

HISTORY OF IRELAND.

BOOK VIII.

CHAPTER IV.

SIR HENRY SIDNEY'S DEPUTYSHIP—PARLIAMENT OF 1569—
THE SECOND "GERALDINE LEAGUE"—SIR JAMES FITZ-
MAURICE.

SIR HENRY SIDNEY, in writing to his court, had always reported John O'Neil as "the only strong man in Ireland." Before his rout at Lough Swilly, he could commonly call into the field 4,000 foot and 1,000 horse; and his two years' revolt cost Elizabeth, in money, about £150,000 sterling "over and above the cess laid on the country"—besides "3,500 of her Majesty's soldiers" slain in battle. The removal of such a leader in the very prime of life was therefore a cause of much congratulation to Sidney and his royal mistress, and as no other "strong man" was likely soon to arise, the Deputy now turned with renewed ardour to the task of establishing the Queen's supremacy, in things spiritual as well as temporal. With this view he urged that separate governments, with large though subordinate military as well as civil powers, should be created for Munster and Connaught—with competent Presidents, who should reside in the former Province at Limerick, and in the latter, at Athlone. In accordance with this scheme—which continued to be acted upon for nearly a century—Sir Edward Fitton was appointed first President of Connaught, and Sir John Perrott, the Queen's illegitimate brother, President of Munster. Leinster and Ulster were reserved as the special charge of the Lord Deputy.

About the time of O'Neil's death Sidney made an official