

History of the Irish Hierarchy,

With the

Monasteries of each County

By The Rev. Thomas Walsh.

1856

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Diocese of Killaloe.

Called after Saint Lua or Molua ; the prefix Mo being a term of endearment, which the Irish frequently used in speaking or writing of their saints. He shall be noticed in his proper place, as he was not a bishop.

Among the benefactors to the church of Killaloe, are reckoned Moriartach O'Brien, king of Ireland, who died in March, 1120, and who was buried here, according to his own desire ; and Donald O'Brien, king of Limerick, of the same family, and much celebrated by Irish historians for his bounty and liberality to this, and many other churches.

About the end of the twelfth century, the ancient see of Roscrea was annexed to that of Killaloe, so that the united sees contained at that time one hundred and sixteen chapels. The church of Killaloe was much frequented by pilgrims.

Saint Flannan, the first bishop of this see, was the son of King Theodoric or Turlough, of Thomond, who retired from his throne, and assumed the monastic habit from St. Colman, at Lismore. It is said that St. Colman afterwards permitted him to return to his kingdom, for the purpose of repairing the ravages which it endured. Having died some time after, this pious prince was buried in the church of Killaloe, to which he had been a generous benefactor. The birth of St. Flannan, it seems, took place between 640 and 650. He is styled the disciple of Molua, as he had been a student in the school which that saint had founded.

The time of his promotion to the see is not known, nor is the date of his death recorded. His festival is observed on the 18th of December. It is said that his father, Theodoric, endowed this see with many estates, but whether it was before his resignation of, or his return to, the throne, is not determined.

In this see, as in others, a chasm takes place in the catalogue of its bishops ; the next mentioned is :

Carmacain O'Muilcashel, who died in 1019.

O'Gernidider, who died in 1055.

Thady O'Teig, died in 1083.

Thady O'Lonergan, a learned and charitable man, died in 1161.

Donatus O'Brien, bishop of North Munster, died in 1165.

Constantine O'Brien, descended of the royal family of the O'Briens, attended the Lateran council in 1179. While he presided in the see, Donald O'Brien was a liberal benefactor to it.

Dermod O'Coning succeeded, and in 1195 was deprived by Mathew O'Heny, archbishop of Cashel and the Pope's legate, and by him banished from his diocese. Dermod, in the same year died, it is said, of grief, in the house of O'Brien's daughter, and was buried at Cork. The cause of his deprivation is not mentioned.

Charles O'Heny succeeded. About this time the sees of Inniscathy and Roscrea were annexed to Killaloe. The possessions of Inniscathy were then divided between Limerick and the sees of Ardfert and Killaloe.

Cornelius O'Heny, assisted at the council of Lateran, in the year 1215, and died the year following, on his return home. With the consent of this prelate, and at the request of Henry de Loundres, archbishop of Dublin, then lord justice of Ireland, King John built a castle of defence at Roscrea, in order to be able to repel the incursions of Moriartach O'Brien, who ravaged those parts. Cornelius died in 1216, whereupon the king conferred the custody of the see on the bishop of Ferns, for his better support and maintenance.

Robert Travers, born at Drogheda, was elected bishop of Killaloe in 1216. He was deprived in 1221, by James, penitentiary to the Pope, and legate of Ireland. The cause of his deposition not known. He afterwards dedicated, in Teuxbury, Gloucestershire, two bells, in the winter of 1224.

Edmond, according to the annals of Innisfail, died in 1222. Thought not to have been bishop of Killaloe, but of Limerick.

Donald O'Kennedy, archdeacon of Killaloe, was elected in 1231, and sat about twenty-one years. He died in 1251, and was buried in the Dominican convent, at Limerick.

Isaac O'Cormacan, dean of Killaloe, succeeded in 1253. Isaac voluntarily resigned in the year 1267, and assumed the habit of a religious in the monastery of Holy Cross, county of Tipperary.

Mathew O'Hogan, dean of Killaloe, was elected bishop in 1267. Mathew, in the year 1280, exchanged some lands with King Edward I. This bishop died in August, 1281, and was buried at Limerick, in a convent of Dominicans.

Maurice O'Hogan, succeeded in 1281 ; was chantor of the see when elected, and obtained the temporals the year following. Having sat sixteen years, he died A.D. 1298, and was buried in his own church.

David MacMahon, dean of Killaloe, was elected by the chapter, and obtained the temporals in April, 1299 ; consecrated by Stephen O'Brogan, archbishop of Cashel. He died in 1316, having presided seventeen years.

Thomas O'Cormacan, archdeacon of Killaloe, succeeded in 1316. He died about July, 1321, and was buried in the church of Killaloe.

Benedict O'Coscry, dean of Killaloe, was elected and consecrated in the year 1322. He sat only three years.

David of Emly—MacBrien—succeeded by papal provision, in 1326. He died in December, 1342.

Thomas O'Hogan, canon of Killaloe, was consecrated in 1343. He died in October, 1354, and was buried at Nenagh, in the Franciscan church.

Thomas O'Cormacan, archdeacon of Killaloe, was appointed by the provision of the Pope, and received the rite of consecration in 1355. Thomas died in 1387, and was buried with his predecessors in the church of Killaloe.

