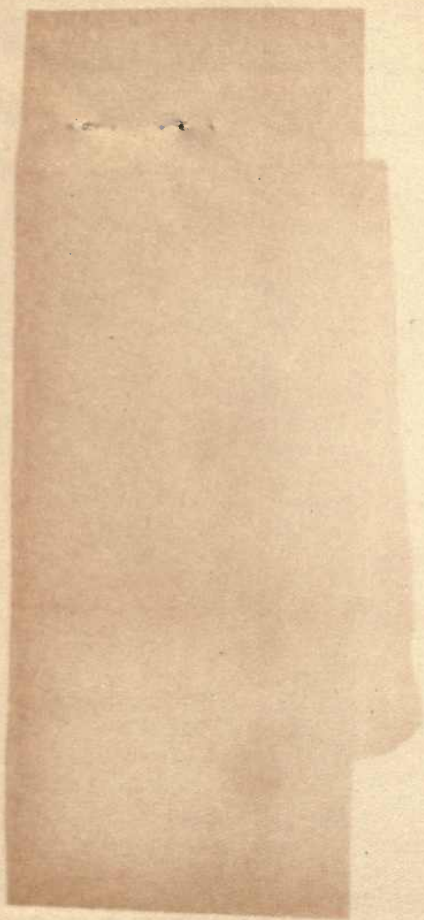


LINKS BETWEEN
IRELAND AND
SHAKESPEARE
SIR D. PLUNKET BARTON

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Frank Owen Andrews

December 1923



LINKS BETWEEN IRELAND
AND SHAKESPEARE

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

BERNADOTTE: THE FIRST PHASE

LINKS
BETWEEN IRELAND
AND
SHAKESPEARE

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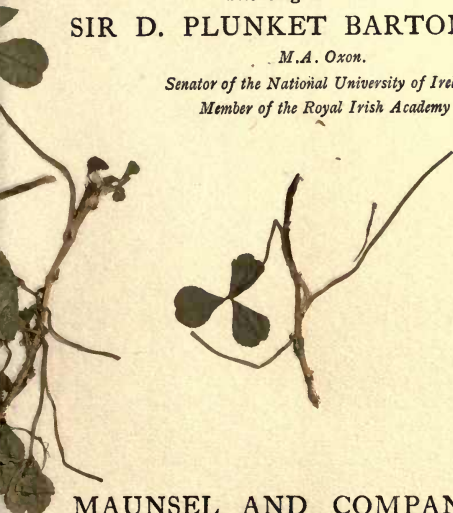
The Right Honourable

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To

MY MOTHER

*Who implanted a love of
Shakespeare in her children.*

PREFACE

This little book does not aspire to the rank of a work of criticism, scholarship, or research. It is a collection of links between Ireland and Shakespeare put together in leisure moments by one who is interested in both subjects.

The idea of gathering these links into a chain was suggested by an article, contributed by Mr. Justice Madden to the Shakespeare *Book of Homage*, and was encouraged by a perusal of the Introduction to Dr. Sigerson's *Bards of the Gael and Gall*. After the book was planned and begun, the writer was referred to Mr. David Comyn's *Irish Illustrations to Shakespeare*, reprinted in pamphlet form from the *Weekly Freeman* in 1894. It is a pioneer work of great value by an author who was not only an accomplished Irish scholar, but also a man of wide culture; and it contains much information not to be found in this book, which was designed upon different lines.

The author desires to acknowledge his indebtedness to Professor Osborn Bergin, M.R.I.A., and to Mr. R. I. Best, M.R.I.A., for having read some of his proofs, when he was engaged in public work in the country, and for several valuable suggestions.

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ERRATA

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"	96,	"	5,	"	Duke	"	Earl.
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LINKS BETWEEN IRELAND AND SHAKESPEARE

CHAPTER I

MACBETH—A TRAGEDY OF THE GAEL

ROSS—Where is Duncan's body?

MACDUFF—Carried to Còrnemkill,
The sacred storehouse of his predecessors
And guardian of their bones.

—*Macbeth, Act II, scene iv, line 32.*

Macbeth is the only Shakespearian play, the pedigree of which can be traced to an Irish source. It is a tragedy of the Gael; and its principal characters are Scottish Gaels of Irish extraction. King Duncan, his cousin Lady Macbeth, and Macbeth himself, were scions of a race which claimed descent from one or other of the six adventurous sons of Erc, the Dalriad chieftain, who, in the beginning of the sixth century, led a colony from Ulster to the south-west of Scotland.¹ The colony were hard pressed by the native Picts, and might perhaps have been exterminated, if it had not been for an event which had far-reaching consequences for both Scotland and Ireland, namely the timely arrival in their midst of the Irish Saint Columba.

It was in 563 A.D. that Columba, known in his lifetime as Columbkille or Columba of the Church,² left Ireland and landed in the island of Iona in the Inner Hebrides, where he founded a monastery which became the mother-house of numerous foundations on the main-

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land. His life-work rivalled that of St. Patrick, for he made himself the chief ecclesiastical ruler in Scotland. From his tiny island his disciples went forth to convert the inhabitants of the mainland, while the schools which he established attracted students from all parts of Christendom. Perhaps the greatest of all his achievements was his success in Christianizing the Pictish king and his pagan subjects. Incidentally he came to the rescue of the distressed Irish colony, for whom, as compatriots and kinsmen, he obtained a favoured place in their adopted country.

From the time of Columba the Irish colonists gained strength and influence, until, in the ninth century, they established an ascendancy over the Picts, under the leadership of Kenneth MacAlpine. When Kenneth, already King of the Dalriad Scots, had subdued the Pictish kingdom, and had been recognized as the first King of Scotland, he signalled his accession to the throne by transferring the seat of civil government to Scone, and by building a church at Dunkeld, to which he conveyed whatever was left in Iona of the relics of Columba. The saint's remains had already been enshrined and transferred to Ireland. King Kenneth was buried in Iona, which became the last resting place of his successors.

Two centuries after the death of Kenneth MacAlpine, Duncan I was King of Scotland. He and his cousin, Lady Macbeth, were descendants of Kenneth, while Macbeth himself was also sprung from the stock of the original Irish colonists. Accordingly, we find ourselves, in the play of *Macbeth*, face to face with a group of Scottish Gaels of Irish descent. That is why the play breathes, more than any of the others, a Gaelic atmosphere. That is why the principal characters resemble the men and women of Celtic Ireland. Macbeth

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and Lady Macbeth were as truly Gaels of Ireland as Richard III and Hamlet's mother were not. That is why, as will be suggested in the next chapter, the "weird sisters" of the play bear more resemblance to the legendary wizardesses of the Irish saga than to the witches who flourished and perished in the days of Elizabeth and James.

The Irish author^s of an interesting book upon Shakespeare, has wondered how the dramatist came to choose the subject of Macbeth. In all probability the main motive of his choice of plot was to please his patron James I. The play seems to have been skilfully attuned to catch the fancy of the Scottish king. The three weird sisters were certain to interest the superstitious monarch, who had himself published a book in justification of his belief in demonology. The dramatist made much of Banquo, and introduced a prophecy that he would "get kings," although he would "not be one," because James was believed to plume himself upon his supposed descent from that individual. He introduced an irrelevant passage, in which the king's power of curing the scrofula or "King's Evil" by touch or prayer is strikingly described, because James was known to pride himself upon possessing that peculiar faculty. When he staged a vision of kings, some of whom carried two-fold balls and treble sceptres, it was by way of complimenting James upon having united in his person the crowns of England, Scotland, and Ireland. At this point Ireland must have been present to the mind both of Shakespeare and of the king, although they were doubtless unaware that the principal characters of the play had Irish blood in their veins, and that the play breathed an atmosphere which was no less Irish than Scottish.

Macbeth lived five centuries after the time of Columba; yet the play contains several allusions, taken from *Holinshed's*

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Chronicles, which serve to remind us of the enduring impression which the Irish saint had made upon Scottish history and topography. They are put into the mouth of Ross, a Highland nobleman, who, after the murder of Duncan, asks Macduff, "Where is Duncan's body?" Macduff replies :

"Carried to Colmekill,
The sacred storehouse of his predecessors
And guardian of their bones." ⁴

The reference is to Columba's sacred island of Iona, which is said to contain the remains of forty Scottish, four Irish, and eight Scandinavian kings. Elsewhere, Ross, in reporting a victory over the Norwegian invader, announces that no mercy was shown to Norway's king

"Till he disbursed at Saint Colme's Inch,
Ten thousand dollars to our general use." ⁵

Here we have an allusion, not to Iona, but to the little island in the Firth of Forth, now known as Inchcolm, which was granted to Columba by the Scottish king of his day, and still contains the ruins of an abbey dedicated to his memory. The name of Malcolm is another memorial of the saint, meaning the servant or disciple of Columba.

In the same play, when the sons of the murdered king, Malcolm and Donalbain, seek safety in flight, they scatter, one to England, and the other to Ireland.

"MALCOLM—I'll to England.

"DONALBAIN—To Ireland, I; our separate fortune
Shall keep us both the safer." ⁶

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This incident comes from Holinshed, who adds what Shakespeare does not mention. The passage runs on—“Donald passed over to Ireland, where he was tenderlie cherished by the king of that land.” Doubtless, the Irish king looked upon Donalbain as no mere cousin by courtesy, but as a veritable kinsman.

Dr. Forman, an Elizabethan playgoer, has given in his diary a description of the plot of the play of *Macbeth*, which he saw at the Globe Theatre on the 20th April, 1610. When he comes to the flight of Duncan's two sons he tells us that they fled, “the one to England, and the other to Wales, to save themselves.”⁷ Why was the name of Wales substituted for that of Ireland in the acting of the piece? Can it have been that the troubles, which were pending in Ireland in 1610, made it inexpedient to mention the name of that country to a London audience?

We read in Holinshed that the “kernes and gallow-glasses,” who are in the service of “the merciless” Macdonald, had come out of Ireland “in the hope of spoil.” In another chapter something will be said about the kernes and gallowglasses. Here we catch a glimpse of them, in *Macbeth's* time, seeking their fortune upon a Scottish battlefield.

Macbeth contains plenty of links with Ireland, some of which have not yet been referred to. Those that have just been cited remind us that in the eleventh century Scotland was ruled by an Irish dynasty; that soldiers from Ireland went forth to look for spoil in Scottish wars; that Scottish princes, when outlawed, sought refuge with their kinsmen in Ulster; and that Columba, after five centuries, was still commemorated in the storied islands of Iona and Inchcolm.

CHAPTER II

MACBETH-THE WEIRD SISTERS COMPARED WITH THE WIZARDESSES OF ANCIENT IRELAND

Saw you the weird sisters?—*Macbeth*, Act IV, scene i., l. 136.

While Shakespearian criticism has illumined many hidden beauties in the plays, it has also shattered some cherished beliefs. Among the crowd of critics the iconoclasts have elbowed the idolators, and have made havoc with popular traditions. This has been especially the case with the three "secret black and midnight hags" who figure in the play of *Macbeth*. It is no longer the fashion to apply the name of "witches" to these mysterious persons. It has been pointed out that they are nowhere referred to under that name by Holinshed, who describes them not as witches but as "weird sisters," and speaks of them respectfully as "goddesses of destinie, or els nimphes or feiries endewed with knowledge of prophecie by their necromanticall science." The parts of the play in which they are presented on the stage as idealized types of mediæval witchcraft, or as satellites of Hecate, Queen of Hell, are believed by the *cognoscenti* to have been interpolated by Thomas Middleton. This Thomas Middleton, who was himself a prolific dramatist and the author of a drama called *The Witch*, undoubtedly revised plays for the King's Company after Shakespeare's retirement and death.

It has come as a shock to some old-fashioned admirers of the great Scottish tragedy to be rudely informed that several of their favourite lines have been adjudged by the

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commentators to be spurious additions, which were smuggled into the piece by Thomas Middleton. For example, the first scene of the tragedy where, according to the stage direction, the so-called witches enter on an open place amidst thunder and lightning, and the opening lines of the third scene, in which we hear of the sailor's wife whose "husband's to Aleppo gone, master o' *The Tiger*," have been seriously suspected of not being of true Shakespearian parentage.⁸ We feel loth to assent to the disherison of lines, which we have been accustomed to regard as children of Shakespeare's fancy, such as "When shall we three meet again?" and "Aroint thee, witch, the rump fed ronyon cried." On the other hand there is a general agreement on the part of all students of the play, that the passages in which Hecate, Queen of Hell, is brought on the stage, are quite unworthy of the greatest of dramatists.⁹

Once the play has been purged of its apocryphal additions, we are left with a simple picture of the three "weird sisters," as Holinshed sketched them, and as Shakespeare transferred them to his canvas. In the present chapter we propose to offer some reasons for inferring that these strange creatures were kinswomen or clanswomen of those wizardesses of the Irish and Scottish saga, who, with the druids, were the traditional wielders of Celtic magic from the dark ages until long after the time of Macbeth.

When we examine the language in which Shakespeare portrays the three weird sisters of the play, we shall find that they are not of the same vulgar type as the pitiable creatures who were tortured and burned in thousands during the sixteenth century. It is true that they are made in the image of human beings; but their human shape is inhumanly disfigured. Their features are withered, their hands are wrinkled, their lips are

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skinny, and their chins are bearded. Their art soars high above the comparatively trivial operations of mediæval witchcraft. They can not only fly like common witches, but, in their mastery of the sky and the air, they can raise tempests that will lay low the bladed corn, blow down trees, and make castles, towers and palaces topple to their foundations. Like the druids and wise women of ancient Ireland, they can look into the seeds of time and read all "mortal consequences." Like them they also have, in the exercise of their prophetic art, a fiendish power of equivocation, which they exhibit when they prophesy that Macbeth will never be harmed by anyone "of woman born," or ever be vanquished until "great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill shall come against him." Bitter is the disappointment of Macbeth, when he discovers that in these predictions the weird sisters "lie like truth," speak like "juggling fiends," and "palter in a doublesense."

In order to illustrate the affinity between the magic of Macbeth, and of ancient Ireland, let us turn aside, in order to make the acquaintance of a few of the traditional wizardesses of the Irish legends.

A group of three weird women was a familiar feature of Gaelic folklore. They were usually believed to belong to that mysterious race of the Tuatha de Danann, of whom something more will be said in a subsequent chapter dealing with Fairyland. The most ancient example of this type were the three Goddesses of War sometimes referred to as Badd, Macha and Morrigan, sometimes as Badd's sisters, who were fabled to be the grand-daughters of a king of the Tuatha de Danann. They were represented as creatures of ill-omen and of horrible aspect, who foreboded death and disaster, brooded over battle fields, stimulated strife and slaughter, and revelled in the pain and desolation which follow in the track of war.¹⁰ They form the original but by no

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means the only triple sisterhood to be found in the Irish saga.

What is perhaps the most interesting instance of the appearance of three weird women in an Irish legend occurs in an ancient tale called the "Enchanted Cave of Keshcorran."¹¹ The scene is laid in the County Sligo, and the three hags are supposed to be the daughters of Conoran, a chief of the Tuatha de Danann, who held a magical sway over the Keshcorran countryside. The tale opens with a hunting party organized by the celebrated Finn mac Cool. There is a poetical description of the landscape, in the midst of which the hunt is to take place, its forests, its fastnesses, its leafy coverts, and its wide expansive plains. From the top of Mount Keshcorran Finn delights in listening to the shouts of the huntsmen and to the cries of the beaters. Meanwhile Conoran's daughters, who evidently regarded Finn as a poacher upon their ghoulish preserves, conceal themselves in a cavern which they beset with an entanglement of crooked holly sticks hung with bewitched hasps of yarn. Here they lie in wait for the hunters. The appearance of the three sorceresses is depicted in lurid colours. Their coarse hair is dishevelled, their eyes are rheumy and bleared, their black mouths bristle with sharp and venomous fangs. They are endowed with long arms, scraggy necks, bandy legs, nails like sharp-tipped ox-horns; and they are armed with pointed distaffs. By their devilish arts the three harridans lure Finn and his companions into their cavern, bewitch them, bind them, and throw them into black holes or dark labyrinths. The tale goes on to describe how the prisoners are ultimately rescued by Goll, the Ajax of his day, who slays the three wizardesses, and receives for reward "Finn's slender white-skinned daughter" as his wife.

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Another trio of wizardesses occur in another Irish legend, and afford an even closer parallel to the weird sisters of *Macbeth* than the three Goddesses of War, or the three daughters of Conoran. These are the three daughters of Calatin, who play an important part in the tragedy which terminates the career of Cuchulainn, the most heroic figure in the Irish saga of the Red Branch Cycle, and the Hector of an Irish Iliad.¹² The greatest epic in the whole range of Irish literature is the *Tain Bo Chuaigne*, which being translated means the "Cattle Raid of Cooley." This famous Irish epic, known commonly as *The Tain*, tells the story of the expedition which King Ailill and Queen Méve of Connaught organized and led across Ireland for the purpose of carrying off a famous bull, belonging to the chieftain of Cooley, which is the peninsula lying between the bays of Dundalk and of Carlingford. Cuchulainn was nephew of King Conor mac Nessa of Armagh, and lived in a princely palace near the town of Dundalk, then known as Dundalgan, on the marches of Ulster. He defended the peninsula from the western invader, and, at a ford on one of his native rivers, slew countless of his enemies in single combat.

The Connaughtmen, whom Cuchulainn slew during the Cooley cattle raid, included a wizard named Calatin and his twenty-seven sons. The family would have been exterminated if Calatin's widow had not given birth to three posthumous daughters. Queen Méve, who was bent upon revenging herself upon Cuchulainn, mutilated the three girls by cutting off their right legs and left arms, so that they might be so odious and horrible as to be the better qualified to excel in the grim profession for which she destined them. She then proceeded to have them educated in spells, druidism, witchcraft, and incantations. They were sent to the best schools

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of wizardry in different parts of the then known world, until they became finished experts in what Holinshed, when speaking of the "weird sisters," called the "Necromanticall science."

In the fulness of time Queen Méve raised a fresh army, and marched upon Ulster, taking with her the three disfigured hags, who were burning to avenge the death of their father and brothers. King Conor mac Nessa, at their approach, summoned Cuchulainn to his court at Emania near Armagh, whither the three wizard women pursued him flying through the air, and alighting on the plains outside Emania. Here they endeavoured to entice Cuchulainn from his retreat by raising phantom armies, and by producing the confused noise of battle array and of the shouting of engaging hosts. The druids and court ladies restrained Cuchulainn from sallying forth to meet these mystical battalions, and ultimately carried him off to one of the Ulster glens, which was so lonely and remote as to be called the Deaf Valley. The three wizardesses, in order to trace his hiding-place, created an enchanted wind upon which they were carried in a reconnaissance of the whole province of Ulster. At last they perceived his two famous chariot horses, the grey steed Liath Macha and the black Saiglenn, standing at the entrance of the valley. Again they challenged him with sounds of arms and shouts of war. The druids succeeded in holding him back, until one of the wizardesses, taking the shape of his sweetheart, lured him from his hiding-place, and drew him step by step across the mountains and plains of Ulster to his own country, where he was surrounded and overpowered by Queen Méve's avenging warriors.

At this stage of Cuchulainn's career there occurs an episode which bears a striking resemblance to the scene, in which Macbeth finds the weird sisters in a cavern throwing into their cauldron a grim mixture of ingredients

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which include a "tongue of dog." On his way from the Deaf Valley to Dundalk, Cuchulainn comes across the three daughters of Calatin at a lonely spot, cooking poisoned dog flesh in a cauldron with the help of spits of holly. They tempt the prince to taste the poisoned flesh, which has the effect of paralysing his left hand and side. The cooking of the flesh of pig, or dog, or cat, accompanied by the chanting of incantations, was the beginning of the ceremonial by which prophetic power was obtained among early Celtic sorcerers.

Later on, in Cuchulainn's last combat, the three wizardesses encouraged his assailants by prophesying that their spears would overthrow a king. When the first spearman missed Cuchulainn and killed his charioteer, the sorceresses justified their prediction by saying that his charioteer was the king of the charioteers of Ireland. When the second spearman also left Cuchulainn unharmed, but killed his grey horse, Liath Macha, they again defended themselves by declaring that Liath Macha was the king of the steeds of Ireland. They ceased "paltering in a double sense" when the third spear pierced Cuchulainn's body. Here we have a parallel to the equivocations which mocked Macbeth.

