There were other bishops of Mayo, but, like some of the Irish chiefs, they ruled with opposition. And if Magauran and O'Hely were Bishops of Mayo, and O'Hely certainly was, they were only titular bishops.

In the circumstances confusion and disputes were inevitable. Colman's monks were Columban monks, and though the

²⁶ Reeve's " Adamnan," p. 378.

²⁷ Theiner, p. 3; Healy's " Schools and Scholars," pp. 527-41

Abbot of the mother house at Iona was not a bishop, Bede points out that this was unusual. At Lindisfarne the Abbot was a bishop, and in Mayo the tradition followed would be that of Lindisfarne. But when diocesan episcopacy came, the bishop was no longer confined to his monastery, and it may be assumed that the Bishop of Mayo and the Abbot of Mayo were two distinct individuals. There might be, and probably were, occasional disputes about the lands of the monastery and the lands of the bishop, and the confusion was increased when Mayo was united to Tuam by Pope Innocent III.

Henceforth the Archbishop of Tuam claimed the episcopal revenues of Mayo, and must have had difficulties with the priests and people of Mayo, who resented the abolition of their diocese. As a fact, one Martin Christian, the Proctor of Mayo, appealed to Rome against the union; but the union had already been approved of by Pope Honorius, and Christian's appeal was answered in 1240 by a mandate from Pope Gregory ordering the Bishops of Ardagh and Killala to enforce the Papal decree that Mayo was "not a diocese but a parochial church."²⁸

Acquiescence and submission to Tuam followed on the part of Mayo, and in 1289 the Archdeacon of Mayo was associated with some members of the Tuam Chapter in the selection of a new bishop.²⁹

In the fifteenth century, however, causes of dispute arose. The Columban monks had then passed away, and the monastery had become a Collegiate church of secular canons, five or six in number, with an abbot. In 1409, or perhaps a year or two earlier, the Archbishop of Tuam approved of the community becoming regular canons of St. Augustine,³⁰ and the Pope gave his approval. The Pope also granted an indulgence of five years to those who, on the Feast of St. Michael, would visit the monastery and give alms for the completion of

²⁸ "Papal Registers," I, pp. 190-191.

²⁹ *Ibid.* I, p. 498.

³⁰ *Ibid.* VI, pp. 274-5.

the church and monastery recently built, "the resources of the monastery being insufficient."³¹ He listened with sympathy to an appeal from the Abbot against the exactions of the Archbishop of Tuam, and he ordered the Abbot of Annaghdown and two others to protect with his authority the monastery of Mayo against these exactions uncanonically imposed.³² Finally, he took the monastery and all its possessions, present and future, under his special protection. And a list is given of its possessions in 1411. Some of these it is difficult to identify; but there is no difficulty about the parish churches of Robeen and Loona, the rectory of Tagheen, and the perpetual vicarages of Robeen and Kilcolman, "with confirmation of all Papal liberties and immunities and all liberties and exemptions granted by kings, princes, and others from secular exactions."³³ Thus protected, Mayo monastery flourished. The Abbot, in 1430, was authorised by the Pope to collate to the prebend of Faldown, and the conditions of the monastery was described in 1452 as "abounding in means and revenues."³⁴

There was still a Chapter of Mayo, but no definite number of canons. There was an Archdeacon of Mayo, who was also Vicar of Breaffy and Prebendary of Balla.³⁵ And there was a Dean of Mayo who became Dean of Tuam,³⁶ another Dean of Mayo who collated in the Pope's name to the position of Abbot of St. John's, Tuam,³⁷ and a third Dean was appointed by the Pope to his position in 1448.³⁸ These dignitaries and their chapters were not acting independently of the Chapter of Tuam, and in 1462, when a new Abbot of St. Michael's in Mayo was appointed, it was specially mentioned in the Pope's letter that the Abbot and his monastery were subject to the Archbishop of Tuam by ordinary law.³⁹

³¹ "Papal Registers," VI., p. 290.

³² *Ibid.* VI, p. 277.

³³ *Ibid.* VI., pp. 277-8.

³⁴ *Ibid.* VIII, p. 425; X. 564.

³⁵ *Ibid.* IX, pp. 143, 175-6.

³⁶ *Ibid.* VII, p. 226.

³⁷ *Ibid.* VIII, p. 357.

³⁸ *Ibid.* X, p. 382.

³⁹ *Ibid.* XI, p. 461.

Some confusion arose in 1432 when one Martin Campania was appointed Bishop of Mayo.⁴⁰ He was probably only a titular bishop, and did not reside in Mayo, and did not, therefore, disturb the slumbers of the Archbishop of Tuam. But when Campania died, Odo O'Higgins, Abbot of Mayo, represented to Pope Eugenius IV. that Mayo had always been a diocese, and its church a Cathedral church, and he so imposed upon the Pope that he appointed O'Higgins himself Bishop of Mayo. This roused the Archbishop of Tuam, who appealed to Rome, telling the reigning Pope Martin V. that Mayo had ceased for centuries to be a diocese, and was only a parochial church. The appeal was successful, and the Pope ordered the Bishops of Elphin and Kilmacduagh to take the crozier of Mayo from O'Higgins, and if necessary "to invoke the secular arm."⁴¹ This was in 1447, and, strangely enough, a new Bishop of Mayo was appointed by the Pope in 1457. He was a Carmelite Friar named Simon de Duren, and was ordered to reside in person in Mayo, and not "to exercise pontifical offices without the city and diocese of Mayo."⁴² This would go to show that he was something more than a mere titular bishop. But the matter is obscure, as is the exact position of the subsequent bishops—MacMahon, appointed in 1578, and Magauran in 1585. There is no reason to believe that O'Hely was able even to set foot in Mayo, and it is equally improbable that Magauran did.

The civil history of the parish is unimportant. The lands in Anglo-Norman times were seized by the McMaurices or Prendergasts. From them the whole barony to which Mayo belongs got the name of Clanmorris, and the Prendergast power overshadowed the whole plains of Mayo from their strong castle at Brize. In 1585, under the Composition of Connaught, MacMorris or Prendergast was granted Brize castle and lands. From him it passed into the hands of John Moore, and at a later date, by inter-marriage between the

⁴⁰ "Papal Registers," VIII, p. 427.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* X, pp. 343-4.

⁴² *Ibid.* XI, p. 309.

families of More and Lynch, it became part of the large property of Sir Henry Blosse of Balla.⁴³

PARISH PRIESTS OF MAYO IN MODERN TIMES.

Rev. Peter Griffin, about 1817.

Rev. Myles Sheridan, 1841.

Rev. John Jennings, 1841-1858

Rev. Thomas Walters, 1858-1870.

Rev. Patrick Sheridan, 1870-1895.

Rev. B. Freely, 1895-1896.

Rev. John McGreal, 1896-1906.

Rev. Michael Murphy, 1906.

Carnacon Parish.

The present parish of *Carnacon*, united to Killawalla, was formerly divided into two parishes, Burriscarra and Ballintubber. They were certainly visited by St. Patrick. Returning from Croaghpatrick, he passed by Triangle to Ballintubber, and there founded a church, and baptized many at the well which is still associated with his name. Thence he proceeded to Touaghty, where he founded another church, and where, within Towerhill demesne, was a St. Patrick's well. In the eighteenth century the name Touaghty was changed to Towerhill, but Ballintubber, or the place of the well, still remains. All this territory was in Carra, and in pre-Norman times had the O'Connors as supreme lords, with the O'Murrays, O'Tierneys and others as subordinate chiefs.

It was during this period of O'Connor supremacy, and in the days of Cahal Crovderg, that the Abbey of Ballintubber was founded. Built in honour of St. Patrick, Mary, and the Apostle John in 1225,⁴⁴ its first Abbot was O'Maicin, and the Order to which it was given was the Canons Regular of St. Augustine. The O'Connors were generous to the foundation of their kinsman, and the Anglo-Irish who supplanted them in Carra, the Burkes and Barrys and Stauntons, were not less

⁴³ "Galway Arch. Journal," Vol. VIII.

⁴⁴ "Annals of Loch Ce."

generous. The Archbishop of Tuam conferred privileges, and so did the Pope. The parishes of Drum and Touaghty were administered by the Abbot of Ballintubber, who had also the tithes of other parishes as well as fishing rights on the lake and in the Robe; and when the ruin of the abbey came, and the alienation of its property, it was found in possession of 25,000 acres of land. These lands passed from the Corporation of Galway to one FitzAlexander, and then to Bingley and King, and finally came in great part in 1620 to one Richard Blake. No doubt they were leased by the Galway Corporation to Bingley and King, and afterwards permanently given to Blake, who was a Galway merchant prominent in the public life of Galway, and sufficiently influential with the corporate body to procure the lands they held on advantageous terms.

Next in importance to the Abbey of Ballintubber was the Abbey of Burriscarra, founded about 1298 by Adam Staunton. For nearly a century it was tenanted by Carmelites, and then, in 1412, was transferred by Pope John XXIII. to the Augustinian Hermits of Ballinrobe. The Papal letter states that the monastery had been established for Carmelites; that Edmond and Richard Staunton invited the Augustinians to enter into possession; that a number of these Augustinians had already been living in the monastery; that their action in so doing had the formal approval of the Archbishop of Tuam; that for thirty years no Carmelite had dwelt there, and that, having deserted the place, the Stauntons had turned to the Augustinians, desiring them to possess "the house, with its church, bell, cemetery and gardens."⁴⁵ There is one other reference to the monastery, at the year 1430, when the Pope granted an indulgence to those who would contribute to the rebuilding of the place which had lately been burned.⁴⁶ At the suppression the abbey owned but one quarter of land, that is 120 acres. The name of the grantee is not stated, but after the Restoration in England the abbey and lands were granted to Sir Henry Lynch.

⁴⁵ "Papal Registers," VI, pp. 387-8.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* VIII, p. 162.

The civil history of these parishes is not without some interest. Long before the coming of the Anglo-Normans the O'Connors had been supreme, and to them tribute was paid by the lesser chiefs. Then Richard de Burgo undertook the conquest of Carra and of Connaught. The shadowy rights in the province which he inherited from his father availed but little against Cahal Crovderg O'Connor as long as he remained true to his engagements with the English. But when Cahal died, a disputed succession gave De Burgo a suitable pretext for interference, and Richard and other Anglo-Norman adventurers, with the sanction and even active co-operation of the Viceroy, obtained a firm foothold in Mayo. "During the period of twelve years," says the Annalist, "down from the war of O'Neill, the foreigners and Gael were plundering each other in turn, without sovereignty or supremacy being possessed by one beyond the other, but the foreigners were able to destroy Connaught every time they came into it, and the king and royal heirs of Connaught pillaging and profaning territories and churches after them."⁴⁷

It was an ideal state of things for Richard de Burgo. He changed sides frequently in these disputes, set up an O'Connor, and then pulled him down, and when the Annalists' twelve years were over in 1237 the power of the O'Connors was completely broken, and De Burgo and Prendergast and Staunton were firmly planted in Mayo. Nor is there any reason to question the accuracy of Mr. Orpen's statement that Mayo gained by the change. For the new proprietors established better order, a better system of rural economy than existed under the factious O'Connors.⁴⁸

Great changes followed the drowning of the Earl's son in Lough Mask, and nowhere more than in the barony of Carra and in the parish of Burriscarra. The Stauntons had been specially powerful round the lake, on the shores of which was their stronghold of Castlecarra. They had another castle at Kinturk. Favouring English customs, they called the neigh-

⁴⁷ "Annals of Loch Ce."

⁴⁸ "Galway Arch. Journal," 1912.

bouring locality Burriscarra—the borough or town of Carra—and it is not unlikely that fairs and markets were held there when the Stauntons ruled there. Like the De Burgos, they turned Irish in the fourteenth century, taking the Irish name of MacEvilly, and being so powerful that the whole country round the shores of Lough Carra was called the MacEvilly Country. They were, however, subject to the Burke's, and when the MacEvilly chief went to Galway in 1576 he was mounted on a little nag, and was spoken of by Sidney as poor in condition and shrunken in power, very different, indeed, from the powerful MacWilliam. Other settlers in Burriscarra were the MacDonnells, who came in the sixteenth century as hired soldiers. They had castles and lands, as had the Mac-Philpins, a branch of the Burke family.

Bingham harassed all these chiefs and broke their power, and only the Burkes were able to make good terms with the English. The first of them, who was ennobled as Viscount Mayo, was buried in Ballintubber. The abbey lands, including much of the land in the modern parishes of Ballintubber and Burriscarra, passed from the Galway Corporation to Sir Richard Blake of Galway in 1620. He also obtained the right to hold fairs in Ballintubber. How his descendants managed to retain their lands, being Catholics, during the penal times is not clear. They certainly did not change their religion, and must have got some Protestant to hold for them in trust. In the eighteenth century they built a castle at Touaghty, changing the name of the place to Towerhill. The Lynchs also got lands in the same parish, but one branch became Protestant, and in later times were Lynch-Blosse.

PARISH PRIESTS OF CARNACON IN RECENT TIMES.

Rev. Peter Waldron, about 1806, afterwards Bishop of Killala.

Rev. James Hughes, 1833-1839.

Rev. James Browne, 1847-1872.

Rev. Edmond Thomas, 1872-1883.

Rev. Michael Brennan, 1883-1891.

Rev. Michael O'Donoghue, 1892-1893.

Rev. Michael O'Connell, 1893-1921.

Rev. Richard Canavan, 1921.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IX.

NOTE I.—GEORGE ROBERT FITZGERALD.

One very remarkable man, not a good man indeed, and a notorious man rather than a famous man, belonged to the parish of Turlough. This was George Robert Fitzgerald. The family had been Catholic and had once held large landed possessions in Waterford; but because they were Catholics they had been transplanted to Connaught by Cromwell and were settled in Turlough, round which they were given considerable property, the confiscated lands of the Catholic Burkes. In time, no doubt, to save their property, they deserted the old faith and, in becoming Protestants, escaped the harassing worries of the penal laws, and were able to preserve their landed estates from confiscation.

In the middle of the eighteenth century the head of the Fitzgerald family was George Fitzgerald. Reckless, immoral, and a spendthrift, he married a daughter of the Earl of Bristol, Lady Mary Harvey, a sister of that eccentric Earl and Bishop of Derry, who, with Grattan, was the champion of Irish reform and the friend of the Volunteers. George Fitzgerald soon drove his wife away, and lived with another woman to the end of his days, having by his lawful wife two sons, George Robert and Charles.

George Robert was a strange compound. At Eton, he was gentle and well-behaved and fond of the classics. In the army, where he held a commission, he was insolent and overbearing, a bully and a braggart, ever ready to take offence and fight a duel, until, at last, in one of these duels he was seriously wounded in the head and was compelled to leave the army. It was said his mind had become unhinged, otherwise it is difficult to explain his conduct. He ran away with an heiress, Miss Connolly, of Kildare, and brought her to Turlough, but she died young owing to his ill-treatment. At Dublin he fought duels with Lord Norbury and John Fitzgibbon and Denis Browne. At Turlough he quarrelled with his brother and with his father, and as the latter tried to disinherit him he threw him into prison. Sometimes he tied the old man to a pet bear. At Rockfield, near Turlough, where he lived, he acted as an outlaw, and had a body of armed outlaws as his escort. His house

was protected by a fort manned with cannon; and he and his boon companions hunted the fox at night by torchlight, until the simple peasants thought that the devil himself had broken loose. He plundered and robbed and terrorised, and laughed at the forces of the law.

At last he met his doom. Under his directions his armed followers murdered a neighbouring lawyer, Mr. McDonnell, who lived at Chancery, and was on his way to Castlebar. Influence so far had served Fitzgerald from well-deserved punishment. But Denis Browne, his mortal enemy, was also influential and powerful, and at the assizes at Castlebar, in 1786, George Robert was found guilty of McDonnell's murder, and sentenced to be hanged. The execution took place publicly on the Green in Castlebar, under the superintendence of Browne, and after the rope had broken, a second rope was procured, and Fitzgerald thus paid the penalty of his many crimes.

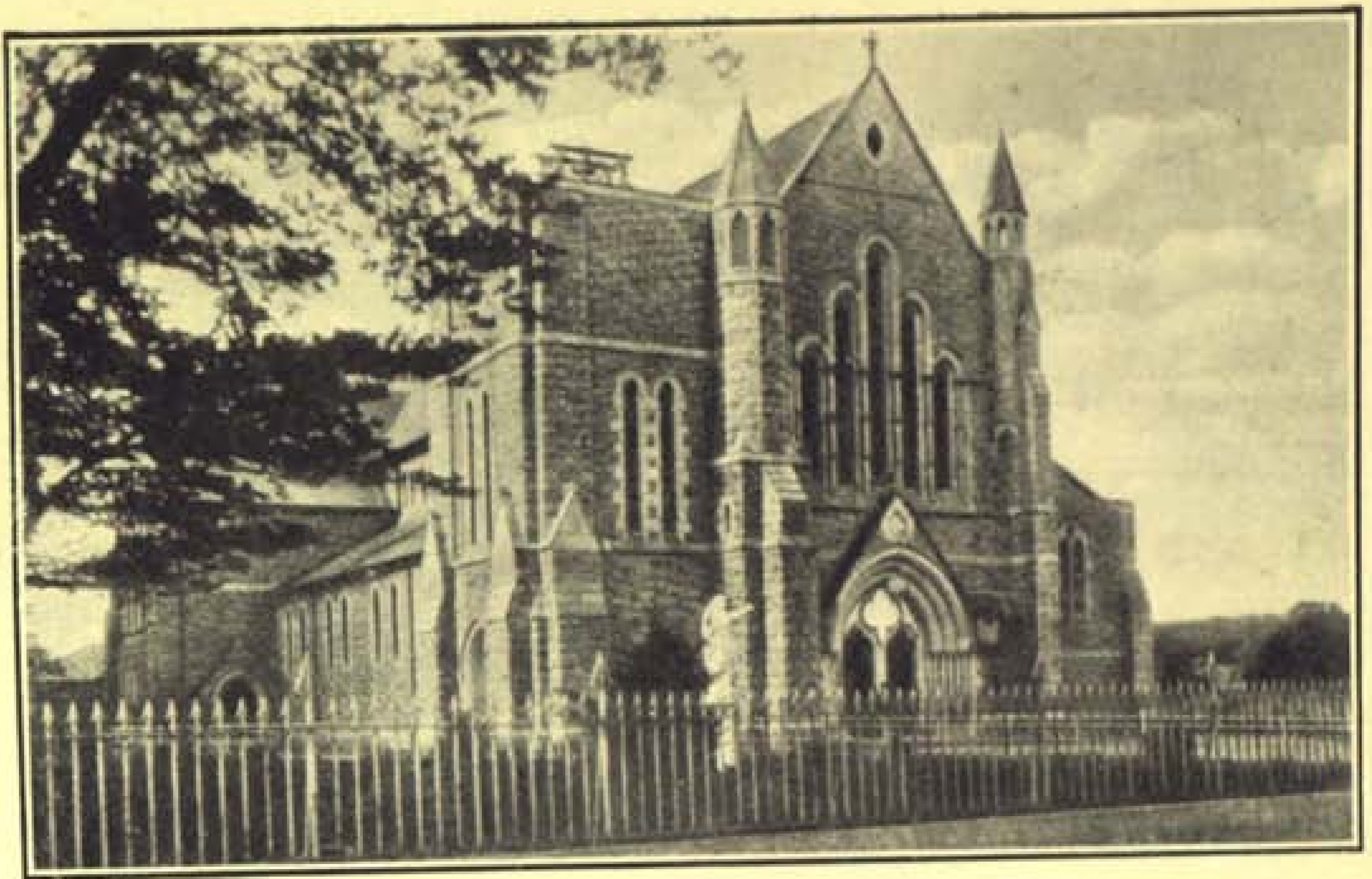
NOTE II.—REV. PAUL MCGREAL.

Father Paul McGreal was at first a Professor in St. Jarlath's College, then P.P. of Began, whence he was transferred to the pastoral charge of the united parishes of Turlough and Keellogues. He lived at Chancery.

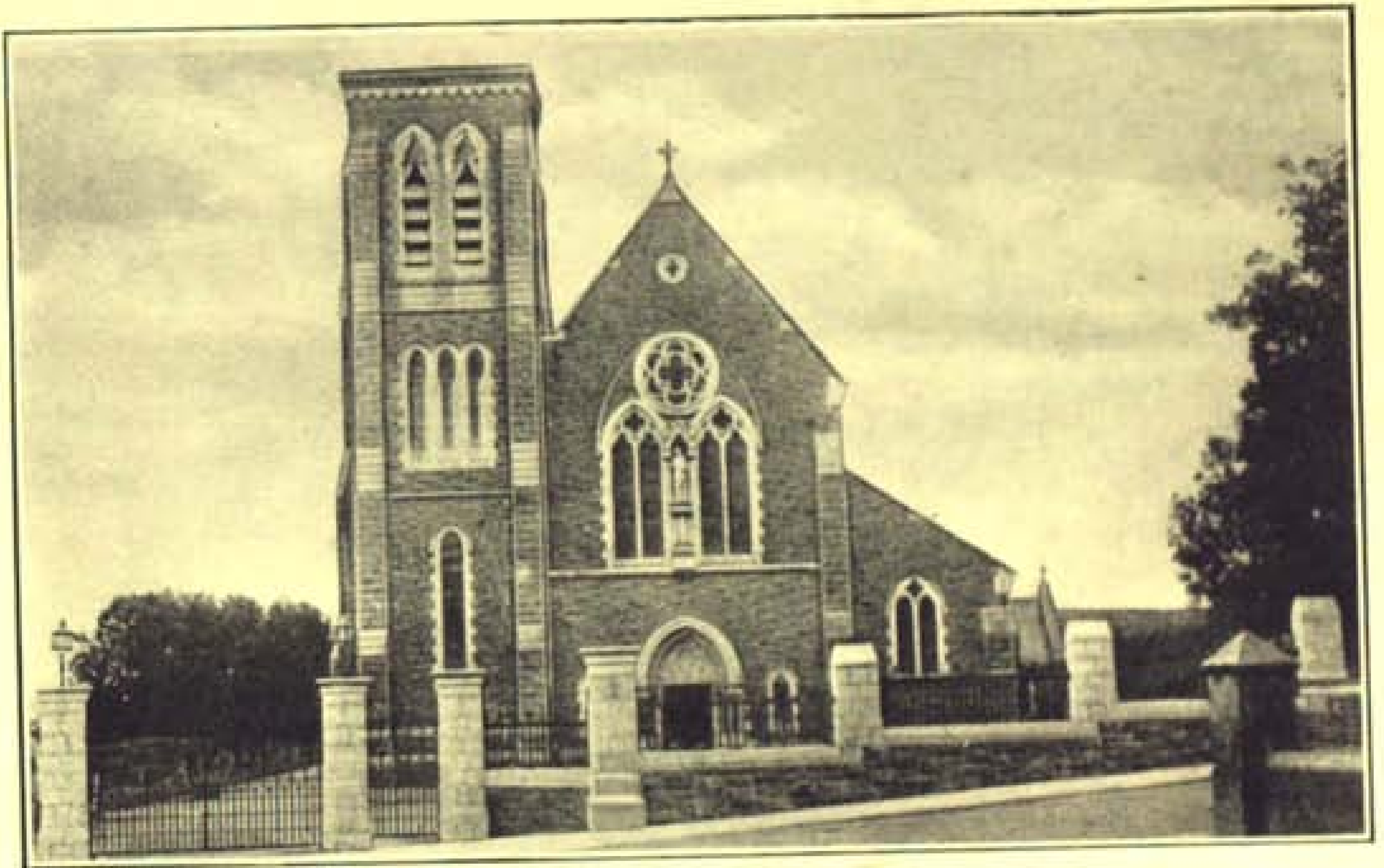
He was a big man, big in body and big-hearted and generous and much beloved by the people. He had so shared everything he had with the people, that when he died on the last day of 1846, there was not enough of money to purchase a coffin for his remains. A neighbour named Joyce, however, who had only one old cow, sold the old animal for thirty shillings, and thus procured the necessary coffin.

Father Paul was buried on the 2nd of January, 1847, and both the people of Keellogues and Turlough wanted his remains. Nor was the contest decided, only after a pitched battle which lasted throughout the day. The Turlough men won, and Father Paul lies buried in the church of Park.

I am indebted for these particulars to Father John Waldron, P.P. of Keellogues.



CLAREMORRIS CHURCH.



BALLYHAUNIS CHURCH.

CHAPTER X.

THE DEANERY OF CLAREMORRIS.

Parish of Claremorris.

THE territory included in the parish of *Claremorris* was inhabited by the Ciarraidhe, who were also the inhabitants of the neighbouring parishes of Aughamore, Knock, Began and Annagh. They held the whole barony of Clanmorris, except Balla, and portion of Costello. They had come from Munster into this portion of Connaught in the time of Aedh, son of Eochaidh, who was the eighth Christian King of Connaught, and they were descended from Ciar, the illegitimate son of Maeve and Fergus.¹

There were Christians in the parish as early as the days of St. Patrick. There was a Bishop Colman, who gave to St. Patrick his church at Cluain Cain, and this would probably be the present church of the parish, and from the saint the parish took its name.² This Colman was obviously not St. Colman of Boffin and Mayo, and we therefore must conclude that he was simply a bishop of St. Patrick's time, and that he laboured in the modern parish of Claremorris.

Long before the Anglo-Normans came to Connaught the district had got the name of Tir Nechtain, Nechtain being son of Brian Orbsen.³ The Prendergasts settled there in the thirteenth century, the head of the family being David Prendergast, who was allied by marriage with the great Anglo-Norman families of De Colgan and Butler and

¹ "Book of Rights," pp. 100-103.

² "Tripartite"; Tirechan's "Collections."

³ Knox's "Mayo"; McFirbis's "Book of Genealogies."

de Burgo. The whole family claimed descent from that famous Maurice de Prendergast who came over with Strongbow, and hence the territory round Claremorris came to be called Clanmorris, the tribal district of the Prendergasts. An Anglo-Norman, Gerald de Rupe, purchased part of the Mayo lands of the Prendergasts, and he in turn sold his lands thus acquired to Maurice Fitzgerald. But the Prendergasts remained the predominant family in Tir Nechtain, and in 1333 William Prendergast was the principal lord, holding as such under the Earl of Ulster.⁴ The tribal name was Clan-Muiris-na-mbri, the chief Prendergast castle being at Bri, or Brees, later changed to Brize. But the name, Tir Nechtain, did not disappear, and in 1289 Kilcolman parish was called the rectory of Tir-Nechtain, and was held by William de Birmingham, the new Archbishop of Tuam.⁵ And he was confirmed in its possessions by the Pope even after he became Archbishop. In the deed of transfer of lands from Prendergast to de Rupe the name given is not Clan-Morris but Tir-Nechtain, and the same name occurs in a Papal brief dated 1411, when an ecclesiastical valuation was made.⁶

The ecclesiastical history of the parish is unimportant. It was part of the diocese of Mayo, and in the taxation of 1306 its value is given as £4. When Mayo was definitely and finally absorbed by Tuam, Kilcolman, or Tir-Nechtain was one of the "vicarages" of the Archdiocese.⁷ The only religious foundation in the parish was the Carmelite Abbey of Ballinsmale, which was founded and endowed by the Prendergasts in 1356⁸ Its possessions were not extensive. At the suppression in 1542 Donagh O'Gormley was the abbot, possessing 120 acres and a mill-race, all of which went at a later date to Sir John King, ancestor of the Earls of Kingston.

In recent years, during the pastorate of Archdeacon Kilkenny, a fine new church was erected at Claremorris.

⁴ Knox's "Mayo," p. 322.

⁵ Knox's "Tuam," p. 111.

⁶ *Ibid.* pp. 223-5.

⁷ *Ibid.* p. 226.

⁸ *Ibid.*

PARISH PRIESTS.

Rev. Peter Heverin, 1817.

Rev. John Hughes, 1839.

Very Rev. James Hughes, 1839-1852.

Very Rev. Peter Reynolds, 1852-1875.

Very Rev. Richard MacHale, 1876-1878.

Very Rev. Ulick J. Burke, 1878-1888.

Right Rev. Archdeacon Kilkenny, 1888-1921.

Right Rev. Monsignor Macken, Dean, 1922-

Bekan Parish.

Bekan was part of the ancient territory of the Ciarraidhe and of that section whose homes were round Mannin Lake. They also inhabited the parishes of Knock, Aughamore and Annagh or Ballyhaunis. They were called the Ciarraidhe of Arne, this district in ancient times bearing the name, or, rather, the lake which was its centre, Loch na n-Arneagh, or the Lake of the Sloe Bushes. It is a marshy, water-soaked land, abounding in bog and heather, and so poor that in Perrott's days, towards the close of the sixteenth century, not less than three acres of this land was required to produce as much as one acre would produce elsewhere.

Thither from Ciarraidhe of Airtech in Roscommon came St. Patrick, shortly after 437. If he found, as he did, enemies among the pagans round Mannin Lake, he also found friends, who listened and were converted, and who were not ungenerous to the Apostle who had brought them the gift of the Christian faith. The sons of the chief, Fiechna, gave him the land between the river Gleoir and Ferna, with all the slaves they had there. The sons of another chief, Doath by name, offered to God and Patrick Cluain Findglais, Imsruth-Cul Cas, Deruth and Cenn Locho. Finally the sons of Conlaid gave him other lands not possible to identify. "All these were offerings of the Upper Ciarraidhe." The ancient writer adds: "St. Patrick, foreseeing by the holy spirit that his family in the country of the Ciarraidhe would be everywhere

9 "Tripartite," II, p. 337.

broken up, that is bishop Sachell and Brohid and Iearn, and priests Medbu and Ernasc joined them together under his blessing into unity of eternal peace with one rite of the faith under the power of one heir of his apostolic see of Armagh."

The exact spot in the parish of Began where the first Patrician church was erected cannot be ascertained, and for centuries the history of the parish, both civil and ecclesiastical, is wrapped in obscurity. When Turlogh O'Connor had established his power he gave the revenues of the rectory or parish of Began to St. John's Abbey, Tuam. It would also be liable, as a Patrician church, for some tribute to the Archbishop of Armagh.¹⁰ In the list of rectories at 1584 its value is put at five shillings, so that it cannot have been rich.

When the Anglo-Normans settled in Mayo this part of the county became the property of the Nangles. Following in the steps of the De Burgos, they threw off their allegiance to England in the fourteenth century, and, renouncing their name and nation, they became MacCostello. And when baronies were formed they gave their name to the whole *barony of Costello*. In the days of Elizabeth their power dwindled, and their lands fell—by purchase it appears—into the hands of Dillon, subsequently ennobled as Lord Dillon. But the MacCostellos still lived on as tenants to Dillon, where they had themselves once been supreme.

REGENT PARISH PRIESTS.

Rev. Paul McGreal, 1841.

Very Rev. Patrick Duffy, 1841-1847.

Very Rev. Canon Geraghty, 1848-1893.

Rev. Hubert Finneran, 1894-1897.

Rev. Bernard Freeley, 1897-1911.

Rev. John O'Malley, 1911-1926.

Rev. Charles J. White, 1926-

Knock and Aughamore Parishes.

The two parishes of *Aughamore* and *Knock* have been often

¹⁰ Knox's "Tuam," pp. 83, 265.

united, and may be conveniently taken together. Both were in the territory of the Ciarraidhe of the lakes, and abound in marsh and lake and heather. Aughamore was certainly a centre of St. Patrick's labours. He found there two chiefs, Earnase and Locharnach, his son, sitting under an elm tree, and in the church which he founded on the eastern shore of Mannin Lake he placed Locharnach as abbot, with a very holy man, Medbu, as his assistant.¹¹ In 1140 the emoluments of Knock and Aughamore were given to the Abbey of St. John's in Tuam. The parish lands, the gifts of the generous chiefs of St. Patrick's days, were claimed as episcopal lands attached to the See of Armagh; and round this claim some sharp disputes arose between the Archbishops of Armagh and Tuam.

In the taxation of 1306, Aughamore, which is called Harendemore, is put down as worth £1 6s. 8d., and a like amount is put as the value of Druggulragi, which is the rather harsh name given to Drumcalry or Knock. In 1570, in the grant to the Earl of Clanrickard, both Knock and Aughamore are called vicarages, and in 1587, in the Composition for the barony of Costello, the Archbishop of Tuam, who is credited with one quarter (120 acres of land) in Annagh, is also credited with a like amount in Knock.¹² In 1615, in an investigation as to the fate of church lands and suppressed monasteries, it was shown that Knock and Aughamore had been claimed as furnishing at least part of his revenues to the Archdeacon of Tuam.¹³ In 1634, in Strafford's survey, the lands of the Archbishop of Tuam in Aughamore were given as Clownegawnagh and Kilbragan.¹⁴

There were no great contests for the lands in these parishes, for the lands were poor, and they were long held by the Nangles or MacCostelloes, until they passed into the hands of the Dillons. Nor was there any religious or conventual establishment within the parishes.

In recent years Knock attained a certain amount of celebrity.

¹¹ "Tripartite," II, pp. 321-337.

¹² Knox's "Tuam," pp. 181-2.

¹³ *Ibid.* p. 244.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* p. 189.

It was said that the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared at the end of the parish church in visible form. This was about 1878, and for many years crowds of pilgrims have come to Knock on the Feast of Our Lady. Miracles, it is said, have been wrought, and undoubtedly a good deal of popular credence has been given to these reports. But a Commission, appointed by Dr. MacEvilly in 1882, after examining many witnesses, came to no definite conclusion, refusing to pronounce for the authenticity of the miraculous cases.

RECENT PARISH PRIESTS.

KNOCK AND AUGHAMORE.

Rev. Eugene Coyne, 1852-1866.

Ven. Archdeacon Cavanagh, 1867-1897.

Rev. John Fallon, 1898-

During this year the parish was divided into

KNOCK.

Rev. John Fallon, 1898-1909.

Rev. John J. Corcoran, 1909-1919.

Rev. John J. Corcoran, 1919-

AND AUGHAMORE.

Rev. Patrick Mulloy, 1898-1927.

Rev. Stephen Walsh, 1927-

Parish of Annagh or Ballyhaunis.

Annagh or Ballyhaunis was like Knock and Aughamore, in the country of the Ciarraidhe and in that section which was called Ciarraidhe of Airne. Its lands were not rich, and there was an abundance of lake and heath and bog. It was visited by St. Patrick about 440, after he had established the Christian church on the shores of Mannin Lake. The direction he took was due south, passing through the site of the modern town until he reached Holywell. Tirechamn describes it: "And Patrick went to the well which is called Mucna, and made the cella Senes which is so called. And Secundinus was apart under a leafy elm, and the sign of the cross is in that

place even to this day.'"¹⁵ The present day named is, of course, the time in which Tirechan lived, that is in the seventh century; but the well of Mucna is there still, and has often been venerated as St. Patrick's well, as the townland around received the name of Holywell.

For centuries the whole district was ruled by chiefs of the same race, who being Ciarraidhe, came to be called the O'Kierans or Kevins. One of these, with his fighting-men, was with Brian Boroimhe at Clontarf, and for more than a century and a-half these chiefs held sway. They were then dispossessed by the Fitzgeralds, under whom were the Nangles. These soon acquired pre-eminence over the whole modern barony of Costello, and in the fourteenth century took the Irish name of MacCostello. It was one of these, Jordan Costello, who founded the Augustinian Friary at Ballyhaunis, endowing it with 150 acres of land. It passed by grant to the Earl of Clanrickard in 1570, but was not suppressed, though its possessions were soon seriously curtailed. In 1586 the MacCostello of that day surrendered his lands at Ballyhaunis to Sir Theobald Dillon, one of the Queen's great officers, a greedy, grasping official, intent on enriching himself, and not over scrupulous as to means. To legalise his position he got a crown survey of his possessions made, and this was done in 1587 by another English official, L'Estrange, who reported "we have been about and over-viewed Ballyhaunis barony, as MacCostello's country was called." The land was so barren that it could not bear the usual crown rent fixed by the Composition of Connaught, and it was therefore taxed with a lighter crown rent, making the burden put on Dillon light, and giving less revenue to the Queen.¹⁶ Dillon was less generous than MacCostello, and in an inquisition into the affairs of the friary in 1608 it was found to be in possession of but eight acres of land. It was situated on "a fair hill" overlooking the river and town. Dillon was then a Catholic. His descendant raised a regiment

¹⁵ "Tripartite," II, p. 321.

¹⁶ "State Papers."

(D 705)

to fight for James II., and subsequently Dillon fought and fell in the armies of France. In 1769 the Lord Dillon of that day became a Protestant, no doubt, to save his large estates. The friars were then banished and outlawed, but when toleration came they returned to Ballyhaunis, and under the protection of Lord Dillon.