Mathew MacCragh, dean of Killaloe, was advanced to the see by provision of Pope Nicholas IV., in 1389, and obtained the temporals in 1391. He sat in 1400.

Robert de Mulfield, a native of England, and a Cistercian monk, of Melsa, in Yorkshire, succeeded, by provision of Pope Alexander V., on the 9th of September, 1409.

Donagh MacCragh was the next successor. He sat in 1428, and died the year after.

Eugene O'Felan succeeded, and died in 1430.

Thady MacCragh succeeded, by provision of Pope Martin V., in 1430 ; obtained the temporals in the year 1431.

Frederick O'Lonergan is said to have succeeded.

James O'Ghanelan was bishop in 1441.

Terence O'Brien I. succeeded, by provision of the Pope, and was barbarously murdered by Brien O'Brien, at Clonruada, in the year 1460.

Thady is said to have succeeded, in 1460. In the following year he renewed and exemp-lified the foundation charter of the abbey of Kilmoney, within his own diocese, and in the county of Clare. Some omit this prelate in the succession of the bishops in this see.

John MacCragh,

Maurice O'Canasa,

Dermod MacCragh, of whom nothing is known, except the names.

Mathew or Mahoun O'Griffa, bishop of Killaloe, died in 1482.

Terence O'Brien II. succeeded ; was a prelate of great account among his people, for his liberality and hospitality. Was more addicted to martial pursuits than became his sacred character. This prelate died in 1525.

Richard Hogan, a Franciscan friar, succeeded in 1525, and was translated to Clonmacnois by Pope Paul III., on the 16th of June, 1538. He died in a few days after.

James O'Corrin succeeded, and through love of retirement resigned his see in 1546.

Cornelius Ryan was bishop in 1558.

Terence O'Brien III. obtained the see in the reign of Queen Mary, and sat in the year 1566. John O'Molony succeeded, was living in 1648.

Thomas O'Molony, doctor of sacred theology, lived in 1650.

John O'Molony was living in 1674.

Patrick MacDonagh, in 1741.

William O'Meara, translated from Ardfert or Kerry, in 1747 ; died in 1762.

Michael Peter MacMahon, consecrated in 1765 ; died in 1807.

James O'Shaughnessy, consecrated coadjutor in 1799 ; died in 1819.

Patrick MacMahon, who succeeded, died in 1835.

Patrick Kenedy, consecrated in January, 1836. Supported the English government in their Catholic bequests bill ; accepted a commissionership under same, but yielded to the remonstrance of his clergy.

Daniel Vaughan, consecrated in 1851, now happily presides.

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## Topography of Thomond

James Frost, M.R.I.A.

A church existed at Killaloe from the date of the foundation of Christianity. It was renewed from time to time, [1] and in 1160 the present cathedral was erected by Donald O'Brien, king of Limerick. It is a plain building, with a low central tower, and a fine east window. In a corner of the nave is a doorway of greater antiquity. By some authorities it is said to have belonged to the church erected by Brian Boromhe. Others believe it to be the tomb of Murrough his son. It is built into the wall and closed up at the back. Its ornamentation, closely resembling that of Cormac's chapel at Cashel, is of a highly elaborate character. In the recess which it forms is found a flag with an ancient Irish cross inscribed, supposed to cover the remains of Turlogh, grandson of Brian. There is much reason to regret that more care has not been employed in dealing with the interior of the cathedral of Killaloe. The walls are covered with stucco, which without doubt, conceals many characteristic features of the early workmanship ; the chancel arch is closed up by an unsightly organ loft or gallery ; one of the transepts is wholly closed up and converted into a vestry, and the level of the floor is several feet higher than it was in the olden time. No ancient tomb or monument of any interest, save the one above referred to, is to be found in the church.

About a furlong from the cathedral, on a small island in the Shannon, is seen a little ruined church, evidently of very great antiquity. Petrie conjectured that it was the original church of St. Molua. [2]

Immediately on the north side of the cathedral stands a stone-roofed church or *duirtheach*, not unlike St. Columbkil's house at Kells, or St. Kevin's kitchen at Glendalough. It measures on the outside 36 feet 4 inches in length, and 25 in breadth. In the west end is a door, rounded at top, and ornamented in the style called Irish Romanesque architecture. The roof is very sharp and entirely of stone. Attached to the east end of the *duirteach* must have stood another building, because on the east gable is seen the marks left by the roof of a structure of somewhat smaller size. Some think it was the choir, and others that it was an edifice of much greater antiquity than that which now remains. [3]

