

# O'Connell and Derrynane.

Transcendently lovely and sublime as are the lakes of Killarney they form but a small portion of a district which at every turn, unrolls some panorama of savage grandeur or tender grace or picturesque festalation. The entire "Kingdom of Kerry" is indeed a land of magic and enchantment. Everywhere you meet with startling and delightful contrasts, streams gently meandering through the rich meadows of smiling and peaceful valleys, rivers leaping from rock to rock and skurrying down the mountain slopes to mingle with the waters of the innumerable little bays along the coast; magnificent passes sentinelled by precipitous crags, and with all this, the most singular effects of light and shade playing on the sides of the gorges and on the dense foliage of the woods, which vary through all the gamut of colors from bright green to russet brown.

It is in the west of Kerry especially that nature combines all her varied resources for the production of her most stupendous effects. The coast scenery is unequalled for its wild grandeur. The cliffs sometimes rising to a height of over six hundred feet, assume the most fantastic shapes, while, down to their edges, they are clad with verdure of that intense green which is to be found nowhere except in Ireland.

But there is one portion of this region which will always have a fascination for Irishmen the world over apart from magnetism of its glorious scenery. It is O'Connell's country," the district that nurtured the great citizen who created a new soul in Erin, and whose teachings modified the political ideas of a considerable part of Europe.

The house in which O'Connell was born, just a little way outside of Cahirciveen a poor little village, but redeemed from the commonplace by magnificent setting and the beautiful church dedicated to the Liberator's memory, is now a picturesque ruin, its mouldering gables and walls tenderly hidden under a luxuriant growth of Irish ivy.

Through the thoughtful kindness of Mr. Jeremiah Curtin, the translator of *Quo Vadis*, it is Donahoe's good fortune to place before its readers the fine illustrations accompanying this article.

"I send you three more photographic views," wrote Mr. Curtin, when presenting the picture to Donahoe's. "O'Connell's residence at Derrynane, the Old Cemetery near Derrynane, and a view of part of Cahirciveen." These photographs, like the others—the ruins of the house in which O'Connell was born, and the bridge—are of my own taking, and the work was a labor of love on my part."

Morgan O'Connell, the father of Daniel, was a younger son, therefore the house at Cahirciveen was a much less imposing mansion than Derrynane, the chief seat of the family, which, although built in different centuries and apparently with an utter disregard of architectural canons, has that stamp of distinction which seems inseparable from the abodes of old families in Europe. Near the house is Abbey Island, containing the ruins of a monastery supposed to date back to the seventh century. In this wild and grand resting-place against whose sides the waves of the Atlantic thunder unceasingly, reposes the dust of generations of the house of O'Connell. Here is the tomb of Morna Duv, Dark Mary, the tribune's grandmother, who resembles a figure in one of Scott's mediæval novels. She ruled her retainers, her workmen, her husband and her twenty-three children with kindness but with firmness, and had only one weakness, intense family pride. Perfectly excusable in the eyes of her clansmen, withal, for was she not the daughter of the Demohue of the Lakes? There are still traditions among the country people of her extraordinary gifts as an improvisatrice of Irish poetry, and especially of her power of withering invective. When she paid her work people their weekly wages she would thunder out at each of them in his or her native language: "If you have earned your wages, God prosper them; if you have not, God turn them to ruin." Her daughter, Madame O'Leary was also a poet, but of a higher type. The author of "The Last Colonel of the Irish Brigade" has given a literal translation of a long elegy on the death of her husband, who was murdered by English soldiers for refusing to sell his horse to a Protestant for five pounds. Even in a bald literal translation, it often rises to a level of singularly grand and impassioned beauty. The grandfather of O'Connell very seldom appears in the traditions of the country or of his family. Smith, the charming historian of Kerry, relates a circumstance, in a private letter, that explains his obscurity and is eloquent as to the position of the Catholic gentry of that day, obliged to exist on the mere sufferance of their Protestant neighbors. In the course of his investigations, he says, he visited

