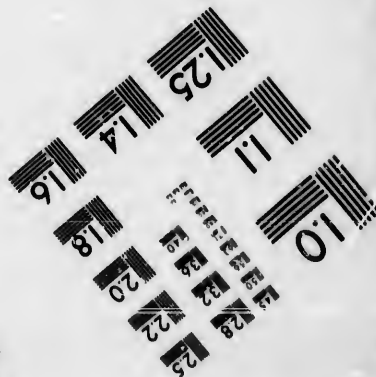
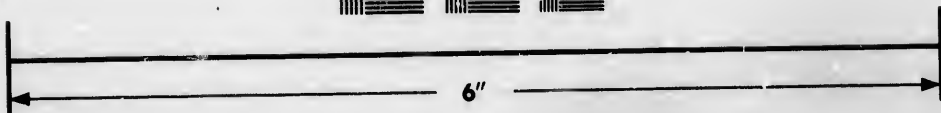
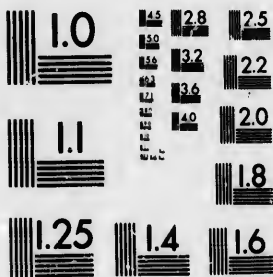


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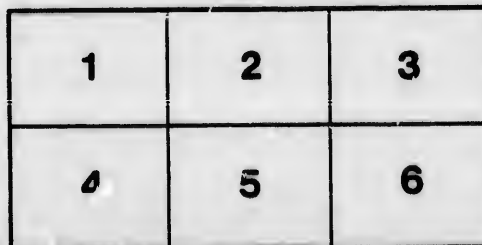
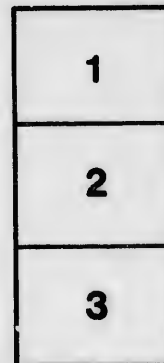
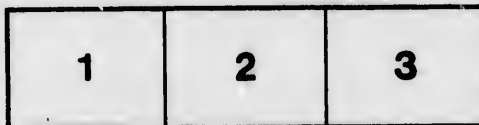
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SECOND EDITION.

Caxton Celebration,

Montreal, June, 1877.

MANUSCRIPTS AND PRINTED BOOKS

In the Irish Language and Character,

AND FAC-SIMILES OF THE

NATIONAL MANUSCRIPTS OF IRELAND.