On the summit of the hill, above the bridge of Killaloe, and almost on the site now occupied by the Catholic church and by the neighbouring houses, stood the royal palace of Kincora. It is needless to say that no vestige of it remains to our time. It must have extended from the church to the edge of the hill over the Shannon, because its name signifies the "Head of the Weir." It was first erected by Brian Boromhe, and for a century it continued to be the chief place of residence of his descendants. The poet MacLiag describes how he happened to be at Ceann Coradh on one occasion when Brian's tribute of cows from Leinster and Ulster was being driven home ; that he went out from the Court to look at them, and that he returned again and said to Brian " Here comes Erin's tribute of cows to thee," whereupon MacLiag gave the name of Boromhe to the town and plain—a name signifying a multitude of cows either paid as tribute by, or carried off as prey from an enemy. It is not unlikely that Brian himself received the name of Boromhe, or of the "Tribute of cows" for the first time on this occasion. MacLiag then proceeds to give an account of the numbers of cattle and of other articles of consumption sent in as tribute to Kincora. If that recital had not been confirmed by the positive statement of other authorities of unimpeachable authenticity it would be scarcely credible. For instance, the Danes of Dublin supplied one hundred and fifty butts of wine ; Burren and Corcomore, 2,000 cattle, 1,000 sheep, and 1,000 cloaks ; Corcabaskin East and West, 2,000 head of cattle. He then describes the order in which royal and noble guests of Brian sat around him at table in the great hall of

the palace. A description of the similar ceremonial, as it had previously existed in the royal palace of Tara while that place continued to be the residence of the kings of Ireland, is given from earlier sources, and it fully confirms MacLiag's picture. [4] Brian himself, we are told, sat at the head, with the king of Connaught on his right hand, and the king of West Ulster on his left ; the king of Tir-Eoghan opposite to him. At the door, on the side nearest to Brian, was placed the king of Leinster ; and on the further side Donogh, the monarch's son. Seated beside Malachy, king of Meath, Murrough, the eldest son of Brian, sat with his back to his father, with Aengus, the son of Carrach, a valiant prince of Meath, on his right hand and the king of Tir-Conaill on his left. This position of Murrough would seem to imply that Brian occupied a chair elevated above the other seats in the hall. Teige, son of the monarch, sat with Teige O'Kelly, king of Ui Maine, at the end or side opposite to the door, at Brian's right hand; and Maelruanaigh, chief of the Ui Fiachra, in South Connaught, sat on Teige's right hand. [5] In the *Annals of the Four Masters* and other records, several references are made to the palace of Ceann-Coradh, and to the town and church of Killaloe. These I shall give here :—

“A.D. 1011. Many fortresses were erected by Brian; among these the Caher of Ceann-Coradh.—*Four Masters*.

A.D. 1012. MacMaine, son of Cosgrach, Coarb of Killaloe, died.

A.D. 1016. The Connaughtmen plundered and demolished Ceann Coradh and Killaloe.—*Idem*.

A.D. 1028. Teige, son of Eochaidh, Airchinneach of Killaloe, died.—*Idem*.

A.D. 1065. Murrough, son of Donogh O'Brien, stormed the palace of Turlogh O'Brien at Ceann-Coradh, and slew many people.—*Ann. Inisfallen*.

A.D. 1061. An army was led by Hugh O'Connor (Ghabhearnaigh) to Ceann-Coradh, and he demolished the fortress and weir, and destroyed the enclosing wall of the well, and eat its two salmons, and also burned Killaloe.—*Four Masters*.

A.D. 1080. Killaloe was burned.—*Ann. Inisfallen*.

A.D. 1084. Killaloe, Tomgraney, and Moynoe were burned by the Connaughtmen.—*Four Masters*.

A.D. 1086. Turlogh O'Brien, king of Ireland, died at Ceann-Coradh, and was buried at Killaloe.—*Idem*. and *Ann. Inisfallen*.

A.D. 1088. Donald, son of MacLoghlen, king of Ireland, broke down and demolished Ceann-Coradh.—*Four Masters*.

A.D. 1096. Ceann-Coradh was rebuilt by Murtoogh O'Brien.—*Idem*.

A.D. 1107. Ceann-Coradh was ruined by lightning immediately after Easter in this year, and sixty puncheons of mead and beer destroyed.—*Idem*.

A.D. 1116. Killaloe, with its church was burned by Turlogh O'Connor. He levelled Boromha, [6] burned Ceann-Coradh, and killed many persons. He took many cows and prisoners, but these latter he restored to God and St. Flannán. In two years afterwards he hurled Ceann-Coradh into the Shannon 'both stone and wood.'—*Idem*.

A.D. 1125. Kennedy O'Conaing Airchinneach of Killaloe died.—*Idem*.

A.D. 1141. Killaloe was burned.—*Idem*.

A.D. 1154. Killaloe was burned.—*Idem*.

A.D. 1160. Ceann-Coradh was burned.—*Idem*.

A.D. 1170. The O'Kellys of Ui Maine destroyed the wooden bridge, and burned the church.—*Four Mast. Ann. Inisfallen*.

A.D. 1559. Donogh Oge, son of Donogh, son of Nicholas O'Grady, archdeacon of Killaloe, died. He was a lord in church and state.—*Ann. Four Masters*.”

