

CHRISTIAN IRELAND.



A SUPPLICANT WEARING THE ANTIQUE HOODED CLOAK OF THE IRISH PEASANTRY.



STUDY worthy of the devotion of a lifetime would be a comparison of the myths and religions, the races and customs, the antiquities and arts of islands like Japan, Borneo, Ceylon, and Ireland on the one hand with the like among the men of the Alps, Apennines, Caucasus, Hindu-Kush, and Himalayas on the other. As the flora and fauna of such outlying tracts have been compared with great profit to science, the ocean of atmosphere having preserved certain things, traits, and races just as the ocean of water, so it is plain that the time has come to compare the human development.

Japan has many historical points similar to Ireland besides the obvious geographical likeness. Both lie off the great double continent of Asia and Europe defended by the ocean from ordinary attacks. Both appear to have supported in the far past the rudest human races, who perhaps were forcibly dispossessed by Mongoloid tribes of hunters. Both seem to have had early invasions from the north and south, Ireland from Spain and North Britain, Japan from the Philippines and Corea. As we get down to historical times the southern invasions are best remembered in each island. Irish families of ancient renown still point to Spain and Greece for the origin of their stock, while the Japanese look southward rather than to Corea for their beginnings. The parallel is so close that it even includes a possible Aryan leaven in the Japanese mixture, corresponding to the Keltic Aryans who occupied and held Ireland again and again during the pagan epoch.

Christianity made itself felt in Ireland about the same time that Buddhism reached Japan. Both religions had a light task; both came by the easiest, most natural track—across the narrow northern straits. Japan had no single Buddhist evangelist to compare with St. Patrick; but here we must remember the difference between the practical and aggressive character of Europeans and the essentially contemplative and ideal minds of Orientals. Many details which cannot be noted here will be found singularly to agree if one should compare Buddhism in Japan with Christianity in Ireland, a similarity extending to monasteries and their effect on education and the fine arts, the abuse of religious privileges and the good wrought by religion. In a short article many other things appear more important to note.

In Ireland as in Japan the larger waves of conquest which have run across Asia and Europe, sometimes extending the whole width of those continents, sometimes only local in their course, have altered the population less profoundly than those of the mainland. The greater number were exhausted before reaching Ireland, dying out in Great Britain as the Saxon wave before the defense of the Welsh. The Roman conquests never passed the channel between Britain and Ireland. The Norman occupation of England was a century old before the Norman-Welsh gained a foothold in Ireland and summoned their king to confirm them in their possessions. Since their advent have been built such beautiful edifices as the

woodcuts here present—Cong Abbey, now in ruins; Muckross Abbey, of whose cloisters a gigantic yew occupies the entire space; the two towers, Celtic and Norman, which remain at Swords; and St. Doulough's Church, which is for the most part Norman. Consequently, although in some instances meager old forms of belief, old legends, old customs, old styles of architecture and weapons have there survived the encroachments of change, when the storm does come in such an island it is not so fierce as on the mainland. Somewhere a handful shelter themselves for the time and emerge with legends, words, and habits of thought that have disappeared from the rest of the world.

Religions are not exempt from this law.

or the other. Of course religion is not the only factor, but its importance is so overwhelming that until it is regarded dispassionately and from the historical point of view the others may be safely neglected. Neither side in the controversy is fair to the other; neither can afford to admit the truth; for some of the finest and most sacred hopes and aspirations are involved on both sides, and admission of fault entails in both cases a criticism of much that is best and most beautiful in modern civilization.

Druidism was of stronger vitality in Gaul and Great Britain than in Ireland. The Celtic peoples who brought Druidism with them in embryo and, when they became to a fair degree civilized and well-to-do, evolved it into



