

LETTERS FROM BERMUDA.

LETTER XXVIII.

HAMILTON, 18—

DEAR — As we have been visiting some places of interest in these Islands since I wrote last, I must hasten to finish the subject of the Irish troubles connected with the Act of Union passed in the time of Tom Moore, the poet (and which indirectly caused his exile to Bermuda), and the agitation for Home Rule at the present day. I shall endeavor to conclude my episodes of Irish history in the next letter if possible. You have requested me to tell you about the siege of Limerick. D Arcy McGee's History will give a "full, true and particular account" of the Siege and the Treaty. I need only say a few words on that point of history, but I shall give you some information which is not generally known. Patrick Sarsfield, afterwards Lord Lucan, took the leadership; he was a trained soldier, having served with credit in the English army, and he was also a generous patriot. William III. had got possession of Dublin, and after the battle of the Boyne James II. fled to France. The Irish army, under Sarsfield, stood gallantly at bay; the Irish fought with courage and unswerving loyalty for their lawful King, James II., and maintained themselves for 12 months in Munster and Connaught against the skilled soldiers and Generals, William and Ginkle, till they were able to make an honourable capitulation at Limerick. The Irish foot, ill-armed, ill-clothed and undisciplined, held their ground for a long time against veteran troops selected from half of the armies of Europe. The story told of the 12 months siege is a story of bravery, heroism and devotion, embracing all classes and both sexes of the besieged.

"Honor and Glory were given to cherish, Cherish them, then, though all else should decay;

Landmarks are these that are never to perish,

Stars that will shine on the duskiest day."

On the 3rd of October the Treaty of Limerick was signed. The Irish army, 30,000 strong—the Irish nobility, gentry and people capitulated with the army and Crown of Great Britain. They restored the allegiance of the Irish nation to that Crown. Never was there a more useful treaty to England than this, under the circumstances. It was a most deliberate and solemn treaty, *deliberately confirmed by letters-patent from the Crown*. It extinguished a sanguinary civil war. It restored the Irish nation to the dominion of England, and secured that dominion in perpetuity over one of the fairest portions of the globe. By that treaty, on the other hand, the Irish Catholic people stipulated for and obtained the pledge of the faith and honor of the English Crown for the equal protection by law for their properties and liberties with other subjects, and in particular for "the free and unfettered exercise of their religion."

"Deserving freedom more Than those her conquerors, who leave behind

Nothing but ruin wheresoe'er they rove."

But one circumstance of the siege you probably have never heard, an incident which Irish annalists record with great pride, marked the close of the siege. "Before the city was actually delivered up the arrival of a long-promised expedition from France with men, money and arms was announced but, General Patrick Sarsfield considered his honor and the honor of his race engaged in completing the surrender and completed it with a French fleet lying in Irish waters." England rejoiced, and Ireland bowed her head in the dust.

"Hope withering fled and Mercy sighed farewell."

"Alas! for poor Erin—her pride has gone by And th' spirit is broken, which never would bend,

O'er the ruin her children in secret must sigh,
For 'tis treason to love her and death to defend."

When peace was concluded between England and Ireland the bulk of the Irish army withdrew to France with Gen. Sarsfield. William III., who had promised his continental allies to establish religious liberty in Ireland and as he had confirmed the articles of surrender with his own hand, struggled for a time to preserve his honor, but at last gave way, and the House of Nassau has another blot on its escutcheon more infamous and dishonoring even than the judicial murder of John de Barneveldt or the massacre of the McDonells of Glencoe by his orders. As soon as the flower of the Irish army went to France William's Parliament took back the estates restored to the Irish owners and reinstated the heirs of the Cromwellian settlers. The parliament of Cromwell's settlers and Government officials in Dublin excluded all Catholic members by requiring from them the oath of abjuration, in direct infringement of one of the articles of surrender, enclosed in the treaty. They then passed a law depriving all Catholics of arms and another stringent statute ordering all "Popish archbishops, bishops, priests, monks, friars, Jesuits and regulars, &c., to depart from the Kingdom on pain of transportation." A large majority then passed a resolution not to keep the conditions of the treaty affecting the Catholics. The more spirited of the Catholic gentry from this time sought foreign service. The bigotry which shamefully repudiated the treaty of Limerick drove one hundred and fifty thousand Irishmen into the armies of France during three generations—brave soldiers who, under Louis le Grand and the first Napoleon, changed the history of the world at Fontenoy and Austerlitz. Hosts of these names of great Irishmen are emblazoned on the walls of Versailles, among "Les Officiers genereux morts pour la France."

"There is a tear for all who die,
A mourner o'er the humblest grave;
But nations swell the funeral cry,
And Triumph weeps above the brave."

Yours. PLACIDIA.

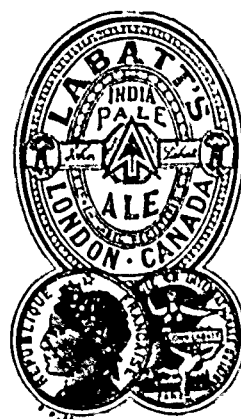
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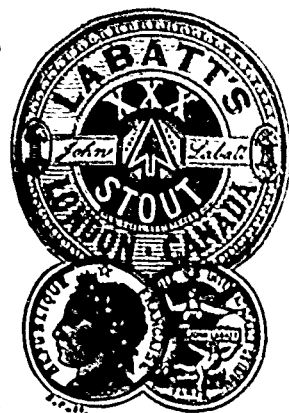


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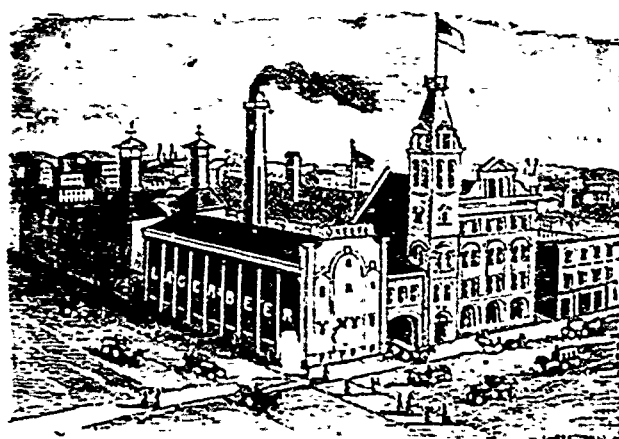
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