About a mile northwards from Killaloe, and rising over the road as you go towards Tomgraney is the rocky mountain of Cragliath, far famed, in Irish story, and well known as the habitation of Aoibheal, the banshee of Munster and of the Dalcassians. Her palace is shown in a wild glen of the mountain, from which rises a peak forty feet high, and most romantic in appearance. A well, called after the fairy, springs from the side of the hill. She has been celebrated in verse by several Irish poets. In Cragliath also is found the site of Grianán Lachtna, which according to the *Annals of the MacBruodins*, was built as a place of residence by Lachtna, the brother of Brian Boroimhe in 953. It is well called Grianán (the sunny) from its southern site and from the noble prospect it commands. In the northern part of the townland of Cragliath is a field called Park-na-neach (of the horses) where, it is said, Brian Boroimhe kept his horses. Only one castle existed in the parish, namely, that of Killaloe, long since demolished, and owned in 1580 by Donogh MacNamara.

- [1] A.D. 1012.—The great church of Killaloe was built by Brian Boroimhe *Keating's History of Ireland*, p. 90.
- [2] Petrie's *Round Towers*, p. 281.
- [3] Petrie conjectures that the building under consideration was erected by St. Flannan. See his description of it in his work on the *Irish Round Towers*, p. 281.
- [4] See Petrie's *Antiquities of Tara Hill* in vol. xvii. of *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*.
- [5] See MacLiag's Poem; Library of the Royal Irish Academy, as quoted by O'Curry in his *Lectures on the Manners and Customs of the Ancient Irish*, vol. ii., Lecture 6, p. 120.
- [6] This place is now called Bael Boromha. It is an earthen fort situated near the margin of the Shannon, about one mile north of the town of Killaloe. According to local tradition, Brian Boroimhe's stables extended from Kincora to Beal-Boromha, but no remains are now visible except some of the ramparts of Beal Boromha.—J. O'Donovan's note *Ann. Four Mast*.

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#### County of Clare — Monasteries

BEAGH, in the barony of Burren. A monastery for the third order of Franciscans was founded here. The abbey and the townland of Abbey Beghan are mentioned in the records.

Cean-indis. — (Cluain-creadhui, county of Limerick.) Cluain-creadhui, or Kilita. St. Ita, styled the Brigid of Munster, was of the princely house of Decies, now in the county of Waterford; her father's name was Keenfoelad, her mother's, Necta, both Christians, as it appears St. Ita was baptized in her childhood. The year of her birth is not known, but it is supposed she was born about 480.

Clare, on the river Fergus, where it falls into the river Shannon, in the barony of Islands.

An abbey was founded near this town, under the invocation of SS. Peter and Paul, for canons of St. Augustine, by Donald O'Brien, king of Limerick, the celebrated builder of churches and sanctuaries. He appointed Donatus abbot, and richly endowed the abbey. The charter of the abbey was dated at Limerick, in 1195, and was witnessed by the archbishop of Cashell, the bishops of Killaloe, Kilfenora, and Limerick.

In 1543, King Henry VIII. granted the abbey to Donagh O'Bryan, baron of Ibrachan, together with a moiety of the rectories of Kilchriest, Kilmoyle, Kilmacdevan, Kilberragh, Ballinregdan, Ballylogheran, and Ballylegford. The abbey was granted in fee to Donough, earl of Thomond, on the 19th of January, 1620, and a new grant was made on the 1st of September, 1661, to Henry, earl of Thomond.

Corcumroe or De Petra fertili, in the barony of Burrin. It was thrice plundered by Roderick O'Connor and Dermot O'Brien, in the year 1088.

A.D. 1194, Donald, king of Limerick, founded a splendid monastery here, for Cistercian monks. Others say, that his son Carbrac was the founder, in 1200. This abbey “ of the fruitful rock,” was a daughter of that of Suire. The cell of Kilshanny was annexed to this house.

A.D. 1418, the abbot John was made bishop of Kilmacduach.

This abbey, with eleven quarters of land in Corcumroe and Glanmanagh, was granted to Sir Richard Harding.

Ennis, on the river Fergus, in the barony of Islands. Donagh Carbrac O’Brien built a very noble and beautiful monastery for conventual Franciscans, in this place, A.D. 1240. Dermot and Mathew O’Bryan, princes of Thomond, had been munificent benefactors to this abbey, which continued for centuries the usual cemetery of the Thomond family.

This friary received the reform of the strict observance. In a rental of the crown, A.D. 1577, in the office of the auditor general, the crown was then in possession of the site of this monastery, a mill on the river Fergus, an eel and a salmon wier, with some houses and gardens in the village.

On the 1st of June, 1621, it was granted to William Dongan, Esq.

Many of the ancient ornaments of this building still remain, which, with many other similar instances, says Archdall, must argue the refined taste of our ancestors, of course the Irish, who built it.

Under the miserable pedant, James I., when the judges made their regular circuits, the assizes were held in the monastery of Ennis.

Enniskerry,—an island in the territory of Hybreccan, in Thomond. St. Senan, of Inniscathy, built an oratory, over which he placed some of his disciples, before he founded his establishment in Scatterry Island.

Innisfidhe, an island in the Shannon, where it receives the river Fergus.