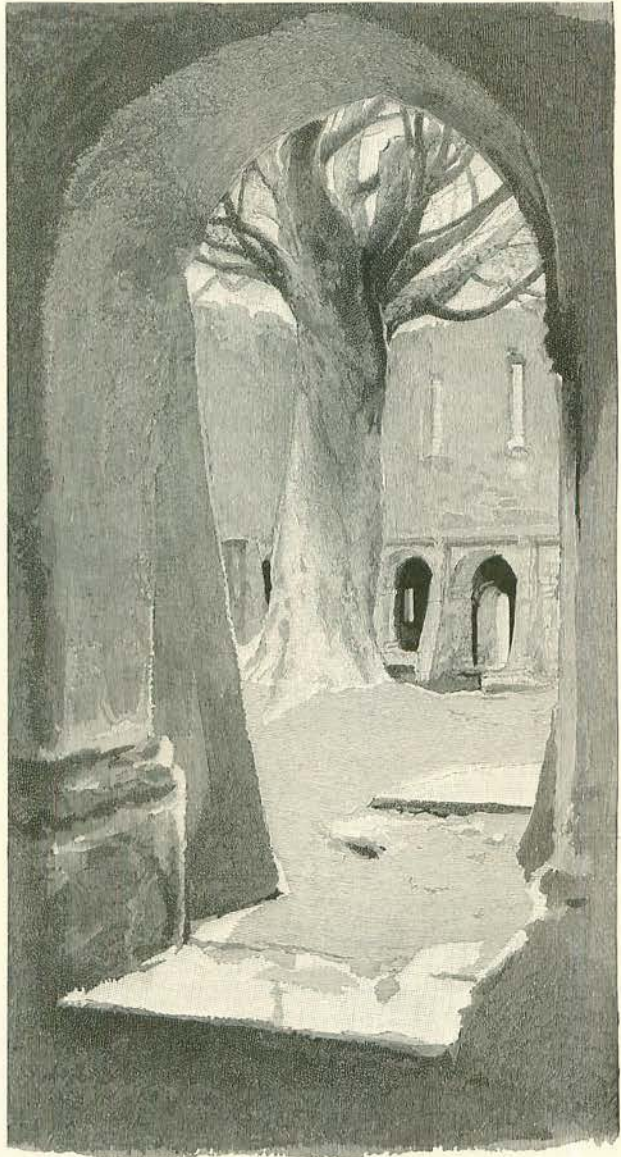
CONG ABBEY, COUNTY MAYO, BURIAL PLACE OF THE LAST KING OF IRELAND. (AFTER A PHOTOGRAPH BY W. LAWRENCE.)

To understand the Irish problem of to-day it is necessary to study the religious waves which have affected Ireland. For at the root of the trouble between the majority and the minority of voters in Ireland, the majority demanding home rule, and the minority, say fifteen per cent. of the population, denouncing it,—between Ireland as a whole and the dominant majority of Great Britain,—lies the religious question like the toad of the fairy tale under the ailing tree. The problem is far from simple; indeed, most writers betray despair of explaining it at all, and according to the prejudices of the writer many have recourse to arguments that will not bear an instant's examination, such as inherent defects in the people of one island

an elaborate and bloody ceremonial, into a religion of philosophy for the wise, of secrecy and fear for the unlearned, did not crush the aboriginal tribes of Europe equally in all places. The unlikelihood will be recognized that large armies were needed to overrun the British islands. Especially Ireland, a barren, woody, wet land, inhabited by a Mongoloid race of hunters and fishermen, offered small temptations, and could be easily occupied by tribes not only more warlike but better provided for a pastoral and agricultural life. Hence the weakness of Druidism in Ireland compared with Britain, where we may confidently suppose the earliest inhabitants to have made more resistance and forced the Kelts into a stronger

tribal and religious development. Yet the existence of Druidism in Ireland is certain. Too many curious legends, too many names of places and men, attest it. But it found no resistance in Ireland worthy of the name, and may, in a certain sense, be said to have stagnated there. The Shamanistic superstitions of the original inhabitants lived on and exist yet obscurely in the people, notwithstanding the advent of at least three forms of Christianity, in addition to, we may fairly say subversive of, the Keltic Pantheism of the Druids.

Before Druidism disappeared, before the Roman armies left Britain, it is certain that Christianity had already reached Ireland. Even the Druid or the bard,—and indeed the same man was apt to be both,—who considered himself a pagan, must have been affected by the principles underlying the simple, pure form of Christianity that went through civilized Europe on the commercial routes during the first centuries and penetrated the barbarian nations as well as the Romans of the West and the East. Even then Druidism was undermined, but held its own because of rank and caste. In the underfolk, composed of conquered tribes of a Mongoloid stock, Keltic early settlers subjected by later swarms, tribes and septs overthrown in the constant wars and partly enslaved, together with other slaves robbed or bought from Britain, Gaul, Scandinavia, and Spain, the superstitions cultivated must have been too crude to make any opposition to Christianity. Then it was a religion for the oppressed, and seemed to bring heaven to earth when compared with Druidism as that religion showed itself to the lowly. We hardly need the obscure hints that exist concerning early Christians in Gaul and the British Islands, because a religion like this, confined at first to merchants and unimportant folk, must have reached the West by way of the Greek colonies, of which Marseilles was the type. Christianity must have existed in timid protest against Druidism, making converts among the people, and leaving that haughty philosophy, the natural ally and comrade of the clan system, to the great persons. Even at Rome, says the Rev. Mr. Tozer



CLOISTERS OF MUCKROSS ABBEY.

in a recent work, the church was at first Eastern in character, being mainly composed of Greeks or Greek-speaking Jews. "Up to the middle of the third century all the literature of the church was in Greek." The Church of Rome, as we know it, did not exist at all. Only when it became divested of its Oriental character and took on a form suited to the Western peoples did the Catholic Church find the strength to become a propaganda. By ceasing to be orthodox, by becoming in fact a Western sect, it was able to accomplish the wonderful things which stand to its account in history.

It is an old error to count St. Patrick among



SQUARE NORMAN AND ROUND TOWER, SWORDS ABBEY.