EXHIBITED BY

MR. EDWARD MURPHY,

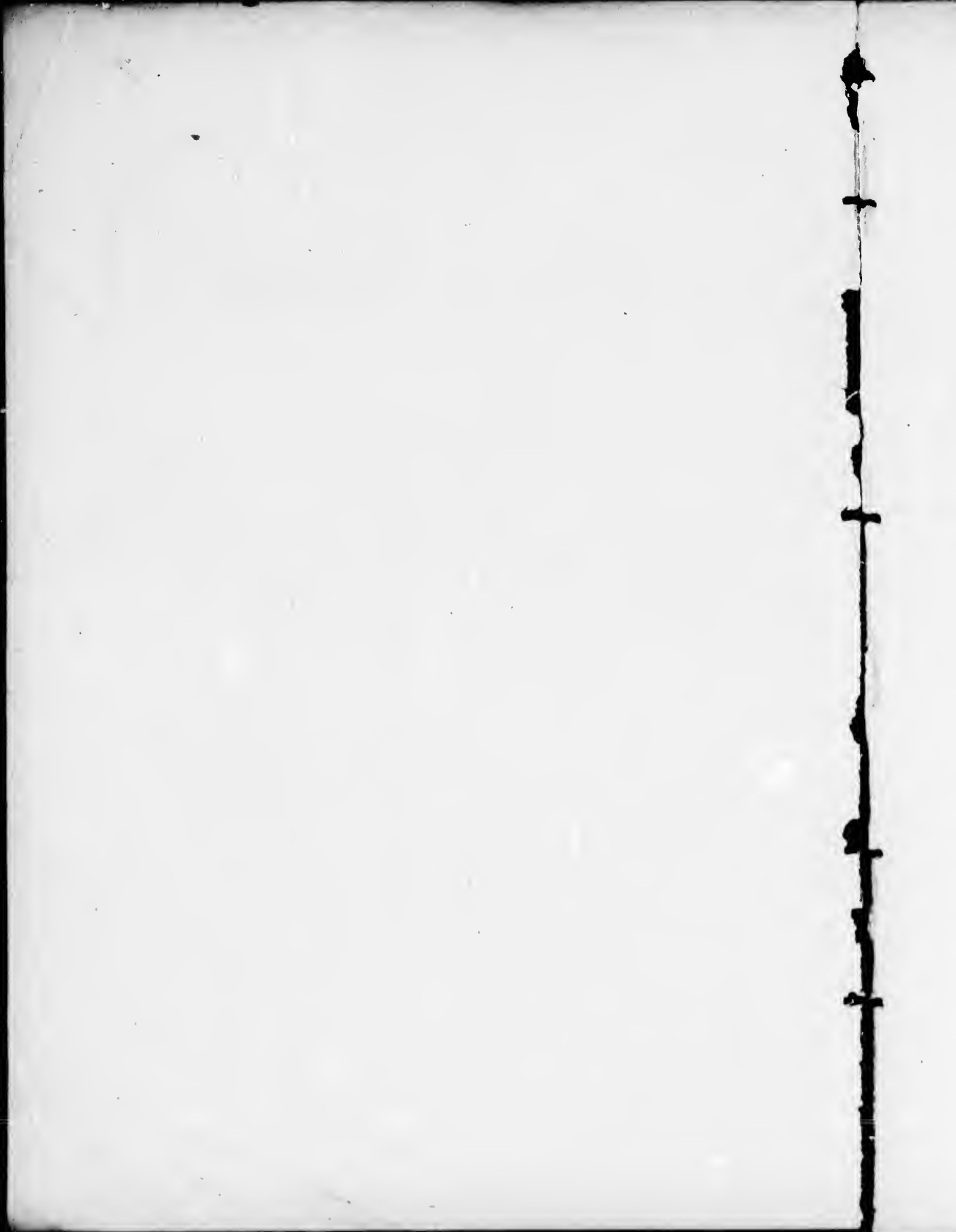
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