

FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE.

FRANCE.

PARIS, Oct. 13.—The French papers reproduce the announcement that the English Minister at Bern has brought an action against Lausanne Gazette for libel on the Queen, and the Paris, improving the occasion, points out how true it is that in all countries, even in free England, it is deemed fit that Sovereigns should be defended against the license of the press.—Times.

The Times Biarritz correspondent says: The Emperor looks remarkably well, and it is evident that the air here has been of great benefit to him. On Sunday last he and the Empress left their carriages and walked for a short distance out of Bayonne to Biarritz, about three miles; and hardly a day passes that he does not make similar excursions on foot.

The Paris correspondence of the Independence Belge says that Dr. Langenbeck, a celebrated German physician, has been consulted by the Emperor Napoleon, and the result of an examination instituted by him was not considered satisfactory. On the other hand, his Majesty has received sensible relief from a slight operation which he has undergone at the hands of Dr. Guillon, and it is added that this physician will remain at Biarritz until his Majesty's departure. The celebrated Dr. Nélaton has also been sent for.

We all remember those days of anxiety in the beginning of July, when the Emperor Napoleon, having been appealed to by a defeated Kaiser, hesitated as to the course he should pursue. We all felt it a great relief when, determining for neutrality, he promoted the speedy restoration of peace, instead of plunging Europe into prolonged war, as he was requested. His motives have since been candidly explained by himself, and their wisdom and sagacity universally appreciated. I do not apprehend it will prejudice his Majesty in the opinion of the world when I say that, in addition to the more public and political reasons which actuated him on that memorable occasion, he was influenced by a piece of private and highly interesting intelligence communicated to him about that time. On the 6th of July the Grand Duke of Saxe Weimar was in a position to advise Napoleon III. of the existence of an Italian conspiracy consisting of a number of young men who had sworn to take his life were the recovery of Venice prevented by his interference. The investigations immediately set on foot by the secret police of France confirmed the statement volunteered by the Weimar potentate. My informant supposes, but is not certain, that the latter derived his knowledge from persons of high trust at this Court.—Times Cor.

The Pays lately had some remarks about Mexico, which derived importance from the avowedly semi-official character of that journal. It referred to the unfortunate malady of the Empress Charlotte as an additional reason why Maximilian would probably be disinclined any longer to devote himself to his ungrateful task, and it plainly hinted that the despatch from the Mexican Emperor to General Almonte, first published in the Patrie had no real importance. General Castelnau, it believes, took out decisive instructions, and the French Government is evidently much engrossed by the eventuality of the retreat of Maximilian—in other words, of his abdication and return to Europe. The Opinion Nationale to-day points out the great significance of these remarks in the mouth of a Government organ, and considers it a positive symptom of the resolution adopted by the French Government, 'at last to abandon a work which has already cost so much blood and money, and which it would have been more prudent never to have undertaken.' You will remember that the Opinion Nationale is considered frequently to serve as mouthpieces to the friends of Prince Napoleon; and you know who was the prime mover of the Mexican expedition. The same journal proceeds to set forth the disadvantages of having maintained an army in distant lands and risked a rupture with the United States when the most serious events, claiming all the attention of France, were passing close to her frontier. Happy will be the day, it claims, when the last French soldier shall have quitted that unlucky land, even though, as there is every reason to believe, that day shall be the last of the Mexican Empire. The Pays having used some enigmatical and high sounding phrases, to the effect that France, before leaving Mexico, was determined to secure French interests, even by the most extreme means, the Opinion Nationale says:—

'What does the Pays mean? What are those extreme means? If it knows them, it would do well to reveal them. It seems to us that extreme means have already been employed by maintaining, for several years, an armed and costly occupation in the middle of that vast country without being able to suspend the civil war for a single day, or to obtain any other immediate result than the increase of the debt of a probably insolvent debt.'