According to Archdall, a St. Brigid presided over a nunnery in this island, in the time of St. Senan. She was, he says, of the family of Mactalius, and daughter of Conchraid. Mactalius, who then was a pagan, opposed the St. Senan in forming his settlement in Inniscathy, about the year 540. A Saint Brigid left Ireland in the ninth century, to visit her brother Andrew, deacon of Fiesole, in Tuscany, and the disciple of St. Donatus, an Irishman, who was bishop of that see. The festival of St. Brigid, of Fiesole, is observed on the 1st of February, as well as that of the celebrated patroness of Ireland.

Inchcronane, an island in the river Shannon. Donald O’Brien, king of Limerick, founded an abbey in this island for regular canons, about the year 1190. [?]

This abbey, and a moiety of the tithes of the parish of Inchcronane, were granted to Donough, earl of Thomond, January 19th, 1620, and again given in fee to Henry, earl of Thomond, on the 1st of September, 1661.

Inchmore, an island of Loughree, in the Shannon.

St. Senan built a monastery in this island, which he governed for some time, and then, about to retire, placed over it St. Liberius, whose memory is still revered in the island.

Inisanlaoi or Calf Island. Turlogh O’Brien, son of Teigue, king of Thomond, built a magnificent abbey here, in which he was buried, in the year 1305.

Inniskeltra, an island in Loughderg, in the river Shannon.

Saint Camin founded an abbey here. He led a solitary life, and of great austerity ; but as numbers of people resorted to him in this island, for instruction, he founded this monastery. Although St. Camin or Comin was of a very sickly constitution, he closely applied himself to ecclesiastical studies, and wrote a commentary on the Psalms, compared with the Hebrew text. This saint died on the 25th of March, 653. His memory was so much respected that the monastery of Inniskeltra became very celebrated, and was considered as one of the principal asylums in Ireland.

The abbot Saint Stellan became his successor.

St. Coelan, a monk of this abbey, whom some writers conjecture to be the Saint Chilien who flourished in the eighth century, wrote a life of St. Brigid in Latin verse, in which he mentions the abbey of Inniskeltra as Benedictine.

A.D. 834, this island was ravaged by the Danes, and the same year it was destroyed with fire by Tomar, a Danish commander from Limerick.

A.D. 1027, the monarch of Ireland, Brien Borumh, erected the church of this abbey. [?]

A.D. 1040, Corcoran was abbot of Inniskeltra. He was the most celebrated ecclesiastic of western Europe, both for religion and learning. He died this year at Lismore.

Saint Amnichad, who was the disciple of Corcran, died in 1043, at the abbey of Fulda. The occasion of his leaving Ireland is related by Marianus Scotus. Amnichad being intrusted with the care of strangers, happened, on a certain occasion, to entertain some brethren, with the permission of his superior, Corcran ; after they had taken food, and some of them having re-tired, others, who remained sitting near the fire, asked him to drink something. Amnichad refused, asserting that he could not, without leave. At length being much pressed, he consented, but previously sent some of the drink to the superior to be blessed by him. On the next day Corcran inquired why he had sent him that drink, and on informing him of what occurred, the superior, slight as was the transgression, ordered him to leave Ireland. Amnichad obeyed, and went to Fulda,—became there a recluse until his death, on the 30th of January, A.D. 1043. Marianus further relates, that lights were seen and psalmody heard over Amnichad's tomb, in the monastery of Fulda, and that while there a monk, he himself celebrated mass over it every day, for ten years. The reputation of this saint has been very great, and his name occurs in divers calendars, at January 30th.

There yet remains in this island a fine round tower, with seven small churches, which bespeak an elegance of taste.

Inislinghe or Inislua, an island between Limerick and Inniscathy. Here Saint Senan erected a church, and gave the veil to some daughters of Brendan, the dynast of Hyfiginte.

Inis, na-Gananagh—Island of the Canons. A priory founded by Donald O'Bryan, king of Limerick, at the close of the twelfth century, for canons regular, following the rule of St. Augustine.

The lands of this abbey and the tithes of its demesne were granted in fee to Donough, earl of Thomond, June 20th, 1605. They were again granted in fee to Henry, earl of Thomond, September 1st, 1661. The mode of making adherents to Protestantism by granting them the lands of the Church, was an admirable one, in the absence of truth and miracles.

Inniscatha, now Scattery island, a rich and beautiful little island, in the mouth of the river Shannon.

St. Senan, the founder of this monastery, was a native of Corcobaskind, a district in the western part of Thomond ; his parents were noble and Christians. Ercan, his father, is said to have been of the royal blood of Conary I., formerly monarch of Ireland ; his mother, Coemgalla, was also of an illustrious family in Munster. The place of his birth is mentioned, viz. : Magh-lacha, where his father had one of his residences. It is related, that St. Patrick being near the Shannon, about the year 448, foretold the birth and future greatness of this illustrious saint, forty years before the auspicious event.