It would be fanciful to suggest that Shakespeare modelled the three hags, whom Macbeth met on the road to Forres, upon their counterparts whom Cuchulainn encountered on his way to old Dundalغان, or that he had ever dipped into the *Book of Leinster*, or into the other Irish MSS., which tell the story of the three posthumous daughters of Calatin. But, surely, it is not an undue stretch of imagination to suppose that the dramatist, when he placed his three weird women on the stage, was re-creating the atmosphere of Celtic magic in which the sisters of Bodb, and the daughters of Conoran and of Calatin, moved and breathed and had their being.

CHAPTER III

MACBETH—THE VISION OF KINGS AND THE MOVING FOREST OF BIRNAM

A show of eight kings.

—Stage direction, *Macbeth*, Act IV, scene i, line 112.

MESSENGER—As I did stand my watch upon the hill,
I look'd toward Birnam, and anon, methought,
The wood began to move.

MACBETH—Liar and Slave!

—*Macbeth*, Act V, scene v, line 33.

Wizardry is not the only link between the play of *Macbeth* and the Irish Saga. Other analogies are discoverable, two of which form the subject of the present chapter. One of them relates to the Vision of Kings, and the other to the Moving Forest of Birnam.

The last of the apparitions which the weird sisters, in the cavern scene, conjure up from the ingredients of their cauldron, in order to answer Macbeth's unspoken questions, is a vision of kings representing the coming dynasty of Banquo, and forcasting union of crowns and sceptres under King James I. There is a remarkable parallel to this prophetic vision in one of the many stories that are conversant with the career of Conn of the Hundred Battles, who, according to tradition, was paramount King of Ireland in or about the second century A.D. According to the legend, Conn paid a visit to the other world, passing through a doorway in an enchanted rath. There was revealed to him, in the pagan spiritland, the names of all the kings of Ireland who were to succeed him, and he saw a long line of his successors pass before him in a grim procession.¹³

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The resemblance between Conn's vision and the vision of kings in *Macbeth* is an accidental one; but the play contains another passage which has a more direct affinity with Ireland. This is the episode of the moving forest of Birnam, which is one of the turning points in the plot. The weird sisters' prophecy that Macbeth would never be conquered until Birnam Wood should come to Dunsinane, the sense of security with which it inspired him, and the bitter mockery which it had in store for him, are among the main threads in the woof of the great tragedy.

A moving forest appears to have been a familiar incident of Gaelic warfare, and to have been often availed of as a military manœuvre for the purpose of concealing an attack upon some fortified place, or of covering an escape from some untenable position. That mistiness of atmosphere which censorious foreigners delight in attributing to the climate of Scotland and Ireland, may be supposed to have favoured a device which, under clearer conditions of visibility, would have less chance of evading detection. An occasion upon which this *ruse de guerre* was resorted to was the battle of Rosnaree, fought on the Boyne in the first century A.D. not far from the spot, which, sixteen centuries afterwards, was the scene of another battle of the Boyne. The conflict was between the men of the North on one side, and the men of the South and of the West on the other. The following incident is recorded to have occurred at a critical moment of the fight: "It was then that they (the Southerners) went out to the wood that was nearest to them, and they cut oak-branches of green oak, and put them in the hand of every man, and they smoothed a place for their fists in them, and they raised in front of them these green branches of oak."¹⁴

A thorough search would doubtless result in the dis-

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covery of other passages descriptive of hardy attacks or of hair-breadth escapes carried out by Gaelic troops under cover of a moving forest. It will serve our purpose to refer to one instance taken from an ancient Irish poem, where the parallel to a scene in *Macbeth* is so striking, that Dr. Sigerson, who was the first to draw attention to it, was tempted to doubt whether it was accidental.¹⁵

Let us remind ourselves of the manner in which this feature of the play is developed by Shakespeare. In the first scene of the fourth act, Macbeth conjures the weird sisters to open to him the book of fate. They respond by raising with their incantations a series of apparitions, one of which reassures the conscience-stricken murderer, by predicting that he will never fail until what seems impossible shall come about.

“Macbeth shall never vanquish'd be, until
Great Birnam Wood to High Dunsinane hill
Shall come against him.”

Macbeth gains courage from this favourable prophecy and exclaims :

“That will never be :
Who can impress the forest, bid the tree
Unfix his earthbound root ?”

In a subsequent scene, which is laid in Dunsinane Castle, a messenger who had been acting as watcher on Dunsinane hill, startles Macbeth by suggesting that the impossible has happened :

“As I did stand my watch upon the hill,
I look'd towards Birnam, and anon, methought,
The wood began to move.”

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Macbeth calls him "a liar and a slave," and, when the messenger persists in his statement, threatens to hang him upon the next tree, if his story should turn out to be false. It soon transpires that a hidden meaning underlay the words of the apparition, and that Macduff's soldiers are advancing to the attack, carrying every man a bough from Birnam Wood to conceal their approach. When they are near enough, they drop their "leavy screens," and the conflict which ensues ends in Macbeth's death at the hands of Macduff.

This incident is founded upon a few lines in Holinshed referring to a wizard's prophecy that "Macbeth would not be vanquished till the Wood of Birnam came to the Castell of Dunsinane." But there is nothing in Holinshed about the "watcher," or about the conversation between him and Macbeth. Dr. Sigerson has suggested that Shakespeare borrowed the "watcher," and the dialogue at Dunsinane, from an old Irish poetical *Tract*, containing "one of the most ancient of the class of chivalrous tales which are so numerous in Irish literature."¹⁶

The tale in question describes a night attack by Ulster warriors against the castle of Temair Luachra in Kerry. Two watchers on the castle walls have a wordy dispute. One of them, Crom Deróill, asks the other whether he does not see spears and soldiers advancing over the hill from the east. The other, Crom Darail, scoffs at the statement, asserting that the soldiers are oak trees, and the spears are stags' antlers. Crom Deróil ridicules the suggestion that what appears to him to be an advancing army can be a moving forest. The dispute continues until sunrise, when the Ulstermen, casting aside their branches of oak, surge over the castle walls like the waves of the sea over a rock-bound coast, and turn Temair Luachra into a scene of terror. The conversation between the two Kerry watchers is so similar in tone

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and subject-matter to the dialogue between Macbeth and the watcher from Dunsinane as to excite a natural curiosity.

Dr. Sigerson thinks it possible that Shakespeare may have read a translation of this Irish poem. He reminds us that the dramatist was writing in an age when the queen frequently expressed herself as charmed with Irish poetry and music, and when Edmund Spenser, in his home in County Cork, had Irish poems and romances translated to him. If sufficient evidence is wanting to convince the reader that Shakespeare ever heard of the night attack on the castle of Temair Luachra, he will doubtless admit that Dr. Sigerson is justified in saying that the coincidence between the dramatist's creation and this archaic Irish poem is a remarkable one. The discovery of so close a parallel, even if perchance it be an accidental one, may serve a useful purpose by stimulating, among Shakespearian students, a sympathetic interest in a literature which could anticipate, even if it did not directly influence, the thoughts of the Bard of Avon.

CHAPTER IV

KING LEAR—THE DAUGHTERS OF LEAR,
AND THE CHILDREN OF LIR

Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,
. . . defend you
From seasons such as these.

—*King Lear, Act III, scene iv, line 28.*

Life is weary here,
Great the snowing here,
Night is dreary here,
Bleak the blowing here.

—*The Children of Lir.*¹⁷

Although the play of *King Lear* cannot trace its origin to an Irish source, it undoubtedly has Celtic blood flowing through its veins. Shakespeare derived it from the pages of Geoffrey of Monmouth, a chronicler, who excelled in the art of converting legend into history. Geoffrey appears to have laid hold of the legendary sea god, and father of sea gods, Lhyr, and to have transformed him into a King of Britain. Lhyr was the equivalent of the Irish Lir, or Ler. Both were Celtic divinities with a common affinity to the sea.¹⁸

The story of the famous Shakespearian play has its analogue in the legend of the Irish Lir. In order better to appreciate the relation to each other of the two legends, let us remind ourselves of the relevant features of the great tragedy. King Lear, in his old age, resolves

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to divide his kingdom between his daughters in proportion to their love for him. The two elder of them make vehement and exaggerated professions of affection, while the youngest, Cordelia, promises no more than a daughter's dutifulness. The king discards the true-hearted Cordelia, and divides his kingdom between her elder sisters, by whom he is, in due course of time, cruelly flouted and dishonoured. He goes mad and wanders at large, exposed to terrific storms of thunder, lightning and rain, until he is found by Cordelia, who becomes his comforter and protector. The catastrophe is terrible. Cordelia seeks to restore Lear to his kingdom, but both daughter and father are taken prisoners. Cordelia is killed, and Lear dies over her body. The elder sisters perish, one by poison and the other by suicide; and Lear's family is thus exterminated. For our present purpose no reference need be made to the evil passions and dark deeds which cast their shadow over the minor characters in the piece.

If we turn from the Lear of British legend to the Lir of Irish folk-lore, we shall find that one of the most charming and touching of the lays of ancient Ireland tells the story of the fate of the "Children of King Lir." It dates from remote pagan antiquity. Indeed, it belongs to what is called "the mythological cycle" in Irish literary history, which flourished in a pre-Christian and pre-Milesian era. But it comes to us in a comparatively modern form, which it assumed at a later time, when the old beliefs were, to quote Dr. Sigerson, "given a Christian touch of colour." It differs widely from the plot of *King Lear*. But there are some points of similarity. Both are domestic tragedies. In both we seem to feel "the pelting of the pitiless storm," and the defencelessness of "houseless heads." In both the gloom and sadness are relieved by the patience and

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devotion of a beautiful and dutiful girl. In both a Royal house is rendered desolate.

The "Fate of the Children of Lir" relates how the four children of King Lir were wickedly maltreated by a cruel stepmother. According to the legend, Lir's second wife, Queen Aifa, prompted by jealousy and hatred, bids her step-children bathe in Loch Derryvarra, in the County Meath. While the children are bathing in the lake, she turns them, by a touch of her magician's wand, into white swans, and dooms them to three centuries of suffering. They spend the first century in the Lake of Derryvarra, where they pass a comparatively peaceful time conversing with friends on the bank, and indulging in the music of fairy swan-songs. The second period of pain is passed in the cold and boisterous waters of Moyle (the Mull of Cantire), where the miseries of the swan-children are embittered by the news which fairies bring them of the happiness and gaiety of their former home. The third period of pain is spent in the wild and storm-swept sea of Erris, off the cliffs of Connaught, where their sufferings are terrible. Their release, according to a late version of the old legend, is brought about by the coming of Christianity, through the instrumentality of an Irish saint. Throughout the three hundred years of anguish and of torment, the elder sister, Fionnulla, watches over the others with a tenderness worthy of Shakespeare's Cordelia, covering them with her wings, and comforting them with words of consolation. At the end of their tribulations the children of Lir regain their human form, and return to their old haunts, to find them desolate and deserted, with "no father, no house, no home, no gladness."

Here we have two domestic tragedies—different in form but not without points of similarity—which have

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been handed down to our times, in Britain and in Ireland respectively, from sources which were akin to each other. Around the British King Lear there has grown up a tragedy almost unsurpassed for its Titanic realism; while from the Irish seedling a legend has sprung up which is characteristically mystical, graceful, and pathetic.

CHAPTER V

HAMLET—HAMLET A DANE OF IRELAND?
THE GHOST IN HAMLET AND THE
GHOSTS OF THE GAEL

Cerball was slain by Ulf, a mighty deed,
Niall Glendubh by Amhlaide (Hamlet).

—*The Lament of Gormflaith, Queen of Ireland, A.D. 919.*

Such a conception as the Ghost in Hamlet is more characteristically Irish than British.—*Infra*, p. 25.

Mr. Israel Gollancz, in the Introduction to his *Hamlet in Iceland*, discusses the origin of the story of Hamlet. He draws the inference that the evidence "seems to point to the Celtic West, more particularly the Scandinavian Kingdom of Ireland, as the locality where the northern tale of Hamlet, as we know it from Saxo (Grammaticus) was developed some time in the eleventh century."¹⁹ Saxo Grammaticus, the Danish historian of the twelfth century, was undoubtedly the source which Shakespeare used through the instrumentality of a French translation.

Here we have a theory, propounded on the high authority of Mr. Gollancz, that the story of Hamlet originally came from Ireland. The theory is an attractive one, and comes from a writer who has proved himself equally daring and successful in the art of tracking Shakespearian names and characters. For example, it was Mr. Gollancz who traced Polonius to his Polish source as the "Counsellor" in a famous book written

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by a sixteenth century bishop of Posen.²⁰ Let us glance at the main links in the chain of evidence which has led Mr. Gollancz to identify Hamlet as a Danish King of Dublin.

Sihtric, a viking of the House of Ivar, came to Ireland in 888, won and lost the kingdom of Dublin, and died a King of Northumbria in 925. One of the most stirring episodes of his career in Ireland was a battle, fought in 917 (=919), at Ath Cliath, or Kilmashogue, near Rathfarnham in County Dublin, where he slew Niall Glendubh, King of Ireland. After the battle, Niall's widow, Queen Gormflaith, wrote a song of lamentation, a verse of which is quoted in the *Annals of the Four Masters*. In this verse she states that Niall "was slain by Amhlaidhe," the Irish for Hamlet. This is the first mention of the name in the literature of any language; and it indicates that Sihtric was known in Ireland by the name of Hamlet.

Sihtric's son, Anlaf Curan, had a remarkable career. Following in his father's footsteps, he was at one time King of Dublin, and at another time King of Northumbria. Some of the incidents of his life were so similar to the story of Hamlet, that they are believed to have been among the sources of Saxo Grammaticus's tale; and Mr. Gollancz infers that the "father and son were no doubt blended in popular story, the confusion being greatly helped by the likeness between the names of Hamlet and Anlaf." In this way the *Hamlet* of Shakespeare's play is traced to the legends which were attached to these two Scandinavian Kings of Dublin, Sihtric and his son Anlaf Curan.²¹

We are then carried by Mr. Gollancz to Iceland, which, in the era of Scandinavian domination, was in close touch with Ireland. The only other reference to Hamlet, to be found in literature prior to the history of Saxo Grammaticus, is an allusion contained in a poem

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of an Icelandic sailor-poet named Snœbjörn. This Snœbjörn was of Irish ancestry, being descended from the noble house of Ossory, and being a cousin (second cousin once removed) of Queen Gormflaith, the authoress of the dirge in which Hamlet was first mentioned. A verse in Snœbjörn's poem refers to "Hamlet's meal" being ground by the waves of the ocean. Saxo Grammaticus undoubtedly used Icelandic legend for the purpose of his history, and he introduced into his story of Hamlet, which was written two centuries after the time of Snœbjörn, some cunning answers given by Hamlet to the courtiers when they tried to test his sanity. They pointed to the sand-hills and bid him look at "the meal," and he replied that "it had been ground small by the hoary tempests of the sea." Mr. Gollancz regards this passage as a twelfth century explanation of Snœbjörn's reference to "Hamlet's meal."²² The name Hamlet has from very early times been the Icelandic name for a fool, and must have become so from some personal legend attached to the name, because it is not a Scandinavian expression.²³

If the evidence, which Mr. Gollancz has so industriously collected and so persuasively presented, falls short of proving conclusively that the story of Hamlet originated in Ireland, it certainly points in that direction. One thing is made absolutely clear,—that the name of Hamlet appears in literature for the first time in the *Annals of the Four Masters*.

The Ghost in *Hamlet* does not figure in the legends which are associated with Sihtric or with his son Anlaf. Nevertheless, let nobody be surprised if this famous spectre should some day be traced to an Irish saga. He is a quite different conception from the majority of the spirits which appear in the other plays. Some of them, like Banquo's ghost, are the phantoms of an overwrought

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brain or of a guilty conscience. Others are mere creatures of a dream, like the spirits which appeared to King Richard in the bivouac before his last battle. Such shadowy apparitions as conscience conjures, or as dreams are made of, differ widely from the ghost of Hamlet's father, who can think and speak and act, who returns to earth with a serious purpose, and has the power to accomplish it. He is not supposed to be the mere figment of a complex and mysterious mind. Yet Professor Trench has truly observed that Hamlet's weird personality renders the ghost less incredible.

A rational and purposeful ghost is rarely met with in the British spirit-world, but appears so frequently in the ancient Irish ghost-land as to suggest to a student of the sagas that such a conception as the ghost in *Hamlet* is more characteristically Irish than British. From that point of view let us make the acquaintance of some of the ghosts of the Gael.

Mention has been made in a former chapter of the celebrated Irish epic, known as the *Táin Bo Chualgne*, or the Cattle Raid of Cooley. It is related in a popular legend that, for several centuries, the text of this great epic was lost, and passed out of the national memory until the Bards of Ireland resolved to revive it. They were met by the difficulty that no living person could relate the story, and that only one dead person could be named who had known all its details. This was Fergus mac Roich, connected with Cuchulainn, the hero of the epic. It was obvious that the only way of recovering the lost epic was to summon the spirit of Fergus from the other world. Accordingly, the Bards collected the holy men of Ireland, in answer to whose prayers Fergus mac Roich is said to have left his tomb, to have appeared among them, and to have dictated the story, as we now have it, to Saint Kieran of Clonmacnoise.

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The incident is quaintly described in the following terms: "Fergus came to them, and was about to relate the *Táin* to them standing up, but they would hear none of it until they had him seated, and in that position he narrated the *Táin* to them; Kieran of Clonmacnoise it was who wrote it down, and it was on the hide of a red cow that he wrote it. Fergus was narrating the story until he came to its end, after which he returned to the same tomb."²⁴

A second legend of the kind is that of Fothad Canann, a Connaught chieftain, who arranged a meeting with his ladylove at Cláragh, but was forestalled by the hand of death. Fothad was slain, but his ghost kept the rendezvous, and addressed the lady in a weird poem. It opens with "Hush woman, do not speak to me," and its drift is expressed in the words: "The tryst that was made at Clárach has been kept by me in pale death."²⁵

A third ghost story of the Gael tells of a wager made by Mongan, King of Ulster, with his bard, in reference to the place where one of his chieftains had been slain. The king undertakes to prove himself right within a certain time, and stakes his kingdom on the wager. On the very eve of the expiry of the time within which the king's wager must be won or his crown must be lost, a *deus ex machinâ* appears in the shape of the ghost of the very warrior who had slain the chieftain. The ghost guides the wagers to the place which Mongan had declared to be the true one, and proves the king to be right by the discovery of the dead man's gold torque, bracelets and arm rings at the spot which the king had named.²⁶

A fourth legend contains a ghost that is even more realistic than that of Hamlet's father. It is called the "Death of Moelodran." Moelodran, who was a

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Leinster chief, was treacherously attacked by King Aithecda, who speared him with the victim's own lance, and carried off his widow. Moelodran was buried at Glendalough, but no grave could hold him. On the next anniversary of the murder the ghost of the murdered man appeared to Aithecda, who was looking exultingly at the lance. When Aithecda saw the spirit, he "sprang towards the lance. But quicker did Moelodran reach it, and drove it through Aithecda and killed him."²⁷

A strange legend of the early Christian period tells of the appearance to Laeghaire, the King of Ireland, in Saint Patrick's day, of the ghost of the pagan hero, Cuchulainn, in a ghostly chariot with his famous horses, the grey Liath Macha and the black Saiglenn, and with his charioteer holding the reins. The story is called the "Phantom Chariot of Cuchulainn," and it relates how Cuchulainn's ghost testified to the truth of the teaching of Saint Patrick, and converted the king by his description of the pains of hell and of the joys and beauties of heaven.²⁸

Perhaps the most familiar of the ghosts of the Gael were the apparitions which were supposed to appear for the grim purpose of foretelling death. A picturesque type is the "Washer at the Ford," a good example of which occurs in the tale called *Da Choca's Hostel*, which recounts the death of Cormac, King of Ulster, at the hands of an army of Connaughtmen at *Da Choca's Hostel* in County Meath. Cormac, on his way to the battle, sees a woman at the edge of a ford washing her chariot-wheels and its cushions and harness. When she dips her hand into the stream, the water becomes red with blood; and, when she is asked what she is doing, she shouts back: "I am washing the harness of a king who will perish."²⁹

The Washer at the Ford is akin to the banshee, the

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derivative meaning of which is *bean sldhe*, or the woman of the elf-mounds. We shall hear more about the inhabitants of enchanted mounds in a chapter on Fairyland. In its common use the banshee expresses the idea of a supernatural elf or goblin attached to a family, rather than of a disembodied spirit. The peculiar function of the banshee is to act as the ghostly herald of an approaching death. The warning is often communicated by what Sir Walter Scott called "the fatal banshee's boading scream." But the banshee sometimes manifests itself by appearing to a member of the family. Aoibheall (Eevil) of Craig Liath was the name of the banshee of the Royal House of Munster,³⁰ and we read in the traditional account of the death of King Brian Boru at the battle of Clontarf that on the night before the battle Eevil appeared to him, and told him that the first of his sons whom he should see in the morning would be he who should succeed him. Then Brian knew that he would not leave the battlefield alive. The banshee takes many forms. For example, there is a Connaught family, the death of whose chief is said to be heralded by the appearance of a girl-child in the old wood which surrounds the mansion. When the child is approached, she turns her head, shows the face of an old hag, and disappears. In this instance the family is of mixed Gaelic and Anglo-Norman descent; but it is supposed that genuine banshees remain attached to no families except those of pure Milesian stock.