A Paris correspondent says the Empress Charlotte's malady commenced on her voyage from Vera Cruz. In her interview with Napoleon she entirely lost control of herself. She forgot herself as to give way to most violent paroxysms, and made use of language which startled and astonished the Emperor. The first subject which appears to have distracted the mind of the Empress was a clause in her father's will, by which he gave her merely a life interest in the twenty five millions he bequeathed to her. The Empress applied to her brother, Leopold II., to annul this clause, and allow her the whole sum for consolidation of the Mexican Empire. Her brother however, turned a deaf ear to her solicitations, reminding her of prodigal generosity with which her husband had spent his own private fortune as well as a portion of hers, and positively refused her request. The Empress cannot forgive this act, and as she is aware that the King and his Mother have been privately supported in their decision by the Austrian Imperial family, she will not consent to visit her family at Brussels or at Vienna.—Times Cor.

The London papers publish the following account of the massacre of French Missionaries in the Corea: 'A letter from Shanghai of August last says:—I am sorry to fully confirm the sad news I gave you in my letter of the 9th of July last. M. Ridel, following the advice of the two only colleagues remaining in Corea, left the country on a small barque carrying 11 Christians. He arrived at Cae-Foo, and taking the advice of Mr. Ferguson, who received him with the greatest kindness, he started at once for Tientsin, where was Admiral Rose. The Admiral warmly received him, took him on board, and was on the point of sailing for Corea, when he received a dispatch from Admiral de la Grandiere, recalling him at Saigon. Mr. Ridel announces to us the death of—1st. Monsignore Berneux, Bishop of Oapie, and apostolic vicar of Corea, arrested on Feb. 23rd, and beheaded on March 3rd, after having endured the most atrocious tortures; 2nd. M. Beaulieu, apostolic missionary, arrested on the 24th of February, tortured and beheaded with Monsignore Berneux; 3rd. M. Doree; 4th. M. de Bretonniere, both apostolic missionaries, tortured and beheaded with our holy bishop; 5th. M. Poushier, apostolic provincial; 6th. M. Petit-Nicholas, both arrested on the 8th of March and beheaded on the 11th; 7th. Monsignore Durvel, Bishop of Ancona, coadjutor of Monsignore Berneux; 8th. M. Rumatre, apostolic missionary; 9th. M. Huin, apostolic missionary. They were arrested on the 14th of March and beheaded on the 30th (on the Good Friday). About fifty natives suffered also the martyrdom. M. Feron and Calais contrived to escape, but they were hotly pursued. The prosecution was not so active, on account of the rice harvest, but after the harvest it was to begin more furiously than ever. We reckoned this year upon more than 1,500 converted.'

A French Bishop in a sermon recently administered a philippic to crimoline wearers.—Let women beware, while putting on their profuse and expansive attire, how narrow are the gates of Paradise.'

A PARIS MESS.—The commissary of police of the quarter of the Place Vendome, accompanied by a doctor, two days ago visited the apartment of the Baroness X., in order to certify, at the request of the inmates of the house, the death of that lady, who was 75 years of age. The appearance of the apartment indicated extraordinary neglect. There was scarcely any furniture; the dust of years obscured the window panes, and the paper on the wall was spotted and rotten. The place appeared to have been uninhabited from time immemorial, and yet the Baroness X.—had lived there for 25 years, paying an annual rent of 1,500fr. In the bedrooms, stretched upon a trundle bed, and partly covered with rags, lay the body of the baroness. An examination showed that death arose from weakness caused by want of food. It further appeared that she had starved herself willfully; and, indeed, in point of avarice the defunct baroness would have borne away the palm from Harpagon, Gobeck, and other such heroes. Notwithstanding her considerable fortune, estimated at 50,000fr. a year, she always went clothed like a beggar, and often solicited charity in the street. She lived on crusts of bread, the refuse of cabbages and other vegetables, and such like garbage that she picked up from dirt heaps. Last week she fell down from weakness, while passing the door of the concierge, from want of food, but she refused to take some refreshment proposed to her, no doubt fearing that she would have to pay for it. She succeeded in gaining her apartment, and was not afterwards seen alive.