Until very recent times there was the peculiar arrangement of one church being shared between Annagh and Began parishes. It was situated in Ballyhaunis, and the town itself was divided between the two parishes. After Canon Waldron's death, in 1892, a much-needed revision of parish boundaries took place. The whole town was assigned to Annagh, while the rural church of Logboy, in the Annagh parish, was assigned to Began. Since then a beautiful church has been built in Ballyhaunis by Canon Canning, who also built a parochial residence and also a convent and convent schools on a commanding site overlooking the town. The nuns belong to the Order of Mercy, and came from Westport.

Regarding the succession of parish priests, the Very Rev. M. J. Canon MacHugh has kindly supplied the following information :—

The parish priests of the united parishes of Annagh and Logboy were :—

Rev. Owen Coyne, 1846-1849.

Rev. Patrick Horan, 1850-1870.

Very Rev. Canon Waldron, 1871-1892.

In 1893 a Commission was appointed by the Most Rev. Dr. MacEvilly to arrange the overlapping of the parishes of Began on the one part and the parishes of Annagh and Logboy on the other part. The Commissioners were—Dean Ronayne, Canon Hennelly, and the Rev. M. J. MacHugh, then Administrator, Tuam. The result was that Annagh, including the whole town of Ballyhaunis, was made a distinct parish, and that Logboy was added to Began.

Of this parish the Very Rev. Canon Canning was appointed parish priest.

Very Rev. Canon Canning, 1894-1921.

Very Rev. M. J. Canon MacHugh, 1921.

Parish of Crossboyne.

Crossboyne was in the country of the Ciarraidhe, not the Ciarraidhe of the Lakes, but the Ciarraidhe Nachtar. Like Kilcolman, it was in later times in Tir-Nechtán.¹⁷ After the Anglo-Normans came to dispossess the ancient owners of their lands, the Prendergasts settled there, and Crossboyne was then in the barony of Clanmorris. But Crossboyne itself was of considerable importance, and as late as 1585 the modern barony of Clanmorris was often called the barony of Crossboyne.

We have no definite information as to the time when Crossboyne was converted, nor as to the persons who laboured in the work of conversion. Very likely it was from the neighbouring parish of Kilcolman, or it may be from Kilmaine, and in St. Patrick's days. It would certainly be not later than the end of the seventh century, because by that time there was a famous abbey in the neighbouring parish of Mayo, and Crossboyne was one of the parishes in the diocese of Mayo, and remained so until that diocese was merged in the Archdiocese of Tuam.

Crossboyne and Tagheen were two separate parishes, and in the taxation of 1306 Crossboyne is valued at £2, and Tagheen at the same amount. In 1413 the rectory of Tagheen as part of the possessions of the Abbey of Mayo was taken under the Pope's protection.¹⁸

In 1417 several small prebends were given to the perpetual Vicar of Crossboyne, to whose church the people of these lesser churches were to go as to their parish church.¹⁹ In 1444 there was a collation to the rectory of Crossboyne, and three years later a collation to the perpetual vicarage, "to which are annexed certain chapels and a prebend."²⁰ Crossboyne is not

¹⁷ Knox's "Tuam," p. 131.

¹⁸ "Papal Registers," VI, p. 278.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* VII, p. 95.

²⁰ *Ibid.* IX, pp. 428-9.

mentioned in Bodkin's "Visitation of 1558"; but in 1570, in the grant to Clanrickard, there is mention of church lands in Crossboyne,²¹ and in the "Valor Beneficiorum" of 1615 there is mention of the prebend of Ballingarry, which was in Crossboyne.²²

There were at no time any religious houses in Crossboyne. Nor were there any strong feudal castles, except Castlemegarrett, which was the chief stronghold in this district of the Prendergasts. Its history was not uneventful. At what precise date it ceased to be occupied by the Prendergasts is not easy to say. The tradition is that a certain Geoffrey, or Sir Geoffrey, Browne married a Miss Prendergast—about 1608—and through her obtained possession of Castlemegarrett and the surrounding lands. In the previous year he got a lease of the lands belonging to the Rectory of Kilcolman and the Rectory of Kilmainbeg from the Provost and Burgesses of Athenry, to whom they had been made over by the Crown. He had also got possession of Browne Hall, which had belonged to the Abbey of Mayo. If, therefore, his wife brought him the lands of Castlemegarrett he would be the possessor in Mayo of a large landed property.

In the Browne family the tradition is that the first of them to come to Ireland was Sir William Fitzstephen le Brun, a son of Sir Stephen le Brun, who married Eva, sister of Griffith, Prince of Wales. His grandson, Sir David, obtained property near Athenry, and close to that town there is a village called Ballydavid, which, perhaps, derives its name from Sir David le Brun. Later the name was changed to Browne, and in 1451 there was a John Browne of Athenry. There was also a Stephen Browne, burgess of the same town, and in 1510 there was a William Browne, who was Provost of Athenry.

The Brownes had also become prominent in Galway, and in 1574 one Andrew Browne was Mayor; in the following year Dominick Browne filled the same position, and in 1589 one Richard Browne. And meantime Dominick Browne and

²¹ Knox's "Tuam," p. 265.

²² *Ibid.* p. 245.

Oliver Browne had filled the office of sheriff or bailiff. So far the laws against the Catholics could not be rigorously enforced; but in 1609 Oliver Browne, who had been elected Mayor of Galway, was deposed, because, as a practising Catholic, he refused to take the oath of supremacy.²³ In spite of this, Sir Dominick Browne was Mayor of Galway in 1634, though he was certainly a Catholic.

His son, Sir Geoffrey, was a much more famous man, and, indeed, was among the most prominent men of his time. He was a member of the Irish Parliament in 1641, and was one of the committee appointed to go to London to interview the King, and endeavour to make terms with him. He attended the meeting of the Confederate Catholics in Kilkenny in 1642, and was appointed to the Supreme Council; and on this body his voice was always on the side of moderation and peace.

Loyal to Charles I., he had no wish for Irish independence, and was always ready to negotiate with the faithless Ormond, and to accept even a bare toleration of his religion, if even so much could be obtained. He had, therefore, little sympathy with Owen Roe O'Neill, and he so much incurred the displeasure of Rinuccini after the victory of Benburb that he was imprisoned as a weakling and a backslider. Later he was set free, and in 1648 went on a mission to Prince Charles, then an exile at St. Germain. He was accompanied by Lords Antrim and Muskerry, and was much the ablest of the three. But he could get nothing from the Stuart prince except fair promises, which would certainly not be kept, if it suited Charles to repudiate them.

After the Nuncio left Ireland, and after Ormond had betrayed the Catholics, and Charles had been executed, Browne was found acting with Lord Clanrickard, Ormond's deputy, and was one of those who negotiated terms with the Duke of Lorraine. When the Royalists had been finally overthrown, and Cromwell had triumphed, Browne, like so many others, suffered confiscation of his lands. After the Restoration, however, he fared better than many other Irish Catholics who

²³ Hardiman's "History of Galway"; Galway Corporation Book.

had served the Stuarts. He was, perhaps, too important a man to be passed over; his services had been too conspicuous to be overlooked; and he had, therefore, his lands restored to him. He died in 1668, leaving these lands by will to his heir, though in reality they were not formally restored to the Browne family until 1670. In Galway and Mayo they amounted to 8,500 acres.

Sir Geoffrey's son and heir was Dominick. He owned Ashford, near Cong, as well as Castlemegarrett, and some of his family, and perhaps himself, lived at Ashford. But Castlemegarrett was the more important residence, and during his lifetime he built a new castle there. His family so far had been staunch Catholics. But in the eighteenth century it became increasingly difficult for a Catholic landlord to evade the stringent provisions of the penal laws, and in 1754 the Browne of that day publicly and formally abandoned his faith. The fact is recorded as follows:—"John, by Divine Providence, Lord Archbishop of Tuam to all to whom these presents shall come, greeting: We do certify that Dominick Browne, Esq., now an inhabitant of the parish of Crossboyne, in the county of Mayo, and diocese of Tuam, has renounced the errors of the Church of Rome, and that he was by our order received into the Communion of the Church on Wednesday, the twentieth day of November, one thousand seven hundred and fifty-four, and that the said Dominick Browne is a Protestant, and does conform to the Church of Ireland."

There was also a certificate from Thomas Cuff, Clerk of the Peace, that Dominick Browne produced at Quarter Sessions at Ballinrobe, December 9th, 1754:—

"That he did on Sunday, 8th December, 1754, receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the parish church of Crossboyne immediately after divine service and sermon, according to the usage of the Church of Ireland, and further certified that the said Dominick Browne at said adjournment took the several oaths and repeated and subscribed the declaration pursuant in that case made and provided."

This Dominick's son, Dominick Geoffrey by name, was born at Ashford in 1755, and lived until 1826. He had a property of 23,000 acres, and he and his family are described by a contemporary as "stout Protestants." His house at Castlemegarrett, with many valuable records, was completely burned in 1811. He was not particularly distinguished, but his son, Dominick, who lived until 1860, was M.P. for Mayo, an Irish Privy Councillor, and an Irish peer with the title of Baron Browne, of Castlemegarrett. The stout Protestantism was transmitted to his son, the second peer—Lord Oranmore and Browne—who lived until 1900, and who, on various occasions, aired his bigotry in the House of Lords by attacking Ireland and the Catholic religion.

Much of the Browne estate was sacrificed after the famine, having been sold in the Encumbered Estates Court. But Castlemegarrett remained, and in his time the castle was rebuilt and became one of the finest houses in Mayo. Not until the days of the Congested District Board did the Mayo estates pass out of the hands of the Browne family.²⁴

PARISH PRIESTS OF CROSSBOYNE.

- Rev. James King, 1790-1820.
- Rev. Jonathan Gibbons, 1820-1821.
- Rev. Andrew Gavin, 1821-1845.
- Rev. Patrick McManus, 1847-1851.
- Rev. Thomas Walters, 1851-1858.
- Rev. William Flannelly, 1858-1887.
- Rev. James Stephens, 1888-1903.
- Rev. M. J. MacHugh, 1903-1921.
- Rev. Michael Donnellon, 1921-1924.
- Rev. John O'Malley, 1924-

Parish of Ballindine.

Ballindine or *Kilvine* was in the Ciarraidhe country, in that portion called Tir Enna, and probably was converted to Christianity about the same time as Crossboyne. But there

²⁴ Articles by Lord Oranmore and Browne in "Galway Arch. Journal," 1907-1908.

is nothing certain about the matter, only at a later date it had certainly ceased to be pagan, and in Christian times, after diocesan episcopacy had been established, it belonged, like Kilcolman and Crossboyne, to the diocese of Mayo. In the fourteenth century the territory belonged to the Prendergasts, and was not a rich parish, the land being mostly poor. It was taxed in 1306 at £1 13s. 4d., the sum of a £1 being put on the rector, and 6s. 8d. on the vicar. In the valuation of 1584 it was valued at 13s. 4d. Being in the barony of Clanmorris, and in the territory of the Prendergasts, who had two strongholds there—one at Castlereagh and another at Dunmacreena—it was necessarily affected by the warlike activities of the Prendergasts.

This is almost all we know of its civil or ecclesiastical history, for it had no great chief within its bounds, and no ecclesiastical centre, such as an abbey or monastery or school. Nor did it produce any remarkable man in Church or State, if we except Dr. Anthony Blake, Archbishop of Armagh, and he might be said to have acquired notoriety rather than fame.

He belonged to an Anglo-Irish family long settled in Galway. One branch of this widely-scattered family was settled in Dunmacreena, and though they steadfastly clung to the old faith, this branch of the Blake family managed to retain, even in the eighteenth century, and in spite of the penal laws, some portion of their estates. The year of Dr. Blake's birth at Dunmacreena is uncertain, but it would be probably about 1700, or perhaps a little later. He was educated at St. Omers and Lorraine, and after his ordination laboured in some mission in the archdiocese, or, more likely, in one of those parishes subject to the Warden of Galway, over which the Archbishop's power was a power of visitation and appeal. In 1749 one Manus Kirwan of Douglas was elected Warden of Galway; but he so displeased his patrons by his conduct—in what way does not appear—that he was deposed by them, the only instance of such a deposition, and then, in 1752, Dr. Anthony Blake was elected Warden. In this position his zeal was conspicuous, and during his short term of office he built

the parish church in Middle Abbey Street, no easy task while the penal laws were vigorously and savagely enforced.²⁵

In 1755 Warden Blake was promoted to be Bishop of Ardagh, and here also he gave proof of more than ordinary zeal and ability, and was promoted by Rome in 1758 to be Archbishop of Armagh. For a time all went well with him in his new position. In 1761 he held a Diocesan Chapter at Dundalk, at which most salutary regulations were made for the government of the Archdiocese, rules urgently called for by the abuses which prevailed. It was decided, for instance, that no Mass should be celebrated after one o'clock; that the parochial Mass on Sunday should be in the church rather than station houses; that no church collections should be held on the public road; and no collections in the church with the vestments on; that no whiskey should be given to the people at wakes or funerals; and that a drunken priest was to be suspended, or even one who consumed more than a naggin of whiskey, or double that quantity if taken in punch. It was also decreed that if any priest used violence or intrigue to obtain a parish or to oust a pastor in possession he should himself get no parish for at least three years. These regulations were highly approved of by the Diocesan Chapter, who returned hearty thanks to the Archbishop for his care and vigilance and for the pains he had taken to establish peace among the people.

A second diocesan chapter meeting was held at Dundalk in 1764, and again the members of the chapter lauded the efforts for good of Dr. Blake, thanking God for his recovery from a recent illness. And they acknowledged that much good had been already done in building new churches or Mass-houses, as they call them, and they asked the Archbishop to see that more of these churches should be built. They also asked that he should not collate to any parish any priest who had already refused a parish offered him. And they agreed that in future an offering of five guineas should be made to the Archbishop by every newly-collated parish priest. This was

²⁵ Hardiman's "History of Galway," p. 257.

in lieu of the old arrangement by which the Archbishop received the horse, bridle and saddle of the deceased parish priest.

In the succeeding years there was a falling away in the zeal and energy of the Archbishop and in the laudation of his chapter. He acquired the bad habit of leaving his diocese and running home to his friends at Dunmacreena, and two of his priests, Father Levins of Ardee, and Father Mackey of Louth, brought his conduct before Rome. They accused him of non-residence and of too great severity in his exactions. And they complained that in his journeys from Armagh to Dunmacreena he travelled in an elegant carriage. He was, in consequence, suspended from his functions, though not a benefice. In 1777 Dr. Troy, acting as Apostolic Delegate, removed all suspension, and counselled Dr. Blake to act with moderation in dealing with some of his priests. The advice was, however, not heeded, as prudence and charity would suggest, and in 1781 Dr. O'Reilly was appointed Coadjutor Archbishop of Armagh, and Dr. Blake was retired on a pension of 140 guineas. He then returned to Dunmacreena, and died there in 1787.²⁶

RECENT PARISH PRIESTS.

- Rev. John McCullogh, 1872.
- Rev. G. J. Burke, 1872-1881.
- Rev. John Concannon, 1881-1891.
- Rev. P. McAlpine, 1891-1896.
- Rev. Peter McGirr, 1896-1906.
- Rev. Thomas Morris, 1906-1924.
- Rev. W. H. Kelly, 1924.

NOTE TO CHAPTER X.

THE CHURCH OF KNOCK.

The parish church of Knock was built by the Rev. Patrick O'Grady in the year 1828. It was then a small cruciform building; but later on, a notable event, to be referred to presently, necessi-

²⁶ Renehan's "Archbishops," pp. 103-113; Stuart's "Historical Memoirs of Armagh," pp. 268-281.

tated a considerable extension which was carried out by the Venerable Archdeacon Kavanagh in 1880; and within the last few years the church has been still further enlarged and very artistically decorated by the Rev. John J. Tuffy, the present parish priest.

THE KNOCK APPARITION.

The remarkable phenomenon, known as the Knock Apparition, occurred about nine o'clock on the evening of the 21st of August, 1879. An unusual brightness first attracted the attention of the people, and as they approached the church they saw that the south gable was bathed in a kind of luminous haze, in the midst of which stood three figures, which the beholders identified as those of the Blessed Virgin, St. Joseph, and St. John the Apostle. The vision lasted about three quarters of an hour, during which the people knelt and prayed, with what feelings of joy and wonder may be easily imagined.

Soon afterwards an informal Commission, consisting of three priests, was appointed by the late Dr. MacEvilly, Archbishop of Tuam, to take evidence of the Apparition; and fourteen witnesses described what they saw with remarkable clearness and minuteness of detail. They described the figures as of somewhat more than life-size, standing slightly out from the wall of the church, and elevated about three feet above the ground. They answered all questions readily, clearly, and consistently, and the candid, straight-forward manner in which they gave their evidence left no room for any suspicion of falsehood or collusion.

This was the origin of the Pilgrimage of Knock which has now continued for half a century, and which for its numbers and religious fervour constitutes in itself a fact of outstanding spiritual significance. Many miraculous cures have been reported, and it is much to be regretted that no measures were taken to have them scientifically investigated. In the absence of such canonical recognition as might have been obtained, we can only point to the strong evidence that could have been produced at the time and to the vast Pilgrimage, which, undiminished in zeal and numbers, still continues to visit the Shrine of Knock on each succeeding anniversary of the Apparition.

CHAPTER XI.

THE DEANERY OF CLIFDEN.

Parish of Clifden.

As late as 1815 there was only one house where the town of Clifden now stands. The landlord was one John D'Arcy, belonging to a family long settled in Galway. There were D'Arcys in Ireland of English descent, one of them being Sir John D'Arcy, who filled the office of Viceroy; but the D'Arcys of Clifden were Irish in origin, and traced their descent from Walter O'Dorchaidhe of Partry. Long before the sixteenth century, a descendant of this Walter Dorsey, as the name was spelt in English, settled in Galway city, and formed one of the principal city families. A branch of this family was settled at Kiltulla, near Athenry, having been transplanted there by the Cromwellians, and to this branch belonged the famous Count D'Arcy of France. It was his nephew, John, who founded the town of Clifden.

The family had been, even in the eighteenth century, all zealous Catholics; but John D'Arcy, of Clifden, was a zealous and even bigoted Protestant, a patron and a promoter of proselytism. How he got the estate at Clifden, whether by purchase or by the outlawry of some Catholic, does not appear. What is certain is that he owned the land round Clifden, and built the town. In 1824, Nimmo built the pier, and in 1844 Clifden Workhouse was opened. Three years later, during the terrible famine, the workhouse was the scene of such horrors as were scarcely paralleled in Ireland in that terrible year.

The present parish of Clifden, with the town as the head-

quarters and residence of the parish priest, is made up of two ancient parishes—the parishes of Omey and Balindoon—and when we speak of the parish of Clifden we mean the united parishes of Omey and Balindoon. It is an extensive parish, extending from Cleggan to Slyne Head. It is the nearest part of Europe to the American continent, and has its rugged western shore exposed to the full fury of the Atlantic, which has worn its way inland through several bays. The three largest of these are Streamstown, Ardbear, and Mannin Bays. Its scenery is diversified. Mountain and lake and bog and rock are plentiful, and if wild scenery constituted riches, Clifden would, indeed, be rich. The soil, however, is for the most part poor, and the people, to a large extent, depend on the wealth of the neighbouring sea, where there is abundance of fish.

Neither the parish nor the deanery of Clifden was visited by St. Patrick. It was remote and difficult to reach; and paganism, which had yielded to the Gospel in other parts of the diocese, survived in Clifden parish until the seventh century. Then came St. Fechin, directed as St. Patrick in earlier times by a vision. His way was long and difficult, and the centre of his activities was the island of Omey, a little north-west of Streamstown Bay. Exposed to the full fury of the Atlantic, it was a bleak and forbidding home, even for a missionary and an ascetic. And its inhabitants were wilder and more inhospitable than the island which they inhabited. Stubbornly attached to their pagan deities, they wanted no Christian missionary to preach the Gospel of the Cross to them. They bade Fechin and the monks who accompanied him to quit the island, threw the monks' spades and axes into the sea, and refusing them both food and shelter, two of the monks perished. But Guaire, the Christian King of Connaught, was charitable and kindly, and came to the rescue of the surviving monks with plentiful supplies. At last the patience and piety and perseverance of Fechin and his disciples planted the standard of the Cross in Omey, one of the last strongholds of paganism in the West. Then it became a

centre of Christian activity, the headquarters of these bold and courageous missionaries, and in due time the neighbouring mainland followed the lead of the island. Omey became famous, and when parochial boundaries were fixed, the parish was called the Parish of Omey.

Ardoilean, another island, nine miles from Omey, was also a centre of Christianity, and was also associated with the name and labours of St. Fechin. It was much smaller than Omey, much more desolate, farther from the mainland, and dangerous to reach. Even now it has no landing pier, and the visitor finds it difficult to get a safe place to step from the boat. The sides are precipitous and forbidding; the waves coming in full force from the far west mountains high; and, still uninhabited, it is a home of loneliness and desolation. But the adventurous missionaries and ascetics of the seventh century were not easily dismayed. They sought for solitude and poverty, and they found what they sought here, and before the close of the seventh century, Ardoilean, like Omey, had its church and its monastery and its monastic cells. *Prayer and penance, solitude and silence and contemplation* were easy in these wind-swept homes. Ardoilean attracted anchorets and solitaries, and visitors who sought for light and guidance and spiritual comfort at their hands. Omey had its Abbot, and so had Ardoilean, and as late as the eleventh century there is a record of the death of a famous Abbot of Ardoilean. This was Gormghael, "chief soul friend of Ireland," who died in 1018. Soul-friend may mean anchoret, as some think, but it certainly means a holy man whose sanctity was recognised, and it is said that Brian Boroimhe visited Gormghael before the battle of Clontarf.¹

Its desolation and poverty left Ardoilean unvisited by the Danes. There was nothing there to excite their cupidity; and there is no reason to suppose that the solitude of the monks was broken for long after the days of Gormghael. But the decay of religion, which came in the wake of civil turmoil, no doubt affected in time even the lonely island in the western

¹ "Four Masters"; O'Hanlon's "Irish Saints," Vol. VIII, p. 72.

sea. The anchorets died, and left no successors. But even now, after nine centuries have passed, the old ruined church remains with its altar, and so do the cells of the monks, and no doubt many of the holy men whose lives were spent there sleep peacefully in lonely Ardoilean, undisturbed by the roar of the Atlantic.

Omey, being nearer to the mainland, being in fact in low tide accessible on foot, continued to send its missionaries to the neighbouring districts, and to hold for the Church the territory which St. Fechin's labours had won. It is recorded at 1316 that the Abbot of Omaidh (Omey) died.² But there were successors to him in the centuries which followed; nor did the inhabitants of the island ever abandon the faith which their ancestors of the seventh century were so reluctant to receive from the hands of St. Fechin.³

As Fechin is the patron of Omey parish, and has his memory specially revered there, St. Flannan is patron of the parish of Balindoon, which, with Omey, forms the modern parish of Clifden. As he lived a little later than St. Fechin, he merely continued the work begun by St. Fechin. He laboured especially round Mannin Bay. His name still survives in Erris-lannan Point, and the surrounding district of that name. St. Flannan subsequently left the place. He was the son of Theodore, King of Thomond, and after leaving Balindoon he returned to his native territory, and became first bishop and patron of the diocese of Killaloe.⁴

A St. Cailin is also said to have laboured in the parish of Balindoon, and on Duck Island, not far from the mainland, his memory is still revered. But of him little is known.

These saints, if they did not convert all the inhabitants of these wastes and islands, at least they effectively secured the certain triumph of the Cross, and their successors completed the work the early saints had begun. But of these missionaries who laboured round Clifden from the seventh and eighth

² "Annals of Ulster."

³ O'Hanlon, I, p. 356.

⁴ Lanigan, III, pp. 147-49.

centuries we know nothing. Nor did any great monastic establishment appear in Clifden, or even in Connemara, during the whole middle ages. There were the missionaries of Omey, Ardoilean and Boffin, and there were the secular priests of a later date, and that was all.

In civil history, however, some events occurred which are worthy of being recalled. In the ninth century the present barony of Moycullen was ruled by the MacConrrys and the O'Heneys, and the barony of Ballinahinch by the MacConnellys and the O'Kielys, while across the Corrib, in the barony of Clare, were the much more powerful O'Flaherty chiefs. With these latter none could successfully compete in the extensive district which they ruled. But in the thirteenth century the Anglo-Norman De Burgos came, and, making Galway their headquarters, they attacked the O'Flaherties, occupied their lands east of the Corrib, and before the century closed had driven them across the Corrib, to the less fertile regions west of the lake.⁵ Here they made the MacConrrys tributary, and from their central stronghold at Aghenure, near Moycullen, they were a menace to Galway itself. The city owed its importance to the English settlers, boasted of its allegiance to England, and looked with disdain on the "mere Irish" outside. This only embittered the O'Flaherties all the more, and when some of the De Burgos threw off their allegiance to the English, the Burkes and the O'Flaherties were not infrequently on the same side, equally hated and equally feared by the inhabitants of Galway. In 1518 the Corporation passed a law prohibiting either a "Mac" or an "O" being admitted into the city, and an inscription on one of the city gates reads: "From the ferocious O'Flaherties good Lord deliver us."⁶

Meantime these ferocious O'Flaherties, checked on the East by the Corrib and by Galway city, were free to extend themselves; and before the close of the fifteenth century they had possessed themselves of the whole barony of Ballinahinch,

⁵ Hardiman's "Galway," p. 362.

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 20.

with strong castles at Ballinahinch, Bunowen, Doon, Arde and Rinvyle.

The most noteworthy of these castles was Bunowen, situated in Clifden parish, and not far from Slyne Head. It was built probably before the opening of the sixteenth century, and in 1530 was inhabited by Domhnal O'Flaherty. He was called Domhnal an Chogaidh, or Donal of the Wars, which would indicate that his ways were not the ways of peace. And he found a suitable wife in Grace O'Malley, or Granuaile, who dominated him as she subsequently dominated Richard Burke, of Mayo, by whom she became the mother of Theobald of the Ships. Her first husband died in 1575, leaving two sons, Owen and Morogh. English power was then creeping westward, even into the mountains and valleys of Connemara, and in 1585 the O'Flaherties of Bunowen were given under the Composition of Connaught the manors of Bunowen, Ballindoon, and Mannin, free of crown rent, and, in addition, 12,000 acres of land, for which, however, they must pay the stipulated crown rent of a penny an acre. Nearly fifty years earlier, when Lord Leonard Grey, the Deputy, visited Galway, the O'Flaherty chief came in and made his submission, though it was set out by Henry VIII. himself, and as a complaint against Grey, that O'Flaherty's oath and submission were not worth a farthing, as the Irish chief gave no hostages.⁷

The O'Flaherties of 1585 were not less powerful than those of 1531, and were in less humour to submit, and they peremptorily refused to accept the Composition of Connaught. They had then very extensive possessions, and exercised authority over the whole baronies of Moycullen, Ballinahinch and Ross; and men with such possessions and power were not disposed to accept as their share a few hundred, or even a few thousand, acres of land. In consequence of their disobedience they were, in 1586, attacked by Sir Richard Bingham's brother, and on this occasion Granuaile's eldest son, Owen O'Flaherty, was killed. And when the famous chieftainess went to London

⁷ "Correspondence of Henry VIII." Vol. II.

(D 705)

in 1593 to see Queen Elizabeth, she protested the loyalty of the O'Flaherties, and made a bitter complaint against Sir Richard Bingham.⁸

At that date her son, Morogh, was the acknowledged head of the O'Flaherties. His possessions were so great, his authority so widely extended, that he was called Morogh na Maor, or Morogh of the Stewardships. But though his mother protested his loyalty, he wavered and changed, and threw in his lot with the Ulster chiefs, with whom he fought at Kinsale. Afterwards he sued for pardon, and in 1610 he got from James I. a King's letter confirming him in possession of the castles and lands of Bunowen, Ballinahinch, Ballindoon, and Renvyle. There was a further royal grant in 1618, giving him 1,300 acres at Bunowen entirely free of rent. This was the manor of Bunowen, and there he was authorised to hold courts leet and baron, to have a Monday market at Bunowen, and a fair on St. Laurence's Day in August, with the usual tolls.⁹

This Morogh died in 1626, and was buried in the Franciscan Abbey, Galway. He had a numerous family, and provided for them all, but left his eldest son, Morogh, heir to far the larger portion of his estates, and he imposed on his other children the obligation of paying Morogh a rent of three shillings for every quarter of land they held. He was so wealthy in lands and cattle that he was called Morogh na Mart, or Morogh of the Cattle. And he was so many years in such favour with the English that he was, in 1634, knighted by Wentworth, Earl of Strafford. In the civil war which followed his sympathies were with the Royalists. He joined the Catholic Confederation formed at Kilkenny, and after the surrender of Galway, in 1652, he was dispossessed of all his estates. Bunowen Castle was burned in the following year. He was thus landless and homeless under the victorious Puritans, and landless and homeless he remained, unheeded after Charles II. came to the throne, and Sir Moragh died in

⁸ "State Papers," 1592-6, pp. 133-5.

⁹ "Patent and Close Rolls of Chancery in Ireland."

Arran Island in 1666, and was buried there in the church of St. Enda.¹⁰

His brother, Edmond, was a colonel in the Catholic Confederate Army, and helped to capture Galway in 1642. He was, therefore, marked out for destruction by the Cromwellians, and when they captured Galway in 1652, Colonel O'Flaherty was sought out and taken in hiding in a cave near Renvyle. Thence he was taken to Galway, where he was tried and executed. His lands, like those of Sir Morogh, were confiscated, and so also was dispossessed his brother, Brian, who owned the castle and lands of Cleggan. He fled for safety to the Netherlands, and it is recorded that he took with him a chalice belonging to the Franciscan Abbey of Kilconnell. This he gave to the Franciscans of Louvain, receiving from them in return a sum of £20. He acknowledged that he would have asked nothing, but that he was in want; and he added, "I impose this obligation on myself and my heirs after me, that if we ever came into the power or rule of our country, they shall give return and satisfaction to the convent of the friars of Kilconnell."¹¹

A younger brother of this Brian was an Augustinian friar who lived on the Continent, and no doubt died there; and a nephew, the son of Colonel Edmond O'Flaherty, executed at Galway, was a captain in the Irish Army of James II. He left a son, also called Edmond, who, reduced to the position of a farmer, on the lands of his ancestors at Renvyle, died there in 1747, and was interred in the old church at Ballinacill.

Roderick O'Flaherty, the author of "Iar-Connaught" and the "Ogygia," belonged to the same family, but what his relationship was to Sir Morogh is not clear. Like the other members of his family, he was despoiled of his lands by the Cromwellians, and in 1684, when he published his "Ogygia," he was landless and poor. Unfortunately, he was poor in spirit also. It is pitiable to read the servile dedication of his

¹⁰ "Iar-Connaught," p. 83.

¹¹ Meehan's "Franciscan Monasteries," Appendix K.

“ Ogygia ” to the worthless and faithless James II. He calls James the Protector and Patron of Ireland, and presents Ireland prostrate at his feet “ in the utmost dejection and in deep mourning, all covered with sackcloth and ashes, with dishevelled hair, and tears trickling down her cheeks, and presenting a book in which are written mourning and lamentation and woe.”¹² Making all allowance for a man, homeless and destitute and poor, such pitiable servility is enough to excite disgust, and caused Darcy Magee to exclaim : “ Oh, why did the scholar so slander his own knowledge, his own work, the very antiquity he wished to preserve and chronicle.”¹³

With the passing of the O’Flaherties, Bunowen found a new master in the person of Arthur Geoghegan, or Mac-Geoghegan. His ancestors had been chiefs and kings, and even in Cromwell’s day they owned no small share of land in Westmeath. But they still held to the ancient faith, and this was offence enough in the eyes of the Cromwellians. They were, therefore, deprived of their estates, and the rich lands near Castletown were exchanged for the rocks and heather and desolation of Iar-Connaught; the peace and quiet of Westmeath for the cry of the eagle and the roar of the Atlantic. Their gaze was still turned eastward, their hope being that the restoration in England would mean restoration to them. But their hopes were vain, and, about 1690, Charles Geoghegan of Bunowen married a Galway lady, Mary Blake, a granddaughter of Sir Richard Blake of Ardfry. He died in 1724, his wife in 1763, both being interred in the parish church of Ballindoon, where their tombstone bears the following inscription : “ Pray for the soul of Charles Geoghegan, who dyed the 8th of Feb., 1724, aged 80; as also for his wife, Mary Geoghegan, *alias* Blake, who died 6th Feb., 1763, aged 96. Requiescant in pace. Amen.”

The grandson of this Charles Geoghegan was Richard, also of Bunowen, and in 1756 he became a Protestant, the first of his family to desert the ancient creed. He studied science and

¹² Preface to the “ Ogygia.”

¹³ Magee’s “ Gallery of Irish Writers.”

visited foreign countries, and was able to reclaim from the sea a considerable tract of land at Ballyconnelly. He abandoned the old castle on the edge of the sea, and built a new and larger castle to the east of the Hill of Doon. His eldest son and successor took the name of O'Neill, and was a member of the Irish Parliament, and, remaining there, exhausted his resources; Bunowen remained unfinished; and in 1841 a Receiver in Chancery was appointed over the estate. In 1843 Thackeray visited the district, and has left a picture of the unfinished castle. "If," he says, "the traveller only seeks for strange sights, this place will repay his curiosity. Such a dismal house is not to be seen in all England, or perhaps such a dismal situation. The sea lies before and behind, and on each side likewise are rocks and copper-coloured meadows, in which a few trees have made an attempt to grow. The owner of the house had, however, begun to add to it, and there, unfinished, is a whole apparatus of turrets and staring raw stone and fresh ruinous carpenter's work. And then the courtyard, tumble-down outhouses; staring, empty, pointed windows, and new smeared plaster cracking from the walls; a black heap of turf, a mouldy pump, and a wretched old coal scuttle, emptily sunning itself in the midst of this cheerful scene."¹⁴

The famine completed the ruin of Mr. O'Neill. His estate was brought into the Encumbered Estates Court, and in 1853 was purchased by Mr. Valentine O'Connor Blake, to whose family it still belongs. And meantime the Geoghegans, like the O'Flaherties, had finally disappeared from Bunowen.¹⁵

During all these centuries, while chiefs passed away, and castles and lands changed hands, the ecclesiastical history of Omey and Ballindoon, and, indeed, of all Iar-Connaught, was uneventful. Long before the O'Flaherties had been driven across the Corrib the country westward to the Atlantic was exclusively Catholic; and when the O'Flaherties ruled from Bunowen, both chief and people shared a common faith. Nor

¹⁴ "Irish Sketch Book."

¹⁵ Mr. M. J. Blake in "Galway Arch. Journal," March, 1902.

did any of the O'Flaherty chiefs in the days of Henry VIII. follow the greater Irish chiefs in their apostacy. They knew nothing and cared nothing about the new religion, of which Henry and Elizabeth were the defenders. No doubt the churches in Omey and Ballindoon were rude, and there were no monastic establishments and no striking specimens of ecclesiastical architecture. But the old faith was there, unchanged as the centuries passed.

In the seventeenth century the pressure of penal enactments began to be felt even in these wild mountain districts. When Malachy O'Queely wrote his *relatio status* to Rome in 1634 he had to hide to escape imprisonment and death, and he could only indicate his place of residence by saying "ex loco nostri refugii."¹⁶ The triumph of the Cromwellians brought religious persecution as well as confiscation of lands, even to the parish of Clifden. But, though the chiefs were dispossessed, the poor Catholics remained, for the land was too poor to attract Cromwellian settlers. Nor could there be any improvement recorded from the Protestant point of view, when the *Protestant Archbishop of Tuam* had to report in 1731 that there was "scarce a Papist who will send his child to a Protestant school, even to learn his grammar, or so much as to read."¹⁷ The poor as well as the rich still shared the same faith; even the Geoghegans were Catholics. At the close of the century the old flag was still flying, and a new report on the archdiocese disclosed the fact that the priests still laboured in every parish, and were sustained by the people. It could not be said that they lived in luxury, and how small their incomes were compared with the fat incomes of the Protestant clergy we learn from the fact that the income of Ballinakill and Boffin taken together was only £90; Moyrus only £65; and a like amount was the whole revenue of the clergy from the united parishes of Omey and Ballindoon.¹⁸

In 1820 the new Protestant Archbishop cast hungry eyes on

¹⁶ "Spicilegium Ossoriense," I, pp. 193-5.

¹⁷ "Archivium Hibernicum," III, pp. 124-7.