“ When arrived at a certain age, he was forced, by the dynast of Corco-baskind, to join in an expedition which he had undertaken against the territory of Corcomroe, for the purpose of carrying off plunder. As such an excursion did not accord with the pious disposition of the young Senan, he contrived to have no share in devastating that territory. God, the searcher of hearts, rewarded Senan for his Christian behavior : for, when his party was routed, with great loss, and when fallen into the hands of his opponents, Senan was allowed to depart without injury, and to go wherever he pleased. This, with other circumstances which afterwards occurred, induced him to resolve on renouncing the world ; he therefore placed himself under the abbot Cassidanus, and having received from him the monastic habit, became a proficient in piety and ecclesiastical learning. He next repaired to the monastery of the most holy and learned Natalis or Naal, where he spent some years. In the school of St. Natalis he became very distinguished ; his superior talents and sanctity being the subject of universal recognition.

The loss which the Irish southern church sustained in the deaths of St. Ailbe, of Emly, and of St. Declan, was soon repaired by the exertions of Senan, and others, who were distinguished by their sanctity, zeal, and the example of penance and mortification. It is said that Senan, after leaving the monastery of St. Natalis, went to foreign parts, and visited Rome and Tours, spent on his return towards Ireland some time with St. David of Menevia, and with whom he continued an intimacy until his death. The first establishment of Senan was at Inniscarra, where he erected a church. While in this place a vessel arrived in the harbor of Cork, bringing fifty persons, as passengers, from the Continent, who came to Ireland either for the purpose of leading a life of stricter discipline or of improving themselves in the study of the sacred scriptures. Senan received them with the greatest civility and kindness, retained ten of them with himself, the others he distributed in various establishments. He was not long in Inniscarra when Lugadius, prince of the country, insisted on his submitting to certain exact-ions, with which St. Senan refused to comply. The dispute was arranged through the interference of two young noblemen, who were then at the court of Lugadius. Having left eight of his disciples at Inniscarra, he proceeded to Innisluinge, thence he set out by water for Innismore, but being driven by adverse winds to an island called Innis-tuaisceart, and looking on the event as the will of Heaven, he erected a church, which he left to the care of some of his disciples. He next erected the church of Innismore, where he remained some time. Inniscaorach, now called Mutton Island, was his next destination ; and at length we find him in the island of Inniscatha. This establishment existed about the year 540, and to its erection much opposition was given by Mactalius, dynast of Hy-figinte, who claimed the island as a part of his territory ; and being moreover a pagan, endeavored, with his “ Magus,” to expel the saint. Through the interposition of the Almighty, he surmounted the difficulty, and erected his monastery, which became highly celebrated by the strictness of its discipline. Senan was probably for some time before a bishop, when he founded this establishment ; but when consecrated, or by whom, is not on record.

One of the rules which was observed at Inniscatha was, that females should not be admitted,— even with regard to the most holy virgins this regulation was observed. Saint Cannera, a nun from Bantry, wished to receive the holy viaticum from the hands of Senan, and to be buried in Inniscathy. She accordingly set out for that island, and when arrived near to it, was met by St. Senan. who sternly refused to allow her to land, and requested of her to go to the house of his mother, who lived not far distant, and who was related to St. Cannera. At length, understanding that she was near her end, and that she wished to receive the holy eucharist, he complied with her desire. As she died soon after, her wish to be interred in the island was also complied with. This St Cannera was of a distinguished family of the ancient Carberry, and her memory was revered in some churches, particularly in that territory.

It is read in the second life of Senan, that St. Brigid, daughter of Concraid, who had her cell in Cluanfidhe, on the bank of the Shannon, had prepared a vestment which she wished to send to Inniscathy, for St. Senan ; finding no mode of conveyance, she folded it in hay, and put it into a basket, directed it, having written thereon the address of the saint, and that it arrived safely, wafted along by the current of the river.

St. Senan perceiving that his dissolution was not far distant, resolved on going to the monastery of his first master, Cassidus or Cassidanus, and to the nunnery of St. Scota, his paternal aunt, who was the daughter of Cobhtach, in order that he might apply himself more fervently to prayer in those retreats, and prepare for his departure. On his way thither, he turned off a little towards the church of Kill-eochaille, for the purpose of visiting certain holy virgins, the daughters of one Naereus, who had received the veil from him. Having performed his devotions in the monastery of his first master, and on his returning to Inniscathy, when in a field near the church of Kill-eochaille, he heard a voice, announcing to him that he was to be removed to heaven without delay. St. Senan died on that very day, and his body, remained at Kill-eochaille until the next, when several of the principal members of his monastery arrived, and conveyed it to Inniscathy. Notice of his death was then sent to the prelates, clergy, and the principal persons of the neighboring churches, and the obsequies were celebrated during a week. On the eighth day, the remains of St. Senan were deposited in his own church. His festival is observed on the 8th of March, but the precise year of his death is not recorded. It must be later than 544. The fame of this saint has not been confined to Ireland, it spread over the Continent, and his acts have been published among those of the saints of Brittany, and other countries. Yet Ledwich, an Irish renegade to the ancient faith of Ireland, has had the audacity to remark, that St. Senan was no other than the river Shannon personified. Thomas Moore has written a poem in allusion to the interview of St. Senan with the holy virgin St. Cannera, who died and was buried in Inniscathy.

Saint Kieran, called the son of the carpenter and the Kieran of Clonmacnois, having left the island of Arran, came hither, and was made providore for the strangers, by St. Senan.