REPUBLICAN BLACKBIRDS.—The Sport has the following:—The last of the Republican blackbirds of Mondaye (Calrados) has just been shot by an advocate of Bayeux. Those birds, long celebrated throughout the arrondissement, were certainly better known than the persons who have killed them. The remarkable facility with which blackbirds learn and retain airs of music is matter of notoriety. In 1848 an ingenious patriot attempted to turn that instinct to account to republicanize the whole wooded grounds of the neighbourhood. He brought up by hand two broods of the birds in question, taught them for three or four months the Marseillaise, and when he thought their education sufficiently advanced for them to impart their talent to the others he gave them their liberty. The rest of the winged tribe took a fancy to the music of Rouget de Lisle, and for many years nothing but the Marseillaise was to be heard. At a later period France changed her tune, and the majority of the songsters who had not modified their repertory fell before the shot of the rural guards. One alone escaped the pursuit of the authorities, and claiming a right of asylum, it took refuge in the gardens of Mondaye, where the good monks often listened to its song with a smile. The unfortunate bird at length one day ventured beyond its limits and paid for its temerity with its life. Time had singularly changed the colour of its black and lustrous plumage. Physically, as well as morally, it had become a merle blanc.'

ITALY.

FREDOM.—Bad as are the Fenians, they could hardly exhibit a more despicable spirit, in every sense of the word, than has been evinced by nearly every Italian politician, or soldier, or sailor, that has shown in the front during the late war. Let any traveller who knows the language well go to Italy, and mix freely with those who rule that now unfortunate kingdom, either by reason of their office or by virtue of their clamor, and let him state honestly what he thinks of the 'regenerate' kingdom. Bombast and blasphemy, self-conceit without self-respect, an utter want of any moral restraint, a vain, rapid, overblowing praise of themselves, and entire want of energy and purpose save for evil, are the leading characteristics of 'young Italy,' as it exists to-day, whether in the higher or lower ranks. It is true that there exist in the country honest, loyal, well-meaning, sensible men—men who still fear God, honor religion, can speak without cursing what all Christians consider sacred, and who blush for shame at what is passing around them. But these are silenced by their fellow countrymen, or if they make themselves heard, are cast into prison as reactionists. Nor is it necessary to travel in order to make this discovery. If we but turn back to those piles of the very English papers which cry aloud that Rome should be the capital of Victor Emmanuel's kingdom, and read the various letters of their 'special correspondents' in Italy during the late war, we shall find more than enough to confirm the opinion, that if ever there was on earth a nation utterly unfit for self-government, it is that gigantic hump called United Italy, which was conceived in iniquity, brought forth in shame, and has never been able to fight a battle, save by the actual or moral help of foreign bayonets or ships.—Weekly Register.

The total Italian debt at present is \$850,000,000 in gold, bearing an annual gold interest of \$32,500,000, an average rate of nearly four per cent.

Venice has been bought at an incredibly low price; but, however cheap, it was not to be had gratis. The war expenses from June to September are computed at 555,000,000fr., and General Menabrea has just paid 33,000,000fr. to get the Iron Crown out of pawn. All this, even with the share of the Lombardo Venetian debt, is very little for one of the richest provinces in Europe. Lombardy and Venetia, it should be borne in mind, were the two milch cows which, although constituting about one-seventh of the Austrian Empire, were made to yield one-fourth of its revenue. Unfortunately, the expenses occasioned by the liberation of Venetia will fall on an exchequer exhausted by several years' reckless improvidence. In despite of Count Cavour's economical genius, the Budget of Piedmont from 1850 to 1859 has been swamped by the increase of its yearly deficit. At the time of the annexations the most liberal State of Italy was the most heavily taxed and the most deeply indebted. For the last six years the efforts of Cavour's successors to make the two ends meet proved egregious failures. The revenue was raised in 1855 to something very near 700,000,000fr., but it still fell short of the expenditures by 250,000,000fr. to 300,000,000fr. The debt at the beginning of that year was already 4,500,000,000fr., occasioning a yearly outlay of 250,000,000fr., the great bulk of which was sent out of the country as tribute to foreign capitalists.

The first source of all this ruinous extravagance was, of course, the national armament. The Budget was burdened with 180,000,000fr. for the army and 48,000,000fr. for the navy.

No doubt, the financial condition in Italy is very grave, and the Government must come out of it at any cost; but it is a task of uncommon magnitude and not to be accomplished without the full co-operation of the nation, and its readiness for self-denial, for real patriotic devotion—above all things, for hard work.—Times.