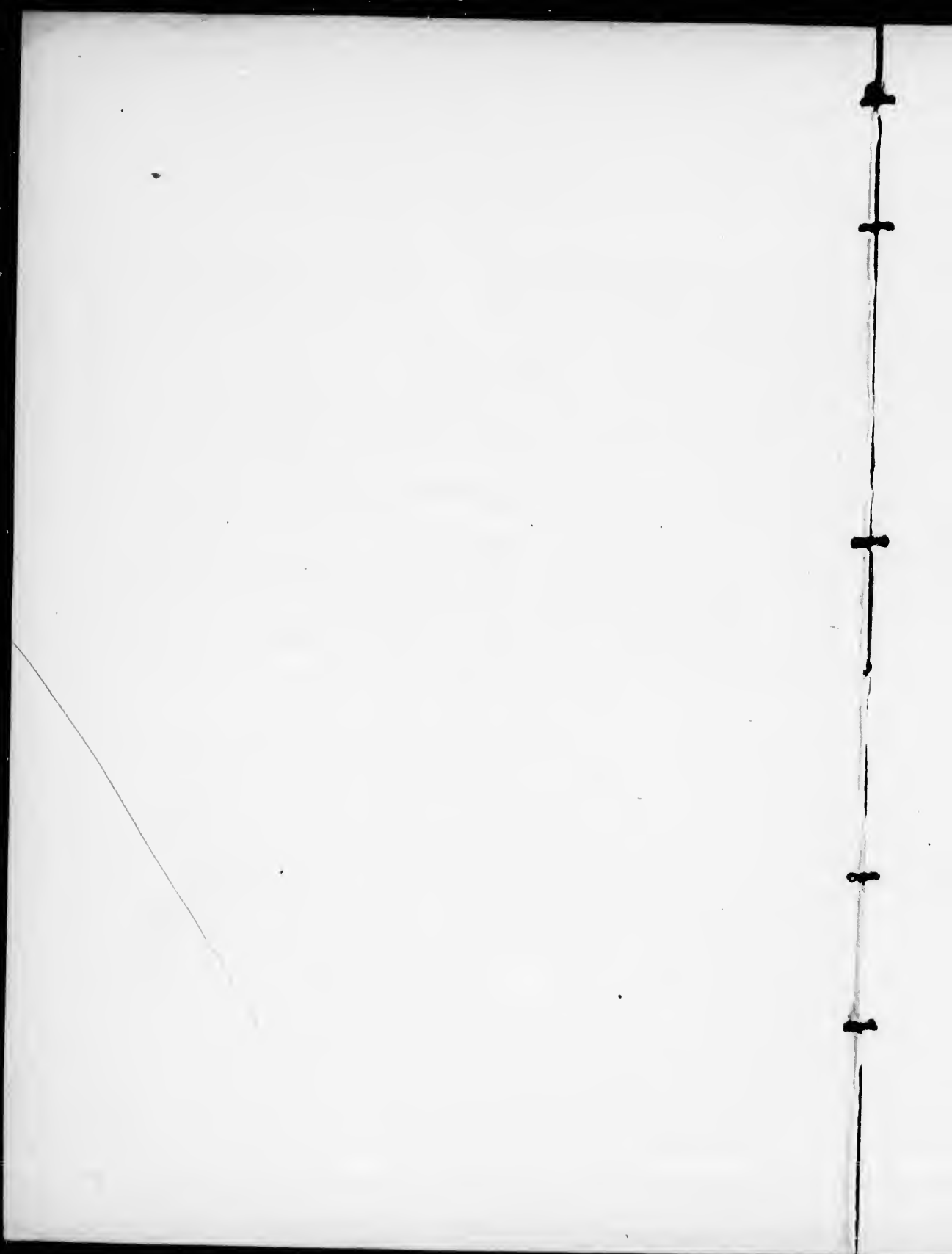
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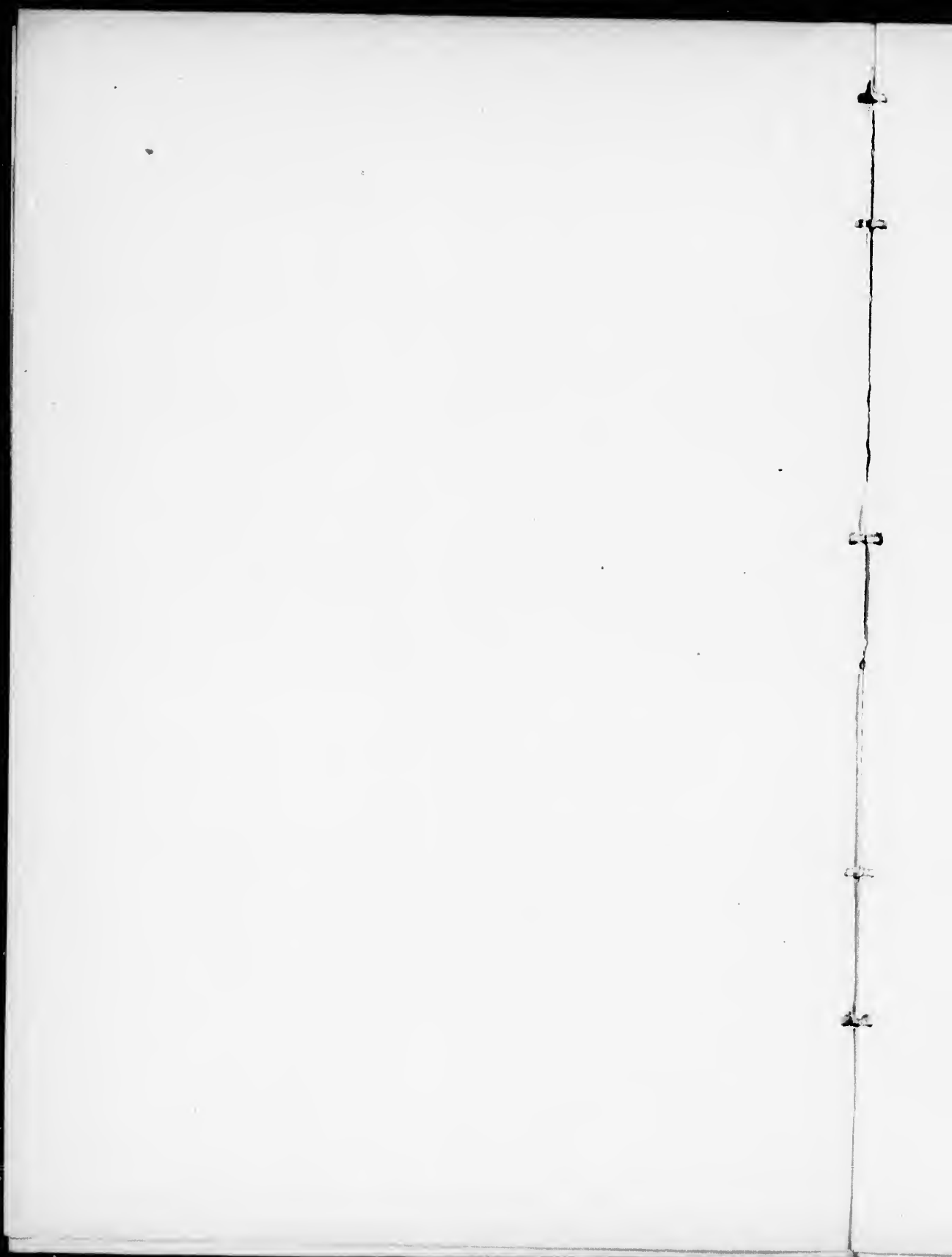