In Ireland the dead are sometimes believed to repose in some romantic resting-place from which they return to earth at regular intervals. For example, Gerald, the Poet Earl of Desmond, who died in the fourteenth century, is supposed to live beneath the waters of Lough Gur, near Kilmallock, and to reappear once in every seven years upon its surface and upon its banks.

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Enough has been said in this chapter to make it evident that the legendary apparitions of ancient Ireland differ widely from the conventional spectres of our modern spirit-land, who haunt old houses, pursue great criminals, or clank heavy chains. On the other hand, the ghosts of the Gael bear a striking resemblance to the ghost in *Hamlet*, who returned from Purgatory to earth in order to carry out a definite design, and did not rest until he had made certain of its accomplishment.

CHAPTER VI

HAMLET—WHY DID SHAKESPEARE MAKE THE PRINCE OF DENMARK SWEAR BY SAINT PATRICK?

THE GHOST—I am thy father's spirit.
—*Hamlet, Act I, scene v, line 9.*

HAMLET—Yes, by Saint Patrick.
—*Ib., line 136.*

Several allusions to Saint Patrick are to be found in Shakespeare's plays. For example, in *King Richard II* there is a reference to the famous legend of the expulsion of the snakes.³¹ By far the most interesting allusion to the Saint occurs in the ghost scene in *Hamlet*, where the dramatist makes Hamlet swear "by Saint Patrick." Why did he do so? For the purpose of supplying an answer to this question let us remind ourselves of the context in which this reference occurs.

Hamlet, having been informed by the sentries that his father's spirit had appeared to them on the battlements of Elsinore, declares his resolve to probe the mystery at all hazards. "I'll speak to it," he says, "though hell itself shall gape and bid me hold my peace." Accordingly, he takes his place on the battlements at night; and, when he sees the ghost coming towards him, inquires in passionate tones why his father's "canonized bones" have burst their cerements, why the sepulchre has cast him up again, and why his "dead corpse" has revisited "the pale glimpses of the moon"? The ghost unfolds his

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grim "tale of murder most foul, strange and unnatural." In doing so he tells Hamlet, in the following lines, whence he has come, and whither he must return :

"I am thy father's spirit ;
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night,
And for the day confin'd to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes done in my days' nature
Are burnt and purged away."

He has already warned Hamlet that at dawn he must go back to the same place of punishment.

"My hour is almost come
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself."

In these passages³² the ghost makes it plain that he is a denizen of the place of purification of souls by fire from the unexpiated sins of life, which is familiar to every student of the history of Christian doctrine under the name of Purgatory. Hamlet is left under no doubt that it is from Purgatory that the ghost has come, and that it is to Purgatory that he must return.

When the ghost has disappeared with the parting injunction, "Adieu, adieu, remember me," Horatio enters with Marcellus, eager to hear the news. Hamlet gives a random answer, which moves Horatio to say that "it needs no ghost, my lord, come from the grave to tell us this." Hamlet, deeply impressed by the seriousness of the information which he has just received, appears to resent this sneer at his ghostly informer, and is disposed to make a quarrel of it. Horatio protests, and the dialogue proceeds :

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“HORATIO—These are but wild and whirling words,
my lord.

HAMLET—I am sorry they offend you, heartily ;
Yes, faith, heartily.

HORATIO—There’s no offence, my lord.

HAMLET—Yes, *by Saint Patrick*, there is, Horatio,
And much offence too. Touching this vision here,
It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you :
For your desire to know what is between us,
O’ermaster it as you may.”³³

The question naturally suggests itself—Why did the dramatist make Hamlet invoke Saint Patrick? Nobody supposes that it is a meaningless reference. Shakespeare was not in the habit of introducing the names of notabilities, and still less of introducing the names of saints, at haphazard. For example, when Saints George, Denis, and David are adjured in the plays, it is not by way of idle emphasis, but because they were regarded as patron saints of England, France, and Wales respectively. The critics are agreed that this allusion to Saint Patrick has some significance, but they have been puzzled to identify it. One commentator has supposed that Saint Patrick’s name was introduced because the northern world derived its learning from Ireland. Another critic has unearthed the interesting fact that the historic Hamlet was a Danish raider, who is mentioned by the Four Masters as having slain an Irish king on a field of battle near Dublin; while a third has made the surprising statement, which itself requires an explanation for the uninitiated, that Saint Patrick was “invoked as being the patron saint of all blunders and confusion!”

The weakness of these theories lies in the obvious circumstance that they have no relation whatever to the ghost scene in which this allusion occurs; and, from

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that point of view, Mr. Israel Gollancz came nearer the mark when he suggested rather tentatively that Saint Patrick was invoked "perhaps as the keeper of Purgatory." This view was definitely adopted by a foreign critic named Tschischwitz, who observed that "since the subject concerns an unexpiated crime, Shakespeare naturally thought of Saint Patrick, who kept a Purgatory of his own."³⁴

It is not surprising that subsequent commentators, including the editors of the Clarendon Press edition of the plays, have hesitated to accept this explanation. Yet, some reasons will be given, in the succeeding chapters, for coming to the conclusion, strange though it may appear at first sight, that, when Shakespeare put the words "by Saint Patrick" into Hamlet's mouth, he was thinking of a little island in a little lough in a remote part of Ireland; and, furthermore, that an Elizabethan audience were likely to take up the allusion in that sense. But, before doing so, let us remind ourselves that, in the age in which *Hamlet* was written, Saint Patrick's Purgatory was a familiar topic for both playwrights and playgoers.

Shakespeare was not the only dramatist of his era who introduced Saint Patrick's Purgatory into one of his dramas. One of his contemporaries, Thomas Dekker, makes an interesting reference of the same kind in a piece which was produced in London at about the same time as *Hamlet*.³⁵ In one of the scenes of this play some fun is made, between two Italian characters named Sforza and Carolo, over the occupations which were pursued by some of the Irish refugees who had come to London in consequence of the disturbed condition of Munster. "Why," says Sforza, "should all our chimney sweepers likewise be Irishmen? Answer that now. Give your wit." To which Carolo replies, "Faith, that's soon

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answered ; for Saint Patrick, you know, keeps a Purgatory, he makes the fire, and his countrymen could do nothing if they cannot sweep the chimneys." Dekker's allusion to Saint Patrick's Purgatory was more specific than Shakespeare's, but Shakespeare's was more happy and apposite, because, in the ghost scene in *Hamlet*, the matter in hand is the return from Purgatory of the spirit of a victim of an unexpiated crime.

A still more direct handling of the subject of Saint Patrick's Purgatory came from the pen of the greatest of all the dramatists of Spain. Some thirty years or more after the production of *Hamlet*, Calderon, the Spanish Shakespeare, published in or about 1636, a religious drama entitled, *El Purgatorio de San Patricio*, in which the scene was laid in Ireland, and the purgatory was represented on the stage in the shape of the mouth of a dark cavern. According to the plot of the piece, the cavern was revealed to Saint Patrick as a divine manifestation to aid him in converting Egerio, a pagan King of Ireland, as well as his subjects, to Christianity. The king is made to enter the mouth of the cavern ; but, instead of passing into purgatory, he falls into hell itself. More fortunate is the lot of Ludovico Enio, or Luis Ennius, the hero of the play, who disappears into the cavern, and returns to tell how he has passed through purgatory, and has seen the gates of Paradise itself.³⁶

To-day Saint Patrick's Purgatory is a place of pilgrimage frequented in the summer months by thousands of penitents. In Shakespeare's time it was far more widely known. In that day, its fame rivalled that of the Tombs of the Apostles at Rome, of Saint James at Campostella in Spain, and of Saint Martin at Tours in France. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that none of these sacred shrines appealed more strongly to the imagination of the poet, the romance-writer, and the

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dramatist. Certainly no place in Ireland, in the interval between the twelfth and the seventeenth centuries aroused so much curiosity throughout Europe, and attracted so many distinguished travellers from all parts of the continent. There was a time when it was the only physical feature in our island that came within the ken of the science of geography, or was even noticed by the cartographers. "In the Middle Ages," writes the Provost of Trinity College, "there was no spot in Ireland so celebrated as Saint Patrick's Purgatory in Lough Derg, County Donegal. I have seen an early map of Europe where the only place designated in Ireland is the Purgatory."³⁷

In the next chapter some of the steps will be traced, by which it came about that this islet in Donegal was so familiar to Shakespeare that he made the name of its patron saint leap to Hamlet's lips at the very thought of Purgatory. It fitted such an occasion to invoke Saint Patrick, just as it would have been appropriate to swear by Saint Hubert upon a hunting expedition, or by Saint Swithin in a rain-storm.

CHAPTER VII

HAMLET—SAINT PATRICK'S PURGATORY, THE "VISION OF OWEN," AND THE *DIVINE COMEDY*

The Purgatory of Saint Patrick, the Purgatory of Owen Miles, was among the most popular and wide-spread legends of the ages preceding Dante.—*Dean Milman.*

Among the main sources of Dante's *Divine Comedy* were the Latin classics with Virgil at their head, the Romance writers of France and Italy, and the early scholastic philosophers from Erigena to Saint Thomas Aquinas. Another tributary stream comprised a mass of books and poems, published in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, about the mysteries of the other world. In this department of literature the Irish compositions surpassed all the others in method and symmetry, in originality of thought, and in the art of picturesque description.

The Irish writers about the other world sometimes threw their thoughts into the form of a voyage, several of which, such as the voyage of Saint Brendan, have made such a vivid and enduring impression upon the mind of humanity that, in the words of a student of the subject, they "greatly influenced European literature, and probably contributed to the discovery of the new world." More commonly the Irish legends of this kind assumed the shape of a visionary descent into the underworld, for example, in the "Vision of Adamnan," the "Vision of Tundale," and the "Vision of Owen." Adamnan was

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Abbot of Iona in the seventh century A.D., and was the biographer of Saint Columba ; and the vision, which is attributed to his pen, reached a high level of beauty and of grandeur. Tundale was a knight of Cashel, in County Tipperary, the story of whose visionary descent into hell was written at Ratisbon, in the twelfth century, by a monk named Marcus, who hailed from Munster, and represents Tundale as having seen his vision at Cork.

The visions of Adamnan and of Tundale became widely known ; but, of all the Irish visions, which were precursors of the *Divine Comedy*, none attained more vogue and popularity than the "Vision of Owayne Miles," or in other words, of "Owen the Knight," the scene of which was laid in Saint Patrick's Purgatory. Owen is said to have been an officer in King Stephen's army, who, after service in the king's wars, went to Ireland and did penance at Saint Patrick's Purgatory for the sins and misdemeanours of his life. In 1140 Abbot Gilbert of Louth, in Lincolnshire, went to Ireland to found an Abbey there. His ignorance of the Irish language proved an obstacle to his enterprise ; and Owen the Knight was lent to him by a native king as an interpreter. While the building of the Abbey was proceeding, Gilbert received from Owen an account of his penance at Lough Derg, and, on his return to England, imparted the story to Henry of Saltrey, a Cistercian monk of Huntingdonshire, who embodied it in the famous "Vision of Owen."

According to the "Vision of Owen," it was in response to a prayer for some evident token by which he could convince the sceptical people of Ulster of the existence of places of eternal reward and punishment, that our Lord led Saint Patrick to an island in Lough Derg, and showed him a cavern, saying that whoever, armed with the true faith and truly penitent, should enter the cave

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and remain in it for the space of a day and a night, would be purged from the sins of his whole life, and, if his faith should not fail, would witness not only the torments of the damned but the joys of the blessed. The experiences of the Knight were weird and sensational. After fifteen days of fasting and preparation he was conducted by a procession to the cave, and was locked in. Having been warned by a band of venerable ecclesiastics against the evil spirits by whom he would be attacked, and having been instructed in the holy words with which he might defend himself, he then passed through various fields of punishment, in which he was tormented by flames, ice, molten metals, fiery serpents, toads, and other tortures. Having warded off these horrors by invoking the Holy Name, he ultimately crossed a high, narrow, slippery bridge, and was admitted to the terrestrial paradise, the occupants of which lived in bliss, awaiting the greater joys of the celestial paradise. Owen was reluctant to leave this happy abode, but was told that he must go back to the world, in order to finish his allotted time, and leave his flesh and bones behind him in mother earth. He returned by a shorter and pleasanter way, was released from the cavern, and lived a life of piety thereafter.³⁸

Henry of Saltrey's book could not possibly have appeared at a more opportune moment. It happened that in the twelfth century there was a marked tendency to discuss the idea of intercourse with the other world, and the subject of such communications aroused a widespread curiosity, which the "Vision of Owen" served to satisfy. The book gave an answer to the very questions which men were asking each other, and was accepted everywhere as a revelation rather than a mere vision. "The legend," writes Canon O'Connor, "was copied from monastery to monastery until it became familiar on

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the continent of Europe.”³⁹ Several metrical translations of the vision into foreign languages were published in the thirteenth century, at which period its circulation was so wide-spread that we find a learned writer, Cæsarius of Heisterbach, saying that “if any one doubt of purgatory, let him go to Scotia (*i.e.* Ireland), and enter the Purgatory of Saint Patrick, and his doubts will be removed.”⁴⁰

The “Vision of Owen,” and other writings in verse and prose, which probed the mysteries of eternal punishment, led up to and culminated in the imperishable poem which surpassed them all. Dean Milman, in his *History of Latin Christianity*, declares that “the Purgatory of Saint Patrick, the Purgatory of Owen Miles,” was “among the most popular and widespread legends of the ages preceding Dante.” There can be little doubt that it was one of the materials which the great Italian poet wove into the *Divina Commedia*. Mr. C. S. Boswell in *An Irish Precursor of Dante* speaks of “the almost certainty that so omnivorous a reader as Dante must have been acquainted with works so generally known at and prior to his day as the Voyage of Saint Brendan, the Vision of Tundale, and the legends of Saint Patrick’s Purgatory.” The same writer refers to the many points of resemblance between the “Vision of Owen” and the *Inferno* of Dante, and particularly to a passage in the vision, in which the Knight is represented as passing several figures lying on the ground crucified like Dante’s Caiaphas.⁴¹

It will cause less surprise to find that Shakespeare was familiar with the legend of Lough Derg, when it is realized that there is no reasonable doubt that it had impressed itself on the mind of Dante, and counted for something in the composition of his magnificent masterpiece.

CHAPTER VIII

HAMLET—SAINT PATRICK'S PURGATORY, ITS WIDE CELEBRITY, AND ITS FOREIGN PILGRIMS

It was an age of pilgrimage. Great men in those days committed great crimes, and they had the grace to do rigorous penance.

—*Archbishop Healy. "Life of Saint Patrick."*

During the three centuries which intervened between the publication of the *Divine Comedy* and the production of *Hamlet*, Saint Patrick's Purgatory reached the zenith of its celebrity. It held a unique place in the public mind of Europe, inspired romances and poems in many languages, and attracted distinguished pilgrims from Italy, Spain, France, Hungary, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and other foreign lands.

In no European country did Saint Patrick's Purgatory excite more interest and curiosity than in Italy. Traces of that interest have been discovered in Venice, Turin, Sienna, Mantua, Rimini, Ferrara, Florence, and Rome. In Sicily the story lingers among the popular tales of the peasantry.

In 1358 two Italian nobles, Malatesta Ungarus of Rimini, and Nicholas de Beccariis of Ferrara, made the pilgrimage together to Lough Derg, as is evidenced by certificates which they received from King Edward III, copies of which are preserved among our Patent Rolls, stating to all whom it might concern that they had visited the Purgatory "with great labour of body, and remained shut up therein for a day and a night as is the

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custom." The Malatestas of Rimini were a well-known family, and it is conjectured that the reason why Ungarus went to the Purgatory was to do penance for some offence, on account of which he had incurred the displeasure of the Pope.⁴²

From Rome several monks are recorded as having undertaken the pilgrimage, one of whom was a native of Pisa. They had to obtain permission, which was not given as a matter of course, for we find Saint Catherine of Sienna, who lived in the fourteenth century, writing to a Carthusian monk, named Giovanni, at Rome, counselling him to submit patiently to the rule of the superior authorities who had forbidden him to carry out his earnest desire to make a pilgrimage to Saint Patrick's Purgatory.⁴³ In 1517 Bishop Chericati, the Papal Nuncio in London, visited the place as a tourist, and wrote an account of his travels and experiences to Isabella d'Este, the cultivated marchioness of Mantua, friend of Raphael and high priestess of the Renaissance.⁴⁴

Of all the Italian cities Florence, as the one most nearly connected with Ireland by tradition, seems to have contributed the largest number of pilgrims. Among the Florentine pilgrims was Antonio di Giovanni Manini, who performed the pilgrimage in 1411. During his stay in Ireland he was received by the head of the Geraldines, John, sixth Earl of Kildare, known in Irish history as "Crouch Back," or "Shane Cam," who welcomed him as a compatriot, for, as a Geraldine, the Earl traced descent to the Gherardini of Florence.⁴⁵

It was another Florentine, one Andrea Patria, who did more than any other Italian to spread the fame of Lough Derg. He was the author of a wild romance called *Guerrino detto il Meschino*, which ran through at least a dozen editions. It was an historical tale of the days of Charlemagne. The hero was the child of royal

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but unfortunate parents, who, in his infancy, fell into the hands of the Saracens. He grew up to be a valiant knight and warrior, to distinguish himself in eastern warfare, and to kill many enemies and fabulous monsters. Finally, with the object of discovering the whereabouts of his parents, he repaired to Saint Patrick's Purgatory in Ireland. The accounts of the Purgatory is a medley of the "Vision of Owen" and the *Divina Commedia*. According to the romance, Guerrino entered the cavern, passed through Purgatory, visited hell, and ultimately reached Paradise, where he met Enoch and Helias, who acted as his guides and gave him the information of which he was in search.⁴⁶

The greatest of the poets of Italy, after Dante, knew all about Lough Derg. This was Ariosto, who alludes to Saint Patrick's Purgatory in his *chef d'oeuvre*, *Orlando Furioso*. When the poet comes to mention Ireland, his thoughts seem at once to concentrate themselves upon the little island in Donegal, as if it was the most noted of all Irish places :

"He next for Ireland shaped his course,
And saw the fabulous Hibernia, where
The goodly sainted elder made his cave,
In which men cleansed of all offences are,
Such mercy there, it seems, is found to save."⁴⁷

From Italy let us cross the Alps and let us look for links with Lough Derg in Hungary. A fellow-pilgrim of Antonio Mannini of Florence, in 1358, was a Hungarian nobleman, Laurence Ratthold. The Hungarian poet, Tinody, tells us that this Laurence Ratthold was sent to Ireland by his sovereign, Sigismund, King of Hungary, who was going through the throes of his election as Roman Emperor, and had to do penance at