A letter from Florence says that Admiral Tegethoff is going to visit that capital, that he will be there while the trial of Persano is going on, and will probably witness it. The Italian Parliament is expected to meet in November to give its approval to the financial stipulations comprised in the treaty with Austria. It is thought probable that M. Scialoja will avail of the opportunity to inform the House of the state of the treasury. Three months' supplies must also be voted. The Session is expected to be very short. The letters written by poor Boggio, and which were picked up by the Austrians after the loss of the Re d'Italia and published in a Vienna paper, have been declared authentic by Boggio's family, and are likely to be brought forward on the trial by Persano's counsel.

A letter from Venice, in the Etendard, has the subjoined:—

'The Venetian people, the reasonable portion excepted, believe firmly that Larks ready roasted are going to fall from the sky on King Victor Emmanuel's arrival. The working classes hope that the leader of the red shirts will not display showing himself at St. Mark's, and I have heard with my own ears

families in the depth of poverty—not mere common beggars, who swarm here—while eating their pittance of polenta, repeat, 'Well, a little more patience Garibaldi will soon be here, and we shall then be all right.' Others are leaving their employments with the same hope. A friend of mine living here had two servants. One morning they both went to him and asked for their wages. 'The work,' they said, 'was too hard, and Garibaldi would soon be there and provide them with a situation where they would have an easier time of it.' Those whose thoughts are more with King Victor Emmanuel than with the hermit of Capraera are infected with absolutely the same ideas. In short, from one end to the other of the city there is nothing but feverish hope. In this temper you may easily imagine that the Venetians scarcely endure the presence of the Austrians, who they think delay the brilliant realization of their fancies. Thus the necessitous portion of the inhabitants, suffering from want and from cholera, and continually excited besides by the agents of the party of action, are very much inclined to quarrelling, uproar, and riot.'

THE IRON CROWN OF LOMBARDY.—There seems to be a general ignorance of what the iron crown really is, though often mentioned. In a well-known newspaper of yesterday the editor in a leading article writes of it thus:—'The iron crown sold at its strict value would be bought, in all likelihood, at the price of a horse-shoe.' The little relic of insignificant appearance and of no value! The editor evidently considers it to be something like an old coal scuttle, to be worn with the bottom upwards. I wish to inform him and others that the crown is composed of a broad circle of gold, set with large rubies, emeralds, and sapphires, on a ground of blue and gold enamel. But the most important part of the iron crown, from which it derives its name, is a narrow rim or band of iron three-eighths of an inch broad and one-tenth of an inch in thickness, attached to the inner circumference of the circle. This inner band of sacred iron is believed to have been made of one of the nails used at the crucifixion, and accounts for the veneration in which it has been always held.—Times Cor.

ROME.—The Memorial Diplomatique gives the following detail of communications said to have been exchanged between the Pope and Napoleon III., with a view to the approaching execution of the Convention of September 15:—'It is certain that Pius IX. very recently, through Cardinal Reisch, declared to the Emperor Napoleon, that he was resolved not to quit Rome after the departure of the French troops, but that, relying upon Divine omnipotence and the protection of France, he would await all eventualities of the foot of the Holy Apostle's tomb. The Emperor commissioned Cardinal Reisch (who was presented to him at St. Cloud by the Nuncio, about three weeks ago) to give the Holy Father his most solemn assurances that the protection of France would never be wanting to him, his Majesty's Government being thoroughly determined to see the loyal and conscientious accomplishment of the Convention of September 15. This is the assurance alluded to in the circular of the Marquis de Lavalette when he said that in withdrawing his troops from Rome the Emperor left the protection of France as a guarantee for the Holy Father.'

AUSTRIA.