NOTE TO SECOND EDITION

The first edition—published in connection with my exhibit at the Caxton Memorial Exhibition, held in Montreal in June last—has been exhausted, the supply not being equal to the demand. I have, at the request of friends, and in response to numerous enquiries to me personally, published another edition. To any one interested in the literature of Ireland, and the purposes for which the Caxton Exhibitions were celebrated, I shall be happy to send a copy upon written application.

The present edition is the same as the first, with the exception of a few additions and verbal alterations.

MONTREAL, *December*, 1877.



IRISH MANUSCRIPTS.

- 1.—IRISH MS. DEVOTIONAL WORK—"THE THREE SHAFTS OF DEATH." By the Rev. Geoffrey Keating, D.D. *Circa*, latter part of sixteenth century.

This work was evidently written by different persons, as the hand-writing will easily determine. It is a good specimen of Irish penmanship of its day. Many quotations from Scripture are given, with chapter and verse. It is divided into *three* parts. That on page 108 begins with a verse from the 129th Psalm, in Latin: "*De profundis clamavi ad te Domini*" (Out of the depths have I cried to thee, O Lord). The leather cover and fastenings to the back are curious. Copied from the original about A.D. 1650.

- 2.—IRISH MS. PRAYER BOOK. The penmanship and binding are good, and the style of both is indicative of its age.

This is a curious and interesting book. It contains, among other things, the Calendar of Saints' days, Feasts, Fasts, &c., Prayers at Mass, the Seven Penitential Psalms, Psalter of Jesus, Prayers for Confession and Communion, the Litanies, Vespers, and other Devotions. Written about A.D. 1630.