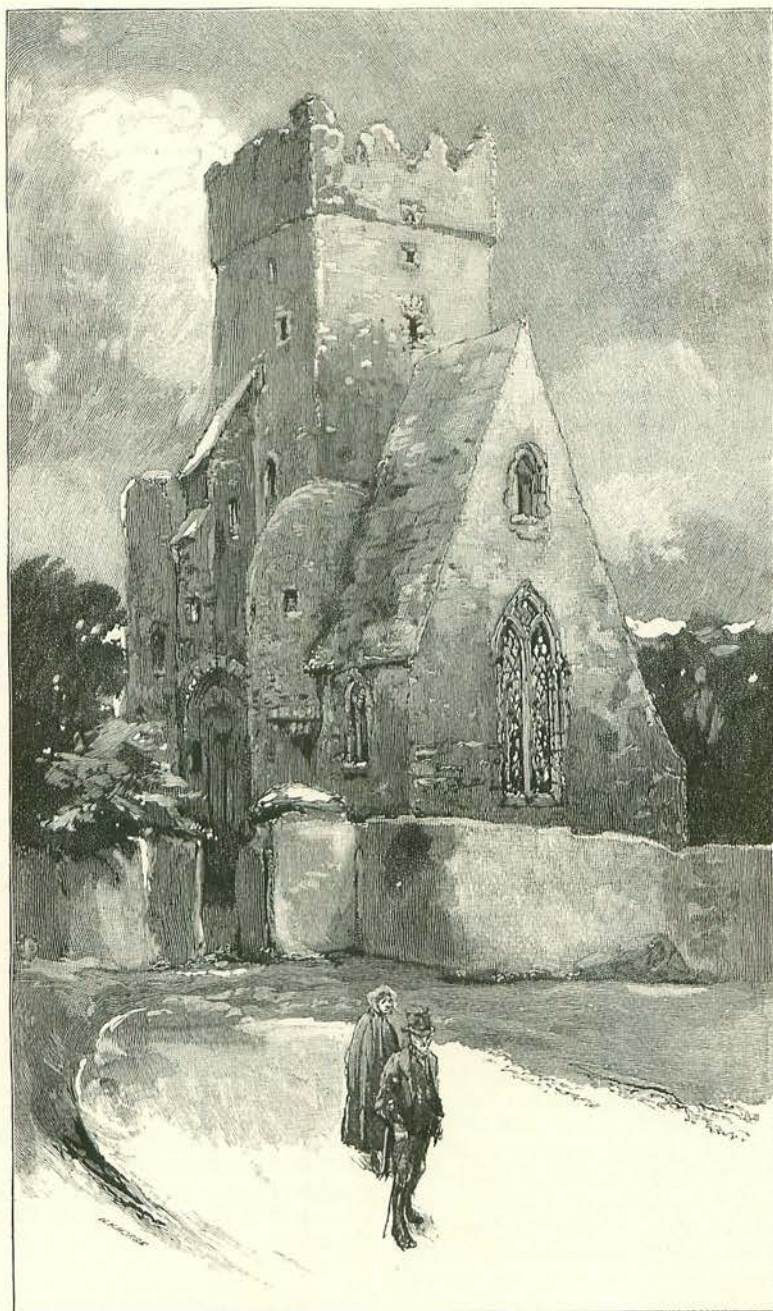
the emissaries, missionaries, or nuncios from the see of St. Peter. His conversion of Ireland was an independent act, which may be compared with similar independent conversions of the Bulgarians and other nations to the orthodox or Eastern Church by St. Cyril and St. Methodius four hundred years later. The terms of his confession of faith and his letter to a Welsh brigand who carried off his converts into slavery, two authentic documents, forbid any other view. Rome was indeed in the field to convert Ireland, but failed because the situation was not understood. A few years before the arrival of St. Patrick (A. D. 430) the then pope, Celestinus I., sent Bishop Paladius. Though there is no record of harm done to him by the pagans, but, on the contrary, he was permitted to build churches and leave, pastors, yet his reception was so chilling that he left. He never reached Rome, death overtaking him in Pictland, what is now Scotland, North Britain having received that appellation since his day when overrun and conquered by a Keltic return wave out of Scotia or Ireland. Listen to the Annals of the Four Masters :

The Age of Christ, 430. The second year of Laogaire. It is in this year that the first Celestinus, the pope, sent Bishop Paladius to Erin to spread the faith among the Erinites, and he took land in the Laigin district, twelve men with him. Nathi, son of Garrco, refused to admit him; but, however, he baptized a few persons in Ireland, and three wooden churches were erected by him, namely: Cell-Fhini, Teach-na-Romain, and Domnach-Arta. To Cell-Fhini he left his books and a shrine, with the relics of Paul and Peter, and many martyrs besides. He left these four in these churches: Augustinus, Benedictus, Sylvester, and Solonius. Paladius, on his returning back to Rome, as he did not receive respect in Ireland, contracted a disease in the country of the Cruithnigh (the Picts of the present Scotland) and died thereof.