St. Odran succeeded in the abbacy. It seems he was not consecrated.

A.D. 816, the Danes plundered this island, put the monks to the sword, and defaced the monument of St. Senan.

A.D. 835, they renewed their ravages and destroyed the monastery.

A.D. 861, died the Abbot Aidan.

A.D. 908, Flahertach, who fomented the war in which Cormac MacCulinan, bishop of Cashell and king of Minister lost his life, was abbot.

Cormac bequeathed three ounces of gold to this abbey, and his choicest vestments to the abbot.

This abbot was afterwards elected to fill the throne of Munster. He died in the year 954.

A.D. 975, eight hundred Danes were slain in this island, by Brien, king of Munster, and his associates.

A.D. 994, died Colla, the abbot and doctor of Inniscathy.

A.D. 1081, died the abbot O'Burgus.

A.D. 1176, the Danes of Limerick plundered the abbey.

A.D. 1179, William Hoel, an English knight, wasted the whole island, not even sparing the churches.

A.D. 1188, Aid O'Beachain, bishop of Inniscathy, died.

Queen Elizabeth granted this abbey, with the churchyard, twenty-four acres of land, a house, a castle built of stone, and three cottages of the island, and the several customs following : from every boat of oysters coming to the city of Limerick, once a year, one thousand oysters, and from every herring boat, once a year, five hundred herrings ; also ten cottages, one church in ruins, twenty acres of wood and stony ground in said island, called Beach wood, with all the tithes, to the mayor and citizens of Limerick, and their successors, for ever, in free soccage, at the annual rent of £3 12s. 8d.

The monument of St. Senan is still to be seen here ; and in the stone that closes the top of the altar window of the great church, is the head of the saint, with his mitre, boldly executed, and still little defaced. An ancient round tower, 120 feet in height, and in thorough repair, graces the scene.

Innistymon, in the barony of Corcumroe.

Saint Luctigerna was abbot of Innistymon ; he was the disciple of Ruadan, of Lothra. He often visited the famous Saint Ita, called the Brigid of Munster. He, on one occasion brought with him St. Laisrean, son of Colman, and abbot of Drumliag. Laisrean, being unknown to the nuns, was not welcomed at the gate. St. Ita, though she never before saw Laisrean, told her nuns who he was, and that he was equally holy as Luctigerna.

Kilcarragh, endowed with a quarter of land adjacent thereto—either an hospital or cell— granted at the dissolution of religious houses to John King.

Killfobrick, in the barony of Ibracan. This monastery was founded A.D. 741.

A.D. 837, the scribe and bishop of Killfobrick, Cormac, died.

Kilfenora, in the barony of Corcumroe. The foundation of this monastery cannot be ascertained ; it is attributed to a St. Fachnan, of Ross ; but it would appear the Fachnan of Kilfenora and of that see are different persons. The saint of Ross flourished in the sixth century.

The annals of Munster tell us that Morogh O'Brien burned the abbey of Kilfenora, and slew many people therein, A.D. 1055.

Killaloe, situated on the western banks of the river Shannon, near the cataract.

Saint Molua (the same as Lugeus), was of a distinguished family of Hy-figinte, in Munster. His father was Carthar, surnamed Coche, and his mother, Sochla, was a native of Ossory. Had he been at St. Finnian's school at Clonard, his birth must have occurred several years previous to the middle of the sixth century. It seems that Molua became the disciple of St. Comgall, of Bangor, about A.D. 559. Under this celebrated master he remained a considerable time, and having become a religious, he was distinguished by his abilities and virtue ; and Comgall perceiving him qualified to govern others, gave him instructions to form an establishment for himself, and to nourish the servants of Christ. Having returned to Munster, and attended by his disciples, Molua repaired to Mount-Luachra, in the present county of Limerick, and which was adjacent to the territory of Hy-figinte, in which he was born. Desirous to establish himself in that district, he was advised not to remain there, by the Dynast Foelan, who was a worthy person. He then retired from that district and went to Mount Bladhma, now Slievebloom, near the place where his mother's relatives resided, and erected a monastery, since called Clonfert-mulloe. Hither a vast number of monks resorted, from various parts, who were all received by Molua with great kindness. He afterwards returned to Hy-figinte, where he founded several cells and monasteries. He is said to have established as many religious houses as one hundred. He compiled a rule for his monks, which, we are told, was approved by Pope Gregory the Great. One of his regulations was, the perpetual exclusion of women from the monastery of Clonfert-Molua.

The church of Killaloe is supposed to derive its name from this saint, either from his living there, or its being dedicated in his name. A short time before his death he visited Dagan, the bishop of Achad, in order to consult him as to the appointment of a successor to his monastery. Dagan told him that he would be succeeded by Lactan, with whom he was satisfied.

St. Molua departed this life on the 4th of August—the year is not known—but it seems that his death occurred not long after the beginning of the seventh century. Molua was reckoned among the fathers of the Irish church.