- 3.—IRISH MS. A fragment (14 pages only) of an *Irish Vocabulary*, or *Foclóir*, to the word *Coibic* explaining the meaning of obsolete words in the Irish language. Written A.D. 1706.

- 4.—IRISH MS. LIFE OF ST. PATRICK, APOSTLE OF IRELAND.

Very interesting. Neatly written, date and signature at end of MS. Written A.D. 1764.

- 5.—IRISH MS. THE MIDNIGHT COURT.

A satirical Poem of 51 pages, on the habits and customs of the natives of the County Clare in the last Century. It is in the Irish language, and is considered a beautiful specimen of modern writing in the Irish character, &c. Written A.D. 1812.

BOOK PRINTED IN THE IRISH LANGUAGE, AND WITH IRISH TYPE.

Illustrating Irish Type Printing.

- 6.—AN TEOMNA NUADH (The New Testament). Translated into Irish about A.D. 1600, by William O'Donnell, Archbishop of Tuam.

This New Testament in the Irish language was first printed and published in A.D. 1603, and re-printed in 1687, and in 1830, and 1835. The Old Testament was published in Irish by Bishop Bedell in 1640. Other editions have followed since.

BOOKS PRINTED IN THE IRISH AND ENGLISH LANGUAGES WITH
IRISH AND ROMAN TYPE.

- 7.—A PRIMER OF THE IRISH LANGUAGE, for the use of the Students in the College of St. Columba. Dublin, 1845.
- 8.—AN ENGLISH-IRISH DICTIONARY; by the Rev. Daniel Foley, B.D. Dublin, 1855.
- 9.—AN IRISH-ENGLISH DICTIONARY; by Edward O'Reilly, with Supplement by J. O'Donovan, LL.D., T.C.D. Dublin, 1864. First published, 1817.

BOOKS PRINTED IN THE IRISH AND ENGLISH LANGUAGES ON
ALTERNATE PAGES, WITH IRISH AND ROMAN TYPES.

- 10.—LEABAR NA g-CEART, or THE BOOK OF RIGHTS. Translated by the eminent Irish scholar and philologist, J. O'Donovan, LL.D., T.C.D., with Introduction and copious Historical Notes. Published by the Celtic Society, Dublin, 1847.

This work is a treatise on the Rights and Privileges of the ancient Kings of Ireland. It is translated from the original *Vellum* MS., called the Book of Lecan, which was compiled from various older MSS., by Duaid McPhirbis, in the year 1418. A more ancient Book of Rights was written by St. Benean (or St. Benignus, as his name was Latinized), successor to St. Patrick, who died A.D. 468. The work in its present form, however, was not written by that Bishop, but was compiled and written by Cormac McCuillennan,

King of Munster, and Archbishop of Cashel, who died A.D. 903. It is an interesting fragment of Irish History, and of undoubted authenticity, and was an authority among the Irish Kings for centuries. The text is in Irish and English, on alternate pages. There is a valuable introduction, treating on several subjects; one, on Chess among the ancient Irish, will be found curious and interesting. (See engravings of Chess men, Page ix. of Introduction.) It is a beautiful specimen of Irish typography.

11.—THE TOPOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL POEMS OF IRELAND; by O'Dugan and O'Heerin. Published by the Archeological and Celtic Society. Dublin, 1862.

These poems are valuable illustrations of Irish History in the 12th and 13th centuries. They enumerate with minuteness the principal Families and Territories of Ireland, and the Chiefs who possessed and ruled over the country at the above periods. The work was commenced by O'Dugan, who gave a full account of all the Chiefs and Clans of the ancient kingdoms of Meath, Ulster, and Connaught, in the 12th century (about the time of the English invasion); but he died in 1372, before he could complete the work. O'Dugan commenced his work thus: "Let us travel over Ireland." After O'Dugan's death, O'Heerin, another learned historian, who died in 1420, wrote a continuation to the unfinished work. He gave an account of all the Chiefs and Clans of Leinster and Munster, for the same period. O'Heerin commenced his part thus: "An addition of knowledge on sacred Erin."