It has been suggested that Patrick never existed, and that his legend was founded on these meager achievements of Paladius; but the hypothesis has too many documentary, historical, and legendary evidences against it. There was every reason for the want of success of a bishop coming from Rome where orthodox

had been discarded for a more enterprising and ambitious form of Christianity. Paladius must have found the upper classes free-thinkers, addicted to Druidical and other heathen vices, to human sacrifices and the black art, to polygamy certainly, and more than probably to occasional acts of cannibalism, such as drinking human blood and tearing the human heart with the teeth. Such things have often co-existed with a high grade of civilization. That Paladius was permitted to build churches shows two important things—one, that the upper classes were contemptuous of the new religion, the other, that Christians were present in Ireland. But they must have been humble folk and of the orthodox Eastern sect. The record of Paladius and his mission reported by the Four Masters has internal evidence of genuineness in its trait of moderation. The churches are wooden. We know that architecture in Ireland was late in affecting stone as a material; but if this record had been forged after the twelfth century, national vanity would surely have made out the material to be stone.

The success of St. Patrick where Rome had

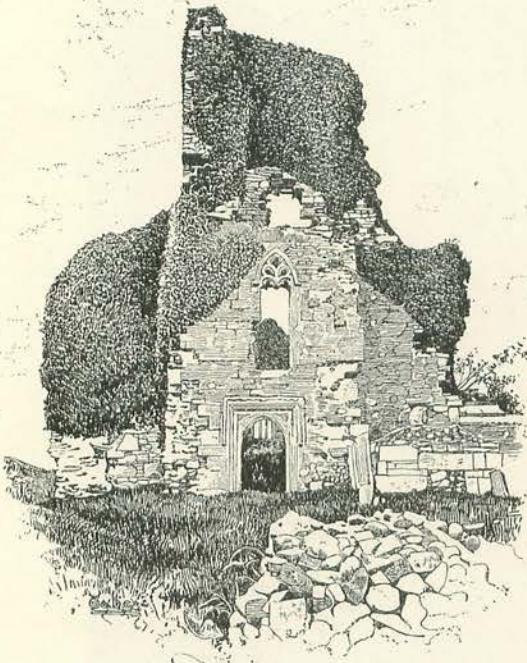


ST. DOULOUGH'S CHURCH (MOSTLY NORMAN).

failed could hardly have been palatable. The hatred and contempt felt by the Italian ecclesiastics come out in St. Jerome's reference to Celestius the Pelagian as an eater of Irish porridge, *Scoticis pultibus pragravatus* ("gorged with his Irish mush") and by other remarks in the polemics of the day. Two years later another missionary, not accredited from Rome,—

an Irish-Scot by residence if not a Scot by birth, a student in Gaul, and a man who distinctly denied that he was learned,—arrived in Ireland and did that which Paladius could not do; so that to-day the Irish Catholics in all parts of the world turn out in procession once a year to honor his memory.

How came it that Patricius succeeded where



ABBEY DORNEY. (AFTER A PHOTOGRAPH BY W. LAWRENCE.)

Paladius failed? Primarily because he had nothing to do with Rome or Italy. This preserved him from the active jealousy of the upper classes, the kings, chiefs, and Druids, who had good reason to perceive that Rome, having retired her armies from Britain, was now trying to extend her sway by religion. It also conciliated the Christians scattered along the borders of the island, who must have resented the pretensions of the Roman bishops with as much vigor as did the orthodox of the East. But there was another reason for Patrick's success. He addressed himself to the temporal and intellectual leaders, the chiefs, Druids, and "Fílés," or poets, because he was a man of genius and saw that only in that way could a community existing on the clan system be converted. Probably he spoke Gaelic from his cradle; very likely he spoke Latin also, for he was born at a station of Roman troops on the west coast of Britain and took a Latin name in place of Succat. From Succat and from Potitus, the name of his father, it is difficult to argue the nationality of his family. We know that Gaulish legions were stationed in Britain and that Syrians and Greeks were also domiciled there, the name "Roman" covering a medley of nations in the fourth century. St. Patrick did only what the

bishops of Rome had done in order to succeed—adapted his methods to the nature of the people and the polity that ruled. But he brought ideas that belonged to Alexandria or Byzantium rather than to Rome, and that were soon to rouse hatred and suspicion in that center of Western Christianity. The purer, more subtle, and imaginative religion of the East was in conflict with the crude worldliness of Rome, and it so happened that the remoteness of Ireland kept off for some centuries after St. Patrick a form of Christianity perhaps at bottom better suited to the Irish character than the orthodox. The southern Irish did not accept the Roman Easter until A. D. 633. It was not till A. D. 716 that northern Ireland and the great training school for missionary monks on the island of Iona gave in, while Wales held out until A. D. 768.