VIENNA, Oct. 13.—The ratifications of the Treaty of Peace between Austria and Italy were exchanged here at one o'clock in the afternoon of yesterday, and at the same time the Iron Crown was placed at the disposal of the Florence Government. The persons present at the ceremony were Count Mensdorff Count Felix Wimpffen who is about to go to Berlin as the representative of Austria at the Prussian Court, General Menabrea, and M. d'Arco. The principal part of the 'function' being over, the Italian diplomatists placed in Count Mensdorff's hands promissory notes of the value of 35,000,000fr., the sum which Italy has agreed to pay as the share of Venetia in the Austrian National Debt. On the 16th of April of the present year the Italian Government offered to pay to Austria 300,000,000fr. if she would give up Venetia with the Quadrilateral. The Emperor peremptorily rejected the proposal, and now, after having obtained two great victories over the Italians, he is obliged to be content with the above-mentioned paltry sum. The Iron Crown, which will soon be removed from this city to Florence, is still at the Austrian Foreign-office, General Menabrea being unwilling to keep an object of such great value in the apartments which he occupies in an hotel. It may here be observed that the above-mentioned emblem of Royalty is made of a richly-gilt iron circlet studded with diamonds, turquoises, opals, sapphires, and other precious stones. The iron framework is about as broad as a middle-sized hand. The Crown was sent from the 'Schatzkammer' (Chamber of Treasures) to the Foreign-office in a very common-looking box; but I am told that care will be taken to provide a suitable covering for such a precious jewel. The Austrian Government, being incapable of doing things in grand style, has resolved that the Emperor, who has formally renounced his claim to be styled King of Lombardy and Venetia, shall retain the titles of 'Grand Duke of Tuscany, Duke of Modena, and Lord of Guastalla and Piacenza.' The general public will hardly attach much importance to this circumstance, but persons who are acquainted with the peculiarities of the Italian character predict that it will lead to fresh dissensions between Austria and Italy. The excuse made by the Austrian employes for the petty titles have not been relinquished 'because they are inherited in the Hapsburg family,' whereas 'the title of King of Lombardy and Venetia is not. King Victor Emmanuel ratified the Treaty of Peace on the 6th instant, but the Emperor Francis Joseph, who has been shooting chamois in the mountains in the neighborhood of Ischl, did not do so until Tuesday last. On the 4th instant His Majesty gave to Mr. Thomas Brassey, the well-known railway contractor, the Order of the Iron Crown, and it appears probable that he will be the last person to receive that mark of favour at the hands of an Austrian Sovereign.

The London Globe adverts to the divergence of policy on the Polish question between Austria and Russia. The Russian troops in Poland which some time ago received orders to proceed to the southern portion of the Empire, and which are now on their march thither, have been ordered back to their old quarters as a precaution against any insurrectionary movement among the Poles. Moreover, the Russian Government are apprehensive that Austria's conciliatory policy towards her Polish subjects in Galicia is an indication that the Court of Vienna is preparing to follow an antagonistic policy to that of Russia in the Eastern question, and very naturally concludes that in this matter the Austrian Government is acting in concert with that of France.

PRAGUE, Oct. 27.—An attempt was made to shoot the Emperor Francis Joseph as he was leaving the Theatre this evening. The culprit aimed the pistol at the Kaiser, but before the ball was fired he was seized by an Englishman and placed under arrest.

PRUSSIA.

The end is not yet, and already we hear that the Northern Parliament will signalize its first sitting by proclaiming William I. Emperor of Germany.—Should such a scheme be carried into effect, it would be for the same Assembly to determine the relations between the central Power and the dependent States; to limit the power of the Princes reduced to the condition of vassals; and, perhaps, to deliberate on the restitution, on the same condition, of the fallen dynasties to their thrones. Steps are taken, in the meanwhile, for the reconstruction of the Zollverein, now to be extended to all Germany, including even, as members of the Northern Confederacy, the Hanseatic cities, Hamburg, Bremen, and Lubeck. Should the new arrangement, as it appears probable, deprive those places of their privileges as free ports,

the commerce of England and the world would by that measure be far more seriously affected than by any real injury that the loss of independence may inflict on land-locked Frankfort.