These Poems are valuable and authentic records, and furnish a complete Topography of Ancient Ireland. Both O'Dugan and O'Heerin travelled over the country, and carefully noted their observations. The result of their joint labors is the above work. There are in O'Dugan's Poems 880 verses of four lines each, which occupy 79 pages, and in O'Heerin's 780 verses of four lines, occupying 55 pages. They are printed in Irish and English, on alternate pages, and the type is very fine.

The Introduction and the Notes, which occupy 150 pages, contain a vast amount of valuable information relative to the ancient and modern Topography of Ireland; and a very interesting account of the origin and meaning of Irish family names, and the changes

they have undergone during the last two or three centuries. There is, also, much useful information collected by Dr. O'Donovan during his researches in Irish History. It is, probably, the most complete and authentic Historical-Topographical record of its age extant in Europe.

Interest is added to this work because the learned Editor and Translator, Dr. O'Donovan, died just as it was ready for press.

12.—THE SENCHUS MOR, generally called the BREHON LAWS. The Ancient Laws and Institutes of Ireland.

This work is completed in three Volumes. It was translated from the original MSS., by Dr. O'Donovan, Professor O'Curry, and other learned Irish scholars, and published by order of the British Government, under a Commission composed of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, and other eminent men, appointed to superintend its publication. The Volume now exhibited is the second, and is illustrated by fac-similes of three pages of Ancient Vellum MSS., two from the collection of Trinity College, Dublin, and one from the British Museum. These fac-similes are beautiful and interesting, and should be carefully examined.

The *Brehon Laws* are very ancient, dating from before the Christian era. They were collated, revised, and transcribed from old manuscripts in St. Patrick's time by a Commission composed of nine persons, viz:—Three Bishops, of whom St. Patrick was one, three Kings, and three Doctors and Poets, appointed by St. Patrick to adapt the ancient Pagan Laws, then in force, to Christianized Ireland. This Commission took three years to their work, which was completed in A.D. 438. These *Brehon Laws* are a very enlightened Code, and prove that the inhabitants of Ireland in those remote times (1506 years ago) were a highly civilized and educated people. Their publication is a valuable addition to our knowledge of the social habits and the customs of the ancient inhabitants of Ireland, and they incidentally throw light upon the cotemporaneous History of Europe in such matters.

— The following summary will give some idea of the contents of the three volumes:—

A learned and exhaustive introduction to the *Brehon Laws*, giving their history and other interesting circumstances connected

with them. The text is in Irish and English, giving the Law of Distress, Laws for the punishment of Murder, Wounding, Abduction, and for all offences against Persons and Property, Hostage Securities, Fosterage, Saer-Stock, and Daer-Stock Tenures. Laws defining with great minuteness the relative positions of Landlord and Tenant. These laws prove that even in those remote times the maxim, "that property has its duties as well as its rights," was well understood." The rights of women, married and single, and of minors, are minutely defined. These ancient laws show that nearly two thousand (2,000) years ago, the Irish laws relating to them were nearly, if not entirely, in accord with those plans now recommended by advanced thinkers in England as a basis for legislation to do justice to women and minors. (*See Preface.*)

These Volumes were published in Dublin, by order of the Government, respectively in the years 1865, 1869, and 1873, and together contain over 1650 pages of printed matter, Irish and English on every alternate page. They are beautiful specimens of Irish Typography. The fac-similes of Irish MSS., with which they are illustrated, deserve careful examination.

FAC-SIMILES OF IRISH MANUSCRIPTS.

- 13.—FAC-SIMILES OF THE NATIONAL MSS. OF IRELAND; made by command of Her Majesty Queen Victoria. Photo-zincographed from the original Vellum MSS., under the direction of Major-General Sir Henry James, R.E., F.R.S., Director-General Ordnance Survey, England, and issued from the Public Record Office, Dublin, 1874.