It appears that this saint is different from another Molua, the leper ; the latter is called the son of Conall, the grandson of Carthan Fion, who had been baptized by St. Patrick. Molua the leper was

brother to Aombh-Caomh, king of Munster. Those saints were contemporaries. In the collectanea of Vallancey, referring to the histories of Munster, Molua the leper is called the first bishop of Killaloe. The prefix " Mo" was a term of affection or endearment which the Irish gave to their saints, in either speaking or writing of their transactions.

Killmacallach or Kill-eochaile, two miles and a half north-west of Inniscathy, where St. Senan died on his return home to his own monastery, in this island. St. Senan gave the veil to the daughters of Naereus, in Kill-eochaille.

Killoen, in the barony of Islands. About the year 1190, Donald O'Brien, king of Limerick, founded this nunnery, for the order of St. Augustine, and dedicated it to St. John the Baptist.

Slaney, the daughter of Donogh Carbreagh, king of Thomond, was abbess of this house ; she died A.D. 1260. She was preeminent above the women of Munster in devotion, alms-deeds, and hospitality.

Kilshanny alias Kilsonna, in the barony of Corcumroe. This cell was annexed to the abbey of Corcumroe. Killshanny, with all its appurtenances, mills and fisheries, was granted at the dissolution of monasteries, to Robert Hickman.

Quin, in the barony of Bunratty, five miles east of Ennis.

An abbey founded here was consumed by fire, A.D. 1278.

An abbey for Franciscan friars was founded in Quin by Sioda Cam MacNamara, A.D. 1350. It was the first convent of the order in Ireland in which the strict observants had settled, Pope Eugene IV. having granted a license to that effect in 1433. The same year Macon Dall MacNamara, lord of Clancoilean, reërected this monastery, the material being beautiful black marble—his tomb is still remaining.

The venerable establishment of Quin, even still in its ruins magnificent, was involved in the general destruction of the sixteenth century. Its manors, advowsons, and all its hereditaments were granted to Sir Turlogh O'Brien, of Inishdyman, in fee, December 14th, 1583.

The Roman Catholics repaired this abbey in the year 1604.

The state of this abbey about sixty years ago is thus described : " Quin is one of the finest and most entire monasteries that I have seen in Ireland. It is situated on a fine stream, with an ascent of several steps to the church. At the entrance, one is surprised with a view of the high altar, entire, and of an altar on each side of the arch of the chancel. To the south is a chapel, with three or four altars in it, and a gothic figure in relief, of some saint. On the north side of the chancel is a fine monument of the family of the MacNamaras, erected by the founder. In the middle, between the body and the chancel, is a fine tower, built on the two gable ends. The cloister is in the usual form, with couplets of pillars, but is particular in having buttresses around it as ornaments. There are apartments on three sides of it,—the refectory, the dormitory, and another grand room to the north of the chancel, with a vaulted room under each. To the north of the large room is a closet, which leads through a private way to a very strong round tower, whose walls are near ten feet thick. In the front of the monastery is a building, which seems to have been an apartment for strangers, and to the south-west are two other buildings."

Instead of the monastic apartments for the stranger and the wearied traveller, English reformers have given us the hotel of the present day ; and instead of those houses (biataghs), in which maintenance was provided for the poor and the destitute and the traveller, without the burden of taxation to the public, English legislators have enacted a poor law, by which the rich man is ground down, the farmer is harassed and oppressed, the indigent are starved, poverty is made a crime, and the spoliation of the country is rendered permanent, lest justice be done in restoring the property of the Catholic church to its original purposes ; and lest the parliamentary establishment of England's

abominable heresies should be rooted out from the soil of Ireland, where this exotic plant has, like unto the upas tree, diffused around it corrupt-ion and crime, poverty and misery unparalleled, carnage and massacre in the name of the God of sanctity and truth.

Ross-ben-choir, near the western ocean—now unknown. St. Conchea or Cocca was the first abbess of this nunnery. She is said to have been the nurse of St. Kieran.

Shraduff or Templedisert. The site of this abbey and the possessions thereof were granted in fee to Sir Edward Fisher, knight, on the 12th of March, 1611. This is all the information we have of this religious retreat. We are however well aware that this mode of propagating religion by robbery and plunder was totally unknown in the days of the apostles.

Tomgrany, either three or four miles east of Lough Derg.

It seems that St. Cronan was the founder of this abbey before he settled at Roscrea, having been on the west side of the Shannon, and having formed some religious establishments there.

A.D. 735, died the abbot St. Manchen.

A.D. 747, died the abbot Conell.

A.D. 791, died the abbot Cathny O'Guary.

A.D. 886 and 949, the abbey was plundered.

A.D. 964, the celebrated Cormuc Hua Killeen, died. He was famous for his learning and good works ; was abbot of Tuam-grene, and of Roscommon, and also abbot and bishop of Clonmacnois. He built the church and steeple of this church.

A.D. 1002, died the abbot Dungal, son of Beoan.

A.D. 1027, Brian Borumhe, monarch of Ireland, repaired the steeple. [?]

A.D. 1078, died the abbot Cormac Hua Beain.

A.D. 1084, O'Rourke, of Breffney, reduced this abbey to ashes.

The vengeance of Heaven soon overtook him, for he fell by the troops of Thomond.

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