¹⁸ "Castlereagh Correspondence," IV., pp. 161-4.

these desolate regions, and no sooner did he take up residence at Tuam than he sent to Clifden as his standard-bearer the Rev. Charles Seymour. In the Archbishop's eyes he was an epitome of all the Christian virtues, a man of stainless character and apostolic zeal. In reality he knew nothing of Christian charity, or even of truth, and he described the Catholic people of Clifden as knowing as little of the Gospel of Christ as they did of the Koran or of the writings of Confucius. Yet in his two years at Clifden, though he confesses to having been amply supported with funds, though he had Sunday schools at Clifden, Ballyconnelly and Renvyle; though he had the active assistance of the two landlords of the district; and though he knew the Irish language, and could argue with the people, he could only boast of one conversion. It was failure and not success, and he was glad to exchange his incumbency at Clifden for the perpetual curacy at Louisburgh.¹⁹ Nor did the succeeding years show any improvement, and in 1838 the Rev. Thomas Coneys, almost as active and as aggressive as Mr. Seymour, and also supported by the local landlords, had but a sorry tale to tell. When he preached at Ballinakill he had only the coastguards and their families to listen. At Boffin there were only two Protestant families; at Shark he fared no better; nor did he at Kingstown or Salerna. At Bunowen he lectured in English, but again he had only Protestants to hear him; and at Clifden, though he preached in Irish at the schoolhouse, and had "Romanists" among his audience, he had no conversion to record.²⁰ It appears that public prayers and street preaching, with no doubt plenty of abuse of Catholic doctrine, were among the means employed to spread the light, and even these means were unavailing.²¹

When the famine came, with all its attendant horrors, Dr. Trench had passed away, but his successor was not less zealous in the cause of proselytism, and the successors of

¹⁹ D'Arcy Sirr's "Life of Dr. Trench, Abp. of Tuam," pp. 111-13.

²⁰ "Life of Trench," pp. 625-7.

²¹ *Ibid.* p. 639.

Seymour and Coneys, liberally supplied with money, hoped to succeed where Seymour and Coneys had failed. The soul might be purchased when the body was without clothes and food, and the Catholics in Clifden were sorely in want when their parish priest, Father Fitzmaurice, wrote that his people were feeding on dead horses, and that the dogs were seen devouring the dead while the living were killing the dogs, and feeding on them.²² Hunger and nakedness and cold, typhus and even cholera were found together in the recently-opened Clifden workhouse. Along the roads were found unburied corpses and homes tenanted only by the dead. It would be strange in such circumstances if some weak Catholics, maddened with hunger, were not found to accept the bribes of the Church-Mission agents, and for a time at least to outwardly conform to an alien church. It is much more remarkable that the vast majority of the people spurned the proselytiser, and preferred death to apostasy. In 1852 Dr. MacHale had to sorrowfully admit that the famine had sadly thinned the flocks in Connemara, but that the diminution caused by famine and eviction was compensated by the intensity of the zeal with which the people were resolved to do away with the impression that they were indifferent to the blessings of their holy religion.²³ And in the following year Father Rinolfi and his colleague concluded their mission in Clifden by declaring that in no part of Ireland had they met with a more living faith.²⁴

There had been, however, a leakage in Clifden and its neighbourhood, and in 1853 the leakage was not stopped. It was so serious that in 1852 the proselytisers boasted that all West Galway had become Protestant. This was, of course, a falsehood; but a serious state of things had arisen when a Catholic resident of Clifden told an English traveller that there had been between 300 and 400 Catholics who had gone over to the Protestants. This success, however, was more apparent than real, and this Englishman—a Protestant himself—pointed

²² O'Reilly's "McHale," II, pp. 95-6.

²³ *Ibid.* p. 445.

²⁴ *Ibid.* pp. 458-9.

out that the statements made of Catholic losses must be qualified. In the Clifden Mission School he found 120 boys and 100 girls, nearly all born of Catholic parents. But the parents were dead, and as derelict children they had been taken up by the proselytisers and brought up in the Protestant faith. Only a few of them were from Clifden, or even from Connemara. In some cases he found that Catholic parents, in dire want of food and clothing, had allowed their children to go to the Protestant schools, and even to the Protestant church. All such were claimed by the Church Missionaries, but they could hardly be called genuine Protestants. The converts to Protestantism were despised by the mass of the people, who called them Jumpers, and their creed a stirabout creed.²⁵

Hoping for still further successes, the proselytisers continued their work, receiving large subscriptions from England, and at home the patronage and active assistance of Dr. Plunkett, the Protestant Bishop of Tuam. Not content with his efforts at Tourmakeady, he paid periodical visits to Clifden. He was there in 1853, and again in 1855, and was always ready to encourage the parsons and bible-readers.²⁶ Yet Protestantism was not victorious. One prop of the new reformation disappeared when Mr. D'Arcy lost his property in the Encumbered Estates Court. Another went when through the same exit Mr. Martin, of Ballinahinch, disappeared. Dr. Plunkett had failed in Tourmakeady, and when he died in 1866 the Catholic flag still floated in Omey and Ballindoon.

After 1870, renewed efforts were made in Clifden by the Church Missions. Dean MacManus was then parish priest, and had already proved himself a vigilant guardian. And he was ably assisted by his curates, especially by Father William Rattigan, who ceaselessly thwarted the proselytisers. Militant and courageous, he handled his opponents with ungloved hands, and while he was in Clifden the Jumpers and their patrons had an unpleasant time. Such efforts as his and

²⁵ Forde's "Memorandum Made in Ireland."

²⁶ "Story of the Irish Church Missions."

the Dean's bore fitting fruit. The reports made by the Church Mission clergy gradually became discredited. Their tales of great successes were discovered to be so many lies, and even bigotry ceased to sustain them. They ought to have written as did Nangle in Achill: "I shall have to tell of partial failure, of the banner being held aloft by weary hands."²⁷

In 1872, when the orphanage in Achill was closed for want of funds, its remaining children, fourteen in number, were sent to Clifden. The numbers in the Clifden institution were also swelled by accessions from "bird's nests" in Kingstown and other places. But in Clifden itself the Jumpers were fewer and more unpopular than ever, and with failing funds and less generous bribes for apostasy, the Protestant churches and schools in the Clifden parish were much less frequented than in the terrible famine days. Again, the language used in Achill in 1879 would fit the state of things in Clifden: "I have to speak of the almost total collapse of all missionary spirit."²⁸

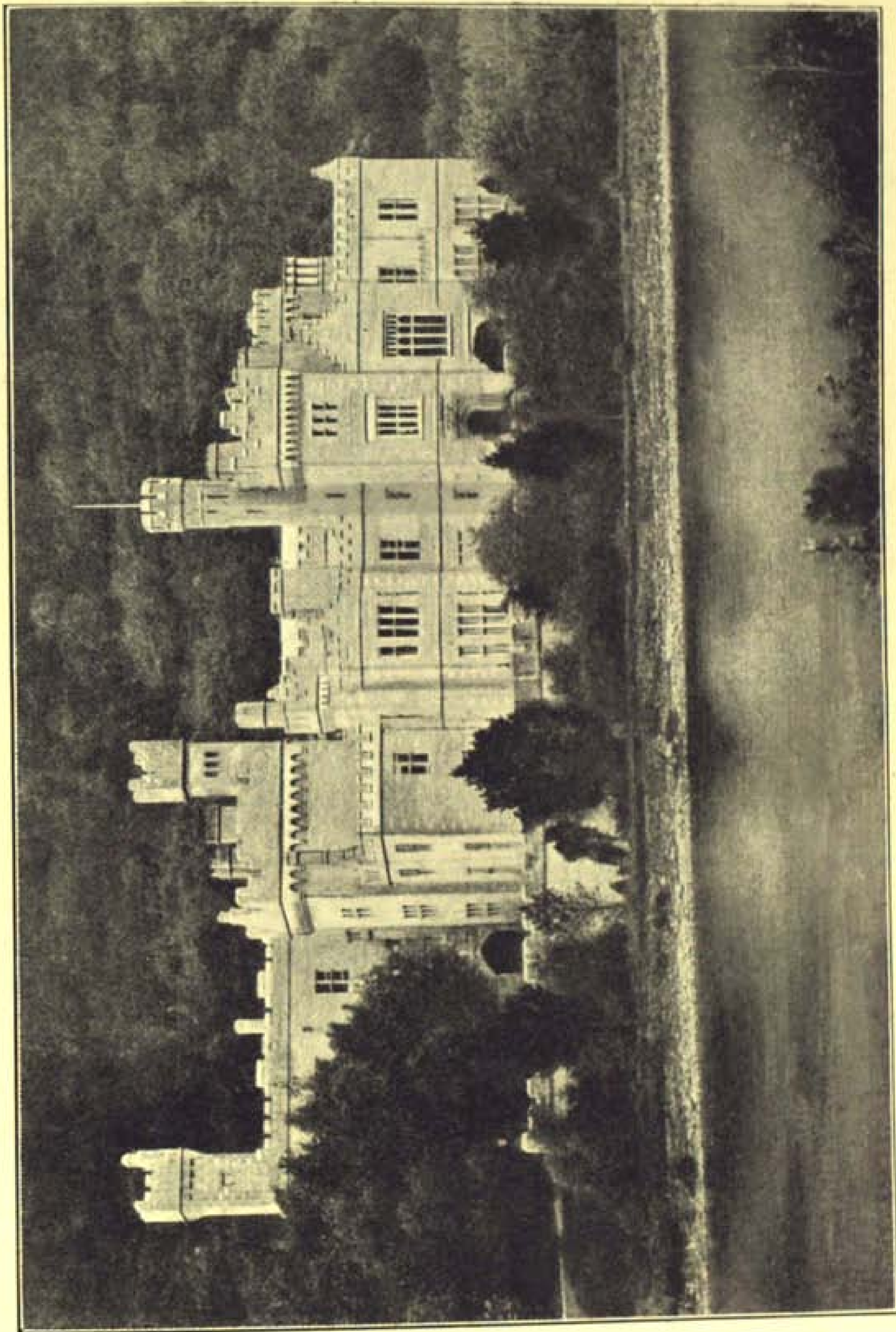
But while the Protestant Church in Clifden was going down, discredited and a failure, the Catholic Church in the same parish had emerged from the catacombs. Long before this date a Franciscan monastery had been established on the outskirts of the town, and had a well-attended school; the Convent of Mercy had been opened, and Dr. MacEvelly could say at Clifden in 1887: "I congratulate the people on the successful struggle which they and their fathers had sustained against the enemies of the faith—a struggle more severe, more prolonged, and more momentous in its issue than the bloody combat of Clontarf."²⁹

One of the most striking symbols of the Catholic success was the erection of a splendid new church. Built on a rising ground, and with noble proportions, it was commenced by Dean McManus, and partially built when death overtook him in 1881. His successors, Canons Greally and Lynskey, continued the work, and opened the church for divine service. It

²⁷ Seddal's "Life of Nangle," pp. 329-30.

²⁸ *Ibid.* p. 345.

²⁹ O'Reilly's "MacHale," II, p. 616.



[*Laurence*]

KYLEMORE ABBEY, CONNEMARA.

Photo by]

remained, however, for Monsignor McAlpine, who succeeded Canon Lynskey, to complete the spire, and to decorate and furnish the church in such a style that it can compete with the finest churches in our cities.

Monsignor McAlpine had come to Clifden with a reputation for church ornamentation already well established. Even in his curate days he might have truthfully said: "I have loved, O Lord, the beauty of Thy house and the place where Thy glory dwelleth"; and at Moylough and Aughamore he did much with scanty resources. His pastoral charge of Ballindine was short, as it was also in Milltown, but in each case the churches bore witness to his taste and zeal. In Clifden his powers were unrestricted, and his zeal for God's house found freer scope than in previous years. He finished the spire until from the ground below to the summit there was a distance of 200 feet. A beautiful tower clock was then put up, and a cross dominating the whole was electrically lighted, and could be seen in the darkness of the night far out at sea. And interiorly there was the best stained glass which Irish art could produce. With schools, convent and church in such a condition as they were found in the first quarter of the twentieth century, it was clear that the Church Missions had failed in Clifden, and that the old Church had emerged triumphantly from the conflict.

PARISH PRIESTS IN RECENT TIMES.

Rev. Myles Prendergast, died of fever, 1831.

Rev. L. Fitzmaurice, 1831-1853.

Very Rev. Dean MacManus, 1853-1881.

Very Rev. Canon Greally, 1881-1883.

Very Rev. John Lynskey, 1883-1898.

Right Rev. Monsignor McAlpine, 1898.

PARISH OF ROUNDSTONE OR ERRISANA.

Parish of Roundstone.

The parish of *Roundstone* extends from Bunowen to Bertraghboy, and inland is a bleak, forlorn land of rocks and heather, where lakes dot the landscape, and poverty and

desolation rule supreme. It includes the district of Ballinahinch, and is in the barony of that name. It has little history, either civil or ecclesiastical, apart from the neighbouring parish of Ballindoon. It probably witnessed the labours of St. Fechin, and it was partly the scene of St. Flannan's labours. Roundstone is a modern name, and the name of the parish was Errisana. St. Brendan is associated by local tradition with the island of Inishee, and St. Cailin with the island of CroaghnaKeela; but of this latter saint we know nothing. Roundstone was the land of the MacConnellys and the O'Kielys, and subsequently became the territory of the O'Flaherties, one of whom had a castle at Ballinahinch. The O'Flaherties were lords of the district before 1350, and we find that one of them established, in 1356, the Carmelite Monastery at Ballinahinch.

A better-known monastery, also endowed with lands by the O'Flaherties, was established at Tombeola. It was a Dominican establishment founded from the Dominican Priory at Athenry. The year was 1427, and at that date Pope Martin V. granted to the Dominicans at Athenry the privilege of founding two other houses. One of these was Tombeola, which was subject to Athenry, and might well be intended as a place of rest for some sick fathers from Athenry, seeking recreation and change. Shortly after the suppression of the monasteries in the early years of Elizabeth's reign, Tombeola was abandoned by the Dominicans, and its stones used in the building of a neighbouring castle. In the second half of the seventeenth century, O'Heyne, the author, advised that Tombeola should be revived, and three or four fathers kept there to minister to the people around. This was done, and in a "Report on the state of Popery in the Archdiocese of Tuam, made to the Irish House of Lords in 1731, it is stated that there was a friary at Tombeola in the parish of Moyrus," lately erected as if in response to O'Heyne's advice. The number of the community was small, "but in an increasing way."³⁰

³⁰ "Archivium Hibernicum," III, p. 126.

How these friars spent their time we learn from a contemporary, Father Brollaghan, an Irishman and a Dominican, who describes himself as one of the oldest missionaries in Ireland. It was, he says, the practice of the friars to leave the convent every year about Low Sunday, and to go about from house to house, preaching and hearing confessions. In winter also they went about, and each evening taught the Christian doctrine, both to adults and children. Thus, amid these rocks and mountains, was the Faith preserved during the horrors of the penal times.²¹

Meanwhile Ballinahinch and its neighbourhood had got new masters. After the fall of Galway the O'Flaherty chiefs were driven into exile, or suffered death, and an adventurer named Martin settled down in Ballinahinch. His descendants, zealous Protestants, and stout supporters of the Conne-mara proselytizers, were wild and reckless, and in 1850 the Martin estates, which included almost the whole barony of Ballinahinch, was brought into the Encumbered Estates Court, and bought from the mortgagees by an Englishman named Berridge. His descendant in the first years of the twentieth century became a Catholic, and a not ungenerous supporter of the Church, and the tenants were able to purchase their lands through the Congested Districts Board.

RECENT PARISH PRIESTS.

- Rev. Edward O'Malley, 1854.
- Rev. William Scully, 1854-1859.
- Rev. Joseph Moloney, 1873-1896.
- Rev. P. Gleeson, 1896-1915.
- Rev. M. Donnellon, 1915-1921.
- Rev. Charles J. White, 1921-1926.
- Rev. Constantine Cunningham, 1926-

THE PARISH OF MOYRUS OR CARNA.

Parish of Carna.

Moyrus means the plain of the promontory, and in ancient days Moyrus included Roundstone, and was more extensive

²¹ O'Heyne's "Irish Dominicans": Introduction, Appendix, p. 91.

than it is now. Even without Roundstone, and with its present limits, it covers a vast area, with a coast line from Bertraghboy Bay to Kilkeiran Bay, and with the islands of MacDara, Meenish and Mason fronting its coast line, and helping, in part at least, to protect its mainlands from the fury of the great ocean beyond.

The patron saint of the parish is MacDara—a name to conjure with in Moyrus. Outside the mainland is MacDara Island; on the island is the saint's ancient church and the rude house in which he dwelt. It has been, and is, the custom for vessels to lower their sails in reverence to the saint as they pass the island, and those who failed to do so were regarded as doomed to encounter some disaster. Fishermen name their boats after MacDara; boys are called MacDara at baptism; and in the seventeenth century a custom existed for women to gather dilisk or salt leaf, and pray to the saint for the release of some soul in purgatory.³² On the 16th of July a pattern was held in the saint's honour, and in the neighbouring parish of Clifden, September 28th was the saint's feast day. His full name was Sinach MacDara, Sinach meaning a fox, the fox being the most detested of all animals in Iar-Connaught.³³

Of St. MacDara's birthplace, or of the time of his birth, nothing is known with certainty. He was probably a native of the district, and the character of the church associated with his name, and probably coeval with him, would indicate that he lived at a very early period. For the ruin, situated at the only safe landing-place on the island, has a stone roof, is semi-cyclopean in character, and obviously belongs to primitive Christian times. The life he led in these wild regions, on a lonely, wind-swept island, bare and barren and exposed to the fury of the Atlantic, would indicate that he belonged to the Third Order of Irish Saints, who lived on herbs and alms and flourished in the seventh century. But if the tradition followed by the poet, D. F. McCarthy, be correct, he lived even before St. Brendan, which would be in the sixth century.

³² O'Flaherty's "Iar-Connaught," pp. 97-100.

³³ *Ibid.* p. 101.

For Mr. McCarthy represents St. Brendan as saying, while sailing west :

“ Borne on the tide or driven before the gale,
And as I passed MacDara's Sacred Isle,
Thrice bowed my mast and thrice let down my sail.” ³⁴

In the ancient church of St. MacDara there was an old wooden statue of him much venerated by the people. It was still venerated in the seventeenth century, and was used by the people to swear by when special solemnity was required. The abuse was ended by Archbishop O'Queely, who took the old statue and had it buried in the earth beyond the reach of the people.³⁵

One of the O'Flaherty strongholds was the Castle of Ardes, seven miles from Golam Head. There Teige-na-Buile O'Flaherty lived in 1585, and was recognised as lord of the castles of Ardes and Ballinahinch, with the lands attached, more than 2,000 acres being completely exempt of crown rent.³⁶ The ruin which overtook the other O'Flaherties after the Cromwellian capture of Galway overtook O'Flaherty of the Ardes, and when Martin owned Ballinahinch he also owned Ardes. The old faith, however, remained, and in the twentieth century, as well as in the tenth, Moyrus parish was Catholic.

CARNA PARISH PRIESTS.

Rev. Edward O'Malley, 1841-1859.
Rev. William Scully, 1859-1873.
Rev. John Canning, 1874-1879.
Rev. Patrick Greely, 1879-1881.
Rev. Thomas Flannery, 1881-1891.
Very Rev. Canon M. McHugh, 1891-1924.
Rev. Martin Adams, 1924-

Parish of Killeen.

The parish of *Killeen* lies east of Moyrus, and includes, besides the mainland, the islands of Lettermore, Lettermullen

³⁴ “ The Voyage of St. Brendan.”

³⁵ O'Hanlon's “ Irish Saints,” IX, pp. 621-4.

and Gorumna. It is almost entirely in the barony of Moycullen. Its early history is unknown. No doubt, it was in the middle ages under the rule of the O'Flaherties, and changed masters in the seventeenth century, when the O'Flaherties were dispossessed. In recent times its boundaries were interlaced with the neighbouring parish of Carraroe in the diocese of Galway, and an arrangement was made transferring the parish of Killanin from the Archdiocese of Galway, the archdiocese receiving in exchange the Galway parish of Carraroe. This rectification was long wanted; but the P.P. of Killanin, Father Patrick Coyne, objected, and appealed to Rome against the change. The dispute was long and bitter, and finally ended in the civil courts. Father Coyne was defeated, and Killanin was permanently attached to Galway, and Carraroe to Tuam. The parish of Killanin at present is not infrequently spoken of as the parish of Carraroe.

MODERN PARISH PRIESTS.

Rev. Peter Roche, 1854-1858.

Rev. Austin O'Dwyer, 1858-1872.

Rev. Martin Mellett, 1872-1883.

Rev. Walter Conway, 1883-1896.

Rev. John Healy, 1896-

Parish of Ballinakill.

Unlike so many other parishes in the Archdiocese, the name of this parish has not changed, though there have been variations in the spelling of the word. For it has been spelt—Balinakyle, Ballinekille and Ballinkilly. It covered a large area, extending from Killery Harbour to Cleggan Bay; and inland it is bounded on the east by Ross, and southward by Clifden and Roundstone. It touches the beautifully picturesque Lough Inagh, and has within its limits Lough Fee and Kylemore, and some lesser lakes, while Benbaun and Bencor and Diamond Mountains, dominating the lesser peaks, diversify the scene. In the west are the beetling cliffs, like soldiers in the front line of battle to repel the advance of the Atlantic. But the ocean has not always been driven back,

and at Little Killery, Renvyle Harbour and Ballinakill Harbour the conquering ocean has advanced and bitten largely into the land.

As Omey Island resisted St. Fechin, so did Ballinakill resist the friendly assaults of the Christian Missionaries, and the patron saint of the parish, Ceannanach, though he succeeded in converting the people, suffered martyrdom at the hands of a pagan chief. He was beheaded near Cleggan, where a heap of stones, no doubt intended as his monument, still marks the spot at which he suffered. Two miles distant, at the foot of the Hill of Cartron, are the ruins of an ancient church dedicated to his memory.³⁷ Another saint, a great worker of miracles—St. Roc—is mentioned at Salruck, where a church once stood. Another church was that of the Seven Daughters, not far from the ancient castle of Renvyle. These seven ladies were said to have been the daughters of a British King, but how they came to Ireland, and why they were thus venerated, does not appear. Another ancient church was at Crump Island.³⁸

The subsequent history of the parish is for centuries a blank. Its lands passed under the rule of the O'Flaherties after they had been driven across the Corrib, and in the fifteenth century Dominick O'Flaherty gave Crump Island to the Abbot of Cong. Subsequently all the rectories in Connemara, including Ballinakill, were made subject to the same Abbey, and, as such, were granted by James I. in 1609 to Bingley and King.³⁹ Morogh-na-Doe O'Flaherty had been making terms with the Queen's officers, and in 1569 had been recognised as chief of all Iar-Connaught.⁴⁰ His kinsman, Morogh-na-Maor, was lord of Renvyle in 1607, and when Morogh died in 1626 Ballinakill was left to his son, Hugh.⁴¹ Another son, Edmond, became Colonel in the Confederate Army, and he it was who was executed at Galway by the Cromwellians in

³⁷ "Iar-Connaught," pp. 118-19.

³⁸ *Ibid.* pp. 120-21.

³⁹ Knox's "Tuam"—"Cong Rentals."

⁴⁰ "Iar-Connaught," pp. 385-6.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* p. 404. (Copy of Morogh's will).

1653.⁴² A near relation of Edmond, surnamed Laidir, or the Strong, long after lived at Renvyle in much reduced circumstances, and died there in 1749, and was buried in the old church.

The O'Flaherty lands had meanwhile passed into Protestant hands, and remained so until, in the twentieth century, landlordism finally disappeared.

All these changes in the ownership of the lands were accompanied by no corresponding change in the faith of the people. The Protestant Blakes replaced the Catholic O'Flaherties. The penal laws and a heathen land system brought sorrow into the hearts of many, and desolation into many a home. But the Catholic faith survived. Even all the efforts of the proselytisers after the famine—and they were specially active in Ballinakill—were unavailing. Protestantism was a foreign plant, planted in an uncongenial soil, and when Dr. MacHale visited Ballinakill in 1854, though parsons and bible-readers had been specially aggressive, the whole population turned out to do him honour.⁴³ And the story of proselytism in Ballinakill is written in the twentieth century in empty churches and crumbling schools.

PARISH PRIESTS IN RECENT TIMES.

Rev. John Griffin, 1831.

Rev. William Flannelly, 1847-1858.

Rev. Hubert Finneran, Adm.

Very Rev. Canon McAndrew, 1876-1922.

Rev. William Diskin, 1922-

Inisboffin and Inishark.

In the return made by the Archbishop of Tuam in 1800, Ballinakill and Boffin are bracketed together as if all, mainland and islands, were under the rule of the P.P. of Ballinakill. In later days, however, Boffin and Shark Islands are under separate jurisdiction, and the Administrator of Boffin,

⁴² "Iar-Connaught," pp. 407-12.

⁴³ "The Story of the Irish Church Missions," pp. 259-60.

as he is called, has a separate and independent jurisdiction. And Boffin has a history all its own.

It has been said that as late as the last half of the seventh century Boffin was uninhabited,⁴⁴ and this may be, as it was barren and desolate, and was separated from the mainland by six miles of stormy sea. But it is more probable that it was then inhabited, for St. Flannan is venerated in Boffin, where there is still a St. Flannan's well, and St. Flannan must have visited Boffin and laboured there before he became, in 640, Bishop of Killaloe. Nor would he have gone to Boffin to preach only to the rocks and waves. It is not, however, St. Flannan, but St. Colman, who is patron of the island. He was an Irishman, and probably a Connaughtman, but we do not know the place or the year of his birth. What we do know is that he was a monk and priest at Iona; that he was devotedly attached to the memory of St. Columba; and that in 661, by the order of his superiors, he went to Northumbria, and in that year became Abbot and Bishop of Lindisfarne. His immediate predecessor, Finian, was, like himself, an Irish monk from Iona, and so also was St. Aidan, who was the first Bishop of Lindisfarne. Bede gives unstinted praise to these Irish Missionaries. Aidan, he says, was of singular piety, who neither sought nor possessed anything of this world but delighted in distributing immediately among the poor whatsoever was given him by the rich.⁴⁵ His successor maintained the same high standard of personal sanctity, and Colman and his monks are described as men whose "whole care was to serve God, not the world."⁴⁶

Had their object been to serve the world, and participate in its luxuries, they would never have established themselves in a lonely island, where prayer and poverty and mortification were their portion, and where their cathedral church was only a building of hewn rock, the roof covered with reeds. This poor abode, however, was dear to them, and Colman would have ended his days at Lindisfarne had it not been for the

⁴⁴ Healy's "Schools and Scholars," pp. 526-32.

⁴⁵ "Bede," pp. 111-116.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* p. 162.

Paschal Dispute. But he would not accept the newer and better system established and accepted at Rome and by the English Church at the Synod of Whitby. Refusing to be convinced by Wilfrid, Bishop of York, Colman obstinately clung to the older and erroneous system of computing Easter, thinking that if he abandoned it he would be casting a slur on the memory of St. Columba. Rather than do this, he resigned his See of Lindisfarne, and taking with him some portion of the bones of St. Aidan, and accompanied by all the Irish monks and thirty English, who refused to desert him, he made his way, in 664, to Iona. Three years later he and his companions came to Ireland, and established a monastery at Boffin.

It was more desolate and barren even than Lindisfarne. Inisboffin means the island of the white cow, and derives its name from a wild legend that a white cow was sometimes seen to emerge from the island lake and graze peacefully along its banks. And even in later days the islanders would tell around their firesides how the white cow had been seen as of old to emerge from Lochnatempul. Here, quite close to the lake, Colman built his monastery. It was a suitable place for those who sought penance and mortification. Poverty and privation were provided for the monks; the sea supplied fish. But the scanty patches of fertile soil could produce no sufficient crop for a large community, and the monks fasted and prayed and chanted their offices, disturbed only by the hoarse cries of the sea-birds and the howling of the waves.

The English and Irish monks soon disagreed. As if to escape privations hard to endure, the Irish resorted to the mainland and accepted the hospitality of their friends, while the Saxons toiled through the Summer and Autumn in their island. When they had gathered in the harvest, the Irish returned from the mainland, and shared with the toilers the food they had themselves done nothing to produce. As the best way of ending the quarrel that followed, Colman brought the Saxons from Boffin, and erected for them a new monastery on the plains of Mayo. It soon became prosperous and

famous, until Mayo of the Saxons was known throughout the land, and attracted Saxon pupils from across the sea. Colman returned to Boffin, and died there in 676.

After his death, darkness settled down on Boffin, and only a few scattered entries in the "Four Masters" show that such a place existed. At 711 is recorded the death of Baetan, Bishop of Inisboffin; at 809 that the foster son of the Abbot of Boffin died; at 898 the death of Cuencomhrach of the Cave of Inisboffin; and at 1334 that the monastery was plundered and burned by Sir John D'Arcy. There is nothing more until 1584, when benefices were taxed for the first fruits. Boffin is put down as a vicarage, and is taxed at ten shillings.⁴⁷ In 1591 the Queen is put down as rector of Boffin, and the vicar of the place then was Thomas O'Moraghan.⁴⁸

In the seventeenth century Boffin emerges from obscurity. Like the neighbouring mainland, it had been in the hands of the O'Flaherties, but passed, either by purchase or marriage or conquest, to the hands of the O'Malleys. After the fall of Galway in 1652 a strong force of the Confederate Catholics took possession, and there received money and arms from the Duke of Lorraine. Colonel Cusack was in command with a force of 50 horse and 500 foot. But such a force could do little, and though the island had been fortified, the Catholics had to surrender in February, 1653. All officers and men, after giving up arms and stores, and all priests and bishops were given protection for life and property, those guilty of murder excepted.⁴⁹ A Cromwellian garrison was then put to garrison the island. But in 1655 it was suggested that the place should be abandoned, the fort demolished, and the harbour blocked. This, however, was not done, and instead of being abandoned, Boffin, in 1656, was provided with new fortifications and a new governor, and "an able, pious and orthodox minister of the Gospel," and no Irishman there was henceforth to keep boats.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Knox, p. 221.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* p. 227.

⁴⁹ Gilbert's "History of Irish Affairs," III, pp. 356-66.

⁵⁰ "Iar-Connaught," pp. 294-5.

Meantime many priests and bishops were taken throughout the country and exiled to Boffin until there was time to ship them to Barbadoes. They were grossly ill-treated on the island by the Puritans, and the islanders still point out Bishop's Rock, where a bishop was chained and allowed to perish in the flowing tide. Rory O'More was also a prisoner there for a time, but escaped, disguised as a fisherman.⁵¹ In 1690 Boffin was again a scene of conflict, and was taken by the Jacobites, by whom, however, it was surrendered to the Williamites in the same year.

After the restoration, when the Puritans were in the dust, and their fort on the island partly in ruins, Boffin became the property of the Marquis of Clanrickard. In 1700 he built out of the old fort a residence for his agent, which afterwards became a barrack for the constabulary. In the eighteenth century the island passed from the Clanrickard family to the Brownes of Westport, one of whom became Marquis of Sligo. From him it was purchased in 1860 by the Hon. H. Wilberforce for £11,000, and from him it passed to Mr. Allies, the friend of Newman. The Marquis of Sligo was, of course, a Protestant, and his agent, Hildebrand, was a bigot who seconded the efforts of the Clifden proselytisers after the famine. But the Administrator, Father McDonagh, was a formidable opponent, and Hildebrand was badly defeated. In the time of Mr. Wilberforce the Catholics were unmolested; and Mr. Allies and his son, who succeeded him, were staunch Catholics, who edified the people, befriended the priests, and helped to build the new Catholic church.

There are still some remains of a thirteenth century church, and in the old church, now in ruins, is a monument to Father McFadden, the Administrator, who died there of the cholera in 1834. The new church was erected early in the twentieth century by Father William Rattigan.

The history of Inishark is a blank. Its patron saint is St. Leo, but who he was, and when and where he was born, nobody can tell.

⁵¹ Father Neary's "Inisboffin and Inishark."

ADMINISTRATORS IN RECENT TIMES.

Father McFadden, 1834.
 Father McNamara.
 Father Moore.
 Father Flannery.
 Father Thomas McDonagh, 1855.
 Father Thomas McWalter, 1860.
 Father Patrick Loftus, 1865.
 Father Patrick O'Connor, 1867.
 Father J. O'Boyle, 1871.
 Father Thomas Brennan, 1872.
 Father John Healy, 1876.
 Father Thomas Hosty, 1880.
 Father James Rabbitte, 1880.
 Father Martin Colleran, 1883.
 Father John Corcoran, 1886.
 Father Michael McHugh, 1889.
 Father Edward Lavelle, 1892.
 Father John Mylotte, 1895.
 Father Edward McGough, 1902.
 Father James Kelly, 1905.
 Father William Rattigan, 1908.
 Father James Coyne, 1913.
 Father Thomas Lynch, 1916.
 Father John Neary, 1919.
 Father Michael Carney, 1921.
 Father Greally, 1925.

NOTE TO CHAPTER XI.

PROSELYTISM IN CONNEMARA.

The progress of the Irish Church Mission agents in Connemara after the famine was alarming but temporary, and in less than twenty years the failure of proselytism was well established. But nothing can better demonstrate how futile was the expenditure of so much money, generously given and lavishly expended, than the story of Connemara proselytism as told in its ruins as they now appear.

At Salruck in the Ballinakill parish there was a Protestant

church and school. At the present time (1928) the school is closed, and service in the church has been discontinued. In Letterfrack there was a jumper school which is now used as a store. In Moyard the Protestant school is gone and the church almost deserted. In Renvyle the same fate has overtaken both church and school. In Clifden parish the well-built Protestant church and school at Cleggan are in utter ruin; the parsonage has become the residence of the Catholic curate. At Kingstown there was a Bird's Nest, frequently full, but here also both church and school are in ruins; and the same is true of Beleek, Streamstown, and Ballinaboy. It is failure everywhere, failure absolute and complete.

CHAPTER XII.

THE DEANERY OF DUNMORE.

Parish of Dunmore.

BOTH in civil and ecclesiastical history *Dunmore* holds a prominent place. In ancient Ireland a *dun* meant a large fort, and was the residence of the ruling chief or king, and *Dunmore* was, as the very name implies, a great *dun*, the residence of one of the more important kings. It was in fact one of the residences, though not the chief one, of the King of *Connaught*. As such, it was a special object of attack by the enemies of *Connaught*, and the "Four Masters" records, at 1133, that *Cormac MacCarthy* of *Desmond* and *Connor O'Brien* of *Thomond* led an army into *Connaught* and killed the ruling chief, *O'Connor* and *O'Flynn*, one of his tributary chiefs, and burned *Dunmore*. Ten years later, *Turlogh O'Connor*, the greatest of the *O'Connor* kings, marched into *Meath*, and having taken its king, *O'Mellaghlin*, he imprisoned him in *Dunmore*. When *Turlogh* died, *O'Mellaghlin* was again a free man, and in his ancestral kingdom, and in revenge he invaded *Connaught*, devastated much of the country, and burned *Dunmore*.

In the next century *Dunmore* exchanged its old masters for a new one. A royal charter of the English King, *Henry III.*, ignoring the rights of the *O'Connors*, granted "all the land of *Connaught*" in 1227 to *Richard de Burgo*.¹ In the next year he became *Viceroy*, and for many years afterwards he was the most powerful man in *Connaught*, encouraging divisions among the *O'Connors*, pulling down one and setting up

¹ "The *O'Connors* of *Connaught*," p. 96.

another, and so weakening these chiefs of the province that he was able to dispossess many of the older chiefs, and put in their places "a new class of proprietors, or as they may be more aptly termed local rulers, who, whatever their faults, were much more modern in their ideas of political subordination, social order and rural economy than those who had preceded them."²

One of these new landowners and chiefs was Peter de Bermingham, who got the Manor of Dunmore, and who died in 1254. He belonged to the same family as the De Berminghams of Athenry, and was the son of Meyler de Bermingham, as he was also the father of another Meyler, the latter being specially identified with Athenry. In the usual manner of these Anglo-Irish lords, he built at Dunmore a strong Norman castle, much stronger and easier to defend than the dun of the Irish kings. Its builder was one Hosty, the son of Merrick. It must have been built before 1200, for we find that the sons of the King of Connaught attacked Dunmore in 1249, and burned the town, though it is not stated, nor, indeed, is it likely that they captured the newly-erected Norman Castle. No doubt they plundered the lands of the De Berminghams round Dunmore, and despoiled his tenants, and that was all.³ In 1271 another O'Connor prince attacked, but was less fortunate, for it is recorded that he was killed by the "foreigners of Dunmore." But the Irish in due time had their revenge, for it also recorded, at 1284, that Dunmore was burned by one Fiacra O'Flynn and again, at 1315, that Dunmore was burned by Rory O'Connor.⁴ Dunmore was then a walled town, and had got a murage charter in 1380.⁵

One of the De Berminghams, William by name, was then Archbishop of Tuam. The town and district had long since renounced paganism, and the Christianity of Dunmore goes back to the days of St. Patrick. The Apostle's footsteps have been carefully traced from Holywell, in the parish of Annagh,

² G. H. Orpen in "Galway Arch. Journal," Vol. VII, 1912.