The most vivid and complete view of the native ecclesiastics prior to the English settlements in Ireland is that left by a shrewd Norman-Welsh prelate who accompanied the conquerors—the famous Giraldus de Barry Cambrensis. He pitched at once upon a grand distinction between the Irish custom of electing high prelates and that in Europe, namely, that they

were chosen from the monasteries among men who had become famous for austerity. This was an Eastern trait remaining in Ireland in the twelfth century. Giraldus scores the monks for ignorance of their duty, yet says:

It is wonderful, however, that, as the prelates have always been thus slothful in their duties and negligent of the welfare of their people, so many of them have been reputed holy men while on earth and are so devoutly revered and worshiped as saints.¹

He tried to discover the reason for the absence of martyrs among the Irish saints, a fact which very naturally surprised him, but all he got was this sharp thrust from Maurice, Archbishop of Cashel:

It is true that, although our nation may seem barbarous, uncivilized, and cruel, they have always shown great honor and reverence to their ecclesiastics and never on any occasion raised their hands against God's saints. But there is now come into our land a people who know how to make martyrs and have frequently done it. Henceforth Ireland will have its martyrs as well as other countries.

We have seen why Ireland had no early martyrs, first, because an extremely pure and simple Christianity leavened the people; and

¹ T. Forester's translation.

secondly, because with St. Patrick came a form essentially Oriental, which suited the upper classes and found no organization to resist it. Election of prelates from the monasteries arose in the same way, as well as the sin that seemed so frightful to Cambrensis, that of marrying a deceased brother's wife according to the teaching of the Old Testament. The Irish cross, which is so picturesque and distinguished a form, owes its existence without doubt to the Eastern origin of Irish Christianity, though an ultimate analysis must separate the cross proper into the Christian emblem and the wheel into the pagan. We may regard this cross as a pious effort to conciliate the pagans and Greek Christians. It has a certain superficial resemblance to the Greek cross, which would help in the harmless deception. A fine example of a comparatively late variety is shown in the sketch.

A pagan tradition of a strongly marked character connected with fire-worship lingered in the protection of the Church until an English king reigned who had not religion enough in him to be even a pagan—Henry VIII. This was the famous fire of St. Brigit, which was not allowed to go out, but was kept alight by nineteen nuns who watched alternately. The twentieth night St. Brigit herself kept the fire going with her own spirit hands. The number twenty represents the division of the old heathen year. There are many other indications of the survival of pagan and of Oriental Christian ideas in Ireland, some too coarse to mention, others not sufficiently important for this article.

But a word or two more concerning Patrick.

The three forbidden bloods
Patrick preached therein;
Yoke-oxen and slaying of milch-cows,
Also, by him, the burning of the first-born.

The verses, taken from an old Gaelic poem, attribute to St. Patrick the defense of a farmer against the wild clansman and hunter. It represents him as the patron of the herdsman also, thus softening the manners of the people at large; finally it shows that he struck at the horrible perversion of Druidism, that which must have kept it alive while it had health, but made its extinction sudden when once assailed. We know of too many similar practices among the Phœnicians, early Jews, Mexicans, and other peoples to be surprised any longer at a ritual in Northern Europe which has been de-

nied existence in vain. When we recall how recent are the latest instances of burning human beings at the stake on the plea of religion, and when we survey the record of the various peoples and religions in this respect, it will be difficult to make of the Druids those harmless philosophers merely which many able writers seek to prove them.

Giraldus Cambrensis did not say in the



CROSS AT ROSSTREVOR. (AFTER A PHOTOGRAPH BY W. LAWRENCE.)

twelfth century that Patrick was sent by Rome, and perhaps that fixes approximately the date after which it was thought necessary to give him the Italian stamp of approval. The Four Masters, who reflect many of the pious fictions invented up to the sixteenth century, were undoubtedly in good faith when they accredited him as well as unsuccessful Paladius to the same pope. Their entry concerning his death is full of round numbers. Thus his age is 122 years, his apostolate 60; he ordained 700 bishops and 300 priests. The record of St.

Patrick breathes the acknowledgments of a nation for that genius and those self-abnegating labors which substituted for a hidden religion of cruelty and terror a faith of love and peace open to all men, engaging the upper classes in a course which might hold their subjects and dependents by affection instead of by