Derrynane and was entertained for several days by its venerable master, who gave the chronicler a great number of interesting anecdotes about the principal families of the country. Dr. Smith was so delighted with his reception, that he declared a considerable portion of his work should be devoted to celebrating the glory of the Clan O'Connell. "For God's sake," replied the old man, "do not dream of it! We have peace in these glens for the moment, Doctor, and we are so hidden away that we have escaped persecution; in these solitudes, we can profess the faith of our fathers. God

was esteemed a highly honorable occupation among the Irish gentry of the period, and the custom-house officer who showed himself unduly zealous, even though of gentle birth, was presumed to have lost caste and to be unworthy of receiving the satisfaction accorded in these dulling days by gentlemen to each other. If he escaped being knocked on the head by the peasantry, however, the retired naval officer generally found some gentleman of undoubted lineage sufficiently broad-minded not to object to put a bullet through him. The O'Connell revelation that Morgan O'Connell was engaged in a sort of commerce, selling his goods like any common sheep-keeper needs explanation much more than his connection with smuggling, for at that day, and participation in trade, whether wholesale or retail, brought social ostracism in its train. No tradesman could be a gentleman and, conversely, no gentleman could be a tradesman.

were more than half-a-dozen little brothers and sisters already there—and Derrynane, which he was to inherit, became practically his home. A precocious youngster, he had a vivid remembrance of the visit of Paul Jones to the Skelligs on the voyage from Brest, and of the seizure by the reputed privateer of a number of Kerry fishermen off the coast of Valentia. They were not unwilling prisoners and did woman's service afterwards in compelling the Serapis to strike her colors to the Stars and Stripes. These poor Irishmen were subsequently taken to Brest, from whence two of them returned to Kerry with large fortunes.

Soon after this, Daniel's education became a subject of anxious consideration. It was a period when it was rather the custom of the schoolmaster to be much in evidence, as a student of Queen Anne entailed the penalty of hanging, drawing and quartering on the audacious pedagogue who ventured to teach young Irishmen their A. B. C. However, there were to be found hundreds of humble men brave enough to dare it, and when O'Connell was a little over four years old, a wandering tutor, one Dennis O'Mahoney, made his appearance at Derrynane and took in charge the training of the future liberator. The worthy man's acquirements, however, were not extensive and the early education of his pupil might have fared badly but for the advent of a more highly polished professor some five years later. At that period Derrynane was to have a chaplain, a Father O'Grady, who was able to supply

when he fell into the clutches of a band of robbers. By great good luck, the captain of the band turned out to be an Irishman, and Kerryman to boot—Dennis O'Mahoney—probably a deserter from the English army then operating in Belgium. When he heard the mellin accents of his native tongue, the banishment could not do too much for his prisoner, and supplied him with sufficient money to carry him to the land of his birth—"God rest your soul, Denis Mahony!"—Father O'Grady was accustomed to exclaim when relating the adventure, "You were a good friend of mine when I badly wanted a friend, but somehow, I think it would be more comfortable to have you as a friend in need than as a neighbor." But poor Father O'Grady ran a greater danger when he reached Ireland than any of the fugitives from a casual encounter with robbers. Father O'Grady visited on a priest for returning to his native