³ "Annals of Loch Ce."

⁴ "Loch Ce."

⁵ Report of Dep. Keeper, "Irish Records," 36th Report, Appendix 37.

to Kiltulla, from Kiltulla to Kiltevna, from Kiltevna to Dunmore, and from Dunmore to Kilbannon. There is no trace of any church at Kiltevna, and the Patrician church at Dunmore, being probably of wood, soon crumbled away. But the tradition was that a church had been established there by St. Patrick, and no more suitable site could have been selected than the place where the local chief had his castle or *dun*.⁶

What followed in the early Christian Church thus established has been blotted out by time, and we do not again hear of the church at Dunmore until, in 1425, Walter de Bermingham, Lord of Athenry, founded and endowed there an abbey or monastery of Augustinian Hermits.⁷ When the dissolution of the monasteries came it did not escape the cupidity of the new reformers. But the Dunmore Augustinians had not extensive possessions, and their patron and friend, Lord Bermingham, petitioned the Irish Council to allow his "poor monastery at Dunmore" to stand. His request was acceded to, but under conditions. The monastery might continue, but must have only four in the community, and these, having exchanged their clerical for secular dress, "shall have said house during the king's pleasure."⁸ Bermingham's Castle was taken by the Queen's forces in 1569, and at that date the Augustinian monastery was let for 31s. 8d. per annum, with a proviso that one horseman was to be furnished for the service of the Crown.⁹

These conditions were not observed, and the Government at Dublin was not sufficiently strong to have them enforced, and in 1641 a Protestant writer complained that there were then 31 members in the community at Dunmore—a Prior and 30 members. They were to be met openly on the roads, dressed in their distinctive clerical dress, and they had their oratory, dormitories and refectories, and observed the rules of

⁶ Healy's "St. Patrick," pp. 220-1.

⁷ Archdall, II, p. 205.

⁸ "Patent Rolls," July, 1542

⁹ Knox's "Tuam," p. 276.

their Order as fully as when they were in Spain.¹⁰ Malachy O'Queely was the Archbishop of Tuam, and to his order was made a beautiful chalice for the Dunmore Augustinians. It still exists, and has the following inscription: "Malachias O'Queely me fieri fecit pro Thadaeo Conal de Conventu Dunmore. 1641."¹¹

With the triumph of the Cromwellians evil days came for the Dunmore monastery. The friars were no longer to have toleration, and in 1654 they abandoned their house and fled for refuge to Mayfield, and there they dwelt in secret, trembling for their religion and for their lives. They lingered on until 1809, when they changed to Athlone. Nor do we get but occasional glimpses of them after Cromwell's time until the nineteenth century dawned. With great patience and care Father Neary unearthed some old letters in the now ruined Record Office, Dublin, and these letters cast fitful gleams on the Augustinian community of Dunmore. Some of the letters were to their brethren at home from the island of Antigua in the West Indies; others from Spain. There is, for instance, a letter from Antigua in 1725 referring to old families in Dunmore, and to the price of slaves. There is a letter to the Superior, Father Brehomy, in 1731, from the Protestant minister at Dunmore, to say that the banns between two Catholics had been duly published. And there were many letters about the excessive number of novices going to Spain for their education. They were, indeed, compelled to go, for the first half of the eighteenth century saw the ferocious penal code ferociously administered, and Catholic education at home was dangerous, and might easily be fatal both to teacher and student.

There are still some ruins of the old Norman Castle of the De Berminghams, which show that it was extensive and strong. And a portion of the Augustinian monastery remains, the chancel having been turned into the Protestant church. And thus the architecture of the thirteenth century is to be seen side by side with a modern and less pretentious style of build-

¹⁰ "Galway Arch. Journal," VII, 1911.

¹¹ Father Neary in "Galway Arch. Journal," 1914.

ing. Lord Ross built a residence in the town, and so did Sir George Shea, who was secretary to Warren Hastings.

MODERN PARISH PRIESTS.

- Very Rev. Nicholas Lorelock, D.D.
 Very Rev. Dean Egan, 1820 (about).
 Very Rev. Martin Loftus, D.D., 1830-1847.
 Very Rev. P. Duffy, 1847-1881.
 Very Rev. Canon MacEville, 1881-1894.
 Very Rev. Canon O'Dwyer, 1894-1898.
 Very Rev. Canon Lynskey, 1898-1910.
 Right Rev. Monsignor Macken, 1910-1922.
 Very Rev. Canon Curran, 1922-

Parish of Kiltulla.

Kiltulla was visited by St. Patrick, who went there from Holywell, in the parish of Annagh, and founded a church in what was then called "the desert of the Hy Enda."¹² There he placed his disciple, Lomman.¹³ At a later stage the chiefs of the district were the O'Flynnns, a powerful branch of the Silmurry, and they, no doubt, endowed the church with lands. But in the dispute between Armagh and Tuam the Primate claimed revenues from Kiltulla, as a Patrician church, and the Archbishop of Tuam protested that the church, being in his diocese, belonged to him. The dispute was settled by giving the Archbishop of Tuam episcopal rights in Kiltulla, while recognising the Primate's claim to tribute.¹⁴ Little more is known of Kiltulla in the centuries that followed, except that a Franciscan monastery was founded there by the O'Flynn chief in 1441. It was not an important foundation, and its subsequent history is unknown. In the Edwardian taxation Kiltulla was taxed at £2, and in the return made for the Crown in 1591 it is put down as a vicarage.¹⁵ In addition to the church at Kiltulla there were also churches at Granlahin, Milltown, Church Quarter, Lowberry and Ballykilleen.

¹² Tirechan's "Collections."

¹³ Healy's "St. Patrick," p. 221.

¹⁴ Bliss's "Calendars," I, p. 2.

¹⁵ Knox, p. 225.

In modern days Kiltulla attained a certain measure of eminence from the number of priests it sent forth. At Carrick, near Ballinlough, Mr. Kenny kept a classical school which attracted many students from the parish itself and from many parishes outside. These students being well grounded in the Latin and Greek authors by Mr. Kenny, who was a good classical scholar, passed on to St. Jarlath's College and to Maynooth, and not a few of them did great credit subsequently to their early teacher and to the parish in which they were trained. Fathers John MacDermott, Patrick Molloy and Thomas Hosty became parish priests in the Archdiocese. Dr. Donnellon became Dean, and later Bursor, at Maynooth College. Fathers Wallace and Connelly became pastors on the American Mission, as did also Fathers Michael Waldron, Patrick Judge, M. J. Loftus and Thomas O'Connell.

But even before Mr. Kenny's time, as subsequently, the Parish of Kiltulla had given birth to several priests. This was specially remarkable in the case of one townland named Lavallyroe. There were no less than seven priests born there of the Loftus family, the most notable of them being Dr. Martin Loftus, P.P., of Dunmore. He was an able man, and in 1840 was sent to Rome to defend Dr. MacHale's attitude on the question of the National schools. Dr. Murray, of Dublin, had a majority of the bishops on his side, and there were powerful influences at work in Rome to discredit Dr. MacHale. But Dr. Loftus did his work well, and defended with great zeal and ability his own archbishop and the nine bishops whose views on the National schools coincided with the views of Dr. MacHale.¹⁶ And Dr. Loftus had the satisfaction of reporting from Rome that the Pope did not approve of the National system as it was then carried out, and insisted on safeguards for religion in these primary schools. Dr. MacHale and his episcopal colleagues were thus justified in the action they had taken.

Another native of Lavallyroe, then a Professor at St. Jarlath's College, was the Rev. Anthony O'Regan. He sub-

¹⁶ O'Reilly's "Life of MacHale," chap. xxiv.

sequently became President of the College, and left for the diocese of St. Louis in 1849. He probably lacked the diplomatic skill of Dr. Loftus, and would have been less successful if he had been sent to Rome to defend Dr. MacHale, and explain his position in regard to the National schools. But he was a much greater scholar than Dr. Loftus, and at Maynooth was specially prominent in Sacred Scripture and in the Hebrew and Greek languages. At St. Jarlath's College, in his time, students were often allowed to continue their studies beyond the classics and philosophy, and Father O'Regan was Professor of Dogmatic Theology, Sacred Scripture and Hebrew. And when he went to St. Louis he was at once placed by Archbishop Kenrick at the head of the diocesan seminary. His conspicuous talents marked him out for the episcopacy, and in 1853 he was appointed Bishop of Chicago.

But his humility was not less remarkable than his learning, and on receiving his bulls he sent them back, protesting that he was unfit for the position, that he was a bookworm and a college man, and entirely without missionary experience. Rome, however, was unyielding, and he was compelled to acquiesce, declaring, "I accept them—the bulls—only in the spirit of obedience." He was consecrated by the Archbishop of St. Louis in July, 1854, and took possession of his diocese of Chicago in the following September. He began well, built a cathedral and an episcopal residence, brought priests from outside to his French and German congregations, and enforced discipline where there had been too much laxity and indiscipline. But troubles came thick upon him. His enforcement of discipline was irksome to those priests who had not been accustomed to such; his methods of government were harshly criticised; he appears to have been deficient in tact and prudence, though certainly not in piety; and a French priest, named Chiniquy, whom he suspended, and with good reason, after his suspension publicly apostated. At last Dr. O'Regan himself lost courage, and urgently pleaded with Rome to be relieved from his episcopal burden. His request was granted, and in 1858 he retired from Chicago, and was appointed

titular Bishop of Dora. He died at Brompton, London, in 1866, and by his own request was interred in the church at Cloonfad, where he had attended Mass as a boy.

His successor in the position of President of St. Jarlath's College was another native of Lavallyroe, the Very Rev. Peter Reynolds, and though he did not become a bishop he had ample talents for the episcopacy. He was a sound theologian and a brilliant controversialist, and on many topics of the day he wrote letters which were models of vigorous style. Unfortunately he published nothing in permanent form except a series of letters under the *nom de plume* of "A Priest of the Archdiocese of Tuam." The little book containing the letters is long out of print, and is now unprocurable, and the loss is felt by anyone who undertakes any work in diocesan history, especially in the years from 1850 to 1870.

One other notable man was connected with Kiltulla, though not a native of the parish. This was the Rev. Thomas Feeney, who was for a time P.P. of Kiltulla, and subsequently became Bishop of Killala. Born in Crossboyne in 1790, he received his early education from a classical teacher in Ballindine, and passing to St. Jarlath's College was sent to Maynooth College in 1809. There he was always in the front rank in his classes, and in 1817 was ordained priest by Dr. Murray of Dublin, and appointed Professor in St. Jarlath's College the same year. The new college in Bishop Street had then been just opened, and the old house on the Mall having been deserted, and Father Feeney had as his colleagues Father MacHale, who was President, Father Kielty and Father Martin Browne. His subjects were Philosophy and the Ancient Classics; but the Archbishop told him he might take Father MacHale's subject, Dogmatic Theology, if Father MacHale consented to exchange with him. In a very few years, certainly not later than 1823, Father Feeney was himself President of the College.

He enjoyed in a marked degree the favour of the Archbishop, Dr. Kelly, and when the case of the Warden of Galway was being discussed at Rome, and the advisability of appoint-

ing a Bishop of Galway, it was Father Feeney who prepared the necessary documents for the Irish bishops who had the matter in hands. In the same year, 1830, he had a public disputation on the inspiration of Sacred Scripture with an aggressive bigot of the Protestant Church, named Daly—a man whom O'Connell severely handled as Parson Daly. And Father Feeney acquitted himself so well that he was cheered through the town by the crowd, though he confessed he had little taste for public disputation, nor for popular demonstration.

Meantime, his friend, Father Ward of Westport, advised him to apply for the parish of Ballinrobe, which was about to become vacant. The advice, apparently, was not taken, and in 1831 Father Feeney was appointed P.P. of Kiltulla. After seven years' tenure of this position, a singular compliment was paid to him, for Dr. MacHale asked him to again take up the position of President of the College, while retaining his parish and making any arrangement for its administration he pleased. Only for a brief period he held the dual position, and then, in 1839, he was appointed to administer the diocese of Killala. An unseemly wrangle had taken place between the priests of Killala and Dr. O'Finan, the bishop, who was at length removed from the diocese, and then Dr. Feeney was consecrated Bishop of Killala.¹⁷ For more than thirty years he ruled his diocese wisely and well, and when he died in 1873 he was described by Dr. MacCormack, who preached his panegyric, as a singularly prudent and able administrator, one of the most learned among the Irish bishops.

PARISH PRIESTS OF KILTULLA.

Very Rev. Bernard Concannon, D.D., V.G., 1742-1775.

Rev. Thomas Jordan, 1775.

Rev. Malachy Kelly.

Rev. Laurence Waldron, died in 1830.

All these were interred in Kiltulla Cemetery.

Rev. Thomas Feeney, 1830-1839.

He was, in 1839, appointed Bishop of Killala.

¹⁷ "Feeney MSS."

(D 705)

Rev. Thomas McCaffrey, 1839-1847.
 Rev. William Feeney, 1848-1859.
 Right Rev. Dean McLoughlin, 1860-1891.
 Very Rev. Canon Austin O'Dwyer, 1891-1894.
 Rev. Patrick O'Connor, 1894-1916.
 Rev. Francis McDermott, 1916-

This list has been kindly made out from his parochial records by the Rev. Francis McDermott.

PARISHES OF TEMPLETOGHER AND BUYOUNAGH.

Parish of Williamstown.

These two parishes may be conveniently taken together, Templetogher being the ancient name of the parish of Williamstown, and Buyounagh the ancient name of the parish of Glenamaddy. Little is known of the history of either. They were both in the ancient territory of the Conmaicne, that branch of it to which Dunmore belonged, and they were both probably evangelised from Dunmore, and probably in St. Patrick's day. Buyounagh is put down as one of these parishes which supplied tithes to the Dean of Tuam, and Templetogher as paying part of its tithes to the Archdeacon of Tuam.¹⁸

In Buyounagh there was an old church at Cashel, and in Templetogher there were old churches at Castletogher, Kildaree and Monseenally.

MODERN PARISH PRIESTS OF WILLIAMSTOWN.

Rev. Peter Ward, 1856.
 Rev. Patrick O'Connor, 1870.
 Rev. P. Loftus, 1875-1887.
 Rev. P. Livingstone, 1887-1888.
 Rev. Michael Curran, 1888-1892.
 Rev. John Loftus, 1892-1897.
 Rev. John Burke, 1897-1908.
 Rev. Michael Fallon, 1908-1916.
 Rev. Patrick Madden, 1916-1927.
 Rev. John Walsh, 1927-

¹⁸ Knox, p. 89.

Parish of Glenamaddy.

PARISH PRIESTS OF GLENAMADDY.

The Rev. T. Heaney, P.P., writes that the Rev. Martin Connolly became P.P. of Glenamaddy in 1838, and of Williamstown in 1847, after which, until his death in 1858, he was P.P. of both parishes. After 1858 until 1865 Father MacNamara was Adm., not P.P.

Then, in 1865, the parishes were divided, and in Glenamaddy were:—

Rev. P. J. O'Brien, P.P., 1865-1879.

Rev. Thomas Walsh, 1879-1896.

Rev. Walter Conway, 1896-1919.

Rev. Thomas Heaney, 1919-

KILKERRIN AND CLONBERNE.

Parish of Clonberne.

Very little is known of these united parishes. In ancient times the district belonged to the Corcamoghe, whose chief was compelled to pay the King of Connaught a yearly tribute of 140 cows, 350 masses of iron, 350 hogs, and 350 oxen.¹⁹ In later days it was part of Hy-Many, and, as such, was subject to the O'Kelly chiefs. In the Edwardian taxation Clonberne is taxed at 5s., and Kilkerrin at £1 13s. 4d. The former parish contributed to support two members of the Chapter of the Archdiocese, the Dean and Provost. Beyond this there is nothing known. For it is not certain that there was a Franciscan monastery at Kilkerrin, though it is said that there was one at Kilbrenan. Knox thinks that this was another name for Kilkerrin, but he is hesitating and doubtful.

PARISH PRIESTS IN RECENT TIMES.

Rev. Henry Kelly, 1864.

Rev. Malachy Monaghan, 1856-1872.

¹⁹ "Book of Rights," pp. 104-105.

Very Rev. Canon O'Dwyer, 1872-1891.

Rev. John Cāncannon, 1892-1896.

Rev. Joseph Moloney, 1896-1908.

Very Rev. Canon Colgan, 1908-

The inscription on Father Kelly's Memorial Altar is that "He died Dec. 7, 1864, 90 years of age, and in the 62nd year of his Sacred Ministry." He must have then retired from the charge of the parish, as his successor became P.P. in 1856.²⁰

KILCONLY AND KILBANNON.

Parish of Kilconly.

The parish of *Kilbannon* owes its name to St. Benen, or Benignus, signifying the Church of Benen. He was the son of Sescan, a chief who dwelt near the modern Duleek in Meath. He was but a boy when St. Patrick visited his native district, and he was so attracted to the great Apostle that he watched his every movement, followed him round, gathered flowers as an offering to him, and when St. Patrick was leaving the district he insisted on going with him. And St. Patrick returned his affection, appointed him later one of the Commissioners to codify the Brehon Laws, and brought him with him on his missionary journeys. Thus it happened that Benen, or Benignus, was with St. Patrick when he visited the country of the Conmaicne of Chineal Dublain, the Conmaicne of the Dunmore district, and when a suitable site for a church was obtained at Kilbannon, St. Patrick appointed Benen as head of the church and head of a school for the training of priests. It was there that St. Jarlath was trained. Benen, then a priest, subsequently became Coadjutor to St. Patrick in the See of Armagh. He was author of the "Psalter of Cashel," and probably also of the "Book of Rights," though not in its present form; and for a time he was head of the college established at Armagh. He died at Armagh in 468.²¹

This church of Benen or Benignus was the mother church

²⁰ Archdall, II, p. 216; Knox, p. 296.

²¹ Healy's "Ancient Schools and Scholars," pp. 54-9, 114-17, 159-60, 542; Introduction to the "Book of Rights"; O'Curry's "MS. Materials of Ancient Irish History," p. 373.

of the Archdiocese of Tuam, older than Tuam itself, as Benignus was older than St. Jarlath. And its importance was attested by the fact that a round tower was erected there about 1000 A.D., for the round tower usually marked the residence of an important chief or king, and served to guard the church that was built within its shadows. Nor is it unlikely that Kilbannon would have become the seat of the Archbishop if the O'Connor kings had not made Tuam their chief residence in the eleventh century. This was done by Aedh O'Connor, who defeated O'Flaherty in 1047, and who then selected Tuam as a convenient place for attacking these powerful O'Flaherty chiefs.²³ The churches of the Conmaicne of Dunmore were in these days subject to Kilbannon, just as those of Conmaicne Mara and Conmaicne of Cuil Talach were subject to the Abbot of Cong.²³ In the time of Turlogh O'Connor Tuam had risen to such prominence that it was made the See of the Archbishop as soon as diocesan episcopacy supplanted finally the old monastic system. Then Kilbannon ceased to be a ruling church, and when the Chapter was formed, the tithes of Kilbannon formed part of the revenue of the Chapter. But as a Patrician church its revenues were claimed by the Archbishop of Armagh, and in 1216, when the Archbishop of Tuam was sending his complaints to Rome, he complained that the Primate had despoiled him of the church of Kilbannon.²⁴ The dispute dragged on. At 1243 it is recorded that Finuachta O'Lugadha, Comharb of Benen, and great dean of Tuam died;²⁵ and when the final settlement was arrived at between Tuam and Armagh in 1351, among the places definitely attached to Tuam was Kilbannon.

The connection with Kilconly is not clear, at least in the earlier centuries, Kilbannon being always the more important church; but in the taxation of 1306 Kilbannon and Kilconly are put together as belonging to the Dean and Chapter of Tuam. In 1559 Thomas Carney was Vicar of Kilconly, and

²³ Knox, p. 78.

²³ *Ibid.* pp. 79-80.

²⁴ Bliss's "Calendar," I, p. 40.

²⁵ "Annals of Loch Ce."

John Bermingham Vicar of Kilbannon, and in 1591 the Vicar of Kilconly was one Miles O'Higin, while John Bermingham was still Vicar of Kilbannon, after an interval of more than thirty years.²⁶ Subsequently the two parishes were permanently united, and in the return furnished to the Government in 1800 by Dr. Dillon, the Archbishop of Tuam, Kilconly and Kilbannon are put down with a joint income of £60 a year.

In Kilbannon there was one noted religious establishment. This was the convent at Kilcreevanty on the borders of the Milltown parish. Like Abbeyknockmoy and Ballintubber, it owed its existence as a great convent to the munificence of the O'Connors, and was founded by Cahal Crovderg about the year 1200. Its endowment was from an ancient convent at Clonard, on which establishment Pope Celestine III., in 1196, conferred the possession of the Church of St. Mary at Clonmacnoise, the townland of Dromalga in the parish of Moore, and the Church of St. Mary in Annaghdown, with the townland of Kilgil.²⁷ These possessions of Clonard transferred to Kilcreevanty were vastly increased by the generous liberality of the various O'Connor princes, and more than one of the Lady Abbesses belonged to the same great family. Indeed, we have it on record that Lady Finola O'Connor, daughter of Felim, King of Connaught, died at Kilcreevanty, in 1311; and at 1543, at the suppression of monasteries and convents, the last Lady Abbess was Lady Devergilla O'Connor.

This helps to explain the great influence possessed by the Superioress of the convent as well as the great extent and value of its possessions. In 1220, Pope Honorius III. in confirming the convent in all possessions then held by it, prescribed for the nuns the rule of St. Augustine, but a little later allowed them to change to the rule and habit of St. Benedict, so that henceforth Kilcreevanty was a Benedictine Nunnery. The nuns were assertive and troublesome and ill brooked any interference with their privileges, and when the Archbishop of Tuam attempted to assert his jurisdiction over

²⁶ Knox, p. 225.

²⁷ Archdall, I, p. 527.

them they appealed, and Honorius III. in 1223 appointed the Bishop of Killala as his delegate to adjudicate. The settlement left the nuns all their privileges and almost complete exemption from the jurisdiction of the Archbishop, who was allowed only the right of triennial visitation. Even then he must be accompanied by the Abbot of Cong, and it was significant that at that date the Abbot of Cong was Maurice O'Connor, son of Roderick, the last Ardri.²⁸ Nor was another Archbishop of Tuam more successful against this stubborn community. This was Malachy McHugh who, backed up by the English King, endeavoured to assert his jurisdiction at Kilcreevanty. But again the decision was given in favour of the nuns. The Lady Abbess was left all privileges she had undiminished, but the Archbishop was allowed to hold visitation unaccompanied by the Abbot of Cong.²⁹ No further mention is made of the convent in these Papal letters until we reach 1400, when there is a list given of the immunities and possessions which the community held.³⁰ So matters remained until the sixteenth century came and with it the reformation and the robbery of monasteries and convents.

When the convent was suppressed in 1543 an inventory was taken of its various possessions. A further inventory was taken in 1570, when the whole property of the community was given by royal grant to the Earl of Clanrickard.³¹ But the most complete inventory was that taken in 1610 in the reign of James I., an inventory which shows a great extent of landed property, and shows also what a powerful potentate the Abbess of Kilcreevanty must have been.

In the county of Galway Kilcreevanty had the convent itself, with church, churchyard, six cottages and four quarters of land containing 100 acres arable, and 40 acres of pasture and wood. And wood must have been abundant, for the convent was called in Latin documents the convent of *Casta Silva*,

²⁸ Theiner's "Vetera Monumenta."

²⁹ Bliss's "Calendar," II, p. 212, at the year 1321.

³⁰ *Ibid.* IV, pp. 335-6.

³¹ Morrin's "Patent Rolls."

the convent embowered in woods. At Ardour in Kilconly parish the convent had 60 acres of arable land and 24 acres of pasture, and at Imeracly in Milltown a like amount with a mill and water-course. At Lehid it owned 24 acres arable and 40 acres mountain land; at Tenmoyle 12 acres arable and 8 acres pasture and moor; at Argloony 20 acres arable and 18 pasture; at Kilgil 24 acres arable and 30 acres pasture; at Bannabagh in Hy-Many 30 acres arable and 8 pasture; and at Oghilbeg 30 acres arable and 24 pasture. It had in addition rents from lands in the parishes of Moyrus, Killeen, Ballinakill, Cong, Omey, Kilmilkin, Kilbride, and the islands in Lough Mask.

In Mayo the convent had 60 acres arable and 20 pasture, in Cowlesturne, in Cong, 2 quarters and an eel wire on the river, the ruined chapel at Teaghfin and the town and lands of Ballinchalla; in Hollymount the lands of Annies, the old castle in Hag Island and the church of Annagh and Rinnanul; in Kilmaine parish 2 quarters of land at Ballycushion; and it had Innismaine near Lough Mask.

In Roscommon it had 56 acres at Termonkeelin, 84 acres at Dromalga; half tithes of 36 quarters near Roscommon, 4 quarters at Ballybocagh, the tithes of 4 quarters in O'Connor Don's country, half tithes of 12 other parishes amounting in all to more than 1,000 acres.

In Sligo its possessions were not so valuable, but they were considerable. It had 14 quarters, perhaps 1,500 acres, a small piece of land at Drumcliff; to this may be added tithes and advowsons scattered over Roscommon and Sligo, and extending even to Clonmacnoise and O'Mellaghlin's country.³²

PARISH PRIESTS OF KILCONLY AND KILBANNON.

Rev. Bernard Henry, 1664.³³

Rev. Father Harley,

Rev. Michael O'Malley,

³² "Patent Rolls," James I, Vol. II, p. 173; Knox, pp. 280-285.

³³ This name is found on a slab inserted in the wall of the Kilconly church, evidently taken from a much older church, and recording that the "altar in this church was erected by the Rev. Bernard Henry in 1664."

Rev. Michael Gibbons,³⁴
 Rev. Father O'Dowd,
 Rev. James Corbett, Adm., 1872-1875.
 Rev. Peter Geraghty, 1875-1885.
 Rev. Michael Heaney, 1885-1890.
 Rev. John Begley, 1890-1894.
 Rev. M. J. MacHugh 1894-1896.
 Rev. James Curran, 1896-1898.
 Rev. Matt Lavelle, 1898-1913.
 Rev. A. Waters, 1913-1917.
 Rev. John O'Dea, 1918- .

Parish of Milltown.

The two parishes of Addergoole and Liskeavey constitute the present parish of *Milltown*, and in the middle ages and even up to the sixteenth century there were three parishes—Kilclooney, Liskeevy and Addergoole. In process of time, however, Kilclooney disappeared, either as a church or as a centre and head of parochial jurisdiction.

The early history of the modern parish of Milltown is lost in obscurity. Milltown is in the modern barony of Dunmore and was therefore ruled from Dunmore in ancient times by the chief of Chineal Dubhain as it was afterwards by the O'Connors. And when, in the thirteenth century, the Berminghams became all powerful at Dunmore, Milltown was within the territory which they ruled.

There is no record of St. Patrick having visited the parish of Milltown and no probability that he did. What is more probable is that Milltown got the light of the gospel from Kilbannon, which was so near, and where St. Benignus lived and taught. In 1306 Addergoole appears in the taxation of that year as one of the parishes whose tithes supported the chapter of the archdiocese. A century later, in 1407, the Pope sent a mandate to the Abbot of Holy Trinity, Tuam, the Dean and one of the Canons of the chapter to collate to

³⁴ He was an uncle of Dr. MacEvilly, Archbishop of Tuam.

the perpetual vicarage of Addergoole.³⁵ For some reason apparently its collation must have reverted to the Pope. We lose sight of it again until 1559, when one Redmond MacHosty or Hosty is put down as Vicar of Addergoole, though the profits of the vicarage went to one James Bermingham, so that if the Anglo-Irish Hosty was the spiritual ruler of the parish, another Anglo-Irishman was in possession of its temporalities.³⁶ Indeed, it is not unlikely that Hosty was founder of the parish church as it is written Addergoole Vic Hosty.

LATER PARISH PRIESTS OF MILLTOWN.

- Rev. Hugh O'Connor, 1847-1861.
 Rev. Peter Jennings, 1862-1868.
 Rev. James Flannelly, 1868-1875.
 Rev. Thomas McWalter, 1875-1896.
 Rev. Patrick McAlpine, 1896-1898.
 Rev. Michael Diskin, 1898- .

³⁵ Bliss's "Calendar," VI, p. 119.

³⁶ Knox, p. 225.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE DEANERY OF TUAM.

Cloonfush.

BOTH the parish of Tuam and the archdiocese can trace back their origin to what is now but a village in the parish of Tuam. This is Cloonfush (anciently spelled Cluainfois). It is about two miles from Tuam in a fertile plain, the northern view bounded by the river Clare, which here turns and twists as if to enclose the village within its sheltering arms. From a scenic point of view there is nothing remarkable, just a level plain, well watered and fertile, and well suited for retirement and rest. And, no doubt, it was for this reason it was chosen for his church and school by St. Jarlath, the patron of the parish and of the archdiocese.

St. Jarlath.

In the "Book of Lismore" he is described as Jarlath, "son of Lug, son of Tren, son of Bresal, son of Facha the Fair."¹ He was of the Conmaicne race, and hence went to Kilbannon to learn; and when he had acquired the necessary knowledge and virtue in the school of St. Benignus, he went forth to found a school of his own, and chose Cloonfush as its site. Here he was visited by St. Brendan, attracted all the way from distant Ardfert to Cloonfush "by the fame of a certain pious man who dwelt there." And with him Brendan learnt all "the Rules of the Irish Saints." Jarlath was then old, and many years had passed since he had sat at the feet of Benignus, and Brendan was young. But though he was young he was already holy, and had acquired the gift of

¹ Page 251.

prophecy. And he told Jarlath, who was old, and who might reasonably expect to end his days at Cloonfush by the banks of its winding river, that another place was to be the place of his resurrection. "Let a new chariot be built by thee," he said, "for thou art an old man, and go in it on the road. And wherever the two hind shafts shall break there thy resurrection will be." Nor had Jarlath proceeded far when the two hind shafts of the chariot broke, and the name of the place was Tuam-na-Ghualann (the village or place of the two shoulders), the name, no doubt, being derived from the character of the ground on which the village stood.

The subsequent history of St. Jarlath is obscure. He died about 540. His relics were long venerated in Tuam, and a special church was built to contain them. It was called *Tempul na Scrin*, or the Church of the Shrine. In time both church and shrine disappeared, and all that is known is that the church was close to the cathedral and that the latter stood where the Protestant cathedral now stands. The Church of the Shrine itself was a parish church.²

After St. Jarlath was laid to rest Tuam disappeared from view, and only a few scattered entries are found in the "Annals" like milestones along the road to mark the advance of time. At 776 the "Four Masters" record the death of O'Brolcain, Abbot of Tuam; at 969 the death of O'Clerigh, Bishop of Connaught; and at 1085 the death of Aedh O'Hoison, Comharb of St. Jarlath and High Bishop of Tuam.

The O'Connors.

At this latter date the O'Connors, while still retaining Rathcroghan as their chief residence, made Tuam an important centre of government, and from their strong castle watched the turbulent O'Flaherties and kept them in check. Tuam was also the seat of a school hallowed by the memory of its founder St. Jarlath, the cathedral town of his episcopal successors. As a stronghold of the O'Connors it was

² "Papal Registers."

attacked by the Munster chiefs; but the vigour of Turlogh O'Connor repelled all such attacks, and O'Brien of Thomond had to cede the first place to O'Connor. It was then that money was coined at Clonmacnoise, that stone bridges were built over the Shannon, that Tuam cathedral was rebuilt, that the Abbey of Cong was built, the cross of Cong fashioned by skilled metal workers, the high cross of Tuam sculptured and set up, most probably to commemorate the building of the cathedral. And we have the authority of Petrie for saying that "it is the finest monument of its class in Ireland."³ It may be that the processional cross of Cong was made at Clonmacnoise where Turlogh O'Connor had his money coined, but it is not unlikely that these splendid specimens of Romanesque—the Cathedral and the Abbey of Cong—were the work of architects who had their residence at Tuam. And they would also have sculptured the high cross.

After Turlogh O'Connor had passed away in 1156 his son Roderick resided at Tuam, and built a castle there in 1161 which was so strong that it was called "the wonderful castle." It has, however, long since disappeared, and the O'Connors themselves disappeared from Tuam. After the time of Cahal Crovderg they were completely overshadowed by the De Burgos, who, however, fixed on Galway rather than Tuam as their stronghold. But they were not unmindful of Tuam, and if Turlogh O'Connor founded in 1140 an Abbey of Augustinian Canons dedicated to St. John the Baptist, De Burgo in 1214 erected at Tuam a Premonstransian Abbey of the Holy Trinity. Perhaps it was in reparation for the misdeeds of his kinsman William de Burgo, who robbed the churches of Tuam in 1204.⁴

The Parish of Tuam.

Henceforth the history of the parish of *Tuam* is overshadowed by the history of the archdiocese, and little is

³ "Round Towers," p. 317.

⁴ "Annals of Clonmacnoise."

known of the town and parish until many centuries have passed. But there are a few facts which stand out. In 1244 the whole town including the churches was destroyed by fire. About the same time Henry III. granted to the Archbishop a patent to hold in the town a seven days' fair, beginning in the last days of December. In 1356 Tuam was plundered by Charles de Burgo. At 1446 it is recorded that the church buildings in Tuam, especially the Archbishop's house, rarely occupied by him, were in such a state of dilapidation that Pope Eugene IV. granted an indulgence to those who contributed to the repair of them. It was added that the means of the "mensa of Tuam" were insufficient for the purpose.⁵

With the advent to the archdiocese of Christopher Bodkin Tuam again comes into prominence. It is not necessary to assume that he was a schismatic, for he held office under Queen Mary as well as under Edward VI. and Elizabeth, and he could not have done so if he renounced the supremacy of the Pope. He was a clever courtier, able to steer his bark when the waters were dangerous; and his influence with the Government placed him on many royal commissions. When he died the pervert Dean Lally succeeded, and henceforth the seamless garment of the church of Tuam was torn in two. The Protestant Archbishop had the Cathedral and church lands, while the Catholics were a persecuted creed; and when James I. created Parliamentary boroughs in 1613 Tuam was included.

The Northern earls had then been declared outlaws and the spoliation of Catholic Ulster had been accomplished. For the first time an all Ireland Parliament was to meet in Dublin, and it was advisable from the English king's point of view that this new Parliament would sanction what had been done. For the purpose of securing a majority in the Protestant interest 38 new boroughs were created. In 1610 the Viceroy was much disturbed in mind at the appointment of Florence Conry as Catholic Archbishop of Tuam.⁶ But there was a

⁵ "Papal Registers," X, p. 334.

⁶ Russell's "Calendar," pp. 461-5.

counteracting influence in the person of Lally, the Protestant Archbishop; and the few burgesses who were given the franchise could be controlled by him. And in a forecast from the Government side about the coming election it was confidently expected that two Protestant members would come from Tuam, "the Archbishop's chief seat."⁷ There were therefore in the Parliament of 1613 three stalwarts from Tuam, the Archbishop in the house of Lords, and the two members for the boroughs in the House of Commons.⁸

The Corporation.

In the same year, so pleased was James I. with Tuam and so confident of its loyalty, that he granted a charter constituting the Corporation of Tuam. It included the town itself and extended for two miles outside. The Mayor of a later date was styled the sovereign, and there were 12 free burgesses who filled vacancies in their own body and so perpetuated themselves, the whole body being called the sovereign, free burgesses and commonalty of the borough of Tuam.⁹ Among the town officers were two sergeants-at-mace, a town clerk, a recorder, a treasurer, two constables, scavengers, an inspector of markets, a weighmaster and a bellman. The salary of the sovereign, who was yearly elected, was £50. The revenue was derived from the tolls and customs, and the bellman and scavengers were paid much less than they would be in the twentieth century. A distinguished native of Tuam, Mr. R. J. Kelly, has discovered from contemporary documents that in 1827 the Protestant burgesses were no longer in control, and that so Catholic in sympathy was the Tuam Corporation that the whole surplus revenue from the tolls and customs for five years was voted as a contribution to the new Cathedral.¹⁰

In 1634 the members for Tuam were Sir Thomas Rotherham and Sir Valentine Blake, the former, no doubt, being a

⁷ "Calendar," 1613-14, p. 161.

⁸ *Ibid.* p. 345.

⁹ "Patent Rolls, James I.," 1613.

¹⁰ "Galway Arch. Journal."

