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The Castle of Trim

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It seems that a Peer, by virtue of his Peership, has a constitutional right to enter the King's presence, and to introduce to him subjects who are not Peers. Lord Moira exercised the right. The deputation were, of course, graciously received by the King, who immediately sent orders to his ministers in Dublin to prepare a Bill for the relief from their disabilities of his Irish Catholic subjects.

The Great Catholic Emancipation Act of 1793 was the consequence which broke the back of the whole business, conferring the political franchise on Roman Catholics, and leaving very little to be done in the same direction by Daniel O'Connell or any other.

The Roman Catholics achieved a great victory because they observed the Law, and travelled the road of the Constitution, and shunned all traffick with the British Parliament and British Statesmen, and went with their griefs straight to their King, the King of Ireland.

After that the revolutionary genius of Tone prevailed, and a considerable proportion of the Irish people broke away from the road; not with happy results for themselves, or their country, or for any of us.

THE CASTLE OF TRIM.

By P. J. SHERIDAN.

[I republish this article with great pleasure, taken from the New York Irish Monthly, the *Σ.ω.ρ.α.τ.*, partly because it is interesting in itself, partly because Trim was once the Norman capital of Ireland, forlorn as it looks to-day; partly because it has been a long-cherished hope of mine to settle down in Trim—so near the Hill of Tara too—and thence edit A.I.R., and consider with myself there how it feels to be in a spot which is nearly in the middle of Ireland, and try to find out how things look when observed from Trim, and from the shore by the Boyne, most classic and historic of our Irish rivers. I shall carry out that purpose presently. The *Σ.ω.ρ.α.τ.* is an excellent monthly. The price—threepence.]

Trim of the ruined shrines, the forgotten Parliaments, the enchanted castles, does not figure prominently in the history of modern Ireland. In recent years, its progress has been like that of most provincial Irish towns, in the wrong direction. Decay of National characteristics, general Anglicization and commercial decadence; these are the signs by which it is known amongst,

but not distinguished from the Leinster towns of the twentieth century.

The town itself is situated on the "clear, bright Boyne," and is surrounded by land generally said to be the most fertile in Ireland. Occupying prominent positions on or near the historic river are the ruined fanes, castles and buildings, which deflect towards the town a little of their ancient glory. The number and variety of these ruins, amid surroundings always tame, occasionally beautiful, cannot fail to interest even the curiously speculative or sceptical observer. Trim castle, the Yellow Steeple, St. Patrick's Church, and Newtown Abbey, are amongst the most important and the most interesting of these ruins.

Trim Castle, a gigantic structure, is the largest castle of its kind in Ireland. It was built by the Anglo-French, well known as adepts in the art of castle building, in the years 1172-'73. During the first centuries of the English Invasion it suffered much as the result of garrison intriguing, as also, from the attacks of the Irish clans. Trim, according to the *Four Masters*, was burned in 1143, and again with its church in 1155.

(To be continued.)

Annals of the Four Masters.

The Age of the World, 3922. Ollamh Fodhla, after having been forty years in the sovereignty of Ireland, died at his own *mur* (house) at Teamhair. He was the first king by whom the Feis-Teamhrach was established; and it was by him *Mur-Ollamhan* was erected at Teamhair. It was he also that appointed a chieftain over every cantred, and a *Brughaidh* over every townland, who were all to serve the King of Ireland. Eochaidh was the first name of Ollamh Fodhla; and he was called Ollamh (Fodhla) because he had been first a learned Ollamh, and afterwards King of (Fodhla, *i.e.*, of) Ireland.

The Age of the World, 3923. This was the first year of the reign of Finnachta, son of Ollamh Fodhla, over Ireland.

The Age of the World, 3942. This was the twentieth year of the reign of Finnachta over Ireland. He afterwards died of the plague in Maghinis, in Uladh. It was in the reign of Finnachta that snow fell with the taste of wine, which blackened the grass. From this cognomen Finnachta adhered to him. Elim was his name at first.

The Age of the World, 3943. The first year of the reign of Seanoll son of Ollamh Fodhla, over Ireland.

The Age of the World, 3959. The seventeenth year of Slanoll in the sovereignty; and he died, at the end of that time, at Teamhair (Tara), and it is not known what disease carried him off; he was found dead, but his colour did not change. He was afterwards buried; and after his body had been forty years in the grave, it was taken up by his son, *i.e.*, Oilíoll mac Slannill; and the body had remained without decomposing during that period. This thing was a great wonder and surprise to the men of Ireland.

The Age of the World, 3960. The first year of the reign of Gedhe Ollghothach over Ireland.

The Age of the World, 3971. The twelfth year of Gedhe Ollghothach in the sovereignty of Ireland; and he fell at the end of that time by Fiacha, son of Finnachta.

NOTES TO THE ANNALS. (Continued.)

His own house at Teamhair, *i.e.*, Mur-Ollamhan, *i.e.*, Ollamh Fodhla's house at Tara.

In Mageoghegan's translation of the Annals of Clonmacnoise, it is stated that he builded a fair palace at Taragh only for the learned sort of this realm, to dwell in at his own charges.

Feis-Teamhrach—translated Feast of Tara by Mageoghegan in his version of the Annals of Clonmacnoise, in which the following notice of him occurs: "Ollov Fodla, of the house of Ulster, was King of Ireland, and of him Ulster took the name. He was the first king of this land that ever kept the great Feast of Taragh, which feast was kept once a year, whereunto all the king's friends and dutiful subjects came yearly; and such as came not were taken for the king's enemies, and to be prosecuted by the law and sword, as undutiful to the State.

Cantred—a hundred or barony containing one hundred and twenty quarters of land.

A *brughaidh* over every townland. A *brughaidh*, among the ancient Irish meant a farmer; and his townland comprised four quarters, or four hundred and eighty large Irish acres of land.

Ollamh Fodhla—pronounced Ollāi Fōla; *i.e.*, the Ollamh or chief *poet* of Fodhla or Ireland. Maghinis in Uladh. Now the barony of Lecale in the County of Down.

Finnachta, or Finnshneachta, was very common as the name of a man among the ancient Irish, denoting *nivem* or snow-white. The name is still preserved in the surname O'Finneachta Anglicé Finaghty.

Slanoll—Keating derives this name from *rlán*, health, and *oll*, great, and adds that he was so called because all his subjects enjoyed great health in his time.

The Annals of Clonmacnoise contain the same remark:—"During whose reign the kingdom was free from all manner of sickness."

Gedhe Ollghothach. In the Annals of Clonmacnoise is the following passage to the same purport. "Observers of antiquity affirm of him that the conversation of his subjects in general in his time was as sweet a harmony to one another as any musick, because they lived together in such concord, amity and attonment among themselves that there was no discord or strife heard to grow between them for any cause whatsoever.