landed proprietor could deprive him and his heirs of the established Church. O'Connell, during his subsequent career, had an inexhaustible supply of anecdotes relating to this gloomy period, some of them having a comical side to their essentially melancholy aspect. An incident the liberator was fond of telling, occurred in his neighborhood. A Catholic gentleman named Myers learned that a rascally nephew was about to file a "bill of divorcement" against him in a few days. He rode post haste to one in Dublin, saw the Protestant Archbishop and declared his intention of converting. The archbishop was naturally essential and dilatory, a conviction, that he would be converted knew absolutely nothing of the points of difference between the two churches, declared he could not receive him until he was better instructed. However, there was a rector from his own district then in the city, and if he would consult him and learn the essentials of the Protestant faith there would be no objection to his reception. The suggestion delighted Myers, for this rector was his best companion, his partner in many a jolly carouse. They spent a week together in Dublin, during which the course of religious instruction, if not spiritual, was decidedly spirituous, and at the end the rector assured his grace that his friend was thoroughly instructed in all the mysteries of Protestant theology. The recantation was read and the archbishop, delighted at having a convinced convert of such social prominence, gave a dinner in honor of Mr. Myers, to which the leading lights in church and state were invited. Towards the close of the banquet his grace rose and addressed the convert: "Mr. Myers," said he, "you have to-day been received into the true Protestant church, for which you should thank God. I learn with pleasure from our excellent mutual friend, the rector, that you are thoroughly grounded in the principles of our religion. Would you, for the edification of the company, be kind enough to state the grounds upon which you have abandoned P-p-ery and embraced the Church of England?" "By my faith, my Lord," replied Myers, "I can easily do that, the grounds of my conversion to the Protestant religion are two thousand five hundred acres of the best grounds in the county of Kerry."



FRONT OF O'CONNELL'S HOUSE AT DERRYNANE.

is good to us and enables us to pay for the education of our children in foreign lands and to further their advancement in the Irish Brigade. But if you make mention of me or mine, these sea-side solitudes will no longer yield us an asylum. The Sassanah will scale the mountains of Derrynane, and we, too, shall be driven out upon the world without house or home.

Dr. Smith, an honest liberal-minded Protestant, respected the wishes of his host, and there is barely a slight reference to the Clan O'Connell in his work.

The coast of Kerry with its numerous caverns and tortuous creeks and

But, rigid as was the application of this stern social law, it admitted of one exception; the gentleman smuggler might dispose of the proceeds of his honest industry without forfeiting caste, might even keep a shop for the purpose; so the Liberator's father smuggled along the coast of Kerry and kept a shop in Cahirciveen for the purpose of disposing of his wares.