Protestant. In 1641 the Protestants were evidently not strong and the Catholics were, for the former complained to the Government that the Catholic Archbishop went about openly and was much respected.¹¹ In 1689, in the Parliament of James II., the representatives from Tuam were James Lally of Tullinadaly and William Burke of Carrowfilla, both Catholics.¹² More than a century later, when the Union was carried by corruption and fraud, the two Tuam seats were in the patronage of Mr. John Bingham, who figures on Sir Jonah Barrington's Black List. For he first offered the two votes to the Opposition for £8,000, but he changed sides when he was offered by Castlereagh the higher sum of £15,000 and was raised to the peerage as Lord Clanmorris.

In 1831 the population of Tuam was 6,883.¹³ It had then ceased to be a Parliamentary borough. It still existed as a corporation, and in 1840 was one of those affected by the Municipal Corporation Act of that year. The franchise was extended and henceforth the Tuam Town Commissioners, as they were called, were almost exclusively Catholic. A few years later, in 1847, the Chairman of the Town Commissioners was a priest, the Rev. Peter Reynolds, then Adm. of Tuam and subsequently President of St. Jarlath's College and P.P. of Claremorris.

Parish of Annaghdown.

The fame of *Annaghdown* in Christian times is chiefly owing to St. Brendan, the patron of the parish and the patron also of Kerry and Clonfert. Born at Fenit, not far from Tral, he was a descendant of Fergus Mac Roigh, King of Connaught. He was of the Ciarraidhe, and as these migrated to Connaught he had relatives in both provinces, and this may explain why he was equally active in Connaught as in Munster and equally well known. The date of his birth is given as 483, and that of his death as 577, when he had reached the patriarchal age of 94. He is the most

¹¹ Mahaffy's "Cal.," p. 64.

¹² Davis's "Patriot Parliament," p. 162.

¹³ R. J. Kelly in "Galway Arch. Journal."

picturesque figure among the Irish saints, travelling all over Ireland to Wales, and to Iona, visiting St. Jarlath at Cloon-fush and Enda at Aran, founding monasteries at Inchiquin in Lough Corrib and at Inisglory off Mayo, founding a monastery and school at Clonfert and a convent and monastery at Annaghdown.

But his wanderings outside Ireland to the Land of Promise have given him more fame. Dr. Healy thinks that this island was off the Galway coast, perhaps Ardoilean. Desolate and bleak and wind-swept, and exposed to the full fury of the Atlantic waves, it could hardly be the Land of Promise where only delights abounded. And it is easy to see that we are dealing with fiction rather than fact when we are told, that for several years St. Brendan and his companions anchored their vessel on the back of a whale in mid-ocean and there peacefully said Mass and celebrated Easter. Threatened by winds and waves, St. Brendan prayed to the Blessed Virgin and was saved from all the perils of the sea. One island he visited was filled with sheep so numerous that they hid the face of the land. On another island was a community of monks who observed perpetual silence. On a third island he met Judas Iscariot. He was condemned to hell; but because he had in life once relieved a leper in Joppa, he was allowed by God on certain great festivals of the year to cool himself on this island, after which he returned to his punishment.

“ Once every year when carols wake,
On earth, the Christmas-night's repose
Arising from the Sinner's lake,
I journey to these healing snows. ”

“ I staunch with ice my burning breast,
With silence balm my whirling brain.
O, Brendan, to this hour of rest
That Joppen leper's ease was pain.”¹⁴

After St. Brendan had seen these wonderful things he was accosted by an angel who bade him return home. And long

¹⁴ Matthew Arnold's "Poems."
(D 705)

after his return he founded the monastery of Annaghdown, and died there in 577. Much, indeed, of his supposed voyages may be regarded as fiction, though it may readily be admitted that he was fond of travel and sailed over many seas. And his death at Annaghdown is well authenticated, and there his memory has been ever since specially revered.¹⁵

After his death Annaghdown is for centuries lost to view. Aedh, son of Eochaidh, King of Connaught, who ruled from 557 to 594, had given some land as a church endowment, and here the convent of the nuns and St. Mary's Abbey, sometimes called the College of St. Brendan. There was the Little Cell of Premonstratensian Canons. The date of this latter is uncertain, but it must have been long after the days of St. Brendan, for the Premonstratensians did not exist until long after the sixth century. The subsequent history of these houses is obscure. The convent with its lands became subject to the convent at Clonard, and in Cahal Crovderg's day was transferred from Clonard to Kilcreevanty.¹⁶ The Little Cell in the taxation of 1306 was assessed at 10 shillings.¹⁷ In 1419 its abbot was ordered by the Pope to appoint an abbot of Holy Trinity in Tuam.¹⁸ In 1428 Richard de Burgo, a Canon of the Abbey, was allowed to leave his Order and become an Augustinian Canon at Cong, and in 1455 one of its canons was absolved from serious irregularities.¹⁹ In 1432 there was a Papal indulgence granted for the repairs of St. Brendan's church.²⁰

Parish and Diocese of Annaghdown.

In 1238 a round tower was built at Annaghdown. The wooden churches of Brendan and Briga had long since passed away; but the memory of St. Brendan remained, and the O'Flaherty chiefs who ruled along the shores of the

¹⁵ "Lives of the Saints from the Book of Lismore"; O'Donoghue's "Brendiniana—The Latin Life and Voyage."

¹⁶ Knox, p. 280.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* p. 274.

¹⁸ "Papal Registers," VII, pp. 133-4.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* VIII, p. 52, XI, p. 239.

²⁰ *Ibid.* VIII, p. 445.

Corrib endowed St. Brendan's College until St. Brendan's church became a cathedral and Annaghdown a diocese.

The exact date at which it became a diocese has not been ascertained. It is not mentioned at the Synod of Kells, though Cong is. But Cong was soon abolished, and shortly after Annaghdown appears. For there was certainly a bishop there in 1189, when Concors, Bishop of Annaghdown, was present at the coronation of Richard I. of England. And the deaths of Bishops of Annaghdown are duly recorded until 1251. Henceforth the history of the diocese was a troubled one. In 1250 the Archbishop of Tuam protested that Annaghdown was not a diocese but a parochial church in the archdiocese. The Archbishop, however, was defeated, and the Pope appointed Concors.²¹ The dispute was renewed in 1286 under Fulbourn, and in 1289 under Bermingham, and in 1312 the Archbishop, Malachy MacHugh, appealed to the Pope asking that Annaghdown should be united to Tuam. In 1325 there was a Papal Brief uniting it to Tuam. Against this Edward III. protested, and for the reason that Annaghdown was among the English, and ruled by an English bishop, while Tuam was among the mere Irish. Owing, perhaps, to this interposition the Papal Brief was not enforced, and appointments to Annaghdown are recorded at 1394, 1402, 1421, 1425, 1428, 1431, 1446, 1450. The independence of Annaghdown, however, ceased on the appointment of Donatus O'Murray to the archdiocese in 1450, and when, in 1484, he established the Wardenship of Galway, Annaghdown finally ceased its independent existence. There was, it is true, a Bishop of Annaghdown appointed in 1496 and another in 1551, but these were only titular bishops.²²

After this date Annaghdown became a parochial church, and a poor one, and in 1594 the lands of the ancient abbey were leased to John Rawson and Henry Deane. Nor does

²¹ Theiner.

²² Monsignor Fahy in "Galway Arch. Journal," June and Dec., 1904.

anything remain of the ancient buildings, except some shapeless ruins on the edge of Lough Corrib.

PARISH PRIESTS OF ANNAGHDOWN.

- Rev. Patrick Gallagher—died 1771.²³
 Rev. Father Burke—died 1798.
 Rev. Raymond Hargaden—1831-1840.
 Rev. Myles Sheridan—1840-1849.
 Rev. Thomas Keaveney—1849-1857.
 Rev. Peter Waldron—1857-1877.
 Rev. Laurence Ansbro—1877-1914.
 Rev. Thomas Hosty—1914-1920.
 Rev. Michael Hannon—1920-

Parish of Athenry.

The name *Athenry*, the Ford of the Kings, is derived from the fact that here three territories meet—Hy Fiachrah, Hy-Many and Magh Seola. But the name may be differently derived if we are to believe Ptolemy, who places this as the chief seat of the Anteri. It is certain at all events that Athenry stands out prominently, more prominently at least in civil history than any other parish of the archdiocese. As far back as the reign of Lughad MacCon, about 250, it was the scene of a great battle which took place at Magh Mucroimhe near Moyvilla. Art, son of Conn of the Hundred Battles, the nominal King of Ireland, fell in the battle, as did Forga, King of Connaught, and the seven sons of Olioll Olum, King of Munster. The place still bears the old name, and the exact spot where Art fell is called Turlough Art. The result was to give the throne of Ireland to Lughaid MacCon.²⁴

Like the remainder of the archdiocese, Athenry in due course became Christian; but we know not who were its first Christian teachers and find no footprints of the earlier saints,

²³ The following is a verbatim copy of the inscription on his tombstone:—
 "Pray for the Soul of Father Patrick Gallagher, Parish Priest of
 Annaghdown, died 14th Feb., 1771: aged 109 years."

²⁴ "Four Masters"; "Ogygia," pp. 226-8.

such as we find at Annaghdown and Tuam. It is not unlikely that Brendan, passing from Annaghdown to Clonfert, met the people at Athenry and preached to them. In the twelfth century, however, Athenry emerges from obscurity, and at the Synod of Kells the deanery of Athenry, consisting of Athenry itself, Teac Saxon and Kilmeen, was added to Tuam. Its advantageous position attracted the Anglo-Normans, and after De Burgo came to Connaught Meyler de Bermingham came to Athenry, holding the whole barony with the title of baron, not by creation but by tenure. He soon strengthened his new position and built the Norman castle, which is still called the Castle of King John. This would fix the date of the building earlier than 1216.

Twice within the next century Athenry was the scene of a fierce battle, in which national issues were decided. In 1249 the place, strongly held by the English, was assailed by the Connaught chiefs; but the Sheriff, Jordan de Exeter, rushed out "with harness and arms and sheets of mail," and the Connaught chiefs left many of their bravest on the field. It was said that the Blessed Virgin fought on the side of the English, for the Irish attacked on the Feast of the Assumption and the English had vainly besought the Irish to desist from profaning the great feast.²⁵

A far greater battle was fought at Athenry in 1316. As on a former occasion, the Irish were the assailants. But heavy-armed cavalry and coats of mail were too much for light infantry, and the crossbow and the Norman lance were more deadly than the battle-axe. The English were under Burke and Bermingham, the Irish under Felim O'Connor, King of Connaught. Numbers were certainly on the Irish side, and there was no lack of bravery, but superior weapons and discipline overcame undisciplined valour. Each time the Irish advanced to the attack they were mown down by the terrible crossbows, and when their ranks were broken the English cavalry trampled them under foot. When night fell 8,000 of the Irish lay dead or dying on the field, Felim

²⁵ "Four Masters"; "Annals of Clonmacnoise."

O'Connor and the Connaught chiefs among them; and the greatest battle fought in Ireland since Strongbow—had been lost and won.²⁶

Guarded by discipline and valour and under the capable leadership of the Berminghams, Athenry had already become prosperous, and in 1310 had got from the English king a murage charter empowering "the bailiffs and good men of Athenry" to levy tolls and customs for three years so as to build a wall round the town. It was then inhabited by English settlers and had English institutions, and the "Portreeve, Burgesses and Commonalty of Athenry," to whom the charter was granted, loved to follow English rather than Irish ways. After 1316 they felt a sense of security and were immune from attack. The spoils of the battle enabled them to still further strengthen their encircling wall and enriched the town; greater prosperity supervened; and when the Viceroy, Sir Henry Sidney, visited Galway in 1567 he could truly say that "Athenry was a great and ancient town," fully as large, and even more prosperous than, Galway.²⁷

The turn of the tide, however, was at hand. In 1574 the rebellious sons of the Earl of Clanrickard burned the town, college and parish church included. Athenry was then described as a fair, large town, well walled, with strong towers.²⁸ In the same year a petition was sent to the English Privy Council from the inhabitants asking, as loyal inhabitants, for a fee-farm grant of £20 out of the Crown lands in Connaught;²⁹ and though it does not appear that this petition was granted, the Privy Council ordered that Clanrickard's sons should be pardoned, but that the town should be rebuilt at their father's expense.³⁰ This, however, was not done, and when Sir Henry Sidney laid fines on Clanrickard and his tenants the Earl protested that a levy of £6,000 was too heavy. And lest the rebuilding should be carried through,

²⁶ "Annals of Loch Ce"; "Four Masters"; "Annals of Clonmacnoise."

²⁷ O'Flaherty's "Iar-Connaught," p. 268.

²⁸ "Carew Papers."

²⁹ Hamilton's "Calendar," pp. 14-15.

³⁰ *Ibid.* p. 37.

the Earl's rebellious sons drove away the masons who were rebuilding the town.³¹ Sidney then described Athenry as "the most woeful spectacle that ever I looked on in any of the Queen's dominions." A little later the work of restoration was partially carried out; and in the Parliament of 1585 the two members for Athenry attended and for a time there was peace.³²

But in 1596 the peace was broken, and Red Hugh O'Donnell and Theobald Burke, with an army of 3,000 foot and 200 horse, attacked Athenry. They soon scaled the walls, forced the gates, and in spite of strong opposition took possession of the castle and all the stores it contained. They destroyed the entire fortress, says O'Donnell's biographer. And he adds: "O'Donnell and his host remained in the town that night and evacuated it in the morning, after stripping it of everything valuable."³³

After this Athenry decayed, and in 1607 there was a petition from the inhabitants asking relief from the English Privy Council. The Council was not unfriendly and recommended that the loyal town should get relief. But Clanrickard wrote to his friend the Earl of Salisbury that Bodkin, the chief promoter of the petition, was a knave, and no relief was given.³⁴ Four years later the Protestant party, anxious for a majority in the Parliament of 1613, had to lament that there was no hope of getting any Protestant vote from Athenry. Its inhabitants were loyal and English, but they were Catholic.³⁵ In the Parliament of 1639 the members from Athenry were Richard Martin and Dominick Browne, both, judging by their names, Catholic.³⁶ In the Parliament of 1689, the Patriot Parliament, the members were James Talbot of Mount Talbot and Charles Daly of Dunsandle.³⁷ And in 1800 the Parliamentary representation of the borough

³¹ "Hamilton's Calendar," pp. 95-97.

³² *Ibid.* p. 561.

³³ O'Clery's "Life of O'Donnell."

³⁴ Russell's "Cal.," pp. 190, 204-5.

³⁵ "Carew Papers," p. 145.

³⁶ Mahaffy's "Cal.," p. 64.

³⁷ Davis's List.

was in the hands of Theophilus Blakeney, who sold it to Castlereagh for £15,000. After this Athenry ceased to be a Parliamentary borough, and it ceased to be a corporation after the Municipal Reform Act of 1840.

As Athenry cannot be said to have any civil history before the English settled there, neither had it any ecclesiastical history, and its ecclesiastical history is chiefly bound up with the Dominican Abbey that flourished there. A chronicle of events will be sufficient.

- 1235.—Richard de Burgo, who had already established an English colony at Athenry, having often passed through on his way from Loughrea to Galway, gave a charter to Meyler de Bermingham to levy tolls and customs.
- 1241.—Meyler de Bermingham founded the Dominican Abbey on land which he purchased for 160 marks from Richard Brannach. His knights and esquires gave contribution.
- 1250.—Felim O'Connor, son of Cahal Crovderg, built the refectory.
- 1275.—Meyler de Bermingham died.
- 1289.—Meyler's son, William, appointed Archbishop of Tuam, though only in sub-deacon's orders.
- 1297.—The Archbishop and the Athenry Dominicans quarrelled, the Dominicans denying his right of visitation and the Archbishop retorting by placing the Abbey under interdict.
- 1312.—The Archbishop died and was buried in the Abbey.
- 1322.—Richard de Bermingham, the victor at the great battle of 1316, died and was buried in the Abbey church.
- 1324.—Sir William de Burgo gave 100 marks to build the front of the church.
- 1344.—Mac-an-Wallyde de Bermingham built the chapel of the Blessed Sacrament, and James Lynch gave 12 acres of land at Rahard.
- 1374.—Richard de Bermingham gave the Abbey 18 acres at Gloves. He was buried in the church, and so were the sixth, seventh and eighth Lords of Athenry, all of them benefactors.
- 1400.—Pope Boniface IX. granted an indulgence to all who would visit the Abbey and contribute to its building.
- ^{1413.} 1423.—Large portion of the Abbey burned. The same year Pope Martin V. granted an indulgence to those who contributed to rebuild it. He also authorised the Athenry community to found two houses, which they did by founding Tombeola, and Ballindoon in the Co. Sligo in 1427.
- 1445.—There were at this date 30 Dominicans in the Abbey.

- 1462.—William de Burgo died, having given lands, and many others had given lands and money.
- 1482.—General Chapter held in the Abbey attended by 280 Dominicans.
- 1488.—Pope Innocent VIII. gave the Abbey Our Lady's Church in Galway, formerly belonging to the Premonstratensian Abbey of Holy Trinity, Tuam.
- 1500.—Thomas, Lord Athenry, died, a great benefactor.
- 1509.—Richard de Burgo gave lands at Carnane.
- 1524.—Meyler de Bermingham gave lands and a water mill, and helped to entertain the friars—360 in number—who attended a general chapter at Athenry.
- 1541.—Order of the Irish Privy Council that the Abbey was not to be dissolved, but the friars must wear secular dress.
- 1574.—Crown grant of Abbey and lands—nearly 1,500 acres—to the Provost and burgesses of Athenry.
- 1627.—Abbey and lands transferred to four Galway merchants who allowed the friars to return.
- 1641.—The Dominicans rebuilt the Abbey.
- 1649.—Dominican Abbey at Athenry joined to four others in Ireland, erected into a University by a General Chapter at Rome.
- 1652.—The friars expelled by the Cromwellians after the capture of Galway.
- 1655.—The Abbey and lands granted to Henry Farrelly, "a transplanted Papist" from Tipperary.
- 1667.—Francis, Lord Athenry, sued the Portreeve of the town for having sold an ancient monument in brass, valued at £200, on which was a representation of the landing in Ireland of the first Bermingham.
- 1750.—The Irish Government ordered the Abbey buildings to be pulled down and converted into a barrack—all but the church—and the soldiers defaced many of the monuments in the Abbey.³⁸

That there was a parish church in Athenry has been ignored by most writers in spite of the fact that William de Bermingham, Archbishop of Tuam, was Rector of Athenry, and that in the taxation of 1306 the revenue of the parish was given as 40 marks, of which half went to the rector, one-fourth to the perpetual vicar and the remaining fourth to the Archbishop of Tuam. In the "Papal Registers" there is an entry

³⁸ Register of the Abbey in "Galway Arch. Journal" by M. J. Blake; "Hibernia Dominicana"; O'Heyne and Archdall.

at 1413 of the appointment of Meyler de Bermingham as perpetual vicar of Athenry, one at 1425 that the rectory, which was in lay patronage, was long vacant; another at 1437 showing that the rector and vicar were two different persons, though it would seem that each had fixity of tenure in their positions.³⁹

In 1485 there was a revolutionary change. Canon Burke of Tuam was then both rector and perpetual vicar, and in that capacity he obtained a confirmation from Rome of a grant already made by Archbishop O'Murray making the church at Athenry a collegiate church like Galway. Canon Burke was to be Warden of the College and to be assisted in his parochial work by eight secular priests. This helps to explain Sir Henry Sidney's lament in 1576 that the "College and parish church" had been burned by the sons of the Earl of Clanrickard. It also helps to refute the statement of Archdall that there was a Franciscan friary at Athenry, founded in 1464 by the Earl of Kildare. And if there was no such foundation this Franciscan friary could not therefore have ever evolved into the parish church.⁴⁰

Templemoyle in Athenry parish was for the Third Order of St. Francis, but the date of its foundation is unknown. Tysaxon or Teacsaxon was established from Mayo at an early date, probably long before Strongbow's time. It was burned in 1177. Afterwards, about 1500, it was rebuilt by Burke for Franciscans. At the dissolution it went to the Portreeve and burgesses of Athenry.⁴¹

MODERN PARISH PRIESTS.

Rev. William Cullinane—

Rev. Peter Curran—1847-1858.

Rev. John O'Grady—1858-1879.

Very Rev. Canon O'Brien—1879-1883.

³⁹ "Papal Registers," VI, pp. 424-5; VIII, p. 652; IX, pp. 9, 55.

⁴⁰ Charles McNeill in "Galway Arch. Journal"; also "Papal Registers" and Theiner.

⁴¹ Archdall.

Very Rev. Canon Thomas—1883-1890.

Very Rev. Canon Canton—1890-1920.

Very Rev. Canon Farragher—1920-

Abbeyknockmoy.

The parish of *Abbey* is a composite parish made up of *Abbey* and part of the old parish of *Monivea*. The remainder of *Monivea*, including *Teacsaxon*, was annexed to *Athenry* before the famine. The name of *Knockmoy* added to *Abbey* has a two-fold derivation. If the "Book of Howth" can be relied on, and it is not very reliable, it means the Hill of Victory, being the site of a great victory won over the English by *Cahal Crovderg*. But there is no record of any such battle, and the probability is that *O'Donovan* is right when he says that it means the Hill of *Meaidh*, this being a woman's name literally meaning good or noble. The Hill of Victory, however, has a constant tradition on its side, and in mediæval documents, civil and ecclesiastical, the *Abbey* is spoken of as "de colle victoriae," the *Abbey* of the Hill of Victory.

This abbey was in its day the richest in the archdiocese, and completely overshadows the parish, and indeed the parish has no history apart from that of the *Abbey*. The history of the *Abbey* may be conveniently put in chronological order.

- 1190.—The *Abbey* founded and endowed by *Cahal Crovderg*, who brought Cistercians from *Boyle*. *St. Michael & St. Bernard*
- 1200.—*O'Flaherty* gave the rectory of *Galway*.
- 1211.—*Roderick O'Connor*, son of the last *Ardri*, interred in the *Abbey*.
- 1216.—*Patrick*, "Bishop of *Knockmoy*," no doubt a mitred abbot, interred in the *Abbey*. (*Loch Ce.*)
- 1217.—*Mary*, wife of *Crovderg*, interred there.
- 1224.—*Crovderg*, having become one of the monks, died in the *Abbey*.
- 1235.—The Archbishop of *Tuam* gave the *Abbey* the tithes of *Killascobe*.
- 1290.—The Abbot of *Knockmoy* became Bishop of *Kilmacduagh*.
- 1295.—*O'Kelly*, chief of *Hy-Many*, died a monk at *Knockmoy*.

- 1306.—The Abbey taxed at £42 13s. 6d.
- 1359.—Kilmacduagh, having been for a time united to Tuam, the Archbishop and Chapter of Tuam found the union irksome, and a Papal Commission was appointed, consisting of the Abbots of Knockmoy, Corcomroe and Kilmacduagh. As a result of their report the union was dissolved.⁴²
- 1383.—The tithes of Murrough, near Galway, leased for 20 years to Henry Blake of Galway.
- 1398.—Galway as a perpetual vicarage given by the Pope to John Lang, priest of Cashel, on the petition of the parishioners, who complained that the Abbots of Knockmoy appointed or dismissed whom they pleased without consulting the people.⁴³
- 1399.—The Abbot of Knockmoy, protected by the Archbishop of Tuam, obstructed this John Lang, and the Archbishop of Armagh was ordered to compel the Archbishop and the Abbot to desist from their obstruction.⁴⁴
- 1411.—Knockmoy was so poor that it could not support all the monks.⁴⁵
- 1483.—John de Burgo, a powerful layman, was protector of the Abbey.
- 1485.—The Vicarage of Galway transferred from Knockmoy to the Warden of Galway.
- 1542.—Hugh O'Kelly, the lay abbot, apostatised, and, taking the oath of supremacy, got a lease of the abbey lands.
- 1557.—Hugh O'Kelly appointed Blake as his tithe collector in Galway.
- 1588.—When this lease terminated a renewal was given to the Mayor and Corporation of Galway; but the lands at Tiaquin were given by Crown grant to Hugh O'Kelly's son.
- 1590.—Part of the Abbey lands leased to Sir Patrick Barnewell.
- 1615.—New Crown lease to Sir John King and Sir C. Wilmot.
- 1622.—Abbey lands granted in fee-simple to Sir Val. Blake, with power to hold courts and a market once a week.
- 1652.—Sir Val. Blake as an opponent of the Cromwellians driven from his Castle of Menlo and from his lands at Abbey, which were given to R. Bogle.
- 1668.—Greater part of the lands restored to Blake, but the tithes of Killascobe were given to the Protestant Archbishop of Tuam.

⁴² "Papal Registers," III, p. 605.

⁴³ *Ibid.* p. 189.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* p. 254.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* VI, p. 275.

- 1677.—Nicholas Browne got about 2,000 acres of the Abbey lands including Newtown and Moyne.
- 1737.—Some monks having returned to Knockmoy, were reported to the Irish House of Commons.
- 1766.—Anastasia Blake, last descendant of the original grantee, married to Francis Foster, and henceforth it was the Blake-Foster estate.
- 1855.—The Blake-Foster estate purchased by Martin J. Blake, M.P., of Ballyglunin, and remained in his family until sold to the tenants.

In the Monivea part of the parish there was the monastery of Temple Moyle, built for the Third Order of St. Francis. A more important house was that of Tysaxon, founded at an early date from Mayo, and afterwards a prebend of the archdiocese. Burned down in 1177, it was rebuilt by one of the Burkes about 1500 and at the dissolution went to the Portreeve and burgesses of Athenry. These two houses and the surrounding lands were added to the parish of Athenry.⁴⁶

PARISH PRIESTS OF ABBEY.

- Rev. David Noone—1821-1846.
- Rev. John O'Grady—1847-1858.
- Rev. Thomas Haddican—1858-1872.
- Rev. Henry Cahill—1872-1891.
- Rev. Michael Diskin—1891-1898.
- Rev. James Curran—1898-1912.
- Rev. James Heaney—1912-1920.
- Rev. John Greally—1920-

Parish of Menlough.

The parish of *Menlough* or *Killascobe* has scarcely any history, and ought therefore be happy. No saints' footprints can be traced within its bounds and no monastery or religious establishment. Nor is it connected with any big event either in ecclesiastical or civil history. It was in Hy-Many and in the present barony of Tiaquin. Anciently it had two churches, Kilfellig and Killascobe, the tithes of the former from 1279 going to the Abbey of Knockmoy.

⁴⁶ M. J. Blake in "Galway Arch. Journal," Vol. I; Archdall; "State Papers" and "Papal Registers."

PARISH PRIESTS.

- *Rev. John Noone—1850-1872.
- Rev. Joseph Judge—1872-1897.
- Rev. Patrick Colgan—1897-1908.
- Rev. John Burke—1908-1921.
- Rev. Patrick Nicholson—1921-

Mountbellew and Moylough.

The history of the united parishes of *Mountbellew* and *Moylough* is as destitute of interest as that of Killascobe. In the fifteenth century and earlier they were separate parishes. In 1410 the Abbot of Knockmoy was blamed for retaining the rectory of Moylough in his possession—without cure⁴⁷—and in 1435 the Abbot of Knockmoy was ordered in the Pope's name to collate to the rectory of Mountbellew.⁴⁸ The latter was called Ballynakill-Ahiart from an old church of that name. The name still survives in one of the churchyards of the parish. Both these parishes were in O'Kelly's country and large part of the tithes were in possession of the Abbey of Knockmoy. After the suppression tithes and lands were seized by the O'Kellys, but in a return dated 1591 the Queen is put down as owner both of Moylough and Killascobe.⁴⁹ The date of the junction of Moylough and Mountbellew does not appear.

*Note by the Rev. Patrick Nicholson, P.P. :—

“ Looking over the old Baptismal Register, I see that Father Noone was the first P.P. of Menlough as an independent parish. Up to the time of his appointment Menlough and Moylough were united. He was C.C. here from about 1844, and Father Feeney was P.P. of Moylough—the two parishes apparently united. On the death of Father Feeney, Father Noone was appointed P.P. here. Before his appointment I can find no trace of a P.P. of Menlough—the parish was regulated from Moylough.”

⁴⁷ “ Papal Registers,” VI, pp. 166, 255-6.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* p. 556.

⁴⁹ Knox's “ Tuam,” pp. 213-230.

RECENT PARISH PRIESTS.

- Rev. John Burke—1848-1861.
 Rev. Eugene Coyne—1861-1871.
 Rev. James Magee—1871-1872.
 Very Rev. Thomas Ronayne—1872-1909.
 Very Rev. John Fallon—1909-1918.
 Rev. Michael Glynn—1918-

Parish of Killererin.

Killererin was a rectory as well as a vicarage, and in the taxation of 1306 it was taxed at £1. It had one monastery, the Carmelite monastery of Creevebaun, founded and endowed by the Earl of Clanrickard. Its lands were but 28 acres, and at the suppression were given to the Corporation of Athenry.

PARISH PRIESTS IN RECENT TIMES.

- Rev. John McLoughlin—1839-1849.
 Rev. John Cavanagh—1849-1872.⁵⁰
 Rev. Father O'Flaherty—1872-1873.
 Rev. William Scully—1873-1878.
 Rev. Patrick Waldron—1878-1887.
 Rev. Patrick Levingstone—1887-1888.
 Rev. John Keaveney—1888-1926.
 Rev. Peter Curran—1926-

Parish of Lackagh.

The parish of *Lackagh* was a parish in Annaghdown diocese and as such was incorporated with the archdiocese. It was probably part of the revenue of the Provost of Annaghdown, who held in addition part of the rectory of Killascobe.⁵¹ It is recorded at 1551 that John Moore, Bishop of Annaghdown, held the prebend of Lackagh, and he could be only

⁵⁰ In the church at Killererin there is a mural tablet bearing the following inscription:—"In memoriam Rev. Joannis Cavanagh sacerdotis vita pietatis plena, Killererensis parochi XXV annos pastoris, die 4, Nov., 1872, vocati aetatis suae 64. Hunc lapidem grati et fideles parochiani pie posuerunt."

⁵¹ Knox, pp. 86-89.

titular bishop, for that diocese had then ceased to exist.⁵² Nine years later Dean Lally got from the Queen the prebend of Lackagh. He became an apostate and succeeded Bodkin as Archbishop of Tuam.

In civil history Lackagh is more prominent than in ecclesiastical history. For it was the scene of the great battle of Knockdoe, fought in 1504 on a low hill to the right of the road from Lackagh to Annaghdown. On one side were the Burkes of Clanrickard, O'Carroll of Ely and O'Brien of Thomond. On the other were the Deputy, the Earl of Kildare, O'Kelly of Hy-Many, O'Donnell, O'Connor and Burke, with the English of the Pale. Knockdoe is the Hill of the Axes, for the Irish as usual relied chiefly on their battle-axes. They were, however, badly defeated with the loss of more than 2,000 men. The "Book of Howth," always prone to exaggerate, puts the Irish loss as 9,000. Kildare and his men encamped for the night on the field they had won, and marching to Galway captured it as well as Athenry. Then returning to Dublin, he was rewarded with the Order of the Garter and continued in office to the end of the reign of Henry VII.⁵³

RECENT PARISH PRIESTS.

Rev. John McGough—1853-1883.

Rev. James Hennelly—1884-1887.

Rev. John McGreal—1887-1896.

Rev. James Heaney—1896-1912.

Rev. John O'Malley—1912-1924.

Rev. Thomas Lynch—1924-

Parish of Cummer.

The parish of *Cummer* or *Corofin* is a composite parish made up of the rectory of Kilmoylan and the vicarages of Cummer, Belclare and Killower. The latter must be distinguished from Killower parish. It was a small and poor

⁵² "Irish Dep. Keeper's Records," Eighth Report, p. 154.

⁵³ Ware's "Annals"; "Book of Howth"; Gilbert's "Viceroys"; "Four Masters"; "Annals of Loch Ce."

vicarage, poorer even than Belclare, which in 1585 was valued at only ten shillings, while Cummer was put at £2 and Kilmoylan at £1 6s. 8d. The Rectory of Kilmoylan was a prebend and is still. Its importance can be seen from the fact that MacWilliam Burke in 1488 stipulated that his son should be made Prebendary of Kilmoylan, and he would scarcely wish to get a poor prebend for his son.

Sylane Near ~~Slane~~ is a place called Clash-an-Afrin where Mass was said in the penal times, the priest being disguised in the house of Mr. O'Connor Donnellon near at hand.

Three bishops have been connected with the parish—Dr. Skerrett, who was born in the parish and became Archbishop of Tuam; Dr. Duggan, who was P.P. and became Bishop of Clonfert, and Dr. Higgins, another P.P. who became Bishop of Temno and Auxiliary Bishop of Tuam.

PARISH PRIESTS OF CUMMER.

Father John Moylan was P.P. in Cummer in or about 1800.

Dr. Keary was P.P. in 1812 and died as P.P. in 1816.

Very Rev. Canon Canavan—1816-1856.

Very Rev. Patrick Duggan—(Adm. 1847-1856) P.P. 1856-1871.

Rev. Thomas McDonagh—1871-1881.

Very Rev. G. J. Canon Bourke—1881-1890.

Rev. Michael Heanny—1890-1894.

Rev. Mark Eagleton—1894-1908.

Rev. William J. MacHugh—1908-1910.

Very Rev. Michael Higgins, D.D.—1910-1912.

Very Rev. James Canon Curran—1912-1922.

Rev. Owen Hannon—1922-

Note by the Rev. Owen Hannon, P.P. :—

“Father Edmund Burke was P.P. of Cummer in 1712, according to Geo. Foster, a spy for the Protestant Archbishop of Tuam at this time. (See “Irish Priests in the Penal Times,” Burke, page 215.)

“He is buried in the Cummer graveyard surrounding the old parish church there, outside the church to the north.

“There is a small mortuary building over the tomb, roofed with flag stones.

“ There is no door to the building now. A limestone flag over the grave lying about three feet higher than the floor of the mortuary bears the following inscription :

“ ‘ Inclytus hic tegitur medicus bonus atque Sacerdos, De Burgo Edwardus, lux populique solus. Obiit 18 Jany., 1730.’

“ I should add that there is a tradition in the parish that he was a medical doctor as well as a priest. This accounts for ‘ Medicus Bonus.’

“ After Foster gave information against him he went ‘ on the run ’ towards Roscommon but evidently returned later.”

Parish of Donaghpatrick.

Donaghpatrick has the distinction of tracing its Christian history back to the days of St. Patrick. For the Apostle, after leaving Dunmore, went to Kilbannon and Killower, and from Killower to Domhnach Mor Magh Seola, then ruled by the princes of the Hy Briuin race, the ancestors of the O’Flaherties. There, near the chief’s dun, St. Patrick founded his Christian church, placing over it Bishop Folantus, for whom St. Patrick’s coppersmith, Assicus of Elphin, made one of his quadrangular patem.⁵⁴ Two centuries later Tirechan saw the place, the people and the patem.⁵⁵ When Annaghdown became a diocese Donaghpatrick was one of its parishes, and probably the parochial church was that built where Patrick’s church once stood.

In the thirteenth century the Anglo-Irish family of the Hacketts settled on the shores of Lough Hackett, holding their lands under the De Burgos. In a short time the whole district became studded with Norman castles, and Castle-hackett still perpetuates the memory of these powerful lords.⁵⁶

At Kilnamanagh was a monastery of the Premonstratensians. The date of its foundation is uncertain; but in the “Papal Register” there is at 1400 a record of the granting of a Papal indulgence to those who would visit and give alms for the repairs of “ St. Mary’s Premonstratensian monastery at Kilnamanagh.”⁵⁷ A further indulgence was granted in 1428

⁵⁴ Healy’s “ St. Patrick,” pp. 222-3.

⁵⁵ “ Tripartite,” pp. 96, 108, 313, 319.

⁵⁶ “ Iar-Connaught,” p. 148.

⁵⁷ “ Papal Reg.,” V, p. 268.

for the repair of the monastery, "whose buildings are in ruin and whose books and other ecclesiastical ornaments are insufficient."⁵⁸ There was also a church at Kilkilvery. Within the parish was the family residence of Dr. Skerrett, Arch bishop of Tuam, at Ballinduff.⁵⁹

PARISH PRIESTS OF DONAGHPATRICK AND KILCUANA.

Rev. John Molloy.

Rev. John Loftus—1853.

Rev. John McCullogh.

Rev. Patrick McNamara—1863-1870.

Very Rev. Canon Heaney—1870-1903.

Rev. Michael Heaney—1903.

Parish of Headford.