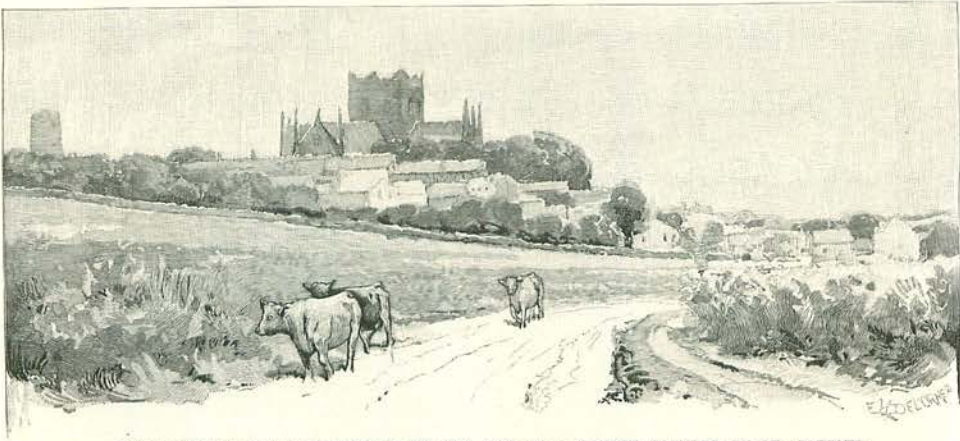
STAIR LEADING TO ST. CANICE'S CATHEDRAL, KILKENNY.

fear. We may believe that St. Ibar told Patrick "that the Irish never acknowledged the supremacy of a foreigner;" but Patrick must have convinced him very speedily that he was as good an Irishman as any.

We can now understand better, perhaps, the obstinacy of the Irish priesthood in their attitude towards Rome before and after the entrance of true feudalism under Henry II. of England. Consider that the old histories ascribed an Oriental, frequently a Greek, origin to mythical heroes and leaders of bands of settlers

in Ireland. As Gaul had Greek letters when Cæsar conquered it, so that alphabet came early to Ireland. Easter was Oriental, not Roman; the tonsure of priests was Eastern in shape, not Latin; the liturgy came from Alexandria, the headquarters of the Oriental Christians; Wednesday fasts and infant communion were Greek, not Roman. Village bishops existed in Ireland long after they were discontinued in Italy, and down to the twelfth century priests had wives and concubines. A bishopric might pass from father to son, and did so pass on many occasions, as various annals show. Nor could it well have been otherwise. Giraldus would have been less scandalized at the Irish priesthood had he known how natural was the survival of old forms of Christianity in such a place, had he known the history of his own Church of Britain. Papal letters and papal nuncios inveighed against habits that seemed to the popes who sent them deadly in their sinfulness. The religious structure conforms to the political. When Rome became secondary to Byzantium things were conducted according to Byzantine ideas, and when the Western Empire rose again its church proceeded to forget or to ignore what had been done by earlier popes. Politics gradually made the popes temporal sovereigns, and the discipline of the Church had to be increased in severity. Celibacy made the priesthood an army of unmarried men, without the entanglements of home, devoted solely to the interests of the pope. Far off in the ocean, on an island to themselves, yet numerous enough to have an intellectual life of some vitality, is it surprising that the Irish priesthood had little sympathy with the political designs of the papacy until the Reformation changed the whole situation? Ireland was of old in bad odor with the popes. Henry II. could have had full powers to do what he would with her, no matter who the pope was. The Isle of the Saints reeked with heresy. Prelates dared to consecrate each other without the correct twelfth-century forms as Rome made them. Doubtless they dared to assert an earlier origin than any Italian bishopric, and, what was unpardonable, to prove it. Ireland had to be brought into the fold.

To this ancient and well-grounded coldness of the Irish priesthood towards Rome we may fairly ascribe the small interest they took in excommunications launched by the papal see. On his second visit to Ireland, in 1210, King John was an excommunicated monarch, whose churches in England and Wales had been closed. Yet he found no difficulty in securing Irish allies against the barons in rebellion. It was not forty years after the so-called conquest by Strongbow. Norman destruction of shrines brought out little condemnation. Giraldus bears testimony to the

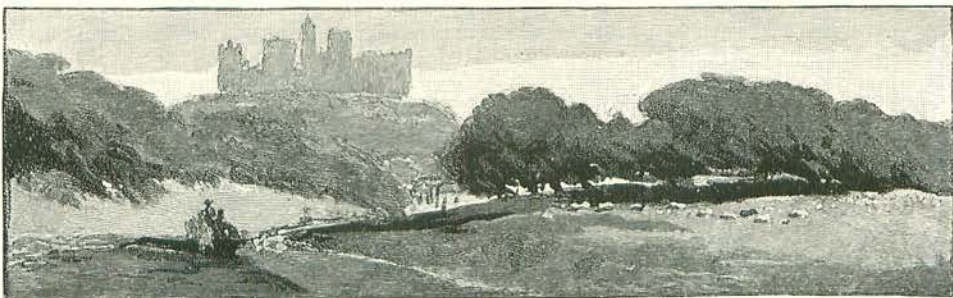


PROTESTANT CHURCH OF ARMAGH, ON THE SITE OF A CHURCH FOUNDED BY ST. PATRICK.