Sir Henry James, in his Preface, says :—

"The Irish Series, as will be seen, is remarkable not only for the great antiquity of many of the MSS. comprised in it, but also for the splendid examples of pictorial art which it contains, of which the highly colored drawings and the letters on the Title-page will give an idea."

"A great number of the MSS. are copies of the Gospels and Psalters, which exhibit in their illuminations the devotion to their work of Artists of the highest skill [the Irish Monks of the period], both in fanciful design and colour."

"The production of Fac-similes of such highly ornamented work has tested the skill of the draughtsmen and printers of this Department [Ordnance Survey Office, Southampton], the selection of the various tints of colours requiring great taste and judgment, and the 'register' of the plates the greatest nicety and care."

These Fac-similes are produced in perfect accordance with the original MSS., in dimensions, colours, and other features; not a line added. So faithfully has the Sun copied these MSS. that the leaves of the ancient documents appear as if they were stretched and pasted on sheets of card board, and then bound up in the Volume. The plates, before the work was issued, were examined and certified to by Mr. Saunders, Assistant-Keeper of the Public Records, England.

Mr. Gilbert, Secretary of the Public Record Office, in his report to the Right Honourable the Master of the Rolls and Keeper of the Public Records of Ireland, describes this great work as follows:—

“The work is in imperial folio size, and the present part contains 45 coloured plates. The written matter of each specimen has been printed opposite to it, in the original language, line for line, without contractions: such translations and elucidations have also been given as will, it is hoped, effectively assist those who may desire to examine or critically study any of the manuscripts.”

The original manuscripts are remarkable for their great antiquity. They are probably the most ancient Christian MSS. in the world, as those copied into this Volume date from the fifth century (*temp. St. Patrick*) to A.D. 1137.

These Fac-similes are most interesting, and to the Biblical student invaluable, as nearly all the MSS. represented in this Volume are portions of the Holy Scriptures, copied from the Gospels.

The Rev. J. H. Todd, D.D. (Church of England clergyman), in recommending to Sir Henry James the publication of the *entire* BOOK OF KELLS, says:—

“I wish you would consider whether it would be possible to do the entire of the *Book of Kells*; it is, I believe, the most splendid specimen of a Latin Evangelistarium in the world. It would be of immense importance to Biblical Literature to have such a MS. in fac-simile.”

There are several hundred figures, letters, &c., copied on 45 folio plates in this book (which is the first of a series of three Volumes publishing by order of the British Government). They are splendid examples of pictorial art, as the magnificent illuminations, especially the *unique* compound and single letters from the *Book of Kells*, show. (See plates XIII. to XVII.)

Mr. Gilbert, in his report to the Master of the Rolls on these facsimiles, in referring to the *Book of Kells*, which Professor O'Curry, R.I.A., believed was written in the sixth century, says :—

“The *Book of Kells* is the chief paleographic and artistic monument which has descended to us from the ages in which Ireland, under the name of ‘Scotia,’ was renowned for her schools, whence religion and letters were carried to various parts of Europe. This manuscript is a copy of the Gospels, and received its present name from having belonged to the Columban Monastery of Kells in Meath. (See Plates VII. to XVII., inclusive, for illustrations ‘rom this ancient and beautiful MS.)”

“It has been (continues Mr. Gilbert) conjectured that the *Book of Kells* is the Volume so highly eulogised in the twelfth century by Geraldus Cambrensis, as the marvellous book exhibited to him at Kildare, and popularly believed to have been executed under the direction of an Angel.”