Headford is a composite parish, including the ancient churches of Kilcuana, Killeany, Cargin, Killusa and Killower, and the island of Inchiquin. Bordering the shores of Lough Corrib, it attracted St. Brendan in the sixth century, and when he was old and longed for solitude and rest he founded, about 570, a monastery in the island of Inchiquin. His nephew, St. Meldun, became his successor as abbot. Another relative was St. Cuana, who founded the monastery at Kilcoona. He was, it is supposed, a half-brother of St. Carthage and was educated at Lismore, after which, returning to his native place on the shores of Lough Corrib, he founded the monastery at Kilcoona. But the best known of all St. Brendan's family—the most famous, next to St. Brendan himself—was St. Fursey. Born at Inchiquin about 567, he died at Mezerolles in France about 650, and had an extremely adventurous career.⁶⁰ Of Cargin and Killeany churches little is known; but it is not unlikely that Killower was founded by St. Patrick himself, and, if so, it would antedate the monastery at Inchiquin by more than a century.

⁵⁸ "Papal Reg.," VIII, p. 27.

⁵⁹ Knox, pp. 13, 17, 147, 171.

⁶⁰ Vid. Cap. III.

What is certain is that in the taxation of 1306 Cargin, Killeany, Killursa and Killower are all included.

These churches had long before excited the cupidity of the Danes, and it is recorded at 929 that these marauders swept over Lough Corrib, plundering the neighbouring churches as they passed. It is also recorded that the church of Killower was the custodian of the Black Bell of St. Patrick, which would go to show that Killursa was a Patrician church. The Black Bell subsequently passed into the hands of the MacGeraghtys who lived near Aughagower. From them it was purchased in 1870 by Sir William Wilde, who presented it to the Royal Irish Academy.⁶¹

An abbey of a later date was Ross Errily, founded for the Franciscans in 1351 by Raymond de Burgo. In 1572 its lands were given by the Crown to the Earl of Clanrickard; but as he was a friend of the friars, they were not disturbed, and when there in 1640 Dr. O'Queely presented them with a chalice. In the following year they gave shelter to the Protestants who survived the slaughter at Shrule. They lingered on until 1727, when a certain Mrs. Julia Burke presented them with a chalice, which is still preserved at Cong. But the dark days of the penal times of the eighteenth century scattered the community and confiscated their property, and the once beautiful abbey is long since in ruins.⁶²

RECENT PARISH PRIESTS.

Rev. Dr. O'Fallon.

Rev. Richard Walsh—1826-1858.

Rev. Peter Conway—1858-1872.

Rev. Patrick Ryan—1872-1879.

Right Rev. Dean Barrett—1879-1919.

Rev. P. J. Forde—1919-

⁶¹ "Iar-Connaught," p. 368.

⁶² Knox's "Tuam"; Healy's "Schools and Scholars"; Wilde's "Lough Corrib"; Burke's "Abbey of Ross"; Meehan's "Franciscan Monasteries of the Seventeenth Century"; O'Hanlon's "Lives"; "Felire of Aengus"; Father Neary's "Notes."

Parish of Moore.

If a parish having no history is happy, *Moore* ought to be happy, for it has no history. It is in the Archdiocese, but completely isolated from it, and probably was originally part of Clonmacnoise, when Clonmacnoise was part of the Tuam province. On being added to Annagh, being incorporated with Ardagh, Moore was detached and given to Tuam. In the taxation of 1306, Moore and Drum, now part of Athlone parish, are bracketed together and taxed at £2.

There is one saint connected with the parish, St. Caireach, who had her convent at Cloonburrou, quite close to a large mound, which probably goes back to pagan times. St. Caireach was a sister of St. Fanchea and of St. Enda of Arran, and was sufficiently prominent among the saints of the sixth century to have her death recorded by the "Four Masters" at 577.⁶³ The church lands of Moore were granted to Clanrickard.⁶⁴

PARISH PRIESTS OF MOORE.

Rev. Redmond Duffy died in Oct., 1800.

Rev. William Harte—1800-1816.

Rev. Hubert MacEvilly—1816-1846.

Rev. John Harley—1846-1856.

Rev. Edward King—1856-1865.

Rev. David Mylotte—1865-1876.

Rev. Hubert Finneran 1876-1894.

Rev. John J. Begley—1894-1905.

Rev. James Ronayne—1905-1906.

Rev. Thomas J. Reidy—1906-1914.

Rev. John Mylotte—1914.

Parish of Spiddal.

The parish of *Spiddal*, in the Composition of Connaught Ballinspiddle, was most probably the site of a hospital. Its church was dedicated to St. Enda of Aran, and in early

⁶³ Knox, pp. 83-136.

⁶⁴ O'Hanlon's "Irish Saints," II, p. 443.

Christian times it was, no doubt, evangelised from Aran.⁶⁵ At a later stage it was part of the diocese of Annaghdown. The church lands were granted by the Crown to the Earl of Clanrickard, being, very appropriately, described as stony.

In the Galway diocese there is another parish of Spiddal, the boundaries so interlaced with the Tuam parish that efforts have been made to disentangle them, but so far nothing definite has been done

RECENT PARISH PRIESTS.

Very Rev. Canon Lyons— —1884.

Rev. Thomas Hosty—1884-1914.

Rev. Thomas Heaney—1914-1919.

Rev. James Kelly—1919.

Soil and Surface of Aran.

We may believe if we wish that Galway Bay was once dry land, and as such joined to the three Aran Islands. Bog oak with the roots attached have been found under the sand at Salthill, showing that trees once grew there. Then, owing perhaps to an earthquake, there was a depression of the land and a great inland lake was formed under the waters of which trees disappeared. Finally the sea broke through the land at Aran, part of the land sunk beneath the water and the waters of the Atlantic, rolling in, were mingled with the waters of the lake. But all this is uncertain and conjectural and may be denied.⁶⁶

What is certain is that since recorded history began the Isles of Aran have stood where they now stand. Perhaps long before the dawn of history the wrathful sea may have pushed the land before it, and the passages between the islands and the mainland may have been made. We do not know. But we do know that the piled up rock facing the Atlantic has been for ages assaulted in vain. Here and there a slight impression has been made, but the island citadel has always flung back the attacks of storm and sea, like a garrison

⁶⁵ "Iar-Connaught," p. 61.

⁶⁶ Professor Anderson in "Galway Arch. Journal," 1905.

fiercely attacked but defended by a gallant army. Seen from the deck of a steamer in Galway Bay Aran looks as if packed with stones, terrace after terrace until the highest point is reached facing the ocean. There are, however, some good fields of land, and there are small patches between the shelving rocks.⁶⁷ But for the most part the herbage is scant, the soil light, the fertility due to the ceaseless toil of man. There is no bog to provide fuel, and the timber it once produced has long since disappeared. Fish is plentiful, but its capture involves the perilous labour in the surrounding sea. Sea gulls and puffins and choughs with red legs make Aran their home; but its forbidding climate repels the swallow, which loves the sun and the heat.

Yet these rock-bound isles, cold, cheerless and inhospitable, have been inhabited from the earliest times. There the Firbolgs went after the disaster of Moytura, preferring freedom and poverty in Aran to slavery on the mainland. And as they sought freedom they were determined to defend it, and built the cyclopean forts of Dun Aengus and Dun Connor within the shelter of which they could repel all attacks either from land or sea.

Aran of the Saints.

Until the end of the fifth century Aran was pagan, its inhabitants infidels from Cocomroe, loving liberty no doubt, and averse also to the restrictions of the Christian faith. Yet, in the spirit of the times, St. Enda sought out these lonely islands, and undertook the conversion of their savage people. The islands were given him by his relative Aengus, King of Munster in 480, and henceforth until his death Enda lived in Aran, which is for ever associated with his name. He was a remarkable man, and in a short time Aran was Christian; and such was the sanctity of his life and the attraction of his personal character that Aran might be called the novitiate of the Irish saints. They came from all quarters to learn at his feet and to hear the words of wisdom from his lips. Finian

⁶⁷ "Iar-Connaught," p. 15.

came from Clonard, his namesake from Moville, Kieran from Clonmacnoise, Jarlath from Cloonfush, Kevin from Glendalough, the great Columba himself, and Brendan before launching out on his famous voyage.

The rule was severe. Enda and his monks spent their time in fasting and labour and prayer, tilled the rocky soil, fished in the sea, slept on the bare floor in their cheerless stone cells, never drank wine and never tasted meat. Yet the number of St. Enda's disciples was so great that he divided the large island into ten divisions each ruled by a superior; and Aran became so full of holy men that it came to be called "Aran of the Saints," and we are warned that it will never be known what number of saints lie in its sacred soil. St. Kieran when leaving the island and St. Enda shed tears. The poet puts the following words into St. Brendan's mouth :—

"When I proclaimed the project that I nursed,
 How it was for this that I his blessing sought,
 An irrepressible cry of joy outburst
 From his pure lips that blessed me for the thought.
 He said that he too had in visions strayed
 On the untracked ocean's billowy foam;
 Bid me have hope that God would give me aid
 And bring me safe to my native home." ⁶⁸

And St. Columba felt strongly at his departure :—

"Oh, Aran blest; oh, Aran blest,
 Accursed the man that loves not thee.
 The dead man cradled on thy breast,
 No demon scares him—well is he." ⁶⁹

The centuries passed, but the sanctity of its religious men remained and the memory of Enda was revered; and while great houses are unnoticed in the "Annals," Aran is not forgotten :—

650.—St. Nennius, Comharb of St. Enda died.

703.—Colman of Aran died.

865.—The Abbot Maettulius died.

⁶⁸ Denis Florence MacCarthy.

⁶⁹ Aubrey de Vere.

- 916.—Egnech, bishop, anchorite and Comarb of St. Enda died.
 1010.—Flann, Comharb of St. Enda died.
 1020.—Aran monastery burned.
 1081.—Aran pillaged by the Danes.
 1110.—Flann, Comharb of St. Enda died.
 1114.—Mael, Comharb of St. Enda died.
 1167.—Gildegorius, Comharb of St. Enda died.
 1334.—Aran plundered by the Viceroy.
 1485.—Franciscan monastery built at Aran.
 1586.—The O'Briens, lords of the Isles of Aran, were expelled from their territory by the ferocious O'Flaherties of Iar-Connaught.

Civil History.

When Colgan was writing his "Acta Sanctorum" he asked Dr. O'Queely, the Archbishop of Tuam, for an account of the island and the inhabitants, and the Archbishop described for him no less than twelve churches on the main island, two on the Middle Island, and four on Inishere, most of which were then in ruins.

The civil history of the islands is not without interest. The O'Briens owned them, and one of them resided on the island and was called Lord of Aran. In 1312 it is recorded that O'Brien undertook to protect Galway from pirates and was rewarded with an annual tribute of 12 tuns of wine. In 1400 Aran was in league with the rebel Burkes, and Henry IV. was so incensed that he licensed four Bristol merchants to attack Aran. In 1586 the O'Briens were expelled by O'Flaherty, and the same year the Queen granted the place to Sir John Rawson.⁷⁰ From him it passed to Sir Roebuck Lynch. In 1651 Aran was captured by the Cromwellians, and two years later they sent priests there as prisoners allotting them only twopence a day.⁷¹ In 1691 a bannock was built in Aran out of the stones of the old churches. In 1670 Aran was granted to Ormond's son, who became Earl of Aran; but in 1713 it passed to Sir Stephen Fox, who sold a half share to Mr. Patrick French of Monivea in trust for Digby, Protestant

⁷⁰ "Patent Rolls."

⁷¹ Burke's "South Isles," pp. 43-4.

Bishop of Elphin, and the other half share to Fitzpatrick of Aran. In 1744 this second half also passed to Digby, and this family retained possession until the islands were purchased under the Land Acts.⁷² In 1815 the population of the islands was 2,400; in 1871, 3,049, of whom 2,993 were Catholics; and in 1881, 3,163, of whom 3,118 were Catholics, leaving but 45 Protestants.⁷³

PARISH PRIESTS OF ARAN.

- Rev. Patrick Harley—about 1850.
- Rev. Daniel Lyden—1870.
- Rev. James Geraghty—1870-1871.
- Rev. John Concannon—1872-1881.
- Rev. Michael O'Donohoe—1881-1892.
- Rev. Peter McPhilpin—1892-1894.
- Rev. Patrick Colgan—1894-1897.
- Rev. M. Farragher—1897-1920.
- Rev. Stephen Walsh—1920-1927.
- Rev. Patrick Egan—1927.

Parish of Shrule.

The parish of *Shrule* was once in the diocese of Annaghdown and then passed to Tuam, finally becoming part of the Wardenship of Galway. It is situated in the very heart of the archdiocese and completely detached from the Galway diocese to which it belongs.

St. Patrick passed through the parish on his way from Donaghpatrick to Kilmaine. In the subsequent centuries it came under the rule of the O'Flaherties. But these had been overshadowed by the O'Connors before the twelfth century, and Turlogh O'Connor who founded the Abbey of Cong was equally powerful at Shrule, and perhaps built the strong castle on the river. If not, it was built by the De Burgos or Burkes who had supplanted the O'Flaherties and O'Connors in the thirteenth century. Henceforth a Burke ruled in Shrule Castle on the Galway side of the river; and in the sixteenth

⁷² "Iar-Connaught," p. 430.

⁷³ Burke, p. 111.

century among the castles and market towns in Mayo built by Englishmen Shrule town is specially mentioned. The castle was the stronghold of the feudal lord, and the market was for the convenience of the tenants. And in Shrule the lord had erected for himself and his tenants a church which could claim to be a parochial church.⁷⁴

When diocesan episcopacy was established and Cong diocese disappeared, Shrule as the headquarters of a great feudal lord became the most important of all these churches hitherto subject to Cong. In the taxation of 1306 it is put down as a deanery comprising no less than 17 churches. These were Shrule, Kinlough, Moyne, Neale, Cong, Innishmaine, Ballinrobe, Killeshine, Ross, Kilmainemore, Kilmainebeg, Attyrickard, Ballinchalla, Temple na Lecka, Moorgagagh, Kilcommon, Moyrus and Omey. Its total taxation was £31 9s. 4d. It was not transferred to the Wardenship of Galway until 1501. Henceforth Shrule belonged to Galway, and when the Wardenship gave place to the diocese in 1830 Shrule became one of the parishes of the new diocese.⁷⁵

NOTE TO CHAPTER XIII.

TUAM CATHEDRAL.

By an Indenture of 10th February, 1830, William Henry Handcock of Carrintrily gave the Most Rev. Dr. Kelly the grounds on which the Cathedral is built. The Archbishop had rented the lands from Mr. Handcock for one year, some time before the date of the lease (10th Feby., 1830), and was holding it as a tenant at the time the lease was given to him. The extent is put down as "one acre and seventeen perches of the late Irish plantation measure." It is set out as "one acre, three roods and four perches statute measure" in another place. The yearly rent was one shilling and the lease was for the lives of Josephine Handcock (daughter of Mr. Handcock), George John Brown—commonly called Lord Altamont, eldest son of Howe Peter, Marquis of Sligo, and Geoffrey Dominick Brown, eldest son of Dominick Geoffrey Brown of Castle Magarrett, Co. Mayo, or for the life of whichever of the three survived longest, or for a period of 31 years. One of

⁷⁴ Knox's "Mayo," pp. 91, 104, 108.

⁷⁵ "Iar-Connaught," p. 224.

the three was still living in 1897. Captain Quintin Dick, of 12 Grosvenor Crescent, London, acquired the Handcock property about 1895 and by an Indenture of 7th August, 1897, he handed over to Dr. MacEvilly and his heirs and assigns the Cathedral grounds for ever for a nominal rent which is paid every year.

It may be of interest to know that as the Cathedral had been begun and could not be finished owing to want of funds, a meeting of the inhabitants of Tuam was held on 14th May, 1830, to consider a proposal to get a loan of £2,000 to finish the building. It was then agreed that loans of £100, £50 and £25 be got at 5 per cent. to the extent of £2,000. To save themselves Dr. Kelly and those with him insured the lives of the three mentioned in the original Indenture of Lease for £3,000 with the European Insurance Co. This seemed to make the whole position very secure, but the Insurance Company failed in 1872 and all the Debenture or Loans have not yet been paid off. In fact the priests of the archdiocese every year pay one pound (£1) each, and this pays the interest on the money borrowed, but nothing more. Just at the present moment a scheme has been started which it is hoped will lessen the debt on the Cathedral.

This note is by the Right Rev. Monsignor Walsh, M.A., V.G., lately Archbishop's secretary and now Adm. Tuam.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE DEANERY OF WESTPORT.

Parish of Westport.

THE prominent place of the parish of Westport in the ecclesiastical history of the archdiocese, and indeed in the ecclesiastical history of Ireland, is unquestioned. There is some doubt about St. Patrick having visited other parishes and other districts, but there is none about his having visited the parish of Westport. On his western journey he went north to Rahins near Castlebar, and then, turning to the southwest, he passed by Aughagower to Cruach-an-Aigle, which was the ancient name for Croaghpatrick. At the foot of the mountain, in the plain of Murrisk, and between the mountain and the sea, his charioteer Totmael died, and there St. Patrick buried him and raised a cairn of stones over his grave.

Then, on Shrove Saturday, the Saturday before Ash Wednesday, he ascended the mountain, and during the whole forty days of Lent he was engaged in fasting and prayer on the lonely summit of the hill. If scenery could bring him pleasure he ought to have been well content; for there was a wide stretch before him, even on the land side, and westward there was the limitless sea with Clew Bay and its myriad islands at his feet. On Cruach-an-Aigle his prayers were long, his fasting severe, his sufferings from wind and rain and cold and lonely vigils not easy to be borne. But he persevered, obtaining from God the favour that the faith of Ireland would never fail. Then, when the long Lenten fast

was over he descended into the plain. Tradition says that he visited Caher Island, and an ancient ruin on the island still bears his name. Near Murrisk, perhaps where Totmael was buried, St. Patrick founded a church, and there left his disciple Bishop Rodan. The place is still called Glasspatrick. Another church he erected in the plain of Umhall, the ancient name of the Owles or Burrishoole. At a later date, and perhaps on the ruins of the ancient church, another church was built either by Columbkille himself or, more probably, by one of his disciples and special friends who erected the church in his honour. It was called the new monastery of Nuachongbhail, a name corrupted in later times to Oughaval or Aughaval, a name extended in time to the whole parish, and which it still bears.¹

Murrisk, meaning the sandy soil near the sea, was in early times the land of the Clan Umoir; but when history first touched the district it was the land of the O'Malleys. They occupied the whole baronies of Murrisk and Burrishoole and were powerful both on land and sea. Their strongholds were at *Kilbownet* in *Ashil*, on *Glac Island*, at *Anishoffin* and at Caher-na-Mart, the modern Westport, and also at Belclare. The chief of the O'Malleys dwelt in Belclare, and in the "Book of Rights" his contribution to the King of Connaught is put down as "the drinking of the fresh ale of Murrisk."²

Whatever authority he exercised over the lesser O'Malley chiefs, and it was probably but nominal, was challenged in the thirteenth century, when the Anglo-Irish lords settled in Connaught, and soon acquired lands and built castles in Mayo. One of these families, the Butlers, settled in Burrishoole, and ultimately acquired possession of the whole parish of Burrishoole. The O'Malley chief from his castle at Belclare ceased to exercise any jurisdiction over the Burrishoole O'Malleys, and even in Murrisk he was in the fourteenth century subject to the Earl of Ulster, to whom,

¹ Healy's "St. Patrick," pp. 227-37; Knox, pp. 23-4, 39, 79.

² "Book of Rights," p. 19.

however, he was not obliged to pay rent but only a contribution of men and perhaps of ships, whenever the Earl of Ulster went to battle.³

As became men dwelling by the sea, the O'Malleys were expert seamen, and often made war on others and indeed among themselves, both by sea and land. It is for instance recorded at 1130 that O'Malley was slain by O'Dowda's son in the stone church of Oughaval; but within three months O'Dowda was killed with his own spear "through the miracles of Columbkille," whose church he had profaned.⁴ The earlier rude church, probably of wood, had then disappeared and the more imposing stone church which had taken its place was sacred to the memory of Columbkille, who thus revenged himself upon the desecrator of his church. Among other entries we find that at 1384 O'Malley and O'Flaherty were at war; at 1396 the O'Malleys returning from some expedition at sea were wrecked near the Isles of Aran; an O'Malley plundering expedition was wrecked off the coast of Scotland at 1413; at 1416 these O'Malleys were aiding the O'Briens of Aran; at 1513 they plundered Killybegs; in 1560 and again in 1568 they attacked the Earl of Desmond in Munster; and in 1594, again operating from the sea, they attacked the MacSweeneys of Fanad.⁵

Meantime a noted warrior of the O'Malley family had appeared in the person of Grace O'Malley or Granuaile, as she was more usually called. She was first married to Domhnall O'Flaherty and secondly to Sir Richard Burke or Richard of the Iron. Her chief residence was at Carrighowley, where she was unsuccessfully besieged in 1574 by Sir Edward Fitton. Two years later she went to pay her respects to the Viceroy, Sir Henry Sidney, at Galway, and he reported that she was a famous sea warrior and that in relation to her husband "she was more than Mrs. Mate."⁶ The following year she went on some roving and probably

³ Knox's "History of Mayo," pp. 303-6.

⁴ "Four Masters."

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ "Carew Papers."

plundering expedition to Munster and was taken prisoner by the Earl of Desmond, by whom she was first thrown into prison and then handed over to the Lord President of Munster. She was soon liberated and her husband—Burke—made his peace with the government.

Like the other Mayo chiefs, Grace O'Malley came into conflict with Sir Richard Bingham, and by him was arrested for her supposed complicity in the rebellion of the Burkes. She retorted by professing her loyalty to the Queen, and accused Bingham of having unjustly arrested her, a peaceful and loyal subject. Fearing Bingham, however, she fled to Ulster and there found shelter with O'Donnell. In a short time she was pardoned, and in 1593 visited Queen Elizabeth in London. She had accepted the Composition of Connaught, protested that she was peacefully disposed, wanted no war, and was living as a farmer paying her Crown rent to the Government. The date of her death is not known, but she was probably buried in the Abbey of Burrishoole.⁷

It was an O'Malley chief who founded and endowed the Abbey of Murrisk in the fourteenth century. It was occupied by the Augustinian Hermits, the same order as that which occupied the Abbey at Ballinrobe. As it had but a small portion of land, it escaped suppression until the reign of Elizabeth, and then, in 1578, Abbey and lands were leased for 21 years to James Garvey, brother of the Protestant Archbishop of Armagh. In 1617 a grant in fee was given by James I. to Sir Christopher Garvey, the Archbishop's eldest son, and to him was given as much as 500 acres constituting the Manor of Murrisk. His grandson was confirmed in possession by the Cromwellian Commissioners in 1655, and his descendants lived and flourished on the despoiled abbey lands until the estate was sold to the Land Commission in the twentieth century. The abbey was an extensive building, but nothing now remains except the chancel of the church and portion of the central tower.⁸

⁷ "Galway Arch. Journal," vol. iv, Article by H. T. Knox.

⁸ M. J. Blake in "Galway Arch. Journal," vol. vii.

On the very summit of Croaghpatrick was a small stone church, 20 feet long and 8 to 10 feet wide, and thither, in the centuries that followed St. Patrick's time, pilgrims came from afar to pray where St. Patrick prayed and fast where he fasted and look out on the scenes that he saw. The ascent was difficult, and as the visitors passed along the pilgrims' way they knelt on the stone called Gloonpatrick indented with St. Patrick's knees. On the summit the pilgrim prayed at St. Patrick's altar, and went through the stations of the cross, meditating and fasting as he did so, and then, like Patrick himself, having communed with God, he came down into the plain. In the "Chronicon Scotorum," at the year 1106, it is recorded that Na Longain, Airchennech of Ardpatrick, was struck by lightning and killed, and at 1113 the "Four Masters" have an entry that a thunderbolt fell on the Reek on the eve of St. Patrick's festival and destroyed 30 of those then engaged on the Reek in fasting and prayer. For these pilgrims there were indulgences, and in 1432 the reigning Pope Eugene IV. granted "a relaxation of two years and two quarantines under the usual conditions to those penitents who visit and give alms for the repair of the chapel of St. Patrick on the mountain which is called Croaghpatrick, whither resorts a great multitude of persons to venerate St. Patrick the Sunday before the feast of St. Peter's Chains.⁹ The little chapel, being a Patrician church, was claimed—and the claim was long allowed—by the Archbishop of Armagh. But in 1216 it was assigned permanently by the Pope to the Archbishop of Tuam.¹⁰ It lived on until the penal times and then, like the churches around, fell into ruin. In 1905, however, the pilgrimage was revived by Dr. Healy, Archbishop of Tuam, and a small chapel was built on the site of the ancient one by the Very Rev. Canon MacDonald, who in the reviving of the pilgrimage zealously co-operated with the Archbishop.

⁹ Bliss's "Calendar," VIII, p. 440.

¹⁰ "Papal Registers."

When MacWilliam Burke of Mayo went to pay his respects and make his submission to Sir Henry Sidney in Galway in 1576 he brought with him O'Mayle or O'Malley, whom Sidney describes as "strong in galleys and seamen." This was the chief who dwelt at Belclare. In 1585 O'Malley accepted the Composition of Connaught, as did also his kinsman Teige O'Malley, who had his strong castle at Caher-na-Mart. A little later they incurred the enmity of Sir Richard Bingham and in 1592 he came with an army to Caher-na-Mart.¹¹ Later, the O'Malleys joined with the Ulster chiefs, and Carew wrote to the Privy Council in 1601 that the O'Malleys were about to invade Munster on the side of the Northern rebels.¹² An inquisition made by the Crown in 1607 showed that O'Malley still owned Caher-na-Mart.¹³ Their connection with the rebellion of 1641 lost the O'Malleys their castles and lands. They gradually sunk to the level of the peasantry, and in the eighteenth century the Brownes were securely entrenched in Caher-na-Mart, and the O'Malley chiefs had disappeared. The Brownes were Protestant and loyal to the ruling Protestant Government, and in the stormy days of 1798 one of the pillars of the regime of Castlereagh was Denis Browne and his kinsman Lord Altamont, who was ennobled as Marquis of Sligo. They lived in a new castle, but it was no longer Caher-na-Mart. The Brownes had built their castle where the old castle once stood, and they had built a town within the shelter of the castle. The new town they called Westport and the new castle Westport Castle.

In the midst of all these changes the old faith remained unchanged. Murrisk Abbey and Aughaval church and the little chapel on Croaghpatrick were Catholic still. In the return made by Dr. Dillon, Archbishop of Tuam in 1800, he gives Westport parish as having two priests with an income of £140, the largest income of any parish in the archdiocese

¹¹ "Carew Papers."

¹² *Ibid.* May 2, 1601.

¹³ "Iar-Connaught," p. 58.

except Tuam. Murrisk Abbey still existed, though it could not have been prosperous, for its lands were gone and it had but one friar. Previous to his appointment as Archbishop of Tuam, Dr. Oliver Kelly had been P.P. of Westport and also Vicar-General of the archdiocese, and while at Westport had built the present church and presbytery. Going to Tuam, no appointment was made to Westport as P.P. and the parish became a mensal parish.

Shortly before he died this condition of things was changed. In 1834 Dr. Kelly collated the Rev. Bernard Burke his Adm. at Westport to the parish, and there he remained until his death in 1861, when the parish again reverted to its former position as a mensal parish. The Rev. Bernard Burke had also been appointed Dean of the Chapter. He was a holy and zealous man, and during his tenure of the parish he brought the Sisters of Mercy to Westport, giving them his own house. He also brought the Christian Brothers to take charge of the primary school in the town.

PARISH OF KILGEEVER OR LOUISBURGH.

Parish of Louisburgh.

Kilgeever may mean the windy church, and suggests that the early church was situated in an exposed and windy situation. The ruins of the old church show that it was small and primitive, just such, says Mr. Knox, as the old church of Tempul na Lecca in Cushlough, Ballinrobe parish. There were other ancient churches at Templedoomore and at Killadon and Kilbride; and on the shores of Lough Cahasey there was, up to recent times, a heap of stones at which people came to pray for their sick friends and even for sick cattle. In pagan times stones were sometimes venerated, and this stone mound by the lake may have been visited by pilgrims in ancient times, and perhaps have become associated in Christian times with some church or saint. But the stones were used for cursing as well as for praying, and visitors to Lough Cahasey sometimes utilised the stones to pray for evil against their enemies. Finding this to be the case, a parish

priest of Louisburgh in recent times, whose name has not survived, took up the stones and flung them into the lake, and the praying and cursing at Lough Cahasey ceased.¹⁴

RECENT PARISH PRIESTS.

Rev. Thomas McCaffrey—1839.

Rev. Patrick McManus—1839-1847.

Rev. Myles Sheridan—1847-1853.

Rev. Michael Curley—1853-1873.

Rev. William Joyce—1874-1905.

Very Rev. Canon Healy—1905-

Parish of Aughagower.

Aughagower means the field of the Spring, and is prominently identified with the missionary activity of St. Patrick in Mayo. On his journey westwards the Apostle went from Triangle to Rahins and from Rahins to Aughagower, and at the latter place he remained some time. He must have met with a friendly reception, for he soon had converts and lands on which to build a church, and over the new church he placed Sinach, whom he baptised and ordained priest and then consecrated bishop. He was a married man, but a holy and an humble man, and he asked three requests of St. Patrick all of which were granted. He asked that he might not fall into sin after his ordination; that the place where he ministered might not take its name from him, and that his son Oengus might get a long life. This son was prepared by St. Patrick for the priesthood, and for him the Apostle wrote a Catechism, and the sister of Oengus, Mathona by name, became a nun and founded a convent near the church founded by St. Patrick. And the Apostle was so much pleased with the sanctity of Sinach's family, with the welcome given to him at Aughagower, that he wished to rest there as a man whose work was done. But much remained yet for him to do, and it was after he had established his church at Aughagower, leaving to Sinach and his son to carry on the

¹⁴ Knox, p. 179.

work he had himself begun, that he ascended the steep and rugged sides of Croaghpatrick, on the summit of which, looking down on Aughagower, he spent the whole Lent in fasting and prayer. When the Lent was over he returned to Aughagower, and spent the Easter with Bishop Sinach and his family.¹⁵

Before he left he predicted many blessings for Aughagower. There were to be bishops there after Sinach had passed away, and this came to pass. Aughagower was not only a Patrician church but also an episcopal church, and as such it exercised pre-eminence and jurisdiction over all the churches in Umhall. To such a church the native chiefs converted to Christianity were not ungenerous, and when diocesan episcopacy was established the church and lands at Aughagower were sufficiently important to be a special object of contention between the Archbishops of Armagh and Tuam. The Archbishop of Armagh claimed them as belonging to a Patrician foundation, and the Archbishop of Tuam as being within the territory assigned at the Synod of Kells to the Archdiocese of Tuam. In 1216 Rome decided in favour of Tuam, and henceforth all dispute was at an end, and the church lands at Aughagower were one of the episcopal manors of the Archbishop of Tuam. That these lands were extensive and valuable we gather from the Taxation of 1306, in which Aughagower is taxed at the high figure of £4.¹⁶

Meanwhile the "Annals" have some entries which specially concern Aughagower, and show that it had acquired eminence in ecclesiastical affairs. At 1094 the Erenach of Aughagower was killed on Croaghpatrick.¹⁷ In 1221 we find it recorded that "Diarmaid O'Culechain, a professor of history and writing died in this year, a man who had more writings and knowledge than any one that came in his own time; and it was he that wrote the Mass Book of Cnoc and another Mass book the equal of it for Diarmaid Mac

¹⁵ Healy's "St. Patrick," pp 224-37; "Tripartite Life."

¹⁶ Knox's "Tuam," pp. 99, 198. 247.

¹⁷ "Four Masters."

Oirechtaigh, his tutor, and for Gillapatraic, his foster-brother—the comarbs of Achadh-Fabhair in succession.”¹⁸ At 1230 Richard de Burgo encamped with his men at Aughagower.¹⁹ At 1247 Mageraghty, the Erenach of Aughagower, was killed by O’Connor;²⁰ and in the next year the English settlers plundered all Umhall including Aughagower.²¹

It is not unlikely, as Knox suggests, that the Archbishop of Tuam, having a large manor at Aughagower, was in the habit of taking up his residence there sometimes;²² and in the end of the thirteenth century, or at least early in the fourteenth century, during the episcopacy of De Bermingham, there was a lawsuit in reference to these see lands. It would appear that one Benedict Mac Geraghty an Erenach was enfeoffed of the Aughagower lands by the Archbishop O’Lachnain, with the assent of his Chapter. A descendant and heiress of this Mac Geraghty, Joan, wife of an English colonist named Staunton, demanded possession of these church lands in De Bermingham’s time. But the Archbishop denied her rights because she was a “mere Irishwoman,” and as such not entitled to the protection of English law. What the decision was we do not know; but this lawsuit shows that the Archbishop let his see lands to middlemen who were Erenachs or stewards of church property.²³

The income from these see lands went to the Archbishop, and no doubt there were other lands assigned for the maintenance of the P.P., or the Perpetual Vicar as he was then called. His income was probably not large and required to be supplemented, for there is a Papal Letter dated 1440 in which the Pope gives two years’ indulgence to pilgrims visiting Croaghpatrick and giving alms for the repair of the chapel on the summit. There it is also stated that the offerings given by pilgrims to Croaghpatrick also kept up the

¹⁸ “Annals of Loch Ce.”

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² “History of Mayo,” p. 93.

²³ Knox’s “Mayo,” pp. 300-301.

parish church at Aughagower.²⁴ When the suppression of monasteries came, neither parish nor episcopal property was spared, and it was at Aughagower in 1595 that Sir Richard Bingham dictated terms of peace to the local chiefs.²⁵ In the eighteenth century the church lands were held by Browne, ennobled as Marquis of Sligo, and in the return made by Dr. Dillon in 1800 the income of the parish of Aughagower is given as only £50 a year.

There are still some ruins of the ancient church from which a bishop ruled the neighbouring churches of Murrisk and Burrishoole. But the probabilities are that even the ancient ruined church is not the original Patrician church, but rather one of a later date which replaced it. There is also another ruin hard by which tradition says was the ancient home of Mathona, sister of the pious Oengus and daughter of Sinachus. The round tower, portion of which still remains, is of a later age, long after St. Patrick himself and Bishop Sinach had passed away. And it was no doubt, as in so many other instances throughout the country, to protect the neighbouring church from plunderers, whether Danish or Irish, to serve as a place of refuge for the ecclesiastics, and a place of safety for the treasures of convent and church. Not far off, a little to the east, is the ruined castle of Ayle once tenanted by Mac Philbin; and to the west of Aughagower on the ancient pilgrim's way is a well dedicated to St. Brendan, a stone still called Croaghpatrick and another stone called St. Patrick's chair.

It appears that a Dr. Charles Lynch who was P.P. of Westport, became Bishop of Achonry in 1808, leaving directions by his will to be interred at Aughagower.²⁶

RECENT PARISH PRIESTS.

Rev. Peter Ward—1825-1854.

Rev. John Flannelly—1854-1866.

Rev. James Waldron—1866-1870.

²⁴ "Cal. of Papal Registers," vol. viii, p. 440.

²⁵ Knox's "History of Mayo," pp. 250-1.

²⁶ "Galway Arch. Journal," vol. ii.

Rev. Jeremiah MacEvilly—1870-1882.

Very Rev. Canon Flatley—1882-1910.

Rev. John Flatley—1910-

Parish of Islandeady.

The parish of *Islandeady* has little of a history, either civil or ecclesiastical. Near the Lake of *Islandeady* is *Rahins* where St. Patrick is believed to have built a church. For he turned north from *Triangle*, and preached the gospel and made converts at *Rahins*, and then turned south-west to *Aughagower*. There are still some remains of an ancient church, which perhaps replaced the original one built in St. Patrick's days.

Originally the parish was in *Corcu Teimne*, later called *Clancuan*, and in the twelfth century it passed into the hands of the *McDermotts*.²⁷ From the *McDermotts* it passed to the *Mayo Burkes*, until they too, in the sixteenth century, were dispossessed. In the nineteenth century the greater part of the parish was the property of Sir Roger Palmer, a Protestant in religion and a Tory in politics, but he too disappeared.

Islandeady had at no time any monastery or convent, nor any remarkable castle.

MODERN PARISH PRIESTS.

Rev. Thomas Kean—1817.

Rev. John Fitzgerald—1872.

Rev. Thomas O'Malley—1872-1898.

Rev. William Coen—1898-1918.

Rev. J. J. Tuffy—1918-1919.

Rev. Paul McLoughlin—1919-

Parish of Kilmeena.

The modern parish of *Kilmeena* is a composite one, made up of the parishes of *Kilmeena* and *Kilmaclasser*. There is a conflict of opinion as to whether St. Patrick visited *Kilmeena*, but the probable opinion is that he did. For in the

²⁷ Knox "Hist. of Mayo," cap. v.

dispute between the Archbishop of Tuam and the Archbishop of Armagh, the latter laid claim to the church and lands of Kilmeena, and he could have done this only because Kilmeena was a Patrician foundation.²⁸ It was in the district of Umhall, the modern barony of Burrishoole, and must have been well endowed. Kilmaclasser, where there are the ruins of an ancient church, was poorer, and in the taxation of 1306 Kilmaclasser is taxed at only 13s. 4d., but Kilmeena at £2 13s. 4d. They were then separate parishes, and so they remained until 1800, when the Archbishop of Tuam returned the annual income from Kilmeena as £65, and a like amount from Kilmaclasser. The famine and the clearances which followed so thinned these two parishes that they were united, and have remained united since then.

