

nates at the bottom in a sharp nom ferula, agreeably to one of the intended uses of the crosier, as explained by an ancient poet,

"Curva trahit mites, pars pungit cuncta rebelles."

Upon the whole, Sir, I cannot think that the crosier of Cornelius O'Deagh is inferior, either in taste and elegance, or in richness, to the celebrated one of his cotemporary prelate William of Wykeham, which is kept with so much care at New College, Oxford. But what will appear equally extraordinary with the existence of such monuments of ancient art in Ireland, is the strong presumption which they afford from the name of the artist, that they were executed in that Island at the beginning of the fifteenth century; as the following enamelled inscription is seen in a small compartment on the mitre: "*Thomas O'Carly, Artifex faciem, (faciebam).*"

N. B. The back of the mitre is exhibited to show in what manner the Vittæ or infulæ, that is to say, the pendant ornaments that are annexed to it. In other respects, the back of the mitre is an exact counterpart of the front, except as to the enamelled inscription. The word lost in the inscription must from the known date of O'Deagh's Pontificate, have expressed either 400, or 410. The stones, which are all precious stones, are drawn to the size, shape and colour of the originals. The unequal white substances represent incrustations of pearls. The infulæ, or pendant ornaments are exhibited on the large sheet of the size of the original. They, like the mitre itself consist of thin silver plate gilt, and ornamented with pearls, &c., except the fringe at the bottom, which is delicate gold lacework as to have baffled the art of the draughtsman in his attempt to exhibit it.

The Register in the possession of my friend, is entitled by Sir James Ware, the famous Irish Antiquary, who cites it in his *Antiquities of Ireland*, "*Registrum Decani Limericensis.*" The testimony is copied in a manuscript note in the book itself. The register contains, amongst other things, a charter of Donald, King of Limerick, to Bricius, bishop of that see in 1194; likewise, a curious inquisition concerning the lands and churches belonging to it, taken soon after the conquest of this part of Ireland by the English, on the oaths of three separate juries one consisting of twelve Englishmen, another of twelve Irishmen, and the third of twelve Ostmen, or Danes. The last date in the register itself, being that of the indenture a lease made by the bishop to Robert Fitz-Stephens, is of 1362; but there is annexed to the Register, the *Taxa Ordinaria* of the bishop of Limerick, certified to be in the hand writing of the above-mentioned bishop, Cornelius O'Deagh, who, as is gathered from the date of this mitre, presided there in the year 1418. As the above-mentioned ornaments, I mean the mitre and

crosier, are so often seen in the statues, bas-reliefs, pictures, and illuminations of former times, perhaps the following short remarks upon them, for ascertaining the personages represented, together with their rank, and the period of their existence, may not be here misplaced.

Eusebius, the celebrated church historian, and friend of Constantine the Great, tells us upon the authority of Polycrates, who lived near the time of the Apostles, that St. John the Evangelist wore a metal plate, like that which the Jewish high priest bore upon his forehead. The same is affirmed of St. James, the Apostle, Bishop of Jerusalem, by St. Epiphanius. The same Eusebius, as likewise St. Gregory Nazianzen, and the pagan historian Ammianus Marcellinus, describe the bishops of the fourth century, as wearing a sort of crown. It appears from different authorities that the bishops of the Latin Church at least, wore some peculiar ornament upon their heads in the succeeding ages; but there is reason to doubt whether this ornament bore any resemblance with the open, double pointed mitre, before the ninth or tenth century. This form, together with its appropriate ornaments, was probably first adopted, and appropriated to themselves, in one or other of those ages by the Roman Pontiffs; as in the eleventh century we find more than one instance of the Pope's granting a special privilege to certain bishops to wear the Roman mitre, and, as in the 12th century, we read of Innocent II., placing his own mitre on the head of St. Malachy Archbishop of Armagh, then upon a visit to Rome, by way of a special favour. Still even the mitres in question at their first invention were very low, being not taller than from three to six inches, and they continued comparatively low till about the end of the thirteenth century, as we may observe in the figure of St. Nicholas, on the Saxon Font in Winchester Cathedral, in the sepulch. 1 statues of the bishops of Old Sarum, since removed to Salisbury Cathedral; and in the statues and other representations of prelates in general, during the ages in question. During the fourteenth century, the mitres seem to have risen to about the height of a foot. That of William of Wykeham, upon his monument which is said to have been executed in his lifetime, is ten inches high; the bishop of Limerick's thirteen. It was not till about the sixteenth century that this episcopal ornament attained to its present disproportionate height of a foot and a half.

When the abbots and other superiors of certain grand religious communities, grew impatient of subjection to the jurisdiction of their ordinary bishops, they eagerly contended for the ensigns of independent authority, namely, for the pontifical ornaments, which were the mitre, the ring, and the sandals. One of the first, if not quite the first mi-