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Lough Derg by deputy. Laurence Ratthold gives a picturesque account of his entry into Dublin "richly attired and accompanied by a herald and a numerous retinue, as befitted his rank and station." His first care was to repair to Christ Church Cathedral, which contained a sacred relic, one of the most venerated in Ireland, the episcopal staff of Saint Patrick. From Dublin he journeyed to Primate Fleming's Manor in County Louth, in whose diocesan register his visit was attested. Some sixty years earlier another Hungarian, Count George Crissaphan, had made the pilgrimage. He was in the service of Louis I, King of Hungary and Poland, called "The Good." An account of his experiences have been published in a Hungarian magazine, and his visit was attested by certificates from the Irish Primate, Richard FitzRalph, from the Bishop of Clogher, Nicholas MacCasy, and from the Prior of the Hospitalers of Kilmainham. It is interesting to note that both these Hungarian pilgrims, before going to Ireland, visited the shrine of Saint James of Compostella in Spain.⁴⁸

Although Spain possessed, in the tomb of Saint James at Compostella, one of the most famous places of pilgrimage in the world, there is evidence that Saint Patrick's Purgatory interested the Spanish public and attracted Spanish pilgrims. For example, we find John I, King of Aragon, in 1394, the year before his death, sending to his daughter, the Countess of the little frontier principality of Foix, which lay near the northern slopes of the Pyrenees, a book on Saint Patrick's Purgatory. The king was an insignificant personality, but he had faithful friends among his nobles, one of whom, Raymond Viscount de Perillos, happened to be at Rome, in the service of the Aragonese Pope Benedict XIII, when he heard of the death of the king. Having, not without some difficulty, obtained leave from the Pope, he started

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for Lough Derg, with the double purpose of obtaining pardon from God for his own sins, and of acquiring some certain knowledge about the state of the soul of his late friend the king. The Viscount de Perilhos travelled in state with a retinue of twenty men and thirty horses. He was courteously received in London by King Richard II, who gave him letters of recommendation and safe conduct dated at Westminster, September 6th, 1397. His account of his pilgrimage became known in later times from the translation of it by Don Philip O'Sullivan Beare in his *Catholic History*. Among the quaint things, which Perilhos saw in his dream or vision, was one which has attracted the notice of several writers. This was the spirit of a kinswoman, of whose recent death he had been quite unaware, suffering an appropriate punishment in the underworld for having spent too much time "in trimming and painting her face." Other pilgrims besides Perilhos went to Lough Derg from Spain; and it was the subject of several Spanish books, including a romance by Montelvan, called *Vide y Purgatorio de S. Patricio*, upon which Calderon afterwards founded the drama which has been already mentioned.⁴⁹

In France the "Vision of Owen" was popularized by a translation which was the work of Marie de France, a French poetess, who was attached to the Court of our King Henry II. Several pilgrimages to the Purgatory by eminent Frenchmen, including the Sieur de Beaujeu, who was one of the Blood Royal, are recorded in the centuries which divided the age of Dante from that of Shakespeare.⁵⁰ In the sixteenth century the pilgrimage fell under the satirical lash of Rabelais, who travestied the literature of visions by painting a hell in which great men were punished by being relegated to humble callings, Alexander to mending old breeches, Cyrus to

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herding cows, and Priam of Troy to selling old clothes. Rabelais alludes twice to the "hole of Saint Patrick," as he called it, once as a type of darkness, and elsewhere as a common topic of conversation. Nevertheless, we read of plenty of French visitors in the sixteenth century. In 1516 a French knight visited the Purgatory, and was hospitably entertained by The O'Donnell, to whom the knight, on his return to France, sent a ship of war as a token of gratitude. With the aid of the ship The O'Donnell appears to have attacked the castle of The O'Connor of Sligo.⁵¹ In 1545 the French Ambassador to the Scottish Court, Jean de Monluc, went to Ulster on a political mission to engage the Ulster chiefs to shake off the yoke of England, and exchange it for that of France. He stayed at the Castle of The O'Doherty, where he met the Irish Primate, a remarkable old man who, although blind of both eyes, had several times travelled to Rome. One of his suite, Sir James Melvil, has left an account of the mission, in the course of which he relates that the Primate did the Ambassador "great honour, and conveyed him to see Saint Patrick's Purgatory."⁵²

Examples might be given of the recorded visits to Lough Derg by distinguished pilgrims from other countries. The Netherlands, in 1399, sent John van Brederode, a member of one of the historic houses of Holland. From Flanders, in 1430, came Gilbert de Lannoy upon an embassy to the King of Scotland, and thence upon a pilgrimage to Saint Patrick's Purgatory. He was envoy of Philip the "Good" Duke of Burgundy, friend of Flemish letters and arts, champion of mediæval chivalry, and founder of the Order of the Golden Fleece. Sixteen years afterwards in 1446 we find a Swiss knight, Conrad de Scharnactal, leaving his estates at Thun, and leading a pilgrimage of noble natives of Switzerland to "the

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cavern known as Saint Patrick's Purgatory." The pilgrimage took place at an interesting point in Swiss history, when the confederates of the Everlasting League had just checked an Austrian incursion at Basle with great gallantry. In 1494 came a Dutch monk from Eymstadt, whose report to the Pope Alexander VI (Roderigo Borgia) resulted in the demolition of the Purgatory in 1497, and the temporary closing of the pilgrimage by orders from Rome.⁵³

There is no difficulty in ascertaining the route by which these foreign pilgrims usually reached Lough Derg. They travelled by Paris, Calais, and London to Chester, where a ship was bought or hired, which coasted to Holyhead, and crossed to Dublin, sometimes touching at the Isle of Man. At Dublin persons of distinction were received by the Viceroy, Malatesta of Rimini by Alleric de St. Amand, the Viscount de Perilhos by Roger Mortimer, Earl of March, and Bishop Chiericati by the tenth Earl of Kildare, the ill-fated father of Silken Thomas. From Dublin the pilgrims usually travelled by Drogheda and Dundalk to Armagh, or to the Primate's residence at Dromiskin, Co. Louth. From the Primate they received letters of safe-conduct and introduction, addressed to The O'Neill and to other chieftains of the North and the North-west. On their way through Tyrone they called on the Bishop of Clogher, and then rode to Pettigo, where they left their horses, continuing the last stage of their journey on foot.

What a pageant must these pilgrims have presented to the people who lived along their path, and had a chance of seeing Laurence Rathhold riding through Damas Street, as Dame Street was then called, on his way to Christ Church Cathedral, richly attired with his herald and retinue; or Viscount de Perilhos with his twenty men and his thirty horses, clattering over the cobble stones of

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Drogheda or Armagh ; or Antonio Mannini making his way to the Castle of the Geraldines in order to claim the Earl of Kildare as a fellow Florentine ; or Malatesta of Rimini, and Nicholas of Ferrara, traversing Tyrone and Donegal, and knocking, perchance, at the hospitable gates of The O'Neill, The O'Dogherty, or The O'Donnell. Wherever the travellers went, they offered, in their own persons, the best possible evidence of the celebrity of the place which was the object of their pilgrimage.

CHAPTER IX

HAMLET—SAINT PATRICK'S PURGATORY
AND WHAT SHAKESPEARE'S ENGLAND
MUST HAVE KNOWN ABOUT IT

That dim lake,
Where sinful souls their farewell take
Of this vain world, and half way lie
In death's cold shadow ere they die.

—*Thomas Moore*

In England the "Vision of Owen" was versified and quickly found its way into the current of popular literature, with the result that many English pilgrims crossed to Ireland to visit Lough Derg. Among them was a Kentish knight named Sir William Lisle, who accompanied King Richard II to Ireland in 1394, and took the opportunity of performing the pilgrimage along with another knight, "while the king lay in Dublin."

If anyone should desire to know the impression which was carried away from Lough Derg by a pilgrim of the class to which Sir William Lisle belonged, his curiosity may be satisfied by referring to Froissart, that industrious collector of useful information. Froissart tells us that in the reign of King Richard II, when he was in England, he met the Kentish knight, Sir William Lisle, who had been with King Richard II in Ireland in 1394. Froissart, as they rode together along a Kentish road, asked him if he could tell him anything about the "hole in Ireland called Saynte Patryke's Purgatorye." The knight replied that, while the king lay in Dublin, he and another knight had made an expedition to the place. He described how

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“they entered into the hole, and were closed in at the sonne going down, and abode there all night, and nexte mornyng issued out agayne at the sonne risyng.” “Then,” says Froissart, “I demanded if he had any suche strange sightes or visions as was spoken of. Then he said howe that when he and his fellow-men were entered and past the gate that was called the Purgatory of Saynte Patricke, and that they were discended and gone downe three or four parts discendyng downe as into a cellar, a certayne hote vapore rose agayne them, and strake into their heads that they were fayne to sit down on the stares which are of stone, and after they had sythe there a season they had great desyre to slepe, and so fell aslepe, and slept there all night. Then I demaunded if that in their slepe they knew where they were, or what vysyons they had. He answered me that in sleping they had entered into great ymaginacyons and marveyulous dremes, and in the mornyng they issued out and, within a shorte season, clene forgate their dremes and vysyons, wherefore he sayde he thought all that matter was but a fantasy.”⁵⁴

More sensational and imaginative was the story of a descent to Saint Patrick's Purgatory written a dozen years afterwards, by one William of Staunton, or Stranton, in Durham. It probably represents an account of an actual visit of an Englishman to the place, but its purpose was to lash all the prevailing vices of the time, which it did in a fierce and effective fashion. It surpasses most of the other narratives of the kind in the terrible nature of the punishments which the departed souls were seen in the act of suffering.⁵⁵

Particular notice was taken of Saint Patrick's Purgatory in the *Chronicles* which appeared in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries from the pens of the ecclesiastical historians Roger of Wendover, Mathew Paris, and

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Ranulf Higden. The latter was the author of the *Polychronicon*, in which he referred to the pilgrimage in a manner which was afterwards criticised in the pages of Holinshed's *Chronicles*.

When we come to Holinshed we begin to get into close touch with Shakespeare. In 1578 Holinshed published his *Chronicles* of England, Scotland and Ireland. The volume, which contained a history and a description of Ireland, was contributed by Richard Stanyhurst of Dublin, under the guidance of Father Edmund Campion. We know that a later edition of the work, which appeared in 1586-7, was in Shakespeare's library, and that it was from this book that the dramatist not only derived the plots of at least eleven of his plays, but also copied many phrases, speeches, and scenes. In Stanyhurst's volume, Shakespeare had at his disposal a great deal of detailed information about Saint Patrick's Purgatory, besides the knowledge which, it is evident, was possessed by most of the educated men of his day.

The fourth chapter of Holinshed's *Description of Ireland* is entitled "Of the Strange and Wonderful Places in Ireland." The chapter, which is full of miracles and fabled wonders, opens with the following sentence: "I think it good to begin with Saint Patrick, his Purgatory, partly because it is most notoriously known, and partly the more that some writers, as the author of *Polichronicon* and others that were miscarried by him, seems to make great doubt, where they may not." Holinshed refers to the opinion of some authors, that the place was known before Saint Patrick's time, and that it is alluded to in a passage of a poem of the Latin poet Claudian, written about 397 A.D. He rejects the opinion of other writers that it was originally discovered not by Saint Patrick but by an Abbot Patrick of a later period. He follows the legend of the "Vision of Owen" in many of its

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particulars, with additional details from other sources. Stanyhurst concludes with the following piece of personal testimony: "I have conferred with divers that had gone this pilgrimage, who affirmed the order of the premises to be true, but that they saw no sight, save only dreams, when they chanced to nodde, and those they said were exceeding horrible!"⁵⁶

Nothing has been said about the legendary traditions which are associated with Lough Derg, nor about its history after the time of Shakespeare. The purpose of this, and of the preceding, chapter, has been to show that the topic was so familiar in the poet's day that it was natural to make Hamlet invoke Saint Patrick's name in a scene which introduced a ghost from purgatory. With that end in view some evidence has been offered of its celebrity in Europe and in England, and of the variety and eminence of the pilgrims who frequented it.

Saint Patrick's Purgatory has not escaped the sneers of the scoffers. Yet, surely, it is a place to which reverence is due. Its air of mystery and romance caught the imagination of poets and dramatists. Its religious side attracted for centuries a continuous stream of pilgrims from every corner of the continent. The mediæval notions, which were largely the creation of poetical fancy, never received the considered sanction of the Church; and for the last two centuries all ecclesiastical writers of authority have agreed in discountenancing them. In modern times nobody has sought to revive them. The place is resorted to solely for the sake of prayer and of penitential exercises and austerities. Many thousands visit it every summer, the majority of whom come from country districts in Ireland. But they also include some English and some foreign pilgrims. A fisherman told the writer that a few years ago he recognized in a boatful of pilgrims, the late Duke of

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Norfolk, Earl Marshal of England, and a prominent member of the government of that day. The little island in the lonely lake still attracts from afar men of all ranks who are in search of spiritual strength and consolation. For them, in the words of Archbishop Healy, "it is in truth, a sacred spot, that barren rock, rising from dark waters, and surrounded by bleak and frowning hills." It is an interesting reflection that this remote islet of ours was in Dante's mind when he planned his *Divine Comedy*, in Calderon's when he wrote a drama of which it was the central theme, in Ariosto's when he composed the greatest of his poems, and in Shakespeare's when he produced the most subtle of all the works of his imagination.

CHAPTER X

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM—FAIRIES

But we are spirits of another sort.—*Oberon*.

The *sidhe* folk are of all the beings in the Irish mythological world the oldest and the most distinctive.—*Douglas Hyde*.

A Midsummer Night's Dream was, in a sense, an epoch-making comedy, because it inaugurated a new era in the history of British fairydom. From a multitude of sources the dramatist collected a mass of fanciful personalities and of gossamer shapes; and, with the help of these models and materials, he drew a new fairy landscape, of which all subsequent poets were mere engravers, who reproduced, each on his block or plate, copies, more or less faithful, of the Shakespearian original. The dramatist filched figures from all the folklores. He borrowed Oberon from a Teutonic, and Titania from a classical source, just as he had, in *The Tempest*, taken Ariel from a Hebraistic one. Puck was an international fairy who, under such *aliases* as Pouca or Robin Goodfellow, played everywhere the part of the prime Playboy of the Spirit-world. Under the names of Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Moth, and Mustardseed, Shakespeare introduced upon the stage the diminutive elves of popular tradition, and enlisted them in Queen Titania's fairy retinue. He derived the idea of a miniature court with a king, queen, and royal pageantry, from the romances of the Arthurian cycle. Having gathered together all that he could find that was prettiest and most enchanting in legend and folklore, he created what has ever since been the conventional fairy-land of English literature.

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In some of its features the Celtic fairy-land of Ireland bears a resemblance or analogy to its Shakespearian counterpart. For example, both of these realms of fancy are inhabited by invisible elemental spirits, who can move about rapidly with a flight that is "swifter than an arrow from a Tartar's bow," can interfere with human affairs, and are governed by monarchial institutions. Both are permeated by an atmosphere of magic, and melody, and joy. But there is less of resemblance than of contrast between these two spirit worlds. It is true that Ireland has, no less than Shakespeare, its dwarf-like ring-dancing elves of the woodland, "in shape no bigger than an agate stone on the forefinger of an alderman," and its elves of the house, whom it is dangerous for the housewife to neglect or leave unprovided with food and milk. But these types of fairyhood are not characteristic of Ireland; and, although the belief in the fairy theft of children and the leaving of changelings in their place, is to be found in both the Shakespearian and the Celtic systems, the belief in the fairy abduction of young men and women is peculiar to the Irish one. Many other differences could be cited. Speaking generally, the Irish conception of fairyland is more weird, more mysterious and more complex, than the Shakespearian one. It is less the product of a transcendent poetic imagination than the natural growth of centuries of legend and tradition.

The characteristic fairy of Ireland is, and has been from the earliest times, the *aé's sldhe*, or *shee* folk, who are the reputed denizens of those fairy mounds or raths called *sldhe* or *shees*, with which many an Irish countryside is studded.⁵⁷ They are conceived as an underworld of supernatural beings, but they are supposed to have been recruited from time to time by numbers of departed spirits of mortals, who have died in the bloom and heyday of youth, beauty and brilliancy. These fairy-folk

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live a life of eternal youth in palaces that are full of music riches and delight. They are not mortal, but they have many mortal qualities. They are dead, but they are imagined as being endowed with human shape and size. They have supernatural powers, but can marry and bear children, and partake and interest themselves in mortal occupations, amusements and conflicts. In these conflicts they are sometimes worsted by mortals. The legendary hero, Cuchulainn, once fought and overcame a *sidhe* warrior, who was seen to be carried away by his comrades to their fairy-rath. Stolen brides and daughters have been supposed to have been rescued from their fairy captors by husbands and fathers who have forced their way into the raths for the purpose.

The popular belief in the *sidhe* fairies is of the same nature as many other Celtic traditions, which have come down to our times, untouched by the Arthurian legends, the Roman occupation, the Norman conquest, and the rest of the traditions and events which so deeply influenced the literature of England. Like many other Celtic traditions, the *sidhe* fairy-world was not banned by Christianity, but received the colour and impression of Christian thought and doctrine.

In Irish legend these *sidhe* folk became inseparably associated with the Tuatha de Danann, a race who are said to have been predominant in Ireland, until they were conquered and displaced by the Milesians. The Tuatha de Danann are the most mysterious people in Irish story. Their predecessors, the Firbolg, have a history. They never wholly disappeared from the island, and many families trace their pedigree to them. There is no family which traces its origin to the Tuatha de Danann.⁵⁸ They wholly disappeared from human ken, but lived on in the popular imagination, first as gods or demons, and afterwards as the fairies of another world. Perhaps this myth may

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have an historical origin. It is conceivable that some earlier race, after their conquest by the Milesians, may have retired to the hills, and by their occasional appearance among their conquerors in the plains below, may have laid the foundation of a legend. At all events, the Tuatha de Danann have left one durable memorial; for it was from the last of their queens that Ireland is believed to have derived the name of Erin. Although the Tuatha de Danann have passed out of sight, they linger as the characteristic fairies of Ireland. Professor Douglas Hyde, who has culled much of Irish "say and song" from the lips of the people, writes: "To this very day I have heard old men, when speaking of the fairies who inhabit ancient raths, and interfere occasionally in mortal concerns either for good or evil, call them by the name of the Tuatha de Danann."⁵⁹

One of the most interesting traits of the *sidhe* fairydom was the belief in the exchanges of infants, and in the theft of dying mortals, not only of children, but also of men and women in the flower of their youth and beauty, and of young mothers, who were supposed to be abducted in order to become foster-mothers to a fairy child. In this way the untimely death of young children, or of beautiful young people, and especially of young mothers in child-birth, was explained. These kidnappings or forced exchanges by the *sidhe* fairies were believed to be motivated by their desire to strengthen and reinforce their mysterious race. In the case of kid-napping, it was supposed that the abducted person or child was actually carried away, and that the corpse that remained behind was a substituted counterpart. In the case of fairy exchanges, the fairies were supposed to have carried off the real child, and the breathing infant in the cradle was looked upon as a mere living imitation of the stolen body.

A fairy kidnapping is the subject of a fine poem by

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W. B. Yeats, called "The Stolen Child." It is supposed to be the song which a fairy sings to lure a child away from its home :

"Come away, human child
To the waters and the wild,
With a fairy hand in hand,
For the world's more full of weeping
than you can understand."

The thought is analogous to the modern notion, so deeply tinged with religion, that the explanation of the mystery of death in infancy is the calling of a chosen child to a better and happier world.

The belief in fairy denizens of raths and forts is to be found in other countries, but what is peculiar to Ireland is the identification of these mysterious spirits with the remnant of a conquered and vanished race. It is this feature which gives to Irish fairy-folklore a touch of historic continuity, and almost lifts it to the rank of national legend and tradition.

The difference which has been traced between the fairyland of Shakespeare and the *sidhe* fairydom of Celtic Ireland may be illustrated by comparing a Shakespearian with a Celtic fairy song. In the second scene of the second act of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Titania lies down in the forest and says to her attendants :

"Sing me now to sleep ;
Then to your offices and let me rest."

