

THE CRAFTSMAN;

AND

CANADIAN MASONIC RECORD.

Bro. J. J. MASON,
Publisher

}

'The Queen and the Craft.'

}

\$1.50 per Annum,
in advance.

VOL. VI.

HAMILTON, ONT., AUG., 1872.

No. 11.

GRACE O'MALLEY.

A ROMANCE OF THE IRISH ARISTOCRACY.

Many a wild tradition yet lingers in Ballyeroy and in the beautiful Island of Clare, concerning that Cleopatra of the West, well known as Grania Waile, or Grace O'Malley. She was possessed of a large extent of country, principally in the County of Mayo, and her jurisdiction seems to have widely extended into the adjoining counties, and over most of the not unfertile, but almost inaccessible islands which border the Atlantic from Donegal to Galway. Here English rule and English laws were almost unknown: an occasional inroad, at long intervals, being all that was attempted by the Norman invaders for many centuries. Grania Waile therefore appears to have reigned, undisturbed; she was acknowledged and patronized by Queen Elizabeth, a kindred spirit. She built castles; fitted out fleets; raised and maintained roops; and left domains to her descendants, now represented by Sir Samuel O'Malley, Bart.

An act of this extraordinary woman, as detailed by an ecclesiastic, well known for his ample stock of traditionary lore, deserves to be recorded.

The wood of Glann covers a bold promontory, which stretches far into the magnificent Lough Corrib, on its western shore. Here, close to the spot where the waters of the lake so far intrude as almost to make an island of the promontory, formerly stood an ancient house of the better class. It was at the bottom of a gentle hollow, whose sides were green and verdant, affording sweet pasturage and productive arable ground, while the thick wood around and about it gave shelter from the storm, and abundance of useful wood, which was cut and manufactured, and then sold in the neighbouring city of Galway, which lies at the southern extremity of the lake. In this house, known by the name of "Annagh," lived a widow woman and her three sons, of whom the two eldest, Roderic and Donald, were tall and handsome, and the younger, Dermot, crippled in one foot, weakly in frame, and small of stature. These all labored in their vocations to support their mother and maintain the respectability of the house; for they laid claim to a respectable lineage, though their estate was but small, and their retainers few.