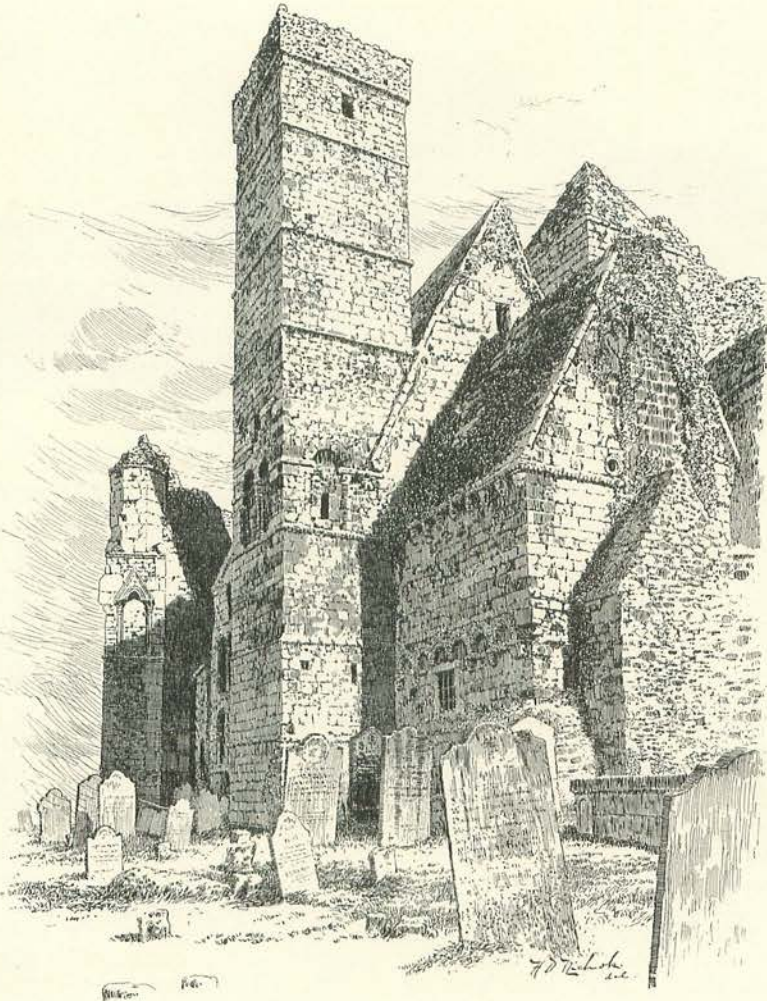
high morality of the Irish priesthood at the end of the twelfth century, but accuses the prelates of ignorance of their duty as officers of the Church, owing to their education as monks, and charges the lower priesthood with drunkenness. It is a singular witness to the permanence of traits in the island for six hundred years that the virtue noted by Giraldus in the priesthood, morality, should be still their grand virtue to-day, and that the vice, indulgence in drink, should be still the vice that causes the most trouble to the organization. It may be said in palliation that some stimulant is almost a necessity in so damp a climate as that of the British Islands.

The Norman barons had many traits which pleased the native Irish. Their valor and calculated magnificence took the Keltic imagination captive: we know that heads of great families soon became more Irish than the natives, and they boldly withstood the encroachments of foreign priests. At Kilkenny—a picturesque bit of which may be seen in Mr. J. W. Alexander's sketch—one of the Le Poers braved the excommunication of Bishop de Ledrede, a prelate who wished to make capital out of a charge of witchcraft brought by the elder children of a very rich woman, Dame le Kyteler, against their mother. The latter

favoured a younger child. Le Poer denounced the bishop as a coarse London friar, and when the latter forced his way into the court of justice over which Le Poer presided he bade him stand at the bar. "Begone with your decretals to your church, and preach them there!" exclaimed Le Poer, when the bishop tried to read the decretals issued by the papacy against heretics. Before the parliament at Dublin he said: "If any interloper from England should wander hither with bulls or privileges alleged to have been obtained in the Roman court, we are not bound to obey until they have been certified to us under our king's seal." Le Poer knew the feeling of Irish as well as Normans against the interference of ecclesiastics who took their orders from Rome. He saved Dame le Kyteler from the stake, but the ferocious bishop succeeded in torturing accusations from members of her household, and burned some of them alive. This was in 1324. When Philippe le Bel seized the property of the Templars and tortured and burned the knights, Edward II. of England did the same at his demand. In Ireland, however, the persecution was languid, and there were no burnings. The same king procured an excommunication from Rome against the Nationalists of his day who fought with



ROCK OF CASHEL, MUNSTER.



CORMAC'S CHAPEL, ROCK OF CASHEL. (AFTER A PHOTOGRAPH BY W. LAWRENCE.)