There are several islands in Clew Bay belonging to Kilmeena and on one of these—Clynish—there are some ruins of an ancient church. There was also a church at Inisduff. But there were no great castles in the parish, and never a convent or monastery.

PARISH PRIESTS.

- Rev. Oliver Kelly—1806.
- Rev. Thomas Kean—1817.
- Rev. Thomas Hardiman—1850.
- Rev. Michael O'Donnell—1852-1898.
- Rev. Jeremiah O'Toole—1898-1915.
- Rev. M. J. Conroy—1915-

Parish of Newport.

The name *Newport* is modern. The ancient name was Burrishoole, which means the town or burg of Umhall, and must have been given to the place by the new English settlers. They built castles in Mayo in the thirteenth century, and one of them—Butler by name—dispossessed the O'Malleys, and in time had the whole parish of Burrishoole in his hands, with his strong castle near the modern town of Newport. Traces

²⁸ Knox's "Tuam," pp. 99-100.

of the castle still remain. Round it grew a settlement, and the incipient town, disdaining an Irish name, took the Anglo-Norman one of Burrishoole. In the disorders of the fourteenth century the Butlers' power waned, and the O'Malleys, mingling their blood with that of the Burkes, reasserted themselves. But the name Burrishoole remained and in time was extended from the castle to the neighbouring river, then to the parish and finally to the whole barony; and though the town of Newport now stands on the Newport river the parish is often called the parish of Burrishoole.

Unlike Kilmeena and Westport, Newport can lay no claim to having been at any time visited by St. Patrick. But unlike Kilmeena it had a great religious establishment. This was the Dominican Abbey of Burrishoole, the ruins of which still remain. It owed its origin to Richard Burke, who in his day was the MacWilliam or head of the Mayo Burkes. The Abbey was founded in 1469 and the founder retired from the world shortly after and died with the Dominicans at Burrishoole. His grandson, Thomas Burke, who, like a namesake of a later age, was married to a Grace O'Malley, presented the Abbey with a beautiful silver chalice having the following inscription:—"Thomas de Burgo and Grany O'Malley caused me to be made in the year of Our Lord 1494."²⁹

Richard Burke the founder of the Abbey, having assumed the Dominican habit, died in 1473. The Dominicans as well as he had acted irregularly in founding a religious house without the sanction of the Pope, and it was not until 1486 that the necessary sanction was obtained in a bull of Innocent VII.³⁰ It may be perhaps as a mark of appreciation and gratitude to the Prior for having obtained the necessary Papal approval that Thomas Burke and his wife made this presentation. The subsequent history of the chalice is obscure, but no doubt it remained at Burrishoole Abbey until the penal laws scattered the inmates. Then it passed, probably through

²⁹ "Thomas de Burgo et Grannia Ni Maille me fieri fecit, anno domino ecclesiastico."

³⁰ "Hibernia Dominicana."

many hands, until it became the property of a Mr. D'Arcy Dowling of Tullamore. At his death it was found in 1896 in an old trunk, forgotten and dirty. It was then handed over to the Very Rev. Hugh Behan, P.P., Tullamore. By him it was sent for examination to the well known silversmiths Messrs. Smyth & Son, Dublin, who pronounced it to be the most beautiful piece of Irish ecclesiastical silver work they had seen. Subsequently it was sold in London to Lord Swaythling, in whose possession it remains.³¹

At the suppression of the monasteries Burrishoole Abbey escaped; but as English power crept westwards its possessions and even its existence became imperilled. In 1580 there was trouble in Mayo caused by Richard Burke, Granuaile's husband. Other Burke chiefs were willing to be friendly with the Queen's Governor Malbie; but Richard was friendly with the Earl of Desmond, trusting, says Malbie, to the strength of his remote country, "environed with woods, bogs and mountains where to any man's memory no English Government hath been at any time." Burke was aided by the McDonnell gallowglasses who, says Malbie, were reputed to be invincible. But Malbie acted with vigour. Starting from Munster in 1580 he passed through Athenry, Tuam, Ballinrobe, Ballintubber and finally reached Burrishoole. "I removed to Burrishoole," he says, "an abbey standing very pleasant upon a river side, within three miles from the sea, where a ship of 500 tons may lie at anchor at low water. It hath a goodly and large lough on the upper part of the river, full of great timber, grey marble and many other commodities, not without great store of good ground, both arable land and pasture. Specially it hath a very plentiful iron mine and abundance of wood everyway. Towards the sea coast there lieth many fair islands, rich and plentiful of all commodities; there cometh hither every year likely about 50 English ships for fishing; they have been before this time compelled to pay a great tribute to the O'Malleys which I have forbidden hereafter till her Majesty's pleasure be known.

³¹ M. J. Blake in "Galway Arch. Journal," Vol. V, No. 4.

It is accounted one of the best fishing places in Ireland for salmon, herring and all kinds of sea fish."

At this juncture the McDonnells deserted Richard Burke, and he was therefore unable to keep the field and took refuge in the neighbouring islands. Malbie was therefore quite safe at Burrishoole, and he made the Abbey his headquarters, fortified it as if it were a barrack, and left there a garrison of 100 men to hold the Abbey and surrounding country for the Queen.³²

With a garrison of English Protestant soldiers in their abbey, the lot of the Dominicans was not a pleasant one, and it is not unlikely that the soldiers sent them adrift. But English power was then far from being secure in Mayo, and in the turmoil of the next 20 years the Dominicans were often befriended by the local chiefs, who were still powerful; and when Granuaile's son became the friend of the English and first Lord Mayo he was strong enough to protect Burrishoole. This, however, did not prevent James I. from making a grant of the Abbey lands to Sir John King; nor did it save the friars from being hunted down when the Cromwellians captured the Abbey in 1653. When Malbie occupied the place in 1580 one of the inmates of the Dominican Convent attached to the Abbey, Honor Burke by name, hid herself in the vaults of the church, remaining there for some time without food or drink. She was probably a daughter of the ruling family of Burrishoole, and must have been young; for she was alive when the Cromwellians came in 1653. She then fled, old as she was, to a neighbouring island, where she was captured by the soldiers, stripped naked and had three of her ribs broken. Her maid carried her to the altar of the Abbey chapel, and there, a few days later, she was found dead in a kneeling position.

With great tenacity the Dominicans still clung to the old Abbey. In 1731 the Report made to the Irish House of Lords states that there were 20 friars in Burrishoole; but in 1756 there were only two. In 1785 the last of them died,

³² "Cal. of State Papers"; Knox's "Mayo," pp. 188-9.

the Rev. Francis Burke, and when Dr. Dillon in 1800 supplied his report on the parishes and religious houses of the Archdiocese, the Abbey lands had long since passed into alien hands and Burrishoole Abbey was in ruins.³³

O'Heyne, who died either in 1713 or 1715, has left an account of some of the friars of Burrishoole, whom he knew. Father Teige O'Heyne who died in 1682 was a remarkably able catechist, Father William Burke who studied at Salamanca, taught philosophy and theology at Louvain, and died in Ireland in 1701. Father Dominic MacPhilpin studied in Spain, "very devout and exemplary," and died in 1700. Father Walter MacGibbon also studied in Spain and died in Burrishoole in 1648. Father John O'Regan was a brilliant student at Burgos and a distinguished poet, and returning to Ireland taught school in Mayo and died in 1674. Father Pierce O'Canavan taught philosophy at Grenoble and moral theology at Macon and died at Naples.³⁴

Newport must have been always an important parish of the Archdiocese. In 1280 it supplied some revenue to the Bishop of Clonmacnoise who owned lands in the parish.³⁵ Its tithes were divided between the prebendaries of Killibegs and Faldown;³⁶ and they must have been valuable, for in the taxation of 1306 they are set down, including Achill, at £4. From the "Papal Letters" we know that in 1443 there was a perpetual Vicar of Burrishoole, whose character was certainly not above reproach.³⁷ The abbey owned lands at Rosnabraher and at Carrowkeel, and had also the fishing on the river which Malbie declared was so valuable.³⁸

In the eighteenth century the old landed proprietors were finally dispossessed, and the once powerful Burkes and O'Malleys had sunk to the level of the peasantry, or had passed into exile. An O'Donnell had turned Protestant and

³³ O'Heyne—"Colman's Notes," pp. 92-3.

³⁴ O'Heyne, pp. 219-225.

³⁵ Knox's "Tuam," p. 383.

³⁶ *Ibid.* pp. 86-89.

³⁷ "Papal Registers," vol. ix.

³⁸ Knox, p. 296, Note.

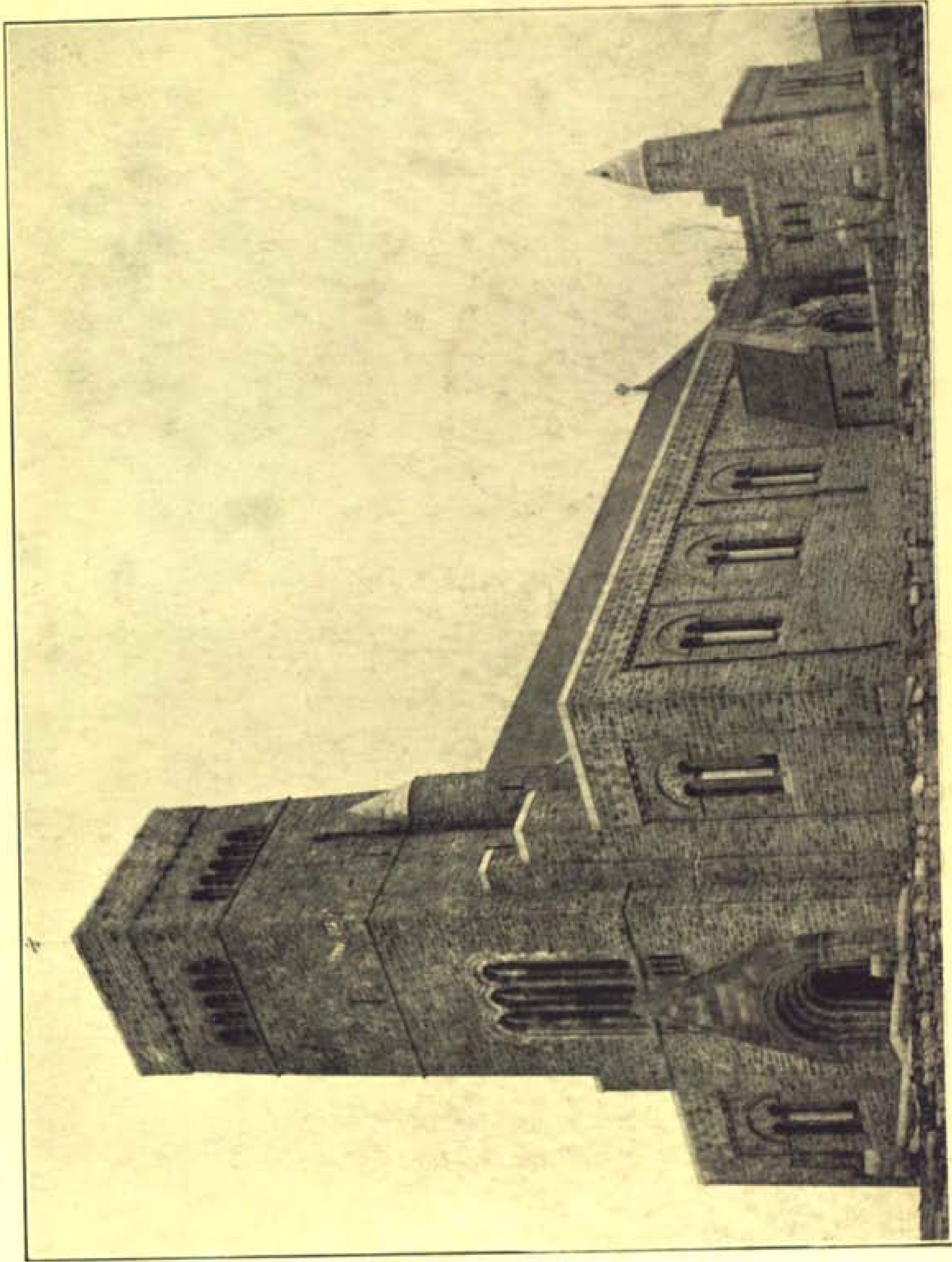
settled at Newport and was there when the twentieth century opened. Some family named Pratt must have also settled there, for Newport is put down by Dr. Dillon in 1800 as Newport-Pratt, with a parochial income of £100 a year. In recent times the most notable parochial events were the establishment of a convent of mercy in the town and the erection by Canon MacDonald of the beautiful church, which is an ornament not only to the parish but to the Archdiocese.

There are existing ruins at Burrishoole—the ruined abbey and the castle near by, and on the sea coast is Granuaile's Castle at Carrickahowley. On the sea coast also is a well associated with the name of Brendan and called St. Brendan's Well.

Canon MacDonald has kindly given me the following list:—

PARISH PRIESTS OF BURRISHOOLE.

1. Father Coen, P.P.—Date uncertain.
2. Father Cusack, P.P., was the successor of Father Coen, but his date is also uncertain.
3. Father Peter Waldron, P.P., obtained in 1796 one acre of land from Sir Neill O'Donnell as a site for a parish church in Newport. The church was erected in 1803. Father Waldron afterwards became Bishop of Killala 1814-34. He was pastor of Burrishoole when Father Manus Sweeney was hanged on 8th June, 1799.
4. Father John Burke was Parish Priest of Burrishoole in 1806. Bishop Lynagh, who died in that year, bequeaths a part of his library to Rev. John Burke of Burrishoole.
5. Father James Hughes, who was a Curate in Castlebar in 1815, was some time after that appointed to be Parish Priest of Burrishoole. It is certain that he was in Burrishoole in 1830. In 1833 he became Parish Priest of Carnacon, and in 1839 he became Parish Priest of Claremorris, where he died in 1852. It is said of him that he was the leading priest in Co. Mayo in his day.
6. Father Peter Cannon was Parish Priest of Burrishoole from 1833 to 1847. He was a Canon of the Chapter and V. F. of the deanery of Westport. He was transferred to Kilcommon and Robeen in 1847.
7. Father Mathew Flannelly was Parish Priest of Burrishoole from 1847 to 1857. He was drowned while bathing.
8. Father Richard Prendergast, 1857-1883.



ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH, NEWPORT, CO. MAYO.

9. V. Revd. Patrick Canon Grealy was Parish Priest of Burrishoole from 1883 to 1910.

10. Very Rev. Michael Canon MacDonald, P.P., V.F. 1910.

Parish of Achill.

There are pagan remains scattered throughout Achill. Under the frowning shadow of Slievemore there is an ancient dolmen called from its peculiar shape the Spectacle Dolmen, approached by a causeway called the Danes' Ditch. Near Dookinelly there is a ring fort and a pagan cemetery. At Keel there is the Giant's Grave, a large cairn with chambers. And there are the cliff forts of Dun Kilmore and Dunanagh, ancient and rude and strong, and defying, like Dun Ængus in Aran, the full fury of the Atlantic.³⁹

But there are no hoary Christian buildings, nothing to recall the earlier days of Christianity. Neither St. Patrick nor the saints of the two following centuries preached in Achill, or founded churches there. Nor did the Middle Ages witness the establishment of abbey or convent on this desolate island. It had no attraction except its wildly beautiful scenery; it was not easy of approach, and it remained long untrodden by the footsteps of saint or missionary. In due time, following the lead of the mainland, it cast off its pagan belief and accepted Christianity as its creed. When it became a parish it was a poor one, and in the taxation of 1306 it was included with Burrishoole and had as a parish no separate existence for taxation.

Achill was part of Umhall and belonged to the O'Malley chiefs, and on the sea shore near Achill Sound there still stands a small tower built by the O'Malleys about the same time that the Abbey of Burrishoole was built. After this we lose sight of Achill for nearly a century, and then it is mentioned in 1580 by Sir Nicholas Malbie, when he established his headquarters in the Abbey of Burrishoole. He had sent ships to Achill in pursuit of Granuaile's husband. But the tempestuous sea round Achill prevented any ships leaving the

³⁹ "R. I. Academy Transactions," 1911, Westropp.

island, and Malbie was unable to pursue Richard Burke into those islands in Clew Bay whither he had fled for shelter.

The Cromwellians, who coveted the richer lands of Mayo, turned in disdain from the rocks and bogs of Achill, and in the eighteenth century the landlords of the island were O'Donnell of Newport and Browne of Westport. Both had come from a Catholic stock and both, to obtain honours and lands, had embraced Protestantism and transmitted it to their descendants. The O'Malleys and others who dwelt on the island were, on the contrary, though sunk in poverty, faithful to the creed of their ancestors; and when Achill came into prominence in the nineteenth century it was because of the desperate efforts made to wean the people from their faith. Missionaries and money were plentifully used, and Sir Richard O'Donnell from his castle at Newport was willing to lend his aid. But the poor people and the old faith won, and when the long and bitter fight was over the imported missionaries had to confess themselves beaten. A few indeed, tempted by money and harassed by hunger listened to Nangle and his army of bible-readers, and earned for themselves the contempt of their neighbours and the opprobrious name of jumpers, and in Dugort a Protestant Colony arose. Long before the nineteenth century closed, however, the jumpers had become less; the Protestant schools had become deserted; the colony at Dugort had decayed; and though Achill remained poor it was Catholic still.

PARISH PRIESTS OF ACHILL.

Fr. O'Malley.

Fr. Connally.

Rev. James O'Dwyer.

Rev. Fr. Monaghan—1846.

Rev. Michael Gallagher—1853.

Rev. Patrick Flatley—1868-1882.

Rev. Patrick O'Connor—1882-1894.

Rev. John Connally—1894-1915.

Rev. Martin Colleran—1915-

Clare Island.

The history of Clare Island before the thirteenth century is a blank. There are no ring forts, no dolmens, no cromlech, no rude stone cells, no oghams, no pillar stones, and the fortifications of Dunallia, Duntranean, Dunagappul and others are nothing more than fortified platforms, where man, strengthened with rude stones and earth works, defended the position which nature had made so strong. They are ancient and primitive, but without the strength and labour which we find at Dun Ængus; and they may well be the product of a time long after paganism had disappeared. Nor do we find any trace of an ancient monastery, abbey or convent or even primitive church; and if the saints of the early Irish church visited the island there is no record of them having done so, nothing which we can with certainty or even probability associate with their names. There are, it is true, two holy wells, one dedicated to the Blessed Virgin and the other to St. Bridget. These may have been sanctified by the visit of some holy person in the middle ages and consecrated by him to St. Bridget and to the Mother of God.

Ware asserts that the abbey, the remains of which are still in existence, and still well preserved, was originally built about 1224, and was a Carmelite foundation. But the modern Irish historian of the Carmelite Order does not believe that there was a Carmelite convent in Ireland before 1260; and there is no reason to believe that the abbey, which was certainly subject to Knockmoy in the sixteenth century, was anything but a monastic cell subject to Knockmoy from the beginning and founded in Crovderg's time.⁴⁰ The island was then subject to the O'Malleys, and the abbey would be endowed by them, after consultation with Crovderg and for the purpose of appointing a place of penance and exile for members of the Cistercian Order.

These O'Malleys were described by the poet O'Dugan about 1372 as good seamen, "A good man there never was of the Ui Maille but a mariner." They had then been

⁴⁰ Rush "Carmel in Ireland," pp. 28-29

making war on the O'Flaherties, who were themselves not averse to war; and the O'Malleys had taken from the O'Flaherties the islands of Inisboffin and Inisturk. They had written on their coat of arms the motto: "Terra marique potens."

At the suppression the abbey of Clare Island was the property of Knockmoy and was valued for taxation purposes at 13s. 4d. a year. In 1574 it was described as an abbey held by O'Malley "possessed by friars and rebels so as her Majesty has no commodity by the same."⁴¹ In 1480 it had been restored and decorated, and in the dark days that followed they protected it as best they could. And Duvdara O'Malley, the father of Granuaile, in order to carry favour with the Queen in 1588, attacked the harassed and famished Spaniards, and slew their commander Dom Pedro and 100 of his men.⁴² During the penal days the abbey was void of inmates. The friars had to fly, but the abbey remained and is still a well preserved ruin; and its dimensions and the general character of the interior buildings can be easily discerned.

It consisted of a nave 36½ feet in length and nearly 19 feet wide, and had some frescoes on the ceiling the colours of which are still discernible. And there are many figures on roof and walls, a horse, a horseman, a greyhound, a herdsman with cattle and goats, a stag with antlers, and many others.

The old castle of the O'Malleys also remains, but "it is devoid of architectural features and is lamentably defaced and modernised."⁴³ It is said to have been the favourite residence of Granuaile as it is also said that the neighbouring abbey was her last resting place. In recent times Sir Samuel O'Malley repaired the old castle for the coastguards.

Formerly Clare Island and the neighbouring island of Inisturk belonged to the parish of Louisburgh, but later both

⁴¹ "Carew Papers," I, p. 423.

⁴² "R. I. Academy Transactions," vol. xxxii.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

islands have been placed under an administrator, who lives at Clare Island and says Mass at Inisturk on Sundays and holydays when the weather permits a safe passage. This is not always, for the sea between the two islands is stormy and a voyage across is sometimes impossible.

In recent years Clare Island was purchased from the landlord and the lands divided among the people. One result is that the cry of distress is no longer heard as of old.

CHAPTER XV.

WRITERS OF THE ARCHDIOCESE.

St. Benignus.

ST. BENIGNUS is the first of those connected with Tuam who can be called an author. He assisted in codifying the laws of the country and was one of the Committee appointed by St. Patrick to remodel the old pagan laws and bring them into accord with Christian teaching and Christian practice.

The labours of the Committee resulted in the writing of the "Senchus Mor," a compilation which contained the Brehon laws thus modified and brought into harmony with Christianity. Benignus cannot be said himself to be the author of the work; he was, jointly with the other eight who constituted the revising Committee.¹ He is also said to have written a "Life of St. Patrick," but this, unlike the "Senchus Mor," has not survived.²

In the "Book of Rights," which recounts in detail the tributes paid by the different subordinate chiefs to their provincial kings, he is often quoted as if he was the author of the whole work as it now stands, though what he wrote was only its groundwork. He probably put in an incomplete form what these tributes and reciprocal gifts were, and in a book called the "Psalter of Cashel." This was modernised and added to by Cormac Mac Cuilenan the Prince-Bishop of Cashel in the ninth century, and at a later age, having been still more enlarged so as to include all Ireland, it came to be

¹ O'Curry's "MS. Materials," p. 16.

² *Ibid.* p. 349.

called the "Book of Rights," in which form it was translated and edited by O'Donovan.³

St. Jarlath.

One of St. Benignus's pupils and personal friends was St. Jarlath, the founder of the See of Tuam, and he is said to have composed some prophecies about his successors. But the authenticity of these prophecies is extremely doubtful, and it is not unlikely that the composition was of a much later date, but attributed to St. Jarlath, so as to surround it with the veneration due to a holy man and to a long past age.⁴ It is also said that St. Jarlath collaborated with St. Brendan in the composition of some poetry. An imperfect copy of this work was seen by Whitley Stokes, but he was unable to translate it, and we can only conjecture what was its meaning, and remain in doubt that such a work was ever written, even in part, by St. Jarlath.⁵

St. Brendan.

There can, however, be little doubt that St. Brendan himself was an author. He was a many-sided man, a saint and a scholar, a visionary and a dreamer, a founder of monasteries and the patron of two dioceses, a traveller of world-wide renown, whose adventures by land and sea have furnished materials for many writers, centuries after he himself had passed away. He lived in an age and in an atmosphere of intense faith, and we are therefore not surprised to learn that his writings are chiefly concerned with religious subjects. For it is said that he wrote "Chartae Coelestis Hereditatis," "Regula Monachorum," "Maxims and Aphorisms," "Dialogue Between St. Senanus and St. Brendan," and "Oratio Sancti Brendani." Such works as these might well come from a man always near to God in meditation and prayer, to whom it is said that an Angel of God dictated his

³ "Book of Rights"—Introduction.

⁴ Healy's "Schools and Scholars," p. 545.

⁵ "Book of Lismore," pp. 251-2.

⁶ O'Hanlon's "Lives," V, pp. 404-5.

Rule. Nor is it without special interest that this is said to have occurred in Magh Enna, which has been identified as Moyhenna in the parish of Keellogues.⁶

And it would be strange if he did not write of his travels, for he travelled much and far, and had much to tell of what he had seen. It is in this direction especially that he acquired fame. Nor did any story excite greater interest in the middle ages than the "Voyage of St. Brendan." Meditative and energetic, his ardent mind was, no doubt, powerfully influenced by the scenes of his youth. From the summit of Brandon Hill, ever since associated with his name, the mountains and valleys were at his feet; on the south was the great expanse of Dingle Bay; on the north the lordly Shannon; and away to the west the limitless sea. Then and long afterwards the vague belief was general that there was some undiscovered land far beyond the ocean's rim. It might be that in this distant land there were men living in pagan darkness, still unblessed by the gospel light. To convey this blessing over the trackless ocean would be the highest form of Christian endeavour, worthy of an ardent Christian minister. No doubt there would be dangers and difficulties, but an Irish missionary of the sixth century was without fear; and even if death came it would be merely dying in God's service and exchanging a sinful world for a sinless and a happier land.

It is not necessary to assume that the account of his voyage, as it came from St. Brendan's hands, contained all that it subsequently contained—the island covered with sheep, that other filled with singing and talking birds, the spending of Easter anchored on the back of a whale, the midnight talk with Judas Iscariot. The early middle ages were more credulous than critical, and these fables, superimposed by later imaginative writers, would be easily believed. Certain it is that St. Brendan was considered no mythical person, and St. Brendan's Island was sought for as no creation of fancy. In England and France and Germany and Italy there were believers in its existence. They placed it out in the ocean

to the west of Europe. It probably sustained the hopes of Columbus, and long after the discovery of America St. Brendan's Island was still believed to exist. And when Portugal was given the islands of the Atlantic by Spain a special exemption was inserted in the treaty reserving to Spain itself the island of St. Brendan if and when it was discovered.⁷

Of his voyage copies were translated from the original Irish or Latin into all the great languages of Europe, and the "Life of St. Brendan," also written in Irish and in Latin, has been similarly translated, and was equally to be found in the libraries of Europe.⁸

St. Fursey.

St. Fursey was the grand-nephew of St. Brendan, and though he did not wander over the ocean in search of some undiscovered land, he travelled much and far. He went to Munster from Connaught, then to East Anglia, and finally to France, where he died. He wrote a Litany and some prophecies and a treatise on the monastic life.⁹ His character for sanctity and zeal was not less than that of his great kinsman. But it is his visions that have made him best known, and though he did not leave, as far as we know, a written account of these visions himself, others have used the information he gave his contemporaries, and probably with ample embellishments. Nor was it easy for imaginative writers to resist the temptation of adding something of their own to the experiences of a holy man who had been permitted to see something of the glories of heaven as well as the horrors of hell, and who on one occasion had been scorched by the devil, even when protected by angels from the demon's attack.

Manuscripts dealing with St. Fursey's life and visions have been found in libraries as far apart as Trinity College, Dublin; Oxford, the Vatican, the Burgundian Library at

⁷ O'Hanlon's "Lives," V, p. 442.

⁸ O'Hanlon, V, pp. 390-1; "Book of Lismore"; "Brendiniana," pp. 105-269.

⁹ O'Hanlon, I, p. 284; Ware's "Writers."

Brussels, the Lambeth Library, London, and the library at Monte Cassino. Through the passing ages authors who have treated of St. Fursey were found in almost every country in Europe, and the probabilities are strong that St. Fursey's visions furnished Dante with a plot for his "Divina Comedia."¹⁰

After St. Fursey.

After St. Fursey's days darkness like a funeral pall descended on the Archdiocese of Tuam. There were still scholars in Mayo and in Tuam, and to Mayo students came from afar. But if they wrote their writings have not survived. Danish depredations would easily account for the disappearance of their manuscripts as they did for the ruin of church and monastery and school. Even under Turlogh O'Connor, when Tuam became a centre of culture, it was architecture and metal-work which were cultivated rather than the writing of books. Nor have we any work to mention until 1249, when one of the Archbishops, Maelmurry O'Loughnan, wrote an account of his travels to Jerusalem; and a century later another Archbishop of Tuam, Malachy MacHugh, wrote a book on the old Irish Kings.¹¹

Maurice O'Fihely.

Maurice O'Fihely who died in 1513, another Archbishop of Tuam, was a much bigger man than either of these. Born in Baltimore and educated at Oxford, he early joined the Franciscan Order, and a man who while still young became Professor of Philosophy at the University of Padua was no ordinary man. Indeed so remarkable were his attainments and such was the recognition of his extensive learning, that he was called *Flos Mundi*, the Flower of the World. Nor could any higher tribute be paid to his learning and capacity as a leader of men than his appointment in early middle life

¹⁰ Stokes "Three Months in the Forests of France"; O'Hanlon, I, pp. 223-6; Bede, Book III, Chap. 19.

¹¹ Ware's "Writers" and Ware's "Bishops."

to the See of Tuam. He wrote a commentary on the Scriptures, published at Venice in 1499, and a Manual of Faith, also published at Venice in 1509. But his better known work is a "Commentary on the Works of Duns Scotus," also published at Venice. Thus did one great Franciscan undertake to interpret another great Franciscan, and as a scholar and a schoolman Duns Scotus was the greatest Franciscan of his age. Critical rather than creative, he is regarded as one who could only find fault, one who threw down but did not build up. But this is an error, for he could build as well as destroy, and though his relentless logic could detect and expose flaws if such existed, he maintained philosophical and theological positions which were unassailable.

It must not be forgotten that he maintained against his chief contemporaries the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, four centuries before it became a defined dogma of the Church. Nor can he be charged with being a sort of forerunner of the Modernists of a later age, for he always bowed before the authority of the Church, and if he maintained philosophical or theological positions which seemed novel or startling it was always with due submission to established authority.

It was no easy task for O'Fihely to explain satisfactorily what was done by so deep a thinker, with a mind of such an original cast, a man whom the learned world named the Subtle Doctor. But O'Fihely was not unequal to the task he undertook, and his work can still be seen in some of the greater libraries, and on rare occasions is offered for sale.¹²

Florence Conry.

Nearly a century rolled by until another writer of eminence appeared in the archdiocese, and again it was an Archbishop of Tuam in the person of Florence Conry, who, like O'Fihely, also belonged to the Franciscan Order. He was more of a politician than O'Fihely, but, like O'Fihely,

¹² Ware's "Writers"; A. Wood "Athenae Oxonienses"; Wadding's "Writers of the Franciscan Order."

he was a profound scholar, and as O'Fihely took Duns Scotus as his master, Conry took St. Augustine as *his* master; and by one writer he has been described as the best student of St. Augustine then in Europe. The result of his continued studies was two works—"Commentaries of St. Augustine" and "Compendium of the Doctrines of St. Augustine." Father Meehan thinks that his "Remonstrance to Irish Catholic Members of Parliament for voting for the Bill of Attainder" was a piece of composition stamped in every line with the impress of a great mind.¹³ This work was written in English, and his Catechism was in Irish, and both deserved high praise. But his works in explanation of St. Augustine though scholarly, the result of long and careful study, were tinged with Jansenism, and have not met with unmerited praise.¹⁴ These were written in Latin.

O'Queely.

O'Queely, who succeeded Florence Conry as Archbishop of Tuam, was too immersed in the public affairs of his time, and less free to devote time to books. Nor did he write anything except a description of the Isles of Aran, and this at the urgent request of Colgan, who was then writing on the Irish Saints. Nor did the succeeding Archbishops of the seventeenth or even eighteenth centuries write anything which has survived. Hampered by penal laws, which were often savagely enforced, they lived as hunted outlaws, often as exiles from their native land.

John Lynch.

But if there was no scholarly Archbishop during the period, there was a scholarly priest of the Archdiocese, and in the seventeenth century few men in the Irish Church acquired such a reputation for scholarship as John Lynch, Archdeacon of Tuam. The son of a teacher whose school was famous throughout Ireland for classical scholarship, and a teacher of

¹³ "Fate and Fortunes of the Earls of Tyrone and Tyrconnell."

¹⁴ Renehan's "Archbishops."

classics himself in his earlier years, he wrote his books in Latin, and he wrote Latin with fluency and elegance. It is easy to see that his bent was that of the student and the scholar, and that his proper place was the library and the lecture hall. And we are amazed at the variety and extent of his knowledge. The Sacred Scriptures—both the Old and New Testament—the writings of the Fathers, both Latin and Greek, the masterpieces of ancient profane literature, the whole field of history, is an open book to him. And he is always ready with an apt quotation to illustrate the particular point on which he writes.

With the priests in politics he had little sympathy, and yet he was himself drawn into politics by the necessities of the times in which he lived. He was Anglo-Irish, loyal to the English connection and to the English king, and not always just to the ancient Irish whom the Anglo-Irish had dispossessed. He had therefore a horror of the Cromwellians and all they stood for; he had fulsome adulation for the worthless Stuart kings; and he had censure, solemn and severe, for the Nuncio and for Owen Roe O'Neill. And it was, at least partly, to vindicate himself that he wrote his "Alithnalogia," published abroad in 1662, and in which he paints in true colours the very onerous position of even the loyal Anglo-Irish Catholics under Elizabeth. His "Life of Dr. Kirwan" is the life of an earnest and zealous bishop. It was the nephew recording with admiration and even with partiality the amiable qualities of an attractive character, and it is an edifying life that is portrayed. His translation into elegant Latin of Keating's "History of Ireland" is another of Dr. Lynch's works. He also wrote the "Lives of the Irish Bishops," which, however, has never been published, and which lies in manuscript in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin.

But the best known of all Dr. Lynch's works, the work which permanently established his reputation as a historical scholar, is "Cambrensis Eversus." Though of English descent, Lynch was intensely Irish and intensely jealous of

the good name of his native land. And it stirred him to anger that the Welsh slanderer, Gerald Barry, who had blackened the name of Ireland in every land, was accepted, both at home and abroad, as an authority on Ireland and her people. This slanderer he determined to refute and expose, and hence the name of the work "Cambrensis Eversus." In the first chapter he gives the plan of the work, and this, even as an exile in a foreign land, he faithfully carried out:—

The following is the plan of this work. After a few preliminary observations I prove that Giraldus has not the qualities of a good historian; then I dispose of the faults which he finds in the Irish soil and climate; next I rebut his calumnious charges against the Irish people, princes and kings; afterwards I answer his licentious invective against our prelates and clergy; finally, since heaven itself was no asylum against his tongue, I follow him and examine his blasphemous assaults on our Irish saints. This order, however, is not invariably observed. Into whatever wilds or thickets his rambling and repeated digressions stray, thither my pen turns and pursues him. The pilot does not always keep the helm straight for the intended track, but often humours the tide and often bends his sails for whatever port wind and weather may permit, in the hope of thence making the destined port. I must endeavour to imitate the prudent helmsman; and should you find anything out of its place, remember that I am in pursuit of an antagonist through trackless wilds and byways.¹⁵

It only remains to add that "Cambrensis Eversus" has been edited with great care and learning by Dr. M. Kelly, then Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Maynooth College, and that the "Life of Dr. Kirwan" has been edited with equal skill and care by the Rev. C. P. Meehan, these being two men who deserve recognition from every student of Irish history.

Had active politics not occupied so much of his later years, Dr. O'Queely, Archbishop of Tuam, might have written something of permanent value, for he wrote an interesting account of Aran for Colgan. And it was another contem-

¹⁵ "Cambrensis Eversus," I, p. 111.

porary and friend, and in addition a scholar connected with Tuam, who wrote Lynch's epitaph. This was O'Flaherty, author of "Ogygia." The epitaph is as follows:—

"Occidit Armoricis pius heu; Lynchæus in oris,
Lynchæus patriæ lux, columenque suæ.
Asseruit famam, commenta refellit, Iernæ;
Eruit e tenebris gesta vetusta stylo.
Gallia habet tumulum, cunabula Galvia jactat;
Scripta vigent terris, spiritus arce poli."

Colonel O'Kelly.

Connected with Tuam by marriage, though not by birth, was Colonel O'Kelly, the author of "Macariae Excidium." It is an account by an eye witness of the war between Jacobite and Williamite, which ended with the disaster of Aughrim and the Treaty of Limerick. A contemporary has the advantage of narrating what he saw, and thus vividness is added to his narrative. But an active participant in the contest can hardly be expected to be altogether impartial, and this is one defect of Colonel O'Kelly's work.

