

had been concealed under his long mantle, and at one vigorous blow snote off his head.* The assassin was too much favoured by his compatriots not to effect his escape, and he fled to his countrymen in arms, exulting in the merit of having thus taken vengeance for the sacrilegious conduct of his victim.

1186. Embarrassed by weightier matters in other parts of his dominions, the English monarch had shown almost as much imbecility in the management of Ireland as he had of ability in conducting the affairs of his territories in England and France. At length, being informed of the ruinous effects produced in that country, by the maladministrations of his son, he recalled the young prince, after eight months of rueful disorder; and John De Courcy was appointed chief governor in his stead. Had the Irish princes remained united, the term of this office, as well as the very existence of English rule in Ireland, would have been rendered extremely precarious; but, after the first fury of their assault on the British settlements, the revival of their former feuds left room for De Courcy to make arrangements for the defence of the colonists. In Connaught the sons of Roderic O'Connor had taken up arms against their father; and completed the misfortunes of that aged monarch. Forced by Conquovar, his eldest son, to resign his provincial government, Roderic took refuge in the monastery of Cong, where he spent the remaining twelve years of his life, and died in 1198, in the eighty-second year of his age.

This prince has been blamed because he did not make a

* Leland, citing from Anonymous Annals in MS., B. 1.