The protest of King George of Hanover has been transmitted to Count Bismark through the ordinary postman. Its approval by the semi-official organs of the Austrian Government has called forth a remonstrance from the Prussian Ambassador at Vienna, which was answered by the almost ludicrous asseveration that the Austrian papers were independent, and that the Government had no means of influencing their attitude except by appealing to the courts. In Hanover it is said that King George has solicited the mediation of England to insure the recovery of his private property from the conqueror. Should any negotiations be opened upon the subject, they will, it is easy to predict, be abortive, unless the King be prevailed upon to restore the public moneys, taken with him in his flight.

The King of Saxony has sent another emissary to Berlin, and partially accepted the terms prescribed by this Government. A favourable issue, however, cannot as yet be prophesied with any certainty. Till an agreement be effected, Saxony, as during the war, is compelled to pay 10,000 thalers a day, besides maintaining the considerable force quartered upon it.

RUSSIA.

St. Petersburg, Oct. 16.—Irebutin, who was found guilty of complicity in the attempt to assassinate the Czar, and who was to have been executed this morning, was reprieved at the last moment by the Emperor.

TURKEY.

THE REVOLUTION IN CRETE.—Since the conquest of Crete by the Turks in 1669 there has been no real amalgamation of the Turkish and Greek races, and by degrees the latter has obtained the possession of more than three-fourths of the landed property in the island, and has in every branch of industry and culture completely eclipsed its conquerors. The latter, with their usual want of foresight, have constructed neither roads nor fortresses, which in this narrow and mountainous region would have given them the command of the whole country; insurrections have consequently been very frequent, and in some of the mountainous districts, especially that of Spakia, the Greeks live in a state of quasi-independence with not a single Turk amongst them. In the whole island, which has a population of 280,000, the proportion of Greeks to Turks is about as four to one. The numerous insurrections of the Cretans have almost always been caused by their desire to be annexed to Greece, and the complaints, which they invariably put forward on such occasions, of unequal taxation, abuses on the part of the authorities, &c. are usually little more than pretexts. The Turks know very well that they only exist in the island on sufferance, and they accordingly treat the Christians there with far more consideration than in other parts of the Empire. As for the present insurrection, it differs but little from previous Cretan insurrections. There was always as now a strong sympathy between the Greeks of Crete and those of the Morea, to whom the Cretans rendered valuable assistance in the war of independence; and the degenerate Greeks of Roumelia have as little to do with the present movement as with all former national risings. The Cretan insurrection is a perpetually recurring symptom of an obstinate disorder, which can only be cured by the union of Crete with the Greek kingdom. It is not from the Greeks, therefore, that we need fear a re-opening of the Eastern question. There is nevertheless very serious danger of such an event happening as a consequence of the present outbreak, although the Cretans themselves may have no such object in view. It is certain that the extraordinary events which occurred in Central Europe last summer have produced an immense effect on the Slavonian populations of Turkey; the feeling of nationality has been strongly stimulated by the defeat of Austria and the liberation of Venetia, and there have been Italian and Hungarian revolutionary agencies at work in the country which have skillfully prepared all the elements of an extensive national movement. The success of the Cretan revolution would doubtless precipitate the outbreak which seems to be inevitable, and which in any case will, there is good reason to believe, occur next spring. In this outbreak the semi-independent principalities of Servia, Montenegro, and Roumania will doubtless join, and there is every probability that it will result in the disruption of the Turkish empire. That such an event must happen sooner or later is pretty generally admitted; but then comes the question, who is to govern the country in the place of the Turks? This question has as yet received but little serious consideration, and yet it is one on whose solution the most important interests of Europe will depend, and which in a few months it will perhaps become necessary to decide.—The Fortnightly Review.

THE HOLY PLACES OF IRELAND.

MONASTERBOICE.

The ruins of Monasterboice stand about four miles to the north of Drogheda, in the barony of Ferrard, county of Louth. St. Bute, or Boetius, son of Batonach, who died A. D. 521, was the founder. Of this establishment, which was called emphatically 'the Monastery,' frequent mention is made by the Four Masters and other authorities. A long but still very imperfect list of its abbots and professors, from the 6th to the 12th century, has been preserved; and amongst the names mentioned occur several which stand high in the ecclesiastical history of the country. The ancient history of Monasterboice appears to have dated about the middle of the 12th century, when the Prince of Uriel founded, almost in its immediate neighbourhood, the great Cistercian house of Mellifont.