The Penal Times.

After his time there came a long interval of silence. The Irish abroad were chiefly soldiers, intent on military distinction, and taking vengeance on the English and their allies for the shameless violation of the Treaty of Limerick. At home the Catholics were without colleges or schools, where learning could be fostered and books produced; and in the archdiocese of Tuam the Protestant landlords were not willing to encourage or even tolerate works which might probably be a censure on themselves. The Catholics, reduced to beggary by the confiscation of their lands, were too poor and too timid even had they been rich to protest. Thus, restrained both by poverty and fear, they had no outlet for such literary talents as they possessed except in the tales and religious songs of the wandering bards. Many of such, written only in manuscript and passed on from hand to hand, must necessarily have perished. But some have survived and have

been gathered by Dr. Hyde and published by him.¹⁶ Nor did any serious work dealing with history or any kindred subject appear during the whole of the eighteenth century, and not in the nineteenth until John MacHale appeared.

John MacHale.

He began to write when he was a young Professor at Maynooth not yet 30 years of age, and on a subject which interested him all his life, and on which in after years he had much to say. This was on the education given in the primary schools. Though emancipation had not yet come, much of the penal legislation of the preceding century had disappeared, and the Catholic who desired to learn and the Catholic who was prepared and qualified to teach were no longer compelled to meet by stealth under a sheltering hedge. It was a sign of enlightenment and toleration that some Protestants were eager to have the Catholics educated in secular subjects by the State, leaving their religious education in the hands of the clergy and the Catholic teachers; and it was a healthy change to find that the Government were willing to have public money expended on such schools. But the schools so established, and partly under Catholic control, were soon diverted to proselytising purposes, where bigots and fanatics were in control, men who must have the bible read for all the pupils, and without note or comment.

It was against this system that Dr. MacHale wrote, marshalling his arguments with considerable skill, and with a wealth of learning, both sacred and profane, remarkable in so young a man. More than half a century after he wrote his first letter as Hierophilus the tradition survived in Maynooth College that in his anxiety to mould his style on that of Gibbon he had copied out the whole *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, not once but many times. But there was no truth in this; it was a legend, and nothing more. He admitted, however, when asked about the matter that he liked

¹⁶ Hyde's "Literary History," pp. 597-606.

Gibbon very much, and had often read the *Decline and Fall*, and there is evidence of this in the very first letter of Hierophilus. And there are many passages that remind us of Gibbon, though the young Maynooth Professor could never write with the sustained brilliancy of the great historian. Indeed MacHale's style though vigorous and manly is often ponderous and pedantic.

Well acquainted with the Greek and Latin classics, with the Bible and its commentaries, with the heresies of the Early Church and with the writings of the Fathers, he is, in his earlier years, manifestly anxious to show the wide extent of his reading; and at the head of each letter he places some quotation from a Greek or Latin poet. It was not, however, merely to show the extent of his learning that he wrote. It was, as he said himself—"To check the career of the Gospellers, to vindicate our clergy against unmerited aspersion, and to justify the line of conduct adopted by them was the first object of Hierophilus."¹⁷

As Bishop of Killala and as Archbishop of Tuam his knowledge was greater than at Maynooth, and he had often to defend his country and his faith or to proclaim the wrongs of the poor people over whom he ruled. But the classical and other quotations are less frequent; the apparent pedantry has disappeared. With age has come the mellowing influence of time. He is more intent on repelling slander and vindicating truth than he is to show the extent of his learning. Yet the learning sometimes appears aptly applied and in a graceful form; and it is a pleasure to read his descriptions of Alpine scenery, of Italian churches and of the pagan remains of the Eternal City. His enthusiasm is that of a highly cultured man; nor can it be doubted, that if he had been free to cultivate literature and had not been burdened with the heavy cares of the episcopacy he would have gone far.

One work of his written in his early years still survives, though now long out of print, and probably never read by

¹⁷ "Letters," p. 117.

the great majority of the priests of Tuam. This is his "Evidences and Doctrines of the Catholic Church." His declared object was—"To deduce the evidence of the Catholic Church from the primitive source of revelation and illustrate the speculative truth of its doctrines as well as their practical influence on the happiness of society"; to show "the identity between the Catholic Church of the nineteenth and the Catholic Church of the first century."¹⁸ To do this he had to cover much ground, showing that pagan philosophy was not sufficient to supply the place of revelation, nor adequate to find out the whole truth unless supplemented by revelation. Just as in later Christian times making the Bible the whole rule of faith, and relying on private rather than on authoritative interpretation of Scripture, was not sufficient to preserve us from error. He also showed in opposition to Gibbon how the spread of the Church by such feeble instruments and against such powerful opposition demonstrated the guidance and assistance of God. And he had no great difficulty in showing that the modern Catholic Church, and it alone of all modern churches, had the marks of the Church founded by Christ. There is throughout much learning, sacred and profane, and it is safe to say that no bishop in Ireland, except perhaps Dr. Doyle, could have written such a work.

All this does not exhaust the literary output of Dr. MacHale. He was a profound Greek scholar, and he was a profound Irish scholar, and used both languages with equal ease. He translated Homer's "Iliad" into Irish, as he also did the New Testament. He also wrote an Irish Catechism, and he turned Moore's "Melodies" into Irish. And in his biography we get a picture of the old man sitting down to play these melodies on his harp, which he played with skill.

Dr. MacEvilly.

Dr. MacHale's successor in Tuam was also an author. But Dr. MacEvilly's tastes were in a different direction, and his knowledge fell far short of his predecessor's, as did also

¹⁸ Author's Preface.

the character of his style. He knew much less of the classics and of history, ancient or modern, and at no time was he familiar with the great masters of English literature. Nor did he even in his later years acquire much facility in expressing himself in readable English. His knowledge was purely professional, and for several years he had been Professor of Sacred Scripture in St. Jarlath's College, and had of necessity become familiar with the different commentators. But there were none such in the English language, and both the students in his classes and the educated laity outside were, unlike those of other countries, "without a popular and thoroughly Catholic exposition of at least the doctrinal portions of the New Testament."¹⁹ He began with the Epistles of St. Paul and continued for many years, even during his episcopate, until he had, except the Apocalypse, completed an exposition of the whole New Testament.

His method was the same throughout. He gives a paraphrase of the Sacred text, and explains the same, drawing for his knowledge on the works of the best commentators. All is in plain English, thus making it easy for the student and for the intelligent layman to understand, without plodding wearily through a foreign language, often imperfectly understood. There is little pretence of profound learning and none of grace of style. But the opinions of other commentators are given by the author, and without unduly intruding his own opinion; and the work was welcomed and had attained to a wide circulation long before the author's death.

Dr. Healy.

Dr. Healy was much nearer to Dr. MacHale as a writer than he was to Dr. MacEvilly. Like Dr. MacHale, he was for many years a Professor at Maynooth. He was a man of wide reading, a good classical scholar, and quite familiar with works of general literature. Even works of fiction attracted him, and he wrote one notable piece of poetry, giving in vigorous and fervid lines what he considered Red Hugh

¹⁹ Author's Preface.

O'Donnell's address to his soldiers on the eve of the battle of the Curlew Mountains. Theology had also a certain attraction for him, and so had Scripture, and in these matters he sometimes entered into controversy, for he was rather combative in disposition.

But his favourite field of study was Irish history, and especially Irish ecclesiastical history, and it is here that he did work of permanent value. In his "Ireland's Ancient Schools and Scholars" he makes the long dead past live again, and in a style that is harmonious and sometimes eloquent, but never dull, we are again in familiar contact with scholars of the fifth and sixth centuries, and with schools that were in ruins for more than a thousand years. His "Life and Writings of St. Patrick" was a work occupying many years, and with him was a labour of love. But though it is exhaustive and brings out the knowledge of topography which Dr. Healy had in a high degree and the patience and care with which he followed in the footsteps of St. Patrick, it did not add to the author's fame and is inferior in interest to his "Ancient Schools and Scholars." The latter is uncritical; too much is taken for granted; legend is too often confounded with established fact; and the author's judgments are not always sound.

Dr. Healy's "History of Maynooth College" is in one respect a marvellous performance. He was commissioned to write it by the Irish Bishops for the Maynooth Centenary of 1895, and he began and completed the work in less than a year. Not many men could have copied the work, much less compiled it, within the time. It is a ponderous volume running to nearly 800 pages, and with many illustrations of places and men. Here and there portions of the work were written by others, who collaborated with the author; but there is a certain coherence throughout; and though the work cannot be regarded as the authoritative History of Maynooth College, it is not unpleasant to read, and will always have an interest for those who were educated within the walls of the great College.

Cardinal Gibbons.

Though Cardinal Gibbons was born in Baltimore, of which city he was afterwards Archbishop, he was closely identified with the Archdiocese of Tuam. His parents lived at Partry before emigrating to America, and the Cardinal himself was sent back to Ireland when a small boy, and received his early education at Ballinrobe, returning to America, where he subsequently became priest, bishop, Archbishop and Cardinal. His was an active life, spent in instructing the young and the adult, building schools and colleges and churches, and appealing to those separated from the old church to come back to their Father's home, and not infrequently with success. Add to this that he was keenly interested in current public events, very proud of his privileges as an American citizen and regarding the American Constitution with something like affectionate veneration.

Such a man, leading such a life, of which almost every moment was occupied with church affairs, and not a little with public events in which the interests of the Church were concerned, could not have the necessary leisure for sustained literary work. Yet, he became, by economising his time, and with literary capabilities of no mean order, an author of repute, and one of his books attained a circulation exceeding that of "Uncle Tom's Cabin." This was his "Faith of Our Fathers," published in Baltimore in 1876.

In North Carolina Catholics were few and poor, churches and schools were wanting, and not infrequently the young Bishop stayed with friendly Protestants, and even preached in their churches when no Catholic church was available. These Protestants were hostile only because of their education and environment, because they had been fed with calumnies against the Catholic Church. But they were willing to learn, not averse to discuss, and even to be convinced, and Gibbons believed that they could be reached by a small treatise which would explain and defend Catholic truth, without offending those outside the Church. He asked

his friend Father Gross to prepare such a work. But Father Gross confessed his inability, and in turn asked the young Bishop to write, and this he did.

Nor was Gibbons badly equipped for the task which he thus undertook. His reading was wide, his memory retentive; he had studied the best English authors, often for style, and his writing, with those models before him, was smooth and flowing and readable, a combination of simplicity, strength and grace. Addressing himself to non-Catholics, he advises his readers to "study the Church's history in the pages of truth, to examine her creed, to read her authorised catechism and doctrinal works." He wrote in clear, simple English, explaining the Church's history, doctrine and mission, the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Unity, the Apostolicity, the Pope's Supremacy, the Temporal Power, the Invocation of Saints, the Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Sacraments and the Mass.²⁰ He indulged in no flights of rhetoric, his chief aim was only to be understood. He modestly hoped that his work would do something good and perhaps attain to a circulation of a few thousand copies.

The success of the work, however, exceeded all his expectations, astonished the publishers as well as the author, and before the Cardinal died in 1921 the "Faith of Our Fathers" had been translated into twelve languages, and more than two million copies had been sold. And the work is still being largely read and bringing many into the Church.

"Our Christian Heritage," published in 1889, is addressed to rationalists and free-thinkers, and from the standpoint of a Christian—not necessarily a Catholic. Here he shows what the world owes to Christianity—light to the mind, peace to the heart, the sanctity of marriage, charity towards suffering and destitution, freedom to the slave. He disliked extreme views and hated boycotting, but he defends labour and its right to combine in self defence. And he solemnly warns America of the evils he saw around him, which, like the cancerous growth, were eating into her vitals. These,

²⁰ Will's "Life of Cardinal Gibbons," II, pp. 875-888.

he pointed out, were Mormonism, divorce, secular education, the desecration of the Sabbath, election frauds, a defective criminal system, the greed for gain which was almost universal. It is a formidable list, and those who love America as a great nation and as a land of freedom have to lament that those evils still remain.

"The Ambassador of Christ," published in 1896, on the lines of Manning's "Eternal Priesthood," is addressed chiefly to priests, and is really a text book for them. The Cardinal also wrote "Discourses and Sermons" and "A Retrospect of Fifty Years."

Dr. Carr.

Dr. Carr, Archbishop of Melbourne, was for many years Professor of Theology at Maynooth College, and while there edited the "Irish Ecclesiastical Record" and published in English for the use of students an explanation of the Bull "Apostolicae Sedis." In Melbourne he sometimes delivered public lectures, and though not by nature of a militant disposition, he sometimes engaged in controversy, that is, he defended his Church when she was assailed. These addresses and papers he collected and published in a volume brought out at Melbourne, some years before his death.

Dr. Yorke.

Dr. Yorke, who died at San Francisco as late as 1926, was also connected with the archdiocese of Tuam. It is true that he was born in Galway, but he received his early education at St. Jarlath's College, and was certainly one of its most brilliant students. He spent a short post-graduate course at the Catholic University in Washington, and his Archbishop, Dr. Hanna, no mean judge of ability and scholarship, declared that he believed Dr. Yorke to be the most brilliant student that the Catholic University had sent out in forty years. Dr. Yorke, as became a man who came from the Claddagh in Galway, was of a militant nature, and in San Francisco often engaged in controversy. But it was only

when his Church was assailed or the defenceless were oppressed. Such contributions, whether in lecture or newspaper, were necessarily of a fugitive character, and sometimes marked by a violence of language which leisure and reconsideration would have cured. But even here there was evidence of a richly stored mind and of an eloquence almost beyond any of his contemporaries.

In the domain of education, however, Dr. Yorke did work of permanent value. He loved teaching, and the regret of many of his friends was that he had not filled the chair of education in some university. On this subject he often wrote and spoke, and he published for the use of schools a valuable series of Text Books on Religion, graded to suit the different classes.

Father Lavelle.

Turning from ecclesiastics abroad to those at home, we have the Rev. Patrick Lavelle, who died P.P. of Cong in 1886. His was a stirring career, and when he undertook to write on "The Irish Landlord Since the Revolution," it could hardly be expected that he would write with the sober impartiality of the historian. Nor did he aim at fine writing, though he could write well. "My one object," he said, "is to concentrate as many authorities in support of the views which I put forward as will justify at least a grave consideration of their merits." He was frankly a vigorous opponent of Irish landlordism, as it then existed, and he had strongly assailed landlords both on the platform and in the press. Pointing out in this book that these Irish landlords had no rights but those which were founded on robbery and confiscation, he compared the condition of the Irish tenants with that which existed in France and Belgium and Prussia, and other countries like Switzerland and Norway, where fixity of tenure if not peasant proprietary prevailed. He read much on the subject, quoting authorities on the different subjects, and traversing in this manner not only the countries of Europe from Norway to Greece but even going to India, Persia and

China. "I undertook to sketch the monster of Irish landlordism," and the colours are certainly put on with no sparing hand.²¹

Canon Burke.

Contemporary with Father Lavelle, but cast in a very different mould, was the Very Rev. Canon Ulick Burke, who died P.P. of Claremorris in 1887. While yet a student at Maynooth he had brought out "The College Irish Grammar," and subsequently "Easy Lessons in Irish." He knew Irish well and both of these books reflect credit on the young author. But, unfortunately, he was not satisfied to confine himself to Irish where he might have done good and useful work. He preferred to write in English, hoping, no doubt, to appeal to a larger audience; and in addition to a book on Pre-Christian Ireland, he wrote and published in 1875 "The Aryan Origin of the Gaelic Race and Language."

His declared object was "to give a thorough critical account of the language of the Gael, to show its early origin; that it is Aryan and comes to us down the great stream of migration that had begun to flow westward from the high country between the Tigris and the Indus, even before Abraham went forth out of his country and his kindred and out of his father's house and came into the land which the Lord did show him."

To write a work covering adequately so much ground as this would require many volumes, and involve deep and laborious research, and ought to be written in an attractive style. And if the matter were to be put in one small volume, as Canon Burke has done, compression would have to be very skilfully done. But neither for the greater or the smaller work was the author suitably equipped. He had read much but had never digested what he read, never stamped it as his own. In everything that he wrote he constantly digressed, constantly turned into bypaths, for ever followed from the main subject. An English gentleman once told him,

²¹ "The Irish Landlord since the Revolution," Dublin, 1870.

that the system of vowel assimilation in Irish was beautiful, and forthwith the author launched out into an aimless and irrelevant dissertation on beauty. Whenever he mentions the names of Max Muller or Stuart Blackie he launches out into an elaborate eulogy on both. He rails at those who neglect to speak Irish, and tries to explain its disuse. He has all the traditional speculations about the origin and use of the Round Towers, but has nothing worth saying on the subject himself.

He discourses on the "Book of Kells," on the site of Ancient Troy, on the birthplace of Homer, on Luxor and Babylon, on Pompeii and Herculaneum, on Latin pronunciation and many other subjects. He has bits of Irish history, quotations on almost all subjects from learned men; he has bold assertion without a particle of proof; and when the reader has read the book and lays it down he is bewildered and has nothing to remember either of the Aryans or of the Gaelic Race.

Father Reynolds.

What Father Peter Reynolds wrote is not available for review, for the little book, "The Letters of a Priest of the Archdiocese of Tuam," was only privately published, and has not survived. We have, however, a few of his letters cut from the newspapers in which they appeared. Writing under the pen-name of Sacerdos, he defended Father Daly, and not to the satisfaction of the local journal. The Editor, however, observed that Sacerdos, without doubt, wielded a powerful pen, "having a richly stored mind, stored with every acquirement fit to grace the priest and ornament the citizen."

Writing also in the "Tablet" in the year 1855, he ventured to differ with the Bishop of Ossory in his treatment of Fathers O'Shea and O'Keefe, two well known advocates of Tenant Right, who had by their public action incurred their bishop's displeasure. He wrote under an assumed name, but he was careful to speak with the greatest respect of the Bishop of

Ossory, and he authorised the Editor to disclose his name if the Bishop wished to know who the writer was. It appears that the Bishop had interdicted the two priests from appearing on a public platform—having indulged too much in that direction, and the Bishop claimed that he was within his right, just as he would be if the two priests had indulged immoderately in the use of intoxicating drink. Father Reynolds, however, preferred moderation rather than total abstinence. “A man must indeed agitate tremendously before he becomes politically intoxicated. But is not political intoxication very nearly akin to political intemperance?”

A little later he was assailed by the “Morning Post” for his share in the Mayo Election of 1857, and on this occasion he wrote in the “Morning Post,” and over his name. He had been called “a meek disciple of Dens,” “a gutter agent of Moore, virulent, ill-conditional and intolerant.” And the priests as a body had been savagely assailed. Father Reynolds, however, on his own behalf and on behalf of others, vigorously struck back. “I would venture to assert,” he said, “that even in London, enlightened as it is by the presence of the Editor of the ‘Morning Post,’ there is more ignorance, more immorality and more crime of every kind than in all Ireland put together. Nay more, I am firmly convinced that in some parts of England, with all its boasted civilisation and its almost infinite number of Bibles, there is to be found a greater ignorance of the principal Mysteries of the Christian religion than in the most benighted quarter of this island of ours.”

Later Writers.

In the last quarter of the passing century nothing was done in writing by the priests of the Archdiocese. But with the new century the waters were again agitated, and one of the first to produce a book was the Right Rev. Monsignor Macken, Dean of the Chapter and P.P. of Claremorris, who wrote a valuable volume on the “Canonisation of Saints.” In a letter acknowledging a presentation copy from the author

Cardinal Logue described it as "clear, orderly, well-written and bringing within reach of English readers a great mass of reliable information on a subject of engrossing interest. Hitherto the knowledge of even educated persons on this subject was very vague and superficial." And this was specially so in Ireland and very remarkable considering how many Irishmen have through passing centuries shed their blood for the faith. The author, however, after a careful study of his subject took away this reproach, and the whole procedure from the preliminary inquiries to the final scene, when the new Saint is venerated in St. Peters, has left nothing unsaid that ought to have been said, and nothing obscure. Nor is the book ever dull, from the first page to the last.

Contemporary with Dean Macken there were other priests of the Archdiocese who wrote books. These were the Rev. J. M. O'Reilly, C.C.; Rev. M. Healy, P.P.; Rev. Thomas Brett, C.C.; Rev. P. J. Joyce, C.C., and Rev. J. Neary, P.P. Father O'Reilly was best known in connection with the Gaelic League movement, and it was he who delivered at Máynoothí Collège the funeral oration when the remains of Father O'Growney had been brought from America to Ireland. But Father O'Reilly not only spoke and wrote Irish well, but he wrote English also with fluency and vigour. Such is his volume "The Native Speaker," where he declares to the horror of many with much less knowledge than himself that the native speaker is the great natural enemy of the Irish language. Nor can it be denied that he supports this thesis with skill and learning.

Father Healy wrote a valuable little book on "Consumption" for the Catholic Truth Society. But a larger and better known work is his "History of the Bible," which has had a large circulation and is extensively used in primary schools.

Father Brett's work is the "Life of Dr. Duggan, Bishop of Clonfert," a relative of the author and in his day a patriot bishop.

Father Joyce's little book, published in America, deals with

the history of Achill and the condition of its people. Lastly, Father Neary, P.P., whose knowledge of the history and topography of the archdiocese is unrivalled, gathered up local tradition in the several parishes in which he administered and wrote in succession short histories of the parishes of Dunmore, Boffin, Cong and the Neale and Turlough.

The Rev. J. F. D'Alton, D.D., D.Litt., though belonging to the archdiocese of Dublin, and occupying the position of Professor of Ancient Classics in Maynooth College, was born at Claremorris, and is therefore a native of the Archdiocese of Tuam. At a very early age he was appointed to a chair in Maynooth, and a few years later he published a work with the title "Horace and His Age." It is not intended for the ordinary man in the street, for it is too learned, and is rather intended for the University student or professor. Nor is it a mere biography of Horace as influenced by the environment in which he lived, by the men and movements which helped to mould his character and shape his thoughts. The author himself declares his purpose. "I have tried to view him in the light of the various movements of his time, to recapture as it were, the atmosphere in which he moved, to estimate portion at least of the influences under which many of his thoughts were bodied forth." It is a study in historical background and was so well received when published that "The Times" gave a large space to a most appreciative review of it. And the author has had words of commendation from many noted classical scholars who welcomed the book as a valuable and learned contribution to classical scholarship.

The Wilde Family.

But the output of books in recent times has not been confined to the clergy alone. The laity have also been active, and some indeed very prominent among literary men. At Moytura, on the shores of Lough Corrib, lived for many years Sir William Wilde, a noted Dublin surgeon. It was historic ground, and Sir William loved Archaeology, the old

castle, the rath and mound, the pillar stone and the cromlech, and the battlefield of the pagan as well as of the Christian times. All these were to be found on the banks of the Corrib, all the way from Galway to Lough Mask. On this territory abbeys had flourished and saints had lived; there were still left the ruins of ancient churches and Norman castles, and the varied movements of the forces at the Battle of Moytura could still be traced. Sir William Wilde was not a man to plough his way through old manuscripts, nor is there any evidence that he knew much of the Irish language in which so many of these manuscripts were written. But he knew enough to locate castle and abbey and church; he gathered up the ancient traditions and accurately identified the ancient ruins; and in his book on Lough Corrib and Lough Mask he left little in this district unexplored. And he put in popular and readable form everything that he had ascertained, and left the people of the district as well as historical students deeply indebted to his memory.

His wife, under the nom-de-plume of Speranza, wrote some of the most stirring poems which appeared in the "Nation" in its earlier years. Her sympathies were with the militant Young Irelanders and against the peace-loving policy of O'Connell; and the anger with which she contemplated the horrors of the famine as the work of English oppression and misgovernment was fierce. She appears to have known many languages, and we find in her "Poems of Speranza" translations from almost every language in Europe.

From such parents it was natural that children of genius would have sprung, and Speranza's son, Oscar Wilde, born in Moytura, rose to great eminence in English literature, and then, after reaching to giddy heights, fell into the abyss. Poet, novelist, playwright, he cultivated art for art's sake and struck out on a new line where he made paradox and epigram supreme. His plays were praised as brilliant, something that satisfied the jaded palate of expert playgoers; and it would be difficult to find a piece of such beautiful writing as his "De Profundis." It is a prose poem, unutterably sad from

beginning to end, the cry of a broken heart seared and seamed by sorrow such as has rarely overtaken a prosperous and honoured literary man. And his remorse was all the greater because the guilt of his fall lay entirely at his own door. It is pleasant to remember that the poor broken spirit left the colder shelter of Protestantism and found rest and comfort in his last days in the bosom of the Catholic Church.

The Moores of Moore Hall.

Only a few miles from Moytura another distinguished literary family had their home. These were the Moores of Moore Hall, the mansion being in the parish of Carnacon and picturesquely situated on the shores of Lough Carra. In 1798 one of these Moores, John by name, then the owner of the family estates, was actively identified with the French invading force which landed in Killala, and when Castlebar had been taken and the English were in headlong flight, the independence of Connaught was decreed by the French General Humbert and John Moore was appointed the first President of the Connaught Republic. But the Republic soon disappeared when English reinforcements came West, and John Moore was soon a prisoner in English hands. Nor can there be any doubt that he would have fared as Teeling and Tone did had he not died at Castlebar before his trial.

His brother George, who then inherited the family estates, was a student and a scholar and wrote a history of the English Revolution as well as lives of Cardinal Alberoni and the Duke of Riparda. His style was manifestly modelled on that of Gibbon. It is for the most part stately and solemn, and he is not much more sympathetic than Gibbon himself with the Catholics. His eldest son, George Henry, was for many years M.P. for Mayo, a man with very considerable talents for political work, though with radical defects for leadership. Before he was yet 17 he left Oscott College for Cambridge, and the Editor of "The Oscotian," in bidding him farewell, as one of the most brilliant contributors, felt quite certain that "never has Oscott sent forth one to whom Heaven had been

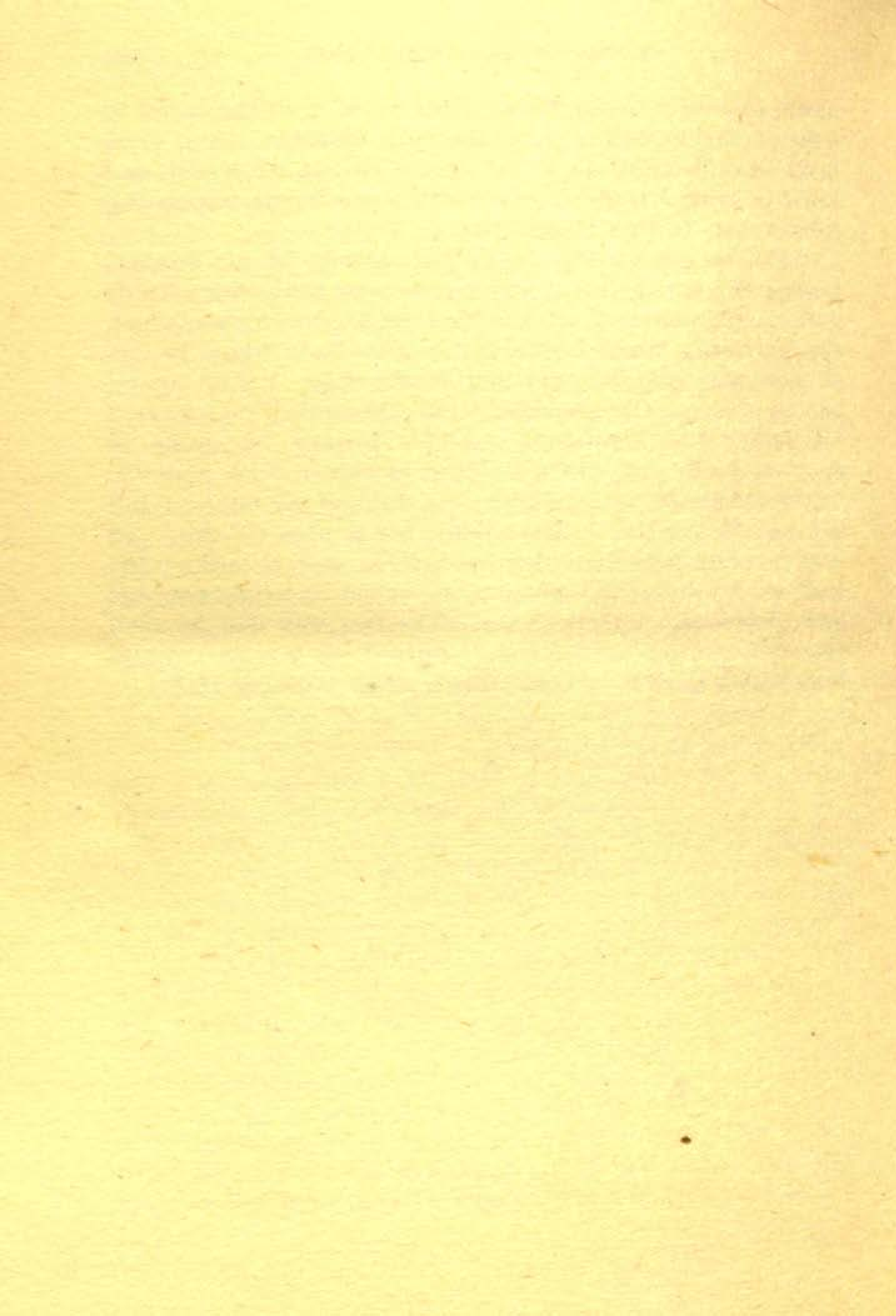
so bountiful." Even at that early age he had published a poem called "Ierne." In later days he wrote many public letters, writing as trenchantly as he spoke, and if he had devoted his great talents to literature rather than to politics he would undoubtedly have gone far.

Two of his sons, however, have written books, and one of them, George Moore, has reached an outstanding position among his contemporaries. His early ambition was to be a painter, and he studied at first in London and then for many years in Paris. He seems to have led a bohemian life, knowing neither discipline nor restraint, with no settled creed and no religious conviction. He acquired, however, an attractive literary style, and turning from painting to poetry and from Paris to London, he published two volumes of poems while yet young. He also wrote plays and much as an art critic. But he is best known as a novelist. Selecting Zola as his model, he is quite as much a repulsive realist as the Frenchman. He revels in sexual passion, and treats of such subjects in almost everything he wrote; and this makes it highly undesirable that such books as "Esther Waters," "A Mummer's Wife," and even "Evelyn Innes" and "Sister Teresa," would be put into the hands of the young and impressionable. All this is regrettable, for he often writes with great power and is never dull.

Mr. Moore's younger brother, Colonel Maurice Moore, has written a biography of his father with the title "An Irish Gentleman, George Henry Moore." The Colonel has been engaged in active military service, and served with distinction in the Boer War, and again in the great War of 1914. But he has also inherited the literary capabilities of his family, and his volume is interesting from the first page to the last. It is all the more interesting because of the sympathy in their political views between father and son; for Colonel Moore loves Ireland as ardently as his father did, and is as ready to make sacrifices on her behalf. No doubt, Mr. G. H. Moore was best known as a politician; but he was a man who was long prominent in racing circles, and had in addition travelled

much, especially in the East. This made it all the easier to write about him and to make the book readable. And there is ample evidence to show that the author can write well, and could produce a readable book with a much less fascinating subject than George Henry Moore.

A blot on the book is the Preface written by his brother, George Moore. As usual he drags in something that offends purity, and dwells with evident pleasure on some liaison which George Henry Moore had with a married lady whom he met at Bath and who followed him to the East. And again, adopting as something probable an unfounded rumour that his father had committed suicide, instead of dying of apoplexy as he did, George Moore glories in such a death. "It would please me," he says, "to think of my father dying like an old Roman." The author has a note on this, and very properly says that what his brother says regarding the mode of his father's death must be taken as expressing his own wishes and not the facts. The fact was that he died peacefully though suddenly and received the last Sacraments from Father Lavelle, who was then a guest at Moore Hall.



APPENDIX

THE PRESIDENTS OF ST. JARLATH'S COLLEGE.

1.—REV. OLIVER KELLY, from 1800 to 1806. At the latter date he was appointed P.P. of Kilmeena, then transferred to Westport, and in 1815 became Archbishop of Tuam.

2.—REV. PAUL MCGREAL, from 1806 to 1817, when he got pastoral charge of the parish of Bekan, from which he was transferred to become P.P. of the united parishes of Turlough and Keelogue. He died at Chancery in the last day of December, 1846, and so poor that there was not enough money in the house to purchase a coffin for him.

3.—REV. JAMES MACHALE, from 1817 to 1821, when he was appointed P.P. of Hollymount. In 1847 he was transferred to Castlebar and appointed Archdeacon, dying in 1856.

4.—REV. THOMAS FEENY, from 1821 to 1830, when he became P.P. of Kiltulla.

5.—REV. MARTIN BROWNE, from 1830 to 1837, when he was appointed P.P. of Balla. On the death of Archdeacon MacHale he was transferred to Castlebar, becoming also like his predecessor Archdeacon of the Chapter. He died in 1873.

6.—REV. WILLIAM CULLINANE, from 1837 to 1838, when he left for the American mission. He became Pastor in the diocese of Albany, where he died.

7.—REV. THOMAS FEENY, from 1838 to 1839. This was Father Feeny's second term of office. The college was then not prosperous, and such was the high opinion that Dr. MacHale had of Father Feeny's administrative abilities that he requested his acceptance of the Presidency while allowing him to continue as P.P. of Kiltulla, allowing him also to make any arrangement he pleased for the administration of his parish. Father Feeny was able to extricate the College from its difficulties, and in the following year became Bishop of Killala, where he soon ended the scandals that existed there.

8.—REV. JOHN FLANNELLY, from 1839 to 1845. In the latter year he was appointed P.P. of Aughagower. He does not appear to have attained to any eminence in any direction.

9.—REV. ANTONY O'REGAN, from 1845 to 1849. With great abilities himself, his pet aversion was a stupid student, and many stories were told of how he covered such students with abuse. On the other hand, though a strict disciplinarian, he forgave much to a student of ability. Leaving Ireland in 1849 he made his way to St. Louis and was at once placed by Dr. Kendrick at the head of his diocesan college. In 1854, against his vehement protests, he was appointed Bishop of Chicago, but was allowed to resign his see in 1858. For a time he lived at Garra, near Tuam, whence he went to London, and died there in 1866.

10.—REV. PETER REYNOLDS, from 1849 to 1852. In the latter year he was appointed P.P. of Claremorris, becoming also V.F. of the Deanery and Chancellor of the Chapter.

11.—REV. JOHN MACEVILLY, from 1852 to 1857, when he became Bishop of Galway.

12.—REV. P. J. O'BRIEN, from 1857 to 1865. In the latter year he was appointed P.P. of Glenamaddy, subsequently becoming P.P. of Athenry, where he died in 1883.

13.—VERY REV. U. J. CANON BURKE, from 1865 to 1878, when he became P.P. of Claremorris, where he died in 1887.

14.—REV. PATRICK KILKENNY, D.D., from 1878 to 1887, when he succeeded Canon Burke at Claremorris. He died there in 1921, having become some years before Archdeacon and V.G. and a Domestic Prelate.

15.—REV. MICHAEL O'CONNELL, from 1887 to 1893, when he became P.P. of Carnacon. Some years before his death he had been offered the parish of Castlebar, but declined it, and died at Carnacon in 1921.

16.—REV. JOHN FALLON, from 1893 to 1898, when he was appointed P.P. of Knock. Subsequently he was transferred to Mountbellew, and in 1918, on the death of Dr. Higgins, he was promoted to Castlebar, and also appointed Archdeacon of the Chapter.

17.—REV. M. J. MACHUGH, from 1898 to 1903, when he was appointed P.P. of Crossboyne. On the death of Canon Canning Father MacHugh was promoted to Ballyhaunis and also appointed Canon.

18.—VERY REV. CANON HIGGINS, D.D., from 1903 to 1910. In the latter year he was appointed P.P. of Cummer, whence he was transferred to Castlebar in 1912 on his appointment as Auxiliary-Bishop. For a brief period before his death, during Dr. Healy's illness, Dr. Higgins was Apostolic Administrator of the Archdiocese. During his presidency of St. Jarlath's the college rose to the front rank among the Irish colleges.

19.—REV. M. J. CONROY, from 1910 to 1915, when he was appointed P.P. of Kilmeena

20.—VERY REV. CANON EATON, from 1915 to 1923. He was also V.F. of Tuam Deanery. Canon Eaton spent his whole priestly career in the college, and was the only one who died while President. As Professor he was singularly efficient. His special department was Greek, and so well was the teaching done that St. Jarlath's College, year after year, at the public examinations headed the list of Irish colleges in Greek.

21.—VERY REV. CANON RYDER, appointed in 1923.

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