Of this work, Professor J. O. Westwood, of Oxford, in his important work on the miniatures and ornaments of the Anglo-Saxon and Irish MSS., writes as follows :—

“Ireland may be justly proud of the *Book of Kells*—a Volume traditionally asserted to have belonged to St. Columba, and unquestionably the most elaborately executed MS. of so early a date now in existence ; far excelling, in the gigantic size of the letters at the commencement of each Gospel, the excessive minuteness of the ornamental details crowded into whole pages, the number of its very peculiar decorations, the fineness of the writing, and the endless variety of its initial capital letters, the famous Gospels of Lindisfarne, in the Cottonian Library. But this MS. is still more valuable on account of the various pictorial representations of different scenes in the life of our Saviour, delineated in the genuine Irish style, of which several of our MSS. of St. Gall, and a very few others, offer analogous examples.”

“The text itself is far more extensively decorated than in any other now existing copy of the Gospels.”

After describing other wonders of this book, Prof. Westwood continues :—

“Another artistic peculiarity of the *Book of Kells* arises from the decoration of the initial letters of each of the sentences or verses, so that each page presents us with several of these letters, varying in size and design, as well as from the introduction of colored representations of men, animals, birds, horses, dogs, &c. . . . The introduction of natural foliage in this MS. is another of its great peculiarities ; whilst the intricate intertwining of the branches is eminently characteristic of the Celtic spirit, which compelled even the human figure to submit to the most impossible contortions.”—(Pages 31 and 32).

Again, the characteristics of the Celtic, or early Irish school, Prof. Westwood thus refers to further on in the same work :—

“First, in one or more ribbons diagonally but symmetrically interlaced, forming an endless variety of patterns ; 2nd, one, two or three slender spinal lines coiling one within another till they meet in the centre of the circle, their opposite ends going off to other circles ; 3rd, a vast variety of lacertine animals and birds, hideously

attenuated and coiled one within another, their tails, tongues and top-knots forming long, narrow ribbons, irregularly interlaced; 4th, a series of diagonal lines, forming various kinds of Chinese-like patterns. These ornaments are generally introduced into small compartments, a number of which are arranged so as to form the large initial letters and borders, or tessellated pages, with which the finest MSS. are decorated."

"Especially deserving of notice (continues Professor Westwood) is the extreme delicacy and wonderful precision, united with an extraordinary minuteness of detail, with which many of these ancient MSS. were ornamented. I have examined with a magnifying-glass the pages of the Gospels of Lindisfarne and the *Book of Kells*, for hours together, without ever detecting a false line or an irregular interlacement; and when it is considered that many of these details consists of spiral lines, and are so minute as to be impossible to have been executed without a pair of compasses, it really seems a problem not only with what eyes, but also with what instruments they could have been executed. One instance of the minuteness of these details will suffice to give an idea of this peculiarity. I have counted in a small space, measuring scarcely three quarters of an inch, by less than half an inch in width, in the *Book of Armagh*, 'not fewer than one hundred and fifty-eight (158) interlacements of a slender ribbon pattern, formed of white lines edged by black ones upon a black ground.'" (Illustrated on Plates XXV. to XXIX.)

Mr. Gilbert, the learned editor of these fac-similes, concludes the publication of this first Volume by promising that in the next issue, now nearly ready, the series will be continued from the early part of the twelfth to the end of the thirteenth century. There are in my possession many other works, on historical and educational subjects, illustrating Irish type printing. The above will, however, show what has been done, and is now doing, for the preservation of the ancient language of Ireland—a language in which there is found an ancient and extensive literature, original and peculiar to herself—a language which is valuable for elucidating her own annals—a language which is the key for unlocking much that is occult in the ancient history of Europe. This language is still a living one, spoken by a large number of the inhabitants of Ireland. Chairs have been established in the Catholic University of Ireland and in many of the Irish Colleges for its cultivation.* These, with the special efforts now making by "*The Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language*," will, it is to be hoped, successfully perpetuate and preserve a language, not only so ancient—so expressive—but so dearly cherished by the Irish people.

EDWARD MURPHY.

*A Gaelic Professorship has been founded in the University of Edinburgh through the exertions of Professor Blackie, to whom great credit is due.