The fairies sing the lullaby which begins :

"You spotted snakes with double tongue,
Thorny hedgehogs be not seen ;
Newts and blind-worms, do no wrong,
Come not near our fairy queen."⁶⁰

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The fairies go on to warn away from the resting-place of the fairy queen the spiders, blackbeetles, worms, snails, and all the insect and animal life of the forest. Let us turn to Celtic folklore, where we learn, as Petrie and Sigerson have pointed out, that one of the three classes of music believed to have been introduced into Erin by the Tuatha de Danann was the fairy lullaby. Dr. Sigerson has translated some of these lullabies into beautiful English verse. One of them is sung by a peasant woman, a young mother, who has been carried off by the fairies, so that she may act as nurse to a fairy child. She is a prisoner in a fairy rath, from the embankment of which she sees a woman of her village washing clothes in a stream near at hand. In the lullaby which she sings to the fairy child, so as to avert the suspicions of her captors, she addresses to the woman an earnest request to tell her husband to come to her rescue with a lighted taper and knife. One verse will serve as a sample of this strange song, which is illustrative of the wide-spread belief of the peasantry in the reality of such fairy abductions :

“Oh, bid my husband haste to-morrow,
Hush-a-by, babe not mine,
A waxen taper he shall borrow
Hush-a-by, babe not mine,
A black knife bring to cross my sorrow,
Hush-a-by, babe not mine,
And stab their first steed comin' thoro',
Hush-a-by, babe not mine.”⁶¹

These two lullabies admirably express the difference between Shakespeare's midsummer dreamland and the weird and mystic fairy world which was evolved by the folklore of Ireland.

CHAPTER XI

AS YOU LIKE IT

I was never so be-rhymed since Pythagoras' time, that I was an Irish rat, which I can hardly remember.—*Rosalind*.

Pray you, no more of this ; 'tis like the howling of Irish wolves against the moon.—*Rosalind*.

One of Shakespeare's most perfect comedies is *As You Like It*, and one of his most charming women-characters is Rosalind. In Rosalind, as in Portia, wit, fancy and gaiety of heart are mingled with culture, dignity and grace. In Rosalind there is also a peculiar blend of waywardness and tenderness, which reminds us of some of the special qualities of Irish girlhood. Rosalind's name has an Irish ring about it. She recalls "the Dark Rosaleen," and resembles her as a smile does a tear. The part has always been a favourite one with Irish actresses, two of whom, Peg Woffington and Dorothea Jordan, particularly excelled in it. If the scene of the piece had been laid in the glens of Kerry or of Antrim, they would make a fitting background ; and it is not surprising that the play contributes more than its due share of the links which connect Shakespeare with Ireland.

There is a word in *As You Like It* which has, perhaps, done as much to puzzle the commentators as any other in the plays. It is put into the mouth of that quaint character, "the melancholy Jacques." Jacques and Amiens were two of the Lords-in-Waiting, who

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followed the banished Duke to the Forest of Arden, where they lived a careless pastoral life, "like the old Robin Hood of England." Amiens is a common-place courtier, whose function in the play is to accompany Jacques and to give him his cue. Jacques, on the other hand, is one of Shakespeare's subtlest creations. He was not quarried out of Lodge or Holinshed or Plutarch, or out of any other of the dramatist's character-mines. He was part of the poet's self. He was a misanthrope, but his misanthropy was sunny and sympathetic—the opposite of Timon's. He was a melancholist, but his melancholy was bright and brilliant—the germ of Hamlet's. In one of the scenes in the forest, the two Lords-in-Waiting join in a tournament of song. Amiens starts by inviting all those who desire to lead a life of repose and of melody under the greenwood tree, to "Come hither, come hither, come hither." The verse draws from Jacques a request for "More, I prithee, more." Amiens responds to this encore by singing another verse, in which he extends his invitation to "those who ambition shun and love to live in the sun." Jacques rejoins with a verse of his own:—

"If it do come to pass
That any man turn ass,
Leaving his wealth and ease,
A stubborn will to please
Ducdame, ducdame, ducdame :
Here shall he see
Gross fools as he,
An' if he will come to me."⁶²

When Jacques has finished singing his verse, Amiens asks a question, which all the commentators have been

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asking ever since: "What's that 'duc dame'?" and Jacques replies: "'Tis a Greek invocation, to call fools into a circle." No Greek scholar having been able to trace any such "invocation," a Latinist has tried to interpret it as being a corruption of "duc ad me." Another critic has made the ingenious suggestion that the word comes from some lay of duck-pond life, and means "ducks come to your dame." Modern opinion, however, inclines to the theory that the phrase is of Gaelic origin; and both Dr. Sigerson and Dr. Grattan Flood have offered reasons for concluding that "Duc dame" is an anglicized form of a refrain which occurs in the romantic Irish ballad, "Eileen Aroon," meaning "will you come"? In the same song the words "Cead mile failte" occur; and it has been suggested that when, in another play, Shakespeare made Menenius Agrippa greet Coriolanus, on his entry into Rome, with a "hundred thousand welcomes" he was quoting from "Eileen Aroon." As "Eileen Aroon" was a popular Irish air in Shakespeare's day, it is possible that a phrase of that kind had been put in currency by the song. At all events, this explanation of Jacques' mysterious "duc dame" seems to be a better one than any of the others.⁶³

When Rosalind finds the forest trees of Arden garlanded with verses, which Orlando has composed in her honour, she reads them out to the jester, Touchstone. Let us stand by and listen to Orlando's rhymes:

"From the east to western Ind,
No jewel is like Rosalind.
All the pictures fairest lined
Are but black to Rosalind,
Let no fair be kept in mind,
But the fair of Rosalind."

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The witty fool burlesques the lover's rhapsodies in a humorous parody, from which we quote a few lines :

“If a *hart* do lack a *hind*
Let him seek out Rosalind.
Sweetest nut has sourest *rind*,
Such a nut is Rosalind.”⁶⁴

Professor Sigerson finds an interesting parallel between Touchstone's parody and a satirical poem written by Gerald Fitzmaurice, fourth Earl of Desmond, who was chief of the southern Geraldines in the latter half of the fourteenth century, and died about two hundred years before *As You Like It* was produced. He was an historical personage of some distinction, who married a daughter of the Earl of Ormonde, and was Lord Justice of Ireland in the reign of Edward III. He played a prominent part in the Ireland of his day ; but it is less for his high rank and offices than for his literary attainments that he is still remembered. It was recorded of him in the *Annals of the Four Masters* that “he surpassed all the foreigners of Erin and a multitude of the Gael in the knowledge and science of the Gaelic language, in poetry and history, as well as in other learning.” He was a friend and patron of the Irish bards, who repaid him by giving him a legendary immortality ; and he was, himself, a witty and learned writer, who was known as “Gerald the Poet,” and left behind him some fragments of verses entitled “The Proverbs of the Earl of Desmond.” One of his poems, which has been preserved in a Scottish collection of Gaelic verse, called *The Dean of Lismore's Book*, is a satire on womankind, a perusal of which makes us wonder whether “Gerald the Poet” had been crossed in love, or had been unhappily married. Perhaps he was merely a misanthrope after the manner

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of Jacques, or a philosopher of the school of Touchstone. Two stanzas, taken from Dr. Sigerson's translation of Gerald's satire, will serve as a type of the poem :

“Married man with witless wife,
Fails in strife with foreign foes ;
Bad for *hart* is belling *hind*
Worse the tongue of womankind.

Wedded wife from altar rail
Pious pale before the priest—
After feast shows bitter *rind*—
Best beware of womankind.”⁶⁵

There is so much similarity between the metre of this poem and that of Touchstones's parody, and between the figures of speech which occur in both pieces, that more than one writer has been tempted to wonder whether the catalogue of Shakespeare's library included the “Proverbs of Gerald the Poet.”

In the same scene Rosalind is joined by her friend Celia, who banterers her about the verses in her praise, which Orlando has hung upon the forest trees. Rosalind illustrates her situation by a learned and witty jest in which Greek philosophy is mixed with Irish necromancy. “Look here,” she says, “what I found on a palm-tree. I was never so berhymed since Pythagoras' time, that I was an Irish rat, which I can hardly remember.”⁶⁶ She alludes to the Pythagorean doctrine that human souls can transmigrate from one animal or living thing to another, and to the belief, prevalent in Shakespeare's day, that the Irish bards could kill rats with their rhyming incantations. The same superstition is alluded to by Ben Johnson, Sir Philip Sydney, Donne, Randolph, Reginald Scot, and other writers of that age. The notion that

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rats could be exterminated by rhymes or music was not peculiar to Ireland. Its existence in Germany is attested by the legend of the "Pied Piper of Hamelin," and it lingered until recently in some parts of France.

A belief in the death-dealing power of satirical poetry was of very ancient origin, and had a far larger range of operation than the extermination of rats. Rhythmic satire was from early times believed to be capable of shortening human life, presumably by producing in the victim a settled grief and melancholy. Before the time of Pythagoras, the poet Archilochus, according to a classical myth, revenged himself upon his enemies in the island of Paros by lampooning them all to death. In ancient Ireland the abuse of bardic satire was so much feared that the Brehon laws contained provisions, on the lines of our law of libel, restraining its excess. A remarkable case of death from satire occurred in Ireland so late as 1414. The victim was Sir John Stanley, Deputy of King Edward IV, and forerunner of the Earls of Derby. The Four Masters record that he was a man "who gave neither mercy nor protection to clergy, laity, or men of science," and that he gave particular offence to the bardic family of O'Higgins, and to Nial their chief. "The O'Higgins," wrote the annalists, "with Nial, satirized John Stanley, who lived, after their satire, but five weeks, for he died from the violence of their lampoons."⁶⁷ As time went on, the death-rate from lampooning seems to have shown a marked decline. Nevertheless, Dean Swift is found, three hundred years afterwards, making a humorous allusion to the deadly effect which Irish satire continued to exercise even in his day.

The rhyming of rats in Ireland continued to be practised long after Shakespeare's time. The scholar and antiquary, Eugene O'Curry, tells us that in or about the year 1776, a clergyman of bardic descent rhymed a

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colony of rats out of a churchyard in West Clare. The rats escaped to another district, where the inhabitants tried to extirpate them, but failed for want of the necessary incantations. O'Curry himself, having some rhyming propensity, tried his hand at a rhyme on rats in 1820, and has left on record the following dismal confession of failure:—"I tried my hand at a satire on rats, but I fear that either the words I used were too hard for the vermin to understand, or that I had not the true inspiration, as certainly they paid not the slightest regard to the notice to quit which I then gave them."⁶⁸

In a later scene of *As You Like It*, when Rosalind is defending herself against a bombardment of eager questions which are thrown at her, in rapid succession, by Orlando, Silvius, and Phoebe, she exclaims: "Pray you, no more of this, 'tis like the howling of Irish wolves against the moon!"⁶⁹

This allusion to the howling of wolves was suggested to Shakespeare by the following passage in Lodge's *Rosalynde* which was one of the main sources of the plot of *As You Like It*. "I tell thee, Montanus, in courting Phoebe thou barkest as the wolves of Syria against the moon." It will be observed that the wolves which Shakespeare found in Lodge's *Rosalynde*, were Syrians, and that he made them Irish. This was not a case of Pythagorean metamorphosis. The explanation is a much simpler one. He probably made them Irish, because wolves, which in his day were extinct in England, were known to abound in Ireland. He had perhaps read of them in Spenser's *View of the State of Ireland*, and was familiar with the couplet in which the poet wrote of "Night":

"And hungry wolves continually do howle,
At her abhorred face, so filthy and so fowle."

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In Shakespeare's time wolves were notorious evildoers on the Irish side of the channel, especially in Munster. In 1570, less than thirty years before *As You Like It* was written, the town of Kilmallock was destroyed by James Fitzmaurice, and became the haunt of wolves. Half a century later (1652-4) we find the Irish Privy Council prohibiting the exportation of wolf-hounds, and putting a price on the heads of wolves, six pounds for a bitch wolf, and five pounds for a dog-wolf, forty shillings for a cub, and ten shillings for a suckling. Notwithstanding all efforts to exterminate them, they lingered in Ireland until the latter half of the eighteenth century.⁷⁰

Rosalind has so much to say about Ireland that some people have drawn the inference that Shakespeare must have made an Irish tour shortly before the production of the play, which took place in 1599. Be that as it may, Rosalind's interest in Ireland has been cordially reciprocated, for surely there never was an Irish student of Shakespeare's plays who did not feel a tender regard for the heroine of *As You Like It*.

CHAPTER XII

KING JOHN

England and *Ireland*, Anjou, Touraine, Maine,
In right of Arthur do I claim of thee.

—*The Dauphin to King John.*

The play of *King John* was not, in date of production, the first of Shakespeare's histories; but it takes precedence in point of historic time. It has never been popular with either readers or playgoers; for it lacks dramatic unity. Besides, the despicable meanness of the king fails to arouse any sustained interest. He has none of the dominating grandeur which redeems the crimes of Macbeth and of King Richard III.

One of the sources of *King John* was an older play called *The Troublesome Reign of King John of England*, which was calculated to give offence to the majority of Irishmen, because it was little more than a diatribe against the Papacy, turning mainly upon the king's struggle with the Pope and his legates. Shakespeare took all the sting out of the old piece, and changed the theme by concentrating the dramatic interest upon the murder of Prince Arthur, and upon the king's usurpation of the boy's inheritance. The story of the death of this charming child is the kernel of the play; the rest is little more than husk. The character of Arthur, his touching appeal to Hubert de Burgh to spare his eyes, and the lamentations of his noble-hearted mother, are so deeply permeated with pathos that they are

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believed to have been inspired by the passionate grief of the dramatist at the recent death of his only son.

King John had much to do with Ireland, and left his mark there. As a boy he had been nominated by his father to be King of Ireland. The title was modified, as time went on, to that of "John, Lord of Ireland, son of the King of England." During the reign of Richard I he retained the Lordship of Ireland. Accordingly, until his accession to the English crown, his rank and station resembled those of a subordinate sovereign, with the king as his suzerain. His Irish subjects never had any affection for a prince, whom Mr. G. K. Chesterton has happily described as the "black blot on the pure gold of the Plantagenets."

John, Lord of Ireland, twice visited his island principality. On the first occasion he came as a lad in 1185, when he estranged the Irish chieftains by his boyish insolence. He left one lasting memorial behind him of this visit to Ireland in the noble family of Butler, whose ancestor, Theobald Walter, accompanied the prince, and received from him a grant of the territory of Ormond.

Twenty-five years afterwards, John revisited Ireland. He came to wreak vengeance upon the family of William de Braose, Lord of Limerick, whose wife, when her son was demanded as a hostage, had made the bold reply to the messenger, "I will not deliver up my son to your lord, King John, for he basely murdered his nephew Arthur, whom he should have kept in an honourable custody." John landed at Waterford; marched from one end of the island to the other; hunted William de Braose, and starved his wife and son, to death; expelled the de Lacys, who had sheltered them; exacted the homage of many of the Irish chieftains; and seized the fiefs of nearly all the Irish barons. There was only

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one of the Anglo-Norman nobles, whose commanding position in the State gave him sufficient strength to withstand the king's encroachments. This was William the Marshal, Earl of Pembroke.

There is no allusion to either of these expeditions in the play of *King John*. But no Irishman need feel surprise, still less take offence, at the omission. A more remarkable event is conspicuous by its absence from the drama. From the beginning to the end of the piece there is not the faintest reference to Magna Charta. Some critics have supposed that the poet was apprehensive lest any reference to the great "Palladium of our Liberties" might have given offence to Queen Elizabeth. At all events the play is as silent about Runnymede as it is about the king's visits to Ireland. To the winning of the great Charter the Irish barons, as a body, contributed nothing. But it was William Marshal, Earl of Pembroke, the greatest of them all, who stood beside the throne, and by his wise and loyal counsel actually induced the king to sign the document.

In two passages of the play, Ireland is expressly mentioned as one of the five dominions of the Crown, which were claimed on behalf of Prince Arthur by the French Ambassador in Act I, and, on a subsequent occasion, by the Dauphin of France in Act II. The Ambassador declares that his master

"Lays most lawful claim
To this fair island and the territories ;
To Ireland, Poitiers, Anjou, Touraine and Maine."⁷¹

The Dauphin repeats the claim :

"England and Ireland, Anjou, Touraine, Maine,
In right of Arthur do I claim of thee."⁷²

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Ireland, in these passages, took its correct place among the dominions of the Crown beyond the seas. In the category of royal titles *Dominus Hiberniæ* always came before *Dux Aquitaniæ*. To be the first star in such a constellation was in the poet's eyes a proud position. The play breathes a spirit of lofty imperialism more characteristic of the reign of Elizabeth than of that of John. There is an Elizabethan ring about the oft-quoted words of Faulconbridge :

“This England never did, and never shall
Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror,
. . . . Nought shall make us rue,
If England itself remain but true.”⁷³

In Shakespeare's conception of the Empire, Ireland stood second only to England.

Although the play borrows no scene or incident from John's relations with Ireland, it included in its *dramatis personæ* three characters bearing names that figure in our history. These were the Earl of Pembroke, Lord Bigod, and Hubert de Burgh.

Sir William Marshal, Earl of Pembroke, who stands out in the play as the defender of Prince Arthur, is better known under the name William the Marshal. He married Strongbow's daughter, Isabel, who brought to him, as her dowry, extensive estates in Ireland, as well as in England. No marriage in our history links up so strikingly the dynastic traditions of England with those of ancient Ireland. The Lady Isabel, who, as grand-daughter of Dermot MacMurrough, belonged to a house which claimed descent from King Eremon, son of Miledh of Spain, was destined to become, through the Mortimers, Tudors and Stuarts, an ancestress of the now reigning sovereign of these islands. Although Pem-

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broke's career belongs mainly to the history of England, he never lost touch with Ireland; and one of his sons and successors, Richard, Earl of Pembroke, who lost his life fighting on the Curragh of Kildare, was laid to rest in the Oratory of the Friars Minor at Kilkenny. Mr. Goddard Orpen, in his *Ireland Under the Normans*, paints a favourable picture of William the Marshal, of whom he says that he "must not be taken as an average example of an Anglo-Norman feudal lord, but rather as one of the finest human products of the feudal system : brave, generous, upright, and ever true to his lights, the highest realized type of chivalry."

Lord Bigot, or Bigod, as the name was commonly written, who plays a minor part in the play, was son of the second Earl of Norfolk, and lived to succeed him, in the next reign, as third Earl. He married Pembroke's eldest daughter Maud. Bigod, on the failure of Pembroke's male issue, succeeded, in his wife's right, to her inheritance of Carlow in Ireland, and to her father's, Earl Marshalship of England. It was through this marriage that the great office of Earl Marshal first became attached to the dignity of Norfolk.

Some writers have fallen into the error of describing Hubert de Burgh, the jailor of Prince Arthur, as an Irishman. He was a remarkable man, who played a prominent part in English history in the reigns of John and of Henry III,⁷⁴ but it may be doubted whether he ever crossed St. George's Channel. It was his brother, William de Burgh, who received a grant of lands in the west of Ireland, and became the founder of the historic Irish family of de Burgh, or Burke. From William de Burgh, or "William the Conqueror," as he was sometimes styled, sprang the long line of lords, princes, and clan-chieftains, who dominated Connaught from the time of John down to Shakespeare's day, and are still

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represented in the noble houses of Clanrickard and Mayo. From him also is descended the scattered and distinguished race which bears his name ; and, among them, that philosopher and statesman, whose statue, standing guard at the gate of Trinity College, helps to keep alive amongst Irishmen a pride in Edmund Burke, only second to that which all the inhabitants of these islands take in William Shakespeare.