The place, like Glendalough, Clonmacnoise, Clonard and other foundations of ante-Norman date in Ireland, was celebrated for the number of its holy and learned men, for its schools, and for the flocks of students who received its hospitality. Two churches, a really splendid round tower, two very lofty and beautifully sculptured crosses, the head of a third, and an extremely early inscribed monumental stone, still remain to indicate the antiquity and former grandeur of St. Bute's monastery. The tower, which measures 110 feet in height by 50 in circumference, is very remarkable on account of the sculpture of its doorway, which, as Dr. Petrie remarked, exhibits the idea of the cross by a connection of the mouldings at the top and at each side. The larger of the churches, which stands a little to the south east of the tower, is a plain cyclopean building, with a square headed doorway, now nearly covered by the soil, in the west gable. There was anciently a chancel connected with the nave by a semicircular arch. In the latter feature, in the square western doorway, in the high pitch of the gable, and in the rude cyclopean masonry, we find characteristics of the oldest style of Christian architecture in Ireland. There can be little question that this is the original church of St. Bute. The smaller remaining church appears to have been erected, or, at least, remodelled, in the early part of the 12th century. The masonry is rude enough to be considered earlier, yet the windows indicate that period.

But of all the remains of Monasterboice, the magnificent crosses are the most remarkable. Europe possesses nothing of their class and age to be compared with Irish crosses in artistic design and embellishment. These stand amid a scene of ruin, desolation and neglect, as silent witnesses of a time when Ireland possessed a school of art peculiar to the genius of her people, and which, after having been hidden for ages, is once more becoming recognized. True it is that even in the darkest day of our political and ecclesiastical history there remains a few minds in which the idea of past and present wrong did not altogether predominate to the exclusion of an

honourable pride in the achievements of our early artists. But the subject was not generally understood, else surely we would not have to deplore the loss of many inestimable relics of the past, of which we can now only say they existed, and must from the traditions preserved of them, have been exquisitely beautiful. Neglect in these matters, or ignorance, may be considered almost as dangerous to our early monuments even as bigotry itself.

Of the three crosses at Monasterboice, by far the most beautiful, though not the largest, fortunately bears the subjoined inscription in the Irish language and character:—

'A PRAYER FOR MUIREDACH, BY WHOM WAS MADE THIS CROSS.'

These were two abbots of Monasterboice of the name of Muiredach, one of whom died A.D. 344, the other in A. D. 923 or 924. Dr. Petrie has suggested a variety of reasons for assigning this cross to the latter, who was a very remarkable man. His death is thus entered in the annals of Ulster:—

'A.D. 923 or 924 Muiredach, son of Dombnoll, taniat abbot of Armagh, and chief steward of the southern Hy Niall, and successor of Buiti, the son of Bronach, head of the council of all the men of Bregia, laity and clergy, departed this life on the fifth day of the calends of December.'

This truly national monument measures 20 feet in height. It is of the usual pattern, the head forming a circle, beyond which the top and sides slightly project. The various sides are richly panelled and enriched with sculpture of the human figure, animals and scroll work. The crucifixion within the circle on the west side is represented in the manner usual with early Irish artists. The Saviour's arms extend at right angles from the body, which is partially clothed. The legs are not crossed. On either side is a soldier; that on the right presenting the sponge; that on the left piercing the Lord's body with a spear. There are supporting angels at the head of the chief figure. At the feet of Christ, above and on either side are crosses in alto relievo connected together with beautiful patterns of scroll work. The three compartments of the shaft below the circle on the west side contain each three human figures. A similar panel, also occupied by three figures, occurs above the circle. There can be but little doubt that all these sculptures illustrate some passage in the history of Monasterboice. The lower panel represents an ecclesiastic attacked by armed warriors, one on either side. The left arm of the assailed person has been seized and forcibly bent in an upward direction by the soldier, who, with his left hand appears about to plunge a shot, broad bladed, heavy blitted sword into the body of the prisoner. The figure to the right, armed with a weapon similar in character but of greater length seems marching to attack the church man, who appears to make no resistance, though holding a staff in his right hand.

