

CHAPTER I

WHEREIN AN EXCURSION IS MADE IN A CELTIC MIND

A YOUNG Irish gentleman of the numerous clan O'Donnells, and a Patrick, hardly a distinction of him until we know him, had bound himself, by purchase of a railway-ticket, to travel direct to the borders of North Wales, on a visit to a notable landowner of those marches, the Squire Adister, whose family-seat was where the hills begin to lift and spy into the heart of black mountains. Examining his ticket with an apparent curiosity, the son of a greener island debated whether it would not be better for him to follow his inclinations, now that he had gone so far as to pay for the journey, and stay. But his inclinations were also subject to question, upon his considering that he had expended pounds English for the privilege of making the journey in this very train. He asked himself earnestly what was the nature of the power which forced him to do it—a bad genius or a good: and it seemed to him a sort of answer, inasmuch as it silenced the con-