CHAPTER XIII

THE HOUSE OF MORTIMER

The Mortimers, in whom the title rested.—*Edmund Mortimer.*

The second of Shakespeare's histories, in point of time, was *King Richard II.* The interval between the events, which form the plot of *King John*, and those, which form the plot of *King Richard II.*, covers a period of about one hundred and seventy years, comprising the reigns of Henry III, the first three Edwards, and the first twenty years of Richard II's reign. The play opens in 1398, the penultimate year of Richard's kingship, and deals exclusively with the deposition of the king. Ireland looms large in the play, although the action of the piece does not cross the Channel. It was the king's departure to Ireland, to avenge the death of his cousin, Roger Mortimer, that gave his enemies the opportunity of deposing him. Perhaps it will not be out of place to explain the origin and meaning of this link between Ireland and the play of *King Richard II.*

It is impossible to read the historical plays of Shakespeare from an Irish standpoint without becoming interested in the fortunes and vicissitudes of the princely House of Mortimer, which, from the Norman Conquest down to the fifteenth century, played a prominent part in English history. For several generations the chiefs of the Mortimer family were recognized as heirs presumptive to the English throne. They were also first among the feudal lords of Ireland. Three of them were Viceroys of Ireland, and died while campaigning on Irish soil. The

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death of one of them contributed materially to the *denouement* of the play of *King Richard II.* Some half dozen members of the family are seen, or are heard of, in the Lancastrian plays. It was the Mortimer claim to the throne which constituted the underlying motive of the Wars of the Roses. Richard Plantagenet and his son, Edward IV, were Mortimers on the distaff side; and it was in a garden of the Mortimers that the White Rose was planted and watered. That is why Shakespeare refers to the members of this family as "the Mortimers, in whom the title rested."⁷⁵

A glimpse at the annals of the house of Mortimer will remind us of a forgotten page of Irish history, and will help us to a better understanding of several of the plays, and especially of *King Richard II.*

The Mortimers came to England in the train of the Conqueror, who planted them on the Marches of Wales. Their lands, according to Domesday Book, were spread over eleven counties. For several generations this border clan fought and forayed from their castle of Wigmore, until a Roger Mortimer, who was eighth Baron of Wigmore, became the lover of Queen Isabel, and the ruler of England during the minority of Edward III. He rose to a perilous eminence, was created Earl of March, and ended a phenomenal career in 1330 upon the gallows at Tyburn.

This ill-starred Roger Mortimer, Earl of March, was a great territorial lord in Ireland. Through the marriage of an ancestor to a de Braose, he had succeeded to the Lordship of Leix, the modern Queen's County, with the Castle of Dunamase, near the site of the town which we know now as Maryborough. It had been the inheritance of Strongbow's youngest grand-daughter, Eva Marshal, who married a de Braose. It turned out to be a precarious possession, disputed by the O'Mores,

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who captured it and recaptured it from the Mortimers. By his own marriage to a de Geneville, a descendant of Walter de Lacy, Roger Mortimer acquired half of the de Lacy palatinate of Meath, with the lordship and castle of Trim. As a young man he visited Ireland once unofficially and twice as viceroy. On these occasions he had to defend his Meath domains from the incursions of his cousins, the de Lacys, who were aided by Edmund Bruce, brother of the Scottish king. As a result, he strengthened his position in Meath; and, after his time, the Mortimers are found occasionally crossing and re-crossing the Channel, visiting their Irish estates, and dividing their time between their castles of Wigmore and of Trim.

A greater Irish fief than either Leix or Trim, together with the right to succession to the English throne, came to the Mortimers, when Edmund Mortimer, third Earl of March, married Princess Phillipa, only child and heiress of Lionel, Duke of Clarence, and of his wife, Elizabeth de Burgh. This Duke of Clarence was one of the sons of Edward III, and became, next to his brother the Black Prince, and to his nephew Richard II, the first prince of the blood. Elizabeth de Burgh was the heiress of the de Burghs, who were not only lords of Connaught, but had also acquired the Earldom of Ulster, after the extinction of the line of de Lacys, Earls of Ulster. The Mortimers never succeeded in establishing themselves in Connaught, where Elizabeth de Burgh's western cousins repudiated the English law of inheritance, and proceeded to hold the province, after the manner of Irish chieftains, against the Mortimers and their successors. In the North the Mortimers were more fortunate, for they obtained possession of a substantial strip of the coast-line of North Eastern Ulster, which elsewhere remained in the hands of the O'Neills.

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The marriage of Edmund Mortimer to the Princess Phillipa had far-reaching consequences for the Mortimers and for the State. The chief of this great family was already Earl of March, and Baron of Wigmore, in England, as well as Lord of Trim, and titular Lord of Leix, in Ireland. He now became Earl of Ulster, and titular Lord of Connaught in Ireland, while in England he became first prince of the blood. These honours and estates threw dark shadows on his path. In Ireland he was involved in agrarian conflicts with the O'Neills, the de Lacys, the O'Mores, and the de Burghs. In England his right of succession to the throne was disputed by the claim of John of Gaunt, Earl of Lancaster, and of his son, Henry Bolingbroke. The Lancastrian branch of the Royal House was junior to the Mortimers, but had the advantage over them of standing in the direct male line.

In the half century, which preceded the events that form the subject of the plot of *King Richard II*, Ireland saw a great deal of the Duke of Clarence, and of his descendants, the Mortimers. Clarence was Lord Lieutenant for five years (1361-1366). His viceroyalty was marked by the enactment of the Statute of Kilkenny (1366), which was designed to prevent intercourse between the English and Irish races. By this notorious Act of Parliament the English were forbidden to intermarry with the Irish, to speak the Irish language, to receive Irish bards in their castles, or to ride after the Irish fashion. The Statute turned out to be little more than a dead letter. When English statesmanship was proceeding upon such grotesque lines, it is not surprising to find that the English sphere of influence shrank in the north from Carrickfergus to Dundalk, and in the south was harried by the Leinster septs, headed by Art MacMurrough Kavanagh, a leader of uncommon ability and resourcefulness.

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Lionel, Duke of Clarence, sowed the wind with the policy of Kilkenny, and his successors reaped the whirlwind. His grandson, Edmund Mortimer, became viceroy in 1379, and after some strenuous fighting in Ulster and in Connaught, died in 1381 from a chill caught in crossing a river in a winter campaign in Munster. His son, Roger, was appointed viceroy at the age of seven. The child held office for a short time through a deputy, and, as he grew up, became a favourite of his cousin, King Richard. In 1394 the king visited Ireland with an imposing force, which for the moment overawed opposition to his authority. When he returned to England, he left Roger Mortimer as Lord Lieutenant, with powers which, Froissart tells us, made him virtual sovereign of Ireland.

The young viceroy was as brave as he was unconventional. When he sallied forth to take the field, he assumed, in defiance of the Statute of Kilkenny, the dress and horse-harness of an Irish chieftain. This display of independence exposed him to criticism and to suspicion at the hands of the king's friends in England, while it only served to render him a more conspicuous target for the king's enemies in Ireland. In a short campaign he was completely out-manceuvred by the Leinster chieftains, and received a mortal wound in a skirmish, in August 1398, at Kelliston in the County Carlow.

The death in Ireland of Roger Mortimer occurred at the moment of history at which the play of *King Richard II* takes up the thread of events. As he had been the heir-presumptive to the throne, his sudden demise disturbed the whole current of public affairs, and contributed to the catastrophe which forms the theme of Shakespeare's play. The removal of Roger Mortimer helped to clear Henry Bolingbroke's way to the throne, because young Edmund Mortimer, who succeeded to his father's position

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as first prince of the blood, was a child in his seventh year, with no strong adherents in the State. With an infant for his only rival and obstacle, the path of Henry Bolingbroke's ambition was rendered an easier one than when Roger was alive. The death of Roger Mortimer had another consequence, which was one of the immediate causes of Richard's deposition. It brought home to the king the seriousness of the Irish situation, and led him to take the fatally imprudent step of personally conducting an expeditionary force to quell the rebellious septs. If Roger had not been killed in Ireland, and if Richard had not gone to Ireland to revenge his death, the Lancastrian revolution might not have been successful, the king might not have been deposed, and the play of *King Richard II* might never have been written.⁷⁶

CHAPTER XIV

KING RICHARD II—THE IRISH EXPEDITION OF 1399

We will ourself in person to this war.—*King Richard.*

We will to Ireland: and 'tis time, I trow.—*King Richard.*⁷⁷

King Richard II is not one of Shakespeare's best dramas. The interest is entirely political, and is unrelieved by any element of humour or of romance. There is very little female characterization; although the dramatist strives to supply its absence by representing Richard's queen, who was really a child about nine years old, as a mature woman. The points in the play, which strike the imagination and linger in the memory, are the patriotic speeches of John of Gaunt, and the contrast which is developed between the character of the king, and that of the usurper, Henry Bolingbroke, who succeeds him. More adjectives have been applied to Richard by the commentators than to most of Shakespeare's characters. He was, according to his critics, a wistful, shadowy, attractive, dreamy, artistic, elegant, interesting sensualist. Henry Bolingbroke, on the other hand, was a strong man of affairs, who knew what he wanted, and knew also how to win it, and how to keep it.

The first incident in the play is a trial by battle between the Duke of Norfolk and Henry Bolingbroke. The combat is stopped by the king, who throws down his warder between the duellists, and banishes them both. Then follows the death of John of Gaunt, "time honoured Lancaster." The banished Henry of Bolingbroke becomes

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Duke of Lancaster, whereupon the king appropriates the Lancastrian inheritance, in order to provide funds for his impending expedition to Ireland. He makes no secret of his design, and of its motive, declaring that :

“The lining of his coffers shall make coats
To deck our soldiers for these Irish wars.”⁷⁸

This high-handed proceeding not only drove Henry Bolingbroke to desperation, but also served to increase the indignation and alarm, with which the king had begun to inspire nearly all the English nobles. His reign had been dotted with *coups d'etat*. Upon the occasion of the last of them, he had recently scourged his enemies with death or confiscation, and had gorged his favourites with spoils and high-sounding titles. He had now become utterly contemptuous of public opinion and of private right ; and his character had entered upon that *hubristic* stage, which is so often the forerunner of a tyrant's fall ; he had to depend for the government of his realm upon groups of high-born intimates, and of comparatively low-born instruments. When he conferred dukedoms upon three favourites, the people nicknamed them “Duketti” ; while his humbler ministers, Bushey, Bagot and Green, were happily hit off by Shakespeare as “the caterpillars of the commonwealth.”⁷⁹

The question naturally suggests itself—what can have induced the king, at such a moment, to abandon his kingdom, and to transfer the flower of his fighting forces to the other side of the Irish Channel ? The answer is, that Richard, while he was devoid of any settled principle or of any consistency of purpose, was not lacking in courage or daring. His pride was deeply involved in the suppression of Irish disorder. A few years back, when he had been a candidate for the

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Holy Roman Emperorship, one of the taunts, which had been successfully thrown in his teeth by his rivals, had been his inability to reduce to obedience his rebellious vassals in Ireland. One of the motives, which had prompted his former expedition in 1394, had been to wipe out this stigma. The taunt still rankled, and cut him all the more keenly, when his cousin and heir, the viceroy, Roger Mortimer Earl of March, was slain by the Leinstermen, as was described in the preceding chapter. It was then, to quote the words of Holinshed's *Chronicles*, that King Richard being "informed of the unruly parts and rebellious sturres of the Irishmen, was minded to appease the same, and specially to revenge the death of the Earl of March; whereupon, with a navie of two hundred sayles he passed over into Ireland on Sunday, being the morrow after Saint Petronella the Virgin's day."⁸⁰

The drama of *King Richard II* might have been rendered more interesting to Irish readers, if the dramatist had devoted an act of the play to the Irish campaign of 1399. In the first scene of the second act, the king departs from London for Ireland, and he next appears, in the second scene of the third act, on the coast of Wales, after two months absence across the Channel. We propose, in the present chapter, to supply the gap, and to sketch some of the episodes, which might have been fittingly borrowed from the incidents of the Irish expedition.

If Shakespeare had added to the piece a dramatic representation of the Irish campaign of 1399, the following would have been the principal characters on the stage:

King Richard II.

Art MacMurrough, "King" of Leinster.

John Montacute, Earl of Salisbury (Richard's only friend among the great English nobles).

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- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| Thomas Holland, Duke of Surrey,
Viceroy of Ireland,
John Holland, Duke of Exeter,
Edward Plantagenet, Duke of
Albemarle or Aumerle,
Thomas Despenser, Earl of Gloucester, a descendant
of Strongbow.
Prince Henry of Lancaster (afterwards Henry V).
Father Richard Maudelain, Richard's confidential
chaplain.
Creton, A French esquire and poet, the "Eye-
witness" of the campaign. | } | <i>Richard's three</i>
<i>"Duketti."</i> |
|---|---|---|

The sources of an Irish supplement to the Shakespearian play are ready to hand in a metrical description of the expedition, which was written by Creton, a French esquire and poet, who was a friend of the Earl of Salisbury, and accompanied him to the end of the campaign. He was what might be called, in modern parlance, the "Eyewitness" of the expedition, and his narrative has been accepted by historians as a trustworthy document.⁸¹

The expedition started from Milford Haven in South Wales, at the end of May, and Creton tells us that "in two days we came in sight of the Tower of Waterford in Ireland." There it stands to-day, more weather-beaten and war-stained, but the same in shape and outline as it was, when Richard and his companions sighted it from the deck of their flag-ship, on the morning of June 1st, 1399, nearly five hundred and twenty years ago. An effective scene, introducing the king and his chief comrades, might be laid under the shadow of the old tower on the riverside at Waterford. Creton tells us that the king was cordially welcomed "by the merchants and the common people"; and we may be sure that Waterford rang, as Milford, according to Creton, had rung,

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with "the sound of trumpets and the songs of minstrels." Waterford was a loyal city. Like Dublin, she had received advantageous charters, and had basked in royal sunshine. There are indications that King Richard was beginning to realize that in Ireland, as elsewhere, there was such a thing as reciprocity in the good relations of governor and governed, and that, especially where racial differences have to be reconciled, loyalty is usually born a twin.

If a scene had been staged at Waterford, the principal characters would have been the king, and his four most prominent companions. One of these was his half brother, John Holland, one of the "Duketti," whom he had recently made Duke of Exeter. Another was young Thomas Despenser, recently created Earl of Gloucester, who had Irish blood in his veins, for he was descended from Strongbow, and from Dermot MacMurrough, King of Leinster, through Isabel Marshal, heiress of Kilkenny. Her Kilkenny estates devolved upon the Despensers, and had, in 1391, been sold to the third Earl of Ormonde, whose successors occupy Kilkenny Castle at the present day. Despenser was married to the king's cousin, the Princess Constance of York. He was one of the king's favourites and intimates, and he was in command of the rearguard of the expedition. A third of the king's comrades at Waterford was John Montacute, Earl of Salisbury. He was almost the only independent noble who remained loyal at heart. The link between him and the king was, perhaps, a community of literary and artistic tastes. Salisbury was a poet, and a patron of poets. He was the author of "ballads, songs, roundels, and lays"; and the aesthetic pleasure-loving king found in him a congenial companion. The fourth of the king's *entourage* was a boy of thirteen, Prince Hal of Lancaster, afterwards Henry V.

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His father had been banished, but Richard was kind to the boy, and was giving him a baptism of war.

After spending a fortnight at Waterford the king marched to Kilkenny, where he remained for a week. Then he turned eastwards, and dived into the wooded and mountainous country which lay between Kilkenny and the coastline of Wicklow and Wexford. His object was to subdue his principal Irish enemy, Art MacMurrough, "King" of Leinster.

In Art MacMurrough we meet with a remarkable personality, worthy of portrayal by Shakespeare. He was a clear-headed forceful leader of men, and was the best general in the field that Ireland had produced since the day of Brian Boru. He sometimes called himself "King of Ireland," but he had no claim to the Ard-ri-ship. His dominion was a provincial one, and his province was at his back to a man. His grievance was no mere sentimental one. He had a substantial *casus belli*; for he had received such provocation as no man of his proud temperament could tolerate. In the first place he was entitled, by a regular contract, and by many years of enjoyment, to what was called a "black rent" of eighty marks a year from the Government of the Pale; and his black rent had fallen into arrear. In the second place he had married the Anglo-Norman Baroness of Norragh; and the king, either under colour of the Statute of Kilkenny, or on some other pretext, had confiscated her barony, and had conferred it upon one of his Holland relatives, whom he had recently made Duke of Surrey and Viceroy of Ireland.

If Shakespeare had devoted an act of his play to the Irish expedition, he would, in all probability, have allotted two scenes to the incidents of Richard's short campaign against the Leinstermen. The "alarums and excursions" would have taken the form of a guerilla warfare full of

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ambuscade, skirmish, and surprise. The campaign was short and disastrous. Art was a resolute commander, and a skilful tactician. He drew the enemy into a country of woods and morasses, where they could not effectively deploy; and, when they proceeded to cut a path through the forests, he harried their flanks, cut off their supplies, and forced them to endure terrible privations from hunger and exhaustion. It was during this campaign that young Prince Hal figured as the centre of a picturesque ceremony. In an open space cleared from the forest, under the shadow of floating pennons and of streaming standards, and within sight of burning villages, and of contending armies, the king knighted the young prince, addressing him as follows: "My fair cousin, henceforth be *preux* and valiant, for you have valiant blood to conquer." The metrical history of the campaign contains an illustration representing this scene. In the picture both king and prince are mounted, and the young prince bends his head over his horse's neck to receive the accolade.

Another scene occurred, before this short campaign came to an end, which would have been worthy of presentation on the stage. At the outset the king had sent a message to MacMurrough promising, if he would surrender, to grant him territories and castles by way of compensation for all he had lost. Art, who was looking not for compensation, but for his "black rent" and his wife's barony, rejected these proposals, and declared that "for all the gold in the world he would not submit, but would continue to fight and harass the king." He kept his word, until the king was driven to break up his camp amid shouts of defiance from the Irish, who, says the eyewitness, were "bold as lions, and gave many a hard blow to the king."

MacMurrough, when he saw that the king was

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decamping, dispatched a friar to express his desire for peace, and to ask that some lord should be sent to negotiate. The king sent young Despenser, Earl of Gloucester, who, as the descendant of Dermot, King of Leinster, was Art's cousin in the tenth degree. Gloucester, attended by his rear-guard, consisting of two hundred lances and a thousand archers, repaired to the appointed place of meeting between two woods near the sea. The Eyewitness gives a graphic description of this scene. From the adjacent mountain, which was covered with fighting men, Art MacMurrough suddenly descended, galloping so swiftly that, says Creton, "I never in all my life saw hare or deer or any other animal go with such speed as his horse." Creton goes on to describe Art as a very tall man, wondrously active, of stern indomitable mien, wielding in his right hand a long dart, which he cast from him with much skill. He rode bare-backed upon a horse which had cost him five hundred cows, and he managed it with great dexterity.

The interview was held at the side of a brook. The earl seems to have reproached the chieftain with having rebelled against the king, and with having been responsible for the death of Roger Mortimer. There was no offer of restoration of the Barony of Norragh. MacMurrough would yield nothing, demanding peace without reservation, and absolute freedom from molestation for his territory and property. Gloucester had no authority to agree to these terms, and the meeting broke up. When Richard heard the result of the conference, he grew pale with rage, and swore that he would never leave Ireland until he had taken MacMurrough dead or alive.

After the breakdown of the negotiations between MacMurrough and Gloucester, the king started for Dublin, where his jaded army found plenty of much-

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needed rest and refreshment. The Eyewitness describes the Irish capital as "a good city, standing upon the sea, and containing such abundance of merchandise and provisions, that it was said that neither flesh, nor fish, bread, corn, nor wine, nor other stores, were any dearer for all the army of the king."

Two fresh personages cross the stage in Dublin. These were Viceroy, and the king's confidential chaplain, Richard Maudelain.

The viceroy was the king's nephew of the half-blood, Thomas Holland, Duke of Surrey. He was one of the favourites who had been loaded with honours and spoils, including the Irish barony, which had belonged to Art MacMurrough's wife. Richard Maudelain was an interesting character. He was a priest of the royal chapel, who resembled his sovereign in form and speech, and was frequently entrusted by him with secret and perilous missions. The king had sent him forward to Dublin to prepare the Castle for his reception. The Eyewitness tells us that "many a time have I seen him in Ireland riding through the country with King Richard, his master ; nor for a long time did I see a fairer priest."