The central figure is shorn on the upper lip and chin, clothed in a long mantle which is fastened over the breast by an Irish brooch. The warriors are attired in close fitting coats and rather full-skirted looking breeches, extending only half way down the thigh. On the breast of one is a brooch of the Danish type, some specimens of which may be seen in the Royal Irish Academy collection. The hair of both these figures is long, and each wears a moustache of considerable size, but no beard. All the figures in these compartments are bearded. There is every likelihood that this curious piece of sculpture, which is as good as late Roman work, represents the martyrdom of some Irish ecclesiastic of rank by Danish soldiers. The next compartment contains three figures dressed in long habits, each holding a book. That in the centre, whose right arm is raised as giving a blessing, wears neither beard nor moustache, whilst his companions have most formidable moustaches. In the compartment immediately beneath the circle, a central shorn figure is receiving from a moustached figure on the right a staff, and from another similar figure on the left a book. The Spirit of God, in the form of a bird, seems to hover over the head of this figure. The uppermost compartment of this face of the cross represents a figure with raised arms, evidently thanksgiving, and supported by two angels.

Commencing with the compartment immediately below the circle, may we not read the story thus?—A saint upon whom the Spirit of God has descended presents the central figure—which, it will be observed, is the same in all the compartments—with a copy of the Holy Word. The figure on the right hands him a staff; he is commissioned to go forth and preach the Word of God. In the compartment next beneath we find him on his mission with two disciples. In the lowest panel, his death by the hands of Scandinavian rovers is illustrated, and in the upper part of the cross he is entering the abode of the blessed, conducted by two angels. The right arm of the cross represents a number of figures playing musical instruments. There are some other subjects, the meaning of which is very obscure; but as they are unimportant we need not detain our readers to speculate upon their character.

On the east side of the shaft there are compartments containing sculptures suggested by Scripture history. The lowest panel contains Adam and Eve with a tree, round the stem of which the serpent is coiled, standing between them. Here, also, may be seen Cain slaying Abel. Another subject is the adoration of the Wise Men, a star being represented above the head of the infant. It is difficult to read the stories indicated by several of the panels on this side of the cross. There are figures of killed warriors armed with swords, targets, and other weapons, amongst which the axe and sling may be recognized. These are intensely interesting as illustrating the dress and warlike appointments of the Scots of the beginning of the 10th century. Many of our readers are probably not aware that we are the Scotts, and that Ireland sent over to Aoba and Ostedonia, as conquerors and colonists, the people who gave its name to Croferu Scotland. It might not be quite safe to announce these facts, in certain quarters, but they are nevertheless, historically true.

Within the circle on the east side is the Last Judgment. Christ holding the cross and sceptre, has ranged upon His right hand troops of the blessed who are singing and playing upon musical instruments, amongst which the old Irish harp is conspicuous. On the left hand side of Christ are the fallen who are being hurried away by devils, one of which is armed with a trident. In a compartment immediately below the Saviour is St. Michael weighing a soul in a huge pair of scales, while the devil is crouched beneath endeavouring to turn the beam in his favour! Our description of this really wonderful relic of nearly a thousand years ago will give but a faint idea of the original. Photography alone could do so.

The great cross is covered with ornaments as richly designed and of the same general character as those on the monument just noticed. It stands upwards of twenty three feet in height, and is composed of white silicious sandstone. Amongst the subject of its sculpture are the soldiers guarding Christ's sepulchre, Daniel and the Lions, chariots and horses, and of course, the crucifixion. It is scarcely necessary to go into further detail, for no words of ours could give more than a general idea of the wonderful beauty of this cross. The description of that of Muiredach will illustrate the character of both.

'A PRAYER FOR MUIREDACH.'

Nothing is known of this name in connection with the early history of the place, it was probably that of an ecclesiastic.

Of the third cross, only the head and base remain. The former, on one side, displays the crucifixion, as usual, with the spearman, sponge, &c. In the centre of the circle, upon the other side, is a beautifully designed boss. A magnificent ash tree of great age used to add considerably to the picturesque appearance of the ruins, but it fell during a great storm some few years ago, and the venerable walls, tower