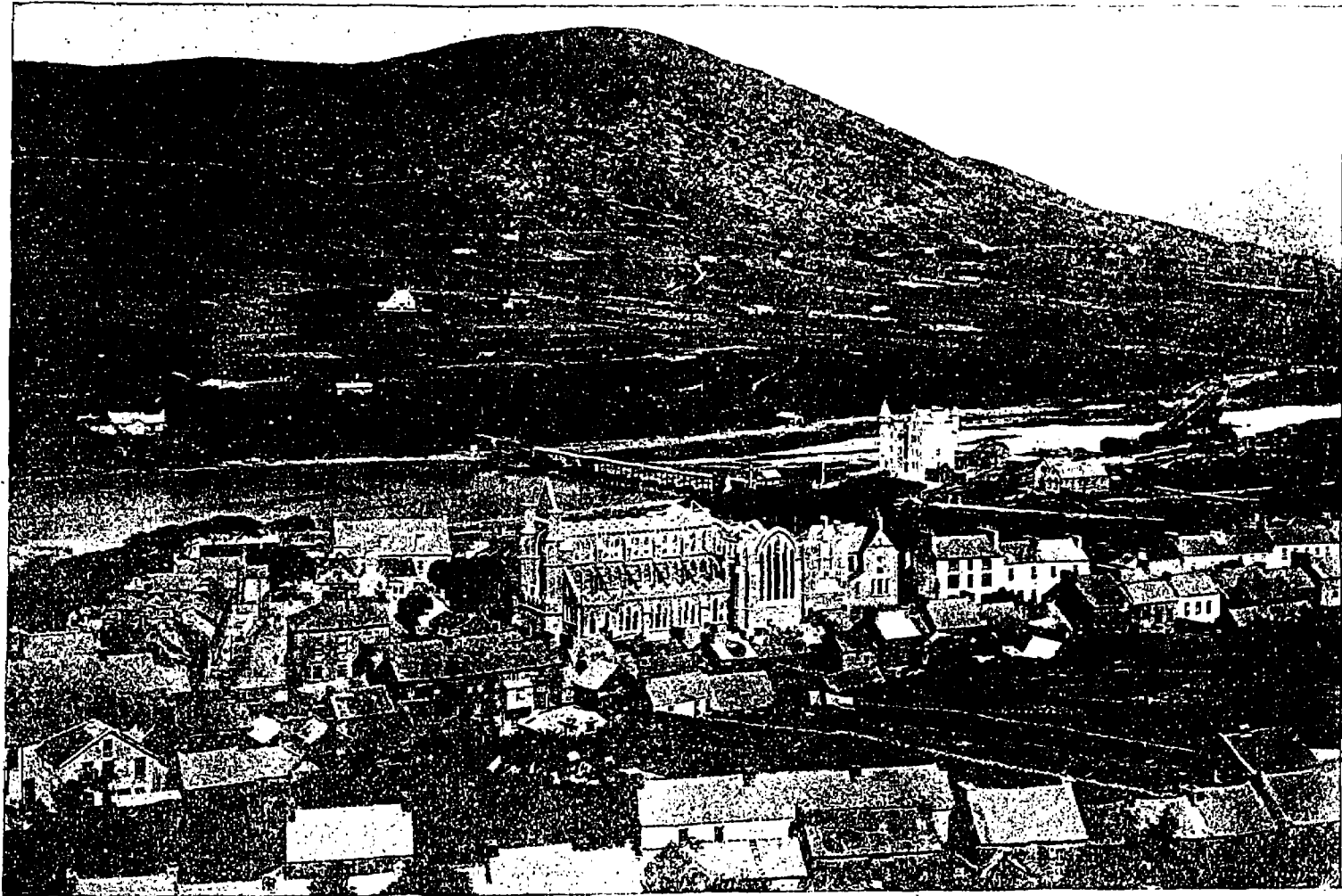
Although Daniel O'Connell was born in Cahirciveen, most of his early years were spent in the home of his Uncle Maurice, the Providence of the numerous family, who, to the generosity and liberality of the Irish gentleman, exercised, however, with sense and

tinger on the audacious pedagogue who ventured to teach young Irishmen their A. B. C. However, there were to be found hundreds of humble men brave enough to dare it, and when O'Connell was a little over four years old, a wandering tutor, one Dennis O'Mahoney, made his appearance at Derrynane and took in charge the training of the future liberator. The worthy man's acquirements, however, were not extensive and the early education of his pupil might have fared badly but for the advent of a more highly polished professor some five years later. At that period Derrynane was to have a chaplain, a Father O'Grady, who was able to supply

ways bloodhounds ready to earn the reward offered by the government for his discovery. He was arrested soon after his arrival and accused by an informer of having said Mass. Fortunately, the judge was a just and conscientious man, hating the laws he had to administer, in this respect resembling a not inconsiderable proportion of the Protestant magistracy of the day, and he resolved to baffle the informer. "What language did you hear him say Mass in?" he asked. "Latin, of course, my Lord." "You know the language?" "Pretty fairly, my Lord." "Repeat a few of the words you heard." "Ave Maria." "That is