While Richard was resting in Dublin, he received two communications from England, the first of which brought him reinforcements, while the second was the herald of his downfall. Albemarle, one of his "Duketti," arrived with a hundred barges full of men and armaments. He had been anxiously expected, and his dilatoriness roused suspicions of treachery, which were strengthened by the course which he took, when news came of Henry Bolingbroke's landing in England, and of the success which was attending the Lancastrian revolt. The ship bringing the intelligence had been delayed by contrary winds, and there was no time to be lost. Richard's council were unanimously in favour of

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his immediate departure for North Wales, which was a stronghold of his adherents. Albemarle persuaded him to send Salisbury to North Wales, and to proceed to Waterford himself, so as to collect all his forces before passing over to England. The Eyewitness, who had no doubt that Albemarle was a traitor, laments that "anything he pleased Albemarle might have asked of King Richard, for I solemnly declare there was no man alive, brother or uncle, cousin, young nor old, whom he loved better." The result was disastrous. Salisbury was unable to keep the men of Wales together; and, when the king failed to appear, they believed him dead and dispersed to their homes. When Richard returned to England, he found himself deserted. Shakespeare attributes the catastrophe to the "contrarious winds that held the king so long in his unlucky Irish wars that all in England did repute him dead."⁸²

It is at this point that the third act of *King Richard II* again takes up the thread of history, and weaves, in dramatic form, the story of Richard's deposition and death. Nearly all the "caterpillars of the commonwealth" had already lost their heads. Most of the "Duketti," and of the other partakers in his ill-fated Irish expedition, followed the king to the scaffold. Exeter, Surrey, Salisbury, Despenser, and Richard Maudelain perished one by one. Maudelain is said to have been used to personate the king in order to encourage his adherents. Poor Maudelain, like the rest of Richard's friends, suffered execution; and his corpse is stated to have been shown to the people for that of the king. On the scaffold he thanked God "that he died in the service of his sovereign lord, the noble King Richard." There can be no doubt that he loved his master, and served him fearlessly and faithfully to the last. There were only two of the king's comrades in the Irish expedition who survived the catastrophe.

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Albemarle lived to succeed his father as Duke of York, and to fall at Agincourt. Prince Hal was destined to become the fabled friend of Falstaff, and the hero of Shakespeare's most patriotic play.

One of the objects of this chapter has been to render the play of *King Richard II* more interesting to Irish readers and playgoers, by reminding them how immediately the Irish expedition of 1399 brought about the *denouement* of Shakespeare's drama. The expedition itself was an historic event. Two hundred and ninety years passed before another King of England visited Ireland. The next occasion was when James II landed at Kinsale in 1689 upon an enterprise no less disastrous to its leader than the last voyage of Richard II.

King Richard II is the only one of Shakespeare's plays which came under the ban of the censorship. The deposition of an English sovereign was a subject upon which Queen Elizabeth was very sensitive; and King Richard's downfall was the nightmare of her life. Accordingly, the Master of the Revels, who was the Censor of that day, struck out one hundred and sixty-five lines in the deposition scene. These were the lines in which the king made his submission, and surrendered his crown. They were omitted in the two quarto editions of the play, which were published in Elizabeth's reign. It was not until 1608, after the accession of James I, that a third quarto was advertised "with new additions of the Parliament scene, and the deposing of King Richard." In a later chapter we shall find that, before the queen died, the censorship of *King Richard II* was justified by grave events, and that a campaign in Ireland became the cause of another national catastrophe, which made a deep impression upon Shakespeare.

CHAPTER XV

KING HENRY IV—HOTSPUR'S IRISH WOLFHOUND

LADY HOTSPUR—Lie still, ye thief, and hear the lady sing in Welsh.
HOTSPUR—I had better hear, my lady, my brach howl in Irish.
—*First Part of King Henry IV., Act III, scene i, line 238.*

The two plays which turn on the events of the troublous reign of King Henry IV are best known for the passages in which Sir John Falstaff is the central figure. Those passages will be the subject of some later chapters. In the meantime we shall find at least one link between Ireland and Shakespeare in a scene which is historical in the proper sense of that term.

The First Part of *King Henry IV* is mainly taken up with the rebellion of 1403, which is generally referred to in history as "the Percy rising." Its three leaders were Lord Percy, better known as Hotspur, Sir Edmund Mortimer, and Owen Glendower. There were several inducing causes of revolt, but its true political significance lay in the fact that King Henry IV was a usurper. The rightful heir to the throne was young Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March and Ulster, a boy now in his twelfth year, the son of that Roger Mortimer who had been killed in Ireland in 1398. All the leaders of the revolt were nearly allied with young Mortimer. Hotspur was married to his aunt; Sir Edmund Mortimer was his uncle, and was married to the daughter of Owen Glendower.

Shakespeare, following Holinshed, falls into a very

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curious error which runs through several of the plays. He confounds the two Edmund Mortimers, uncle and nephew, treating the uncle as the heir-presumptive to the throne. The mistake, fortunately, does not make much havoc with history, since Sir Edmund identified himself with the cause of his nephew. But, as a matter of fact, they were very different men. While Sir Edmund was raising the standard of revolt, his nephew remained a prisoner in the keeping of King Henry, who, just as Richard II had spared Prince Hal, treated the boy with kindness, bringing him up in a comfortable captivity with his own children, and never punishing him for his uncle's insurrectionary proceedings.

In Shakespeare's treatment of the Percy revolt, the characterization of the Percys, of the Mortimers, and of Glendower is admirable. Hotspur is a stormy and impetuous leader of revolt; Glendower is a grandiloquent and visionary Welshman; Sir Edmund Mortimer is a chivalrous and sentimental Anglo-Irishman. The Percys and the Mortimers are two couples of married lovers. All these characters figure in a scene, representing a meeting of the rebel chiefs at Bangor. It was upon this occasion that Hotspur, aided by his wife's good-humoured raillery, makes excellent fun of Edmund Mortimer, and his bride, who cannot understand a word of each other's language. Notwithstanding their inability to converse with each other, the Mortimers are so well-matched a pair, that Glendower, when speaking of Sir Edmund's approaching departure for the front, remarks:

“I am afraid my daughter will run mad,
So much she doteth on her Mortimer.”⁸³

Mortimer makes love as best he can by interpreter; promises to learn his wife's language; praises her “pretty

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Welsh"; and encourages her to sing a Welsh song. When Hotspur is disposed to show impatience at what he regards as outlandish music, his wife banteringly interrupts him with: "Lie still, ye thief, and hear the lady sing in Welsh." To which Hotspur retorts: "I had better hear, my lady, my brach howl in Irish."

Here we have an indubitable link with Ireland. Let us follow it up.


A "brach" was the polite word to describe a female wolf, fox, or hunting dog. Here it means an Irish hunting dog; and, if any Irishman be curious to know what manner of a hunting dog this particular "brach" is likely to have been, his curiosity can be easily satisfied. Let him refer to the *History of the Irish Wolfdog*,⁸⁴ by the Reverend Edmund Hogan, S.J.; a perusal of which will leave little doubt on his mind that Hotspur's "brach" was a handsome wolfdog, of the greyhound type, but of a much larger and stronger build, and that its colour was probably either white, black, or brindled cinnamond.

Ireland was, from the earliest time, famous for her hunting dogs. The allusions to them, which are found in the writings and in the correspondence of the Middle Ages, seem like a continuation of those which occur in the ancient legends. The mass of these references, both legendary and historical, afford cumulative evidence that the Irish wolfhound of the Lancastrian and Tudor times was a large powerful dog, combining the strength of a mastiff with the speed of a greyhound, and that it was the product of centuries of breeding in the kennel, and of training in the field.

The Irish word for greyhound was *Cu*; and, such was the prestige of this breed of dog, that the word was introduced unto the name of Cuchulain and of other national heroes. The *Sons of Usnach*, according to what is perhaps the most famous of all the Gaelic legends, are

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said to have carried one hundred and fifty hounds with them in their flight to Scotland; and, when Déirdre was mourning over their graves, the burthen of her lament was that "their hounds were now without their hunters." In a legend of the same era (about the first century A.D.) we read of a celebrated greyhound for which the Kings of Connaught and Ulster bid against each other up to 6,000 cows, and afterwards fought a sanguinary battle. Among the most famous dogs of the Irish saga was Failinis, the property of a King of Iruiaide, which was compared by poets to a thunderbolt, and to the Sun speeding along on chariot-wheels of fire. Failinis was represented as stronger than the common greyhound, because he was described as "irresistible in hardness of fight." Another legendary hunting dog was Conbee, Finn mac Cool's favourite among the three hundred hounds which were in his kennel:



"Conbee of perfect symmetry,
I have not seen a more expert of foot
In the wake of wild boar or stag.

Never have I seen one more expert of foot
At killing of a buck without delay."

These legendary references would have little significance, if they were not confirmed by historical evidence relating to what was almost the same era. We find in the correspondence of Symmachus, Roman Consul in the year 391, a letter to his brother, Flavianus, thanking him for a gift of seven Irish dogs for the arena. He adds that "all Rome viewed them with wonder, and fancied that they must have been brought hither in iron cages."

These early allusions to the strength and fame of the Irish hunting dog explain how it came about that,

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throughout the Middle Ages, they were known all over the world for their strength and speed, and were regarded as amongst the characteristic treasures of the island. The author of the book already alluded to has collected a vast amount of information upon the subject, extending over centuries, from the earliest times to long after Shakespeare's day, from which it appears that the big deer-hunting and wolf-hunting greyhounds of Ireland "were sent as highly-prized presents to kings of England and Scotland, France, Spain, Sweden, Denmark, and Poland; to Emperors, Great Moguls, Grand Turks, and Shahs of Persia; to Grand Dukes, Grandees of Spain, Cardinals, Ambassadors, Papal Nuncios, French Princes, and Dutch noblemen; to Prime Ministers, noblemen and high-born beauties of Great Britain." A reference to some of the occasions between the reigns of John and Elizabeth, when Irish wolfhounds were sent from Ireland to English and foreign notabilities, will leave very little doubt on the reader's mind as to the breed of Hotspur's "brach."

Let us glance through the pages of the *History of the Irish Wolfdog*. About the year 1210 we find King John giving an Irish hound to Llewellyn, Prince of Wales; Edward I, about 1280, ordering deerhounds, which he called *Brachetti cerviricii*, or "deer-hunting braches," to be sent to him from Ireland; King Edward III, in 1335, sending his huntsman, Reginald, to Ireland to procure hunting dogs, and thus obtaining nineteen of them from the kennels of various Irish lords; Philip Roche of Kinsale sending two greyhounds in 1535 to Thomas Cromwell; Henry VIII in 1545 interesting himself in procuring greyhounds from Ireland for the Spanish Duke of Albuquerque; Shane O'Neill in 1562 forwarding to Elizabeth, through the Earl of Leicester, two hounds from his Ulster kennels; Father Campion

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writing from Ireland in May 1571, that "they (the Irish) are not without wolves, and greyhounds to hunt them bigger of bone and limb than a colt"; Lord Deputy Perrott in 1585 sending to Walsingham a brace of good wolf-dogs, one black and one white; Stanyhurst in 1586 adopting Father Campion's description of the Irish greyhound in the volume of Holinshed's *Chronicles*, which we know to have been in Shakespeare's library.

Several instances of the exportation of Irish wolfhounds occur in the period during which Shakespeare was writing his plays. For example, in 1591 Brian O'Rorke, an Irish chieftain, arrived in Glasgow with four great dogs, to be presented to the King of Scotland. In January 1596, about the time when the plays of *King Henry IV* were written, Henry the Great of France wrote to Shakespeare's friend Essex, "to the other obligations that I am under to you, I must add this one, that you procure me a greyhound of Ireland and a bitch of the same race, in order that I may keep up the breed. You know how much I love the chase, and this gift will enable me to while away time, and sometimes to capture wild boars." It was about 1596 that the Spanish poet, Lope de Vega, wrote a sonnet about the Irish greyhound, descriptive of its beauty and strength. In 1600 Doctor Peter Lombard, Primate of Armagh, wrote of the Irish dogs as "the fairest and best hunting dogs of all Europe," and especially of those used for "capturing stags, boars, and wolves." In 1601 Fynes Morrison writes of "the great stature of the men and greyhounds of Ireland."

The breed was maintained for a century after Shakespeare's day, and some interesting gifts of wolfhounds have been recorded which are worth citing. For example: in the seventeenth century, we find instances of Irish greyhounds or wolfhounds being procured by

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Captain Esmonde of County Wexford, for the Earl of Shrewsbury ; for the Great Mogul, by Sir Thomas Roe, English Minister at his Court ; by the Lord Deputy in Dublin for the Spanish Ambassador in London ; by the Lord Deputy Falkland for the Duke of Buccleugh ; and by Primate Ussher for Cardinal Richelieu.

The Nuncio Rinuccini mentions in his memoirs that he carried a wolfhound back to Italy from Ireland in 1649, and presented it to the Grand Duke of Tuscany. It had belonged to the "great" Duke of Ormond, and came into the Nuncio's possession at Kilkenny in 1646. He describes it as a "most noble molossus, very well able to overcome wolves and stags in fleetness, fighting, and power ; an animal, which by his majesty, great size, his marvellous variegations of colour, and the proportions of his limbs, is so valuable as to be a gift fit to be presented to any emperor in the world." From this description it is probable that this dog was of the brindled cinnamond colour. White was a commoner colour, and black was sometimes met with. A few years after Rinuccini had left Ireland, Dorothy Osborne is found writing to her future husband, Sir William Temple, that Henry Cromwell had sent her from Ireland the finest pair of greyhound puppies that ever she had seen. Dorothy loved a big dog ; but the adage "love me, love my dog" did not help Henry Cromwell in his courtship ; for she became the wife of Sir William Temple very soon afterwards. In Henry Cromwell's time it was no easy task to obtain these puppies, since the Irish Government, in view of the prevalence of wolves in the country, went so far as to prohibit any exportation of wolfhounds.

In view of what we know about the celebrity of this breed of dogs, it seems in the highest degree probable that when Hotspur, in the scene at Bangor, spoke of his

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Irish "brach," he was referring to one of the deer-hunting, wolf-hunting greyhounds, who were so much prized and so widely distributed. The dog may, perhaps, have been a present from his brother-in-law, Roger Mortimer, lately Viceroy of Ireland, with whom he had been so closely associated by both domestic and political ties? Be that as it may, it is pathetic to remember that Hotspur did not long survive this breezy conversation. The Percy rising ended in the defeat of the rebels near Shrewsbury, on July 21st, 1403, and Hotspur's Irish "brach" never again heard his master's cheery voice.

CHAPTER XVI

FALSTAFF AND FASTOLF

Scrope's widow, Millicent, daughter and heiress of Robert, Lord Tiptoft, married in 1409, the afterwards noted Sir John Fastolf of Norfolk, serving in that time in Ireland as an Esquire.

—*Gilbert's "History of the Viceroy's of Ireland,"* p. 300.

Although there is an Irish strain in some of Falstaff's rollicking fun, it is not recorded that the fat and famous knight ever crossed the Channel ; and it is disappointing to find that he, who in his last hours "babbled about green fields," is peculiarly reticent about the green island. Nevertheless, Ireland has paid Falstaff with good for evil, by producing the most life-like of all the interpreters of his part in the person of the Irish actor, James Quin. Quin was a rival of Garrick's, and they acted at Covent Garden in the winter of 1746, in a series of competitive performances, which were followed with great interest by the playgoing public. It was the general verdict that Garrick, who was the younger man by twenty years, surpassed Quin as Richard III, but that Quin remained without a superior in his delineation of Falstaff. That he looked the part can be ascertained by a visit to the Irish National Portrait Gallery, which contains a fine picture of the actor in his favourite character. Quin's conspicuous success as Falstaff was probably due to the fact that it exactly suited his personality. His own distinctive qualities always coloured his rendering of his parts. It was of him that Churchill wrote :

"Nature in spite of all his skill crept in,
Horatio, Dorax, Falstaff, still 'twas Quin."

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The original model for the character of Falstaff was Sir John Oldcastle, the Lollard leader, who was executed in the reign of King Henry V (1417), as an outlawed traitor and convicted heretic. When the play was first produced, Shakespeare gave the name of Sir John Oldcastle to the part. It is by no means certain that Sir John Oldcastle was really much older than Prince Hal, or that he was his boon-companion, or that he ever led the life of a roysterer. Nevertheless, his reputation suffered so severely in the political and religious controversies, in which he took a prominent part, that, before Shakespeare had noticed him, he had already figured on the Elizabethan stage as a comic swashbuckler, and an "aged counsellor of youthful sin." When Shakespeare first enlisted him as one of his characters, Sir John Oldcastle had been dead for one hundred and eighty years. The dramatist troubled himself very little about the personality of the old Lollard. He found him in a chronicle play, and he worked him up into one of the best of his creations. When the descendants of Sir John Oldcastle protested against the defamation of their ancestor, the queen appears to have intervened, and the dramatist had to discard the name and look for another. We need not concern ourselves any more with Sir John Oldcastle, because he never favoured Ireland with his presence.

In his search for a substitute for Sir John Oldcastle, the dramatist pitched upon a certain Sir John Fastolf, whose descendants (if any) might with justice have complained of the use that was made of his name. There is no ground for the supposition that the real Sir John Fastolf was the boon-companion of Prince Hal, or that he was a needy old spendthrift, or a disreputable debauchee. On the contrary he appears to have been a level-headed man of business, who did not strike his

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contemporaries as being either a jester or a *bon camarade*. The real Sir John Fastolf must have been familiar to the dramatist, because he figures in the *First Part of King Henry VI*, a play of which Shakespeare was the reviser.

Sir Sidney Lee has discovered all that is discoverable about the real Sir John.⁸⁵ We know that his career ran the greater part of its course in the reigns of Henry V and Henry VI. As a young man he was sent to Ireland in the train of the king's son, Prince Thomas of Lancaster, who became viceroy in 1401. During the next decade Ireland saw a great deal of Sir John, and it was there that he married Milicent, daughter and co-heiress of Robert, third Lord Tiptoft, and widow of the Lord Deputy, Sir Stephen Scrope. The lady belonged to one of the richest and most influential families of that time. It was a Lord Tiptoft of a later generation who became Earl of Worcester, and Lord Deputy of Ireland, in the reign of Edward IV. He presided over the attainder and execution at Drogheda, of the eighth Earl of Desmond; and won the ill-sounding nickname of "the Butcher of England."

Sir John Fastolf seems to have terminated his connection with Ireland soon after his marriage to the Tiptoft heiress. He served with much distinction in both military and civil employments, and became a Knight of the Garter. In 1429 he incurred a charge of cowardice in the campaign against Joan of Arc, and was publicly stripped of his Garter and of his honours by Talbot, first Earl of Shrewsbury. His innocence of the charge was afterwards established, and he was restored to his honours and employments. But his public disgrace was remembered long after his rehabilitation had been forgotten. This is made evident by the light in which he is represented by the dramatist in the *First Part of King Henry VI*.

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Although the name of Falstaff may have suggested itself to the dramatist on account of the tradition of Sir John Fastolf's poltroonery in the French wars; it must not be supposed that the dramatist intended to represent his own Sir John as a common coward. Anyone who notes the glimpses which Shakespeare gives us of the old fellow's past career, and carefully observes the way in which he is regarded by the other persons in the play, will probably come to the conclusion that there was more of frolic than of physical fear in his absurd escapades.

When we are first introduced to Falstaff, he is an obese old buffoon of seventy; but we learn from his contemporaries that he had once been young, and gay, and graceful. There was a time, as his old friend, Justice Shallow tells us, when the knight had been a dashing young page in the train of the Duke of Norfolk. In those days his figure had been so slight, that he could have crawled through "an alderman's thumb-ring," and his waist might have been girdled by "an eagle's talon." We are also informed that young Falstaff had been "a good back-swordman," and had been seen to break the head of a notorious bruiser named Skogan, "at the Court gate."⁸⁶ Such had been Falstaff's golden youth. We know nothing about his intermediate years, except that he was a soldier by profession; that he had won a military knighthood and a pension; that he had contracted dissipated habits; and that he had drifted into a social circle, which it would be euphemistic to describe as super-Bohemian. When he makes his first bow to the public, he is a "dugout" of "dugouts"; long past the military age, but still "doing his bit"; and giving just such a touch of humour to the wars of King Henry IV, as "Old Bill" has provided for the soldiers of our present king.