Robert Bruce of Scotland against the Anglo-Norman forces of the Pale. The Irish were Christian after their own way, and neither expected nor received consideration from Rome. In 1395 Richard II. found it impossible to conquer the Irish, and undertook to conciliate the four great chiefs of the period, O'Neil, O'Connor, MacMurragh, and O'Brien. He accomplished at once by kindness what his well-appointed forces could not do. There was a connection by marriage between Edward the Confessor and an Irish king of Munster. "Laying aside the hostile banners of England, quartered with leopards and fleurs-de-lis, he substituted flags bearing a golden cross on an azure ground surrounded by five silver birds, said to have been the arms of his patron saint, Edward the Confessor." What interests us in this connection, however, is the fact that in the indentures given

by Richard to his pacified Irish vassals a clause was inserted stipulating that in case of penalties for non-performance said fines should go to the papacy. Papal agents were then in Ireland under Richard's protection. Thus the Roman Church was still struggling for a foothold in Ireland in the fourteenth century. Its legates received compliments and reverence instead of money and political sway.

But if up to the Reformation the Irish were lukewarm Romanists it might be supposed that the suppression of the monasteries would have caused great disorder and hatred of England. There appears to be little reason for such an idea. Politics dragged the religious question into the battle of factions later, and each slaughter envenomed the hatred of the sects. With peculiar fatuousness the ruling powers fancied it cheaper to crush than to conciliate. If

they foresaw that the easy-going Catholics of Ireland who took the pope by no means too seriously would inevitably become ardent Romanists under Protestant attacks, they imagined it possible to destroy them before they could do any harm. The result has been three centuries of barbarous treatment and the alienation of the Irish consequent thereon. It is in this period that the Irish have become tools of the politicians of the Vatican. In one small sketch Mr. Alexander has taken Cashel, the greatest ruin of the Catholic period; in another Armagh, with its Protestant church taking the place of an earlier Catholic structure; a larger cut shows Cormac's Chapel, a part of the ruins on Cashel rock which belongs to the age before the Normans. These are typical spots round which the wars of faction envenomed by religion have raged. For three centuries Ireland was held by a settled garrison of Protestants whose titles to property always bore the suspicion of force and fraud, by a very large floating garrison of soldiers, and by various laws enacted to prevent Catholics from holding places of responsibility and trust. The shameful period gave at last to Ireland her quota of martyrs. The foolish struggle hurt British commerce and injured British statecraft, weakened her power in Europe, and gave opening for a thousand schemes and crimes. Very naturally it has stamped the diplomacy of Englishmen with the mark of failure. It has caused the British Government to curry favor with the Vatican in order to bring pressure on the Irish nation through the papal hierarchy, and thus enable it to force on the Irish the system of government it prefers. To such ignominious methods those politicians have to descend who adhere to the old brutal forms of government by violence.

In the game of diplomacy which the papacy will play, notwithstanding the objections of the Italian nation, little Ireland has always suffered the fate of those who have small offerings to make. A pawn on the chess-board, she is sacrificed at any moment in order to win a bigger piece. To-day that Great Britain is largely democratic and the papacy confined to the precincts of the Vatican, the same old game is going on; Ireland is being "sold out." The old lines show themselves with a difference. On the one side is the people, with their faithful shepherds, the priests; on the other, the papacy, with the prelates obedient

to a foreign court. The difference wrought by three centuries of Protestant folly is in favor of the papacy. Not only are the prelates under fair control, but the memory of past wrongs lingers in the people just where it can be reached by unscrupulous agitators. In England and in Protestant Ireland politicians can always appeal to bigotry and defeat measures for the nation which any colony could have for the asking. This is the disheartening part of the situation. Now, as before, the Irish nation lies between the millstones of papal and Protestant tyranny, and at the slightest effort to make a healthy movement one or the other gives it a grind.

The politicians of Great Britain and the interested upper classes of both islands are not in themselves heroic figures; they do not fire the Keltic imagination; they are identified with all that is opposed to progress in a national sense. With aspirations to count for something in the world, and with no prospect of so doing under the present system, their discontent is at least natural. People who are touched by Irish aspirations in neither their pockets nor their pride may even find such impulses admirable. A weak people stagnates. A strong race reacts against circumstances improper to its development, and will not be kept down. To the coarse arguments of bayonets it replies with agitation in favorable times, and at unlucky moments, when the mad-heads cannot be controlled, with explosives, the bullet, and the knife.

What has Christianity done for Ireland? Softened the manners of the people, placed woman on a higher moral sphere though narrowing the field of her activity, and rooted out many dreadful and disgusting habits and rites of paganism. It brought letters and learning, so that for three centuries Ireland was the resort of students and the asylum of learned men. It introduced the arts of painting, sculpture, and architecture. What have Catholicism and Protestantism together done for Ireland? Confounded all plans for a sensible settlement of difficulties, confused all minds with side issues, introduced the fear of outside interference, roused panics, and caused perpetual irritation. As a return to Christianity is not to be expected on the part of either Catholics or Protestants, the only alternative is the elimination of the clergyman from Irish politics. Only in that way can Catholics and Protestants work together in Ireland without stirring up the musty squabbles of the past.

Charles de Kay.