After a few years spent with his private tutor, a few more at a Protestant college in Cork, O'Connell was sent by his uncle to complete his education at the St. Omer's in France. Then he kept his terms at Lincoln's Inn, London, and returned a full-fledged lawyer to Derrynane. Here he appears to have dropped for a short period his interest in the studies into which he had plunged with ardor in France and England, and to have devoted himself to all kinds of sport with the zest of the school-boy who had been shut out from his favorite playground for a time. And surely the old tribe lands of Clan O'Connell must be a paradise for the sportsman as well as for the artist. The hillsides are fairly alive with hares, the lakes are teeming with trout, and there are myriads of grouse, partridge and woodcock in the dark green woods. Coursing the hare was O'Connell's favorite pastime, almost his controlling passion. He was out on the mountains long before the dawn so that his hounds might be aided in the chase by the scent lying on the ground, and, crouching in the midst of the heather, watching eagerly for the first rays of the sun to glint on the hilltops, he and his huntsmen held in leash the eager and struggling animals until the game was started, and with loud halloo, master, huntsmen and crowds of hardy, excited tenants dashed up along the slopes of Saeem and down through the wild glens of Iveragh, every rock in which seemed vocal as it re-echoed to the musical cries of the boogles. It was to the bracing and invigorating effect of these manly but trying pursuits that the Liberator attributed the constitutional energy and sturdiness which enabled him to endure in after years an amount of labor, physical and mental, such as few could sustain.

This period in his life is also noteworthy for an incident that reflects considerable credit on a young man who was not indisposed to take part in the social enjoyments of the time. One of the extraordinary customs introduced into Ireland by the Cromwellian gentry was that of locking the dining-room after dinner and throwing the key out of the window. It was little less than high treason to release the imprisoned guests until the copious libations had done their work and they were all lying on the floor. O'Connell's successful interference with this time-honored custom at Derrynane aroused vigorous but vain protests. It created shame as well as anger in the heart of "Cousin Kane" for was it not a stain upon the hospitality and honor of his family? This "Cousin Kane" was a typical illustration of some of the social features of the early years of the century. He was one of those persons, no uncommon in that era, whom the hospitality of the Green Isle enabled to live not only in comfort but in luxury on— if their debts were to be reckoned—something less than nothing a year. (Concluded on page 5.)



CAHIRCIVEEN—THE NEW CHURCH IS THE O'CONNELL MEMORIAL CHURCH; THE LARGE BUILDING NEAR THE RIVER THE POLICE STATION. By kind permission of Donahoe's Magazine; photos by Mr. Jeremiah Curtin, the translator of "Quo Vadis."

iron-bound coast, which had even a worse reputation than it deserved in the eyes of the officers of his majesty's customs at the time, forms an ideal locality for the exercise of the smuggler's avocation. Daniel O'Connell's father acquired a considerable part of his very respectable fortune mainly by smuggling. At the head of his tenantry he landed, usually during the night, immense cargoes of French silk, laces, wines, etc. They were stored in his warehouse at Cahirciveen, a distributing centre from which they found their way to every part of the south and west of Ireland. Smuggling, or "free

moderation, added all the worldly wisdom, even the "camminess" of the Scottish laird. Ever ready to open his purse for the needs of his innumerable nephews in the Irish Brigade, or in the colleges of the Continent, or in the Herculean task for a young Irish Catholic gentleman—endeavoring to open a path to fortune at home, grand old "Hunting-Cap" was always the prudent adviser, the bounteous dispenser of his large fortune. Young Daniel, however, was the child of his predilection and adopted as his heir from birth. He could easily be spared from the teeming paternal household—there

what was lacking in the erudition of the tutor. Some of the adventures of Father O'Grady throw a curious light on the beauties of English law at the time. He was a student at Louvain, and as Flanders has been from time immemorial a little cockpit of strife and hostilities, it was not strange that he should find himself, during one of its periodic wars' reduced to a position of great distress. Without a penny in his pocket, he tried to beg his way to the coast, hoping to find some vessel that would consent to take him back to Ireland. He had nearly reached the term of his journey

a part of the Lord's prayer in Latin, is it not?" "Yes, my Lord." "Gentlemen," said the judge, "turning to the jury, "this man is a perjurer. The words Ave Maria do not occur in the Lord's Prayer. You will have to acquit the prisoner." And so Father O'Grady escaped a fate that had been meted out to scores of his predecessors for a similar crime.

But even sheltered as Kerry was by its situation from the vindictive encroachment of English law, the Catholic gentry lived in a constant state of terror. Any relative of a Catholic