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Falstaff was not lacking in a certain rough dignity of character. In his letter to the Prince he signed himself "Jack Falstaff with my familiars, John with my brothers and sisters, and Sir John with all Europe." He was not a Bobadil, or a mere *miles gloriosus*. There was more humour than vanity in his egoism, and more banter than brag in his boasting. His was a complex character, perhaps the most complex of all Shakespeare's creations, except Hamlet. He was not a coward in the ordinary acceptation of that term; and to represent him as such is to attempt to solve a complex character-problem by transmuting comedy into mere pantomime. When the "sober-blooded" Prince John of Lancaster reproached him for his "tardy tricks" in reaching the field of operations, he did not suggest that it was cowardice that made him late. Perhaps he suspected him of loitering too long at the way-side taverns.

The charge of cowardice against Falstaff rests principally upon his vagaries at Gadshill and at Shrewsbury. But he did not run away at Gadshill until all his companions had deserted him; and, on the evening of the escapade, Prince Hal still thought him qualified for "a charge of foot." When he counterfeited death at the battle of Shrewsbury, the old playboy was resorting to a humorous *ruse de guerre*. He was a professional old soldier, who had outlived all those illusions which colour the day-dreams of the young recruit. He had seen too much of the seamy side of military life, to be any longer caught by its glamour. He knew all the tricks of the barrack yard and the camp, and was not disposed to allow the hardships of campaigning to interfere unduly with its *wejn, weib und gesang*.⁸⁷

In his lifetime the real Sir John Fastolf had an advantage over his stage namesake, because he spent several years in Ireland, while Shakespeare never gave

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his Fat Knight leave to cross the Channel. But many a time, in the three centuries which have intervened, has Sir John Falstaff visited our country to receive a warmer welcome than ever was extended to his prototype. His best interpreter was an Irishman; and, according to our stage traditions, he was no poltroon, as Shakespeare made him, and as James Quin played him.

CHAPTER XVII

KING HENRY IV—THE JAIL JOURNAL

Oh ! I have much to say in the behalf of that Falstaff.—*John Mitchel.*

What is perhaps the most interesting allusion to Sir John Falstaff, in the whole range of Irish literature, is to be found in the *Jail Journal* of John Mitchel. John Mitchel, on the second day after he had been convicted of treason by a Dublin jury, and sentenced by Baron Lefroy to fourteen years' transportation, found himself at Spike Island on his way to the convict station at Bermuda. Having donned, for the first time, his brown convict clothes, he turned to his friend Shakespeare, and found consolation and distraction in the society of Sir John Falstaff. Let us read the entry in his *Jail Journal* :⁸⁸

“ Drew my chair to the door, sat down in the sun, and spent an hour or two in reading the *Merry Wives of Windsor*. Thank God for Shakespeare at any rate. Baron Lefroy cannot sentence Shakespeare to death, nor so much as mulct him for damages, though I am told he deserves it for defamation of character, in the case of Sir John Falstaff. The real Falstaff, or Fastolf, I am assured, was a very grave and valiant knight, and built the great castle of Caistor to dwell in ; never drank sack in Eastcheap, nor made love in Windsor ; was neither poor, fat, nor witty, like our Sir John, but was, in fact, as like two other good knights of the period as one shotten herring is like another shotten herring.

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Well; suppose all this to be what you call true, which, then, is the more real and substantial man? I hold that our Sir John is the authentic Sir John, and that your Fastolf was an impostor. Why, I have seen the man, and laughed with him a hundred times: for though he is fat and groweth old, and his hair is grey, yet the fine old fellow will never die—in truth he was born with a grey head and something of a round belly. And so he can take his sack still, witty himself, and the cause of wit in others even to this day. Oh! I have much to say in the behalf of that Falstaff.”

Falstaff was not the only Shakespearian character who kept John Mitchel company. When he arrived in the West Indies, his thoughts naturally turned to *The Tempest*. Three weeks after he had inserted in his *Journal* the entry, which has just been quoted, he had landed in the Bermudas, and was noting down the reflections which were suggested by his new surroundings. He recalls how the celebrated George Berkeley desired to establish a Missionary College in the Bermudas for the conversion of Red Indians to Christianity; how his enterprise broke down, owing to the failure of the British Government to give a grant of money and a charter for the purpose; how the government consoled him with the Bishopric of Cloyne; and how the bishop “philosophised and fiddled till he died.” Mitchel proceeds: “It was to Bermuda, also, that Prospero, on a certain night, sent his Ariel ‘to fetch dew.’ Albeit, one might hardly know these isles for the still vexed Bermoothes, for they lie sleeping on the glassy sea to-day, as tranquil as an infant on its mother’s bosom.” He was, of course, referring to Ariel’s words in *The Tempest*, where Prospero asks him what he has done with the vessel of the shipwrecked King of Naples. Ariel replies:

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“Safely in harbour
Is the king’s ship in the deep nook, where once
Thou call’st me up at midnight to fetch dew
From the still vext Bermoothes.”⁸⁹

This passage lingered in John Mitchel’s memory, for we find him, a month afterwards, making the following entry in his *Journal*: “A month in Bermuda, and there has not been one shower; but a heavy dew at night which it seems Prospero was aware of.”⁹⁰

Six months pass, and John Mitchel tells us of the books in company with which he wiled away a West Indian winter. Most of the volumes at his disposal he describes as so worthless “that there is no use in remembering so much as their names,” but he adds that he has read some good books, including “an old Dublin copy of *Rabelais*, in four volumes, imprinted by Philip Crampton of Dame Street,” which “has kept me in good wholesome laughter for a fortnight. . . . With Shakespeare, also, I hold much gay and serious intercourse; and I have read, since coming here, three or four dialogues of Plato, with the critical diligence of a junior sophister.”

How infinite have been the ramifications of Shakespeare’s power of touching the emotions! By a wave of his magical wand a prison cell is filled with a witty and congenial company.

Ireland need never feel ashamed of liking Jack Falstaff. While he lived he scattered mirth, pleasantry, and good nature wherever he moved. If he was without moral virtues, he was also without meanness, malice, or pretence. The accusing spirits, who are charged with the office of carrying men’s profanities and mendacities to heaven’s chancery, may have had a busy time with the old knight; but let us hope that the recording angels, whose function it is to write such things down, had enough sense of

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humour to blot them all out with tears of laughter. When we turn away from him, we are tempted to echo Prince Hal's epitaph, and to say: "Poor Jack Falstaff, we could have better spared a better man." But we need never put on mourning for Poor Jack. Just as Prince Hal found out at Shrewsbury that the old playboy was not really dead; so we may console ourselves with the reflection that, although the real Sir John shuffled off this mortal coil in 1459, Shakespeare's Falstaff is as much alive to-day as when the dramatist created him.

CHAPTER XVIII

KING HENRY V, AND THE MERRY WIVES
OF WINDSOR—FALSTAFF'S CIRCLE

When as I view your comely grace,
Calen O custure me,
Your golden haire, your angel's face,
Calen O custure me.

—Gaelic song quoted by Pistol.

Ireland, although Falstaff had very little to say about her, did not altogether escape the notice of the disreputable but laughter-provoking band of comic characters, who helped the fat knight to enliven the lighter scenes of the plays of *King Henry IV* and of the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, and lingered on in *King Henry V* to mourn their master's loss. What a mad and merry platoon they make, commanded by Lieutenant Bardolph, and graced by the feminine comradeship of the lady publican of Eastcheap, who, after she married Pistol, was respectfully referred to by him as "the *quondam* Quickly."⁹¹ In such company we do not flatter ourselves that we shall find a discriminating appreciation of the poetry and romance of Irish life. On the contrary, we expect to meet with some humorous allusions to its tavern side, and we are not disappointed.

There was in Shakespeare's time a popular ballad entitled "Fortune, my Foe," the first line of which was,

"Fortune my foe, why dost thou frown on me?"

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It was set to an Irish tune, which is to be found in the songbooks of that day. It was played by Irish pipers as a military march. It was also used for the lamentations which were chanted on the occasion of the execution of extraordinary criminals, and, on that account, was sometimes called the Hanging Tune. It is twice alluded to in the plays. In the *Merry Wives*, Sir John Falstaff gallantly suggests to Mrs. Ford that if fortune were not her foe, she would make an ideal Court lady, "moving about in a semicircled farthingale."⁹² In *Henry V* we find Pistol endeavouring to persuade the Welshman Fluellen, to exert his influence to procure the pardon of Bardolph, who has been sentenced to be hanged for a very grave theft. Lieutenant Bardolph had risen from the ranks, having been Falstaff's corporal. On account of his red, pimply nose, Sir John had christened him the Knight of the Burning Lamp, and had declared that Bardolph "saved him a thousand marks in links and torches," because his fiery proboscis illuminated the way which the Fat Knight used to tread from one tavern to another. Poor Bardolph was now in a desperate situation, and attributed his sad plight to "an unlucky turn of fortune's furious fickle wheel." Fluellen proceeds to moralise upon the proverbial blindness and mutability of the goddess of destiny; and Pistol sums up his friend's case in the line:

"Fortune is Bardolph's foe and frowns on him."⁹³

The plea of theft by misfortune was of no avail. The "Knight of the Burning Lamp" suffered the grim penalty of his crime; and history does not relate whether the Hanging Tune was played on the occasion of his execution.

Another Irish song is alluded to in an amusing

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dialogue which occurs in *King Henry V*, between Pistol and a French soldier, whom he had taken prisoner at the battle of Agincourt. As both captor and captive were ignorant of each other's language, their questions and answers are freely interpreted by an intelligent camp boy. Ultimately Pistol agrees to spare his captive's life in consideration of a promised ransom of two hundred crowns. In the course of this conversation Pistol caps his prisoner's foreign lingo by exclaiming, according to the text of the play, *calmie custure me*.⁹⁴ The earlier commentators suggested several ingenious emendations of these mysterious words, the most plausible of which was that "custure" was a misprint for "construe," and that Pistol was requesting the French soldier to construe, or, in other words, to explain his meaning. . . . It remained for the Irish critic, Malone, to discover the true solution of the mystery. Pistol was quoting the Gaelic refrain of a well-known song, which appears in several musical books of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries under the title of "Calen O (or Calino or Caillino) custure me." These words are said by one writer to mean "little girl of my heart for ever and ever"; and by another to be an attempt to spell, and nearly to express the sound of *Caillínóg, a stór*, meaning "young girl, my treasure." Professor Osborn Bergin has made it clear that none of these translations are satisfactory; and it would appear that a plausible claim to the song has been put in on behalf of Scottish Gaeldom. Be this as it may, the song seems to have been regarded as an Irish one in Shakespeare's day, and is so described by the majority of the writers who have referred to the subject.⁹⁵

Let us quote a stanza, in which a lover composes a nosegay of gallant compliments for his lady :

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with my butter, Parson Hugh the Welshman with my cheese, an Irishman with my *aqua-vitæ* bottle, than my wife with herself."⁹⁷ The allusion is to whiskey, in Irish *uisge beatha*, meaning the "water of life," like the French *eau de vie* and the Latin *aqua-vitæ*. Here we have irrefutable evidence that one of our national beverages was known to the toppers of Queen Elizabeth's day. Perhaps it was *usquebaugh* that Sir John Falstaff was thinking of in the same play, when he consoled himself with the grim reflection: "I think the devil will not have me damned, lest the oil that's in me should set hell on fire."⁹⁸

We have seen in the last chapter how Sir John Falstaff succeeded in dispelling the gloom of John Mitchel's prison cell. Another Irishman has recently mentioned that his prison thoughts carried him into the circle of whom Sir John Falstaff was the centre. In a *Chronicle of Jails*⁹⁹ Mr. Darrell Figgis, from whose writings about Shakespeare we have already had occasion to quote, relates his experiences and impressions while a prisoner at Castlebar, Stafford, and Reading jails, after the rebellion of Easter Week 1916. When a warder informed him that one of his fellow-prisoners had become so depressed as to give himself up to prayer, Mr. Darrell Figgis refused to allow that things were so desperate. The incident served to remind him of the consolatory reflection, with which Mrs. Quickly strove to divert Sir John Falstaff from serious thoughts in his last moments and to persuade him that he was on the road to recovery. "I thought," he writes, "of Dame Quickly with her 'Now I to comfort him, bid him a' should not think of God; I hoped there was no need to bother himself with any such thoughts.'"¹⁰⁰

It is no wonder that citizens, who are disaffected to the constituted authorities, should feel drawn to Falstaff;

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for the old knight, although a loyal officer, never adopted a stern attitude towards revolt. Did he not, on his appointment to an infantry command, frankly declare to Prince Hal? "I would it had been of horse. . . . Well, God be thanked for these rebels, they offend none but the virtuous: I laud them, I praise them!"¹⁰¹ Perhaps it was fortunate for the loquacious old reprobate that there was no such stern personage in his day as the lady we now know as D.O.R.A. to take notice of such "blazing indiscretions."

CHAPTER XIX

KING HENRY V—CAPTAIN MACMORRICE

A very valiant gentleman i' faith.

—*King Henry V, Act III, scene ii, line 171.*

In the long list of Shakespeare's dramatic characters there is only one stage Irishman. He is an officer serving in France, who makes his appearance in an interlude,¹⁰² which is introduced into one of the scenes of *King Henry V*. He figures on the boards for a few minutes, and then vanishes never to return.

The scene is laid at the siege of Harfleur, which was the opening episode in the campaign of Agincourt. The Duke of Gloucester is in command of the besieging forces; and the king accompanies his army. It is during the investment of Harfleur that the dramatist introduces us to four captains representing the four countries from which the king's army was drawn. These were an Englisman named *Gower*, a Welshman named *Fluellen*, a Scot named *Jamie*, and an Irishman the spelling of whose name raises the first of several questions which surround his personality. In modern editions of the play his name is usually spelt *Macmorris*. But in the folio of 1623, where it originally appears, it is spelt in some places *Macmorrice* and in other places *Mackmorrice*. As the spelling in the folio is more likely to be the correct one, we propose to write of Shakespeare's stage Irishman as *Captain Macmorrice*. The succeeding chapters will be devoted to the problem of his origin and

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ancestry. Let us glance at the idiosyncrasies which the dramatist attributes to him and to his fellow-captains.

The English officer's characterization is not very pronounced. But the others are drawn to type. *Fluellen* is a quaint pedantic person, who believes in scientific soldiering and in the military learning of former ages, which he describes as "the true disciplines of the wars." He has a special hankering after "the disciplines of the pristine wars of the Romans"; and he has a profound contempt for the Irish captain who, according to him, is no more acquainted with "the true disciplines of war, look you, of the Roman disciplines than is a puppy dog." *Jamie* is a shrewd canny fellow, who never gives himself away, but encourages the Irishman and the Welshman to quarrel. "Marry," says he, "I wad full fain hear some question 'tween you twa."

Although *Captain Macmorrice* may not have been versed in the ancient history of warfare, it is made abundantly clear that he was not only a sound practical soldier and a good fighting man in the field, but that he had won the confidence both of his superiors and of his equals. *Captain Gower* describes him as "a very valiant gentleman," and says that the commander-in-chief, the Duke of Gloucester, was "altogether directed by" him. When *Fluellen* invites the Irishman to discuss with him the disciplines of the wars and especially of the Roman wars, *Macmorrice* grows indignant at such unseasonable inactivity. "It is no time," he protests, "to discourse, so Chrish save me: the day is hot, and the weather, and the wars, and the king, and the dukes: it is no time to discourse. The town is beseeched, and the trumpet calls us to the breach; and we talk, and, be Chrish, do nothing: 'tis shame for us all: so God sa' me, 'tis shame to stand still; it is shame, by my hand, and there is throats to be cut, and works to be done; and

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there is nothing done, so Chrish save me, la!" It is not surprising that the Duke of Gloucester should have preferred to be directed by this slashing Irishman than by the Welsh *doctrinaire*.

In an unguarded moment the Welshman makes mention of the Irishman's "nation." *Macmorrice* replies in terms which are a little obscure, unless there is some double meaning in the word "nation." We quote his retort according to what is now the generally accepted emendation. "Of my nation! What ish my nation? What ish my nation? Who talks of my nation ish a villain, and a bastard, and a knave, and a rascal!" It is worthy of consideration whether the question, "What ish my nation?" does not involve a reference to a particular sense of that word. One of the dictionary meanings of the word "nation" is "an Irish clan." We shall find in a subsequent chapter that, in Shakespeare's age, the chief of the MacMorrises of Mayo was referred to as the chief "of his nation." We know that the title *capitanus nationis suæ* was commonly used in official documents as the correct description of the chiefs of the O'Briens, the Burkes, the O'Flaherties, and of other clans whether native or Anglo-Norman. Is it not possible that, when *Captain Macmorrice* asks "What ish my nation?" he had in his mind the meaning which the word had for him as an Irish clansman? ¹⁰³

The Irishman's declamatory outburst over the word "nation" draws from the Welshman a polite but incisive rejoinder:

"FLUELLEN. Look you, if you take the matter otherwise than is meant, Captain Macmorrice, peradventure I shall think you do not use me with that affability as in discretion you ought to use me, look you, being as good a man as yourself both in the disciplines of war, and in the derivation of my birth, and in other particularities."

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This claim of equality of rank and dignity draws an indignant retort from the Irish captain :

“MACMORRICE. I do not know you so good a man as myself : so Chrish save, I will cut off your head.”

When the scene reaches this critical point the sound of distant trumpets recalls the two officers to duty, and saves the Welshman from the risk of imminent decapitation. While *Captain Gower* endeavours to throw oil on the troubled waters, *Captain Jamie* displays disappointment that such a promising quarrel should have been so quickly composed. Here we have Shakespeare's stage Irishman presented as a choleric and sensitive, but at the same time as a valiant and effective, soldier.

The interlude, in which the Irishman takes part, occupies only seventy-four lines. It does not occur in any of the three quarto editions of the play, which were published in the years 1600, 1602, and 1608 respectively. It is in the folio of 1623 that it is printed for the first time. Thereby hangs a tale. These early editions of *King Henry V* were so imperfect and corrupt, that they are generally believed to have been unauthorized versions made up from shorthand notes taken down at the theatre. As a matter of fact upwards of five hundred lines, which are to be found in the folio edition, are absent from the quartos. The defective character of the older versions of the play would suffice to account for the omission of this interlude. But there is a great deal to be said for another and a more interesting theory. It is thought by some writers that this portion of the scene, which does not help the action of the piece and is not entirely consistent with what precedes and follows it, was interpolated by the dramatist after the accession of James I, either in support of the Scottish policy of a union between the four nations comprised in the British Isles, or simply to gratify the king, who favoured that

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policy, and also liked seeing his countrymen represented in favourable colours on the stage.

The plan of reconciling Scotland to England was naturally very acceptable to the Scottish king. He was also believed to sympathize with a policy of reconciliation in Ireland. A policy of that kind was associated in the public mind with the party which had been led by the second Earl of Essex, and had included Shakespeare's friend Southampton. This explanation of the scene, and of its appearance for the first time in print after the accession of James I, is an attractive one, and deserves consideration and inquiry. The same topic will be alluded to in a later chapter.

Dr. George Brandes, in his *Critical Study* of Shakespeare's Plays, remarks that "in placing on the stage three representatives of the different English-speaking peoples, Shakespeare had another and deeper purpose than that of amusing the public with a medley of dialects. At that time the Scots were still the hereditary enemies of England, who always attacked her in the rear whenever she went to war, and the Irish were actually in open rebellion. Shakespeare evidently dreamed of a greater England, as we nowadays speak of a greater Britain."¹⁰⁴ Doctor Brandes' theory may fail to receive universal acceptance; but it is entirely in keeping with Shakespeare's attitude of mind towards affairs of state. He thought imperially; but his imperial aspirations always ran upon lines that were tolerant and synthetic.

CHAPTER XX

KING HENRY V—WAS CAPTAIN MACMORRICE A LEINSTER MAN ?

Dermot Macmourche, King of Leinster, and governor of the fifth part of Ireland, possessed all the East partes of the isle.—*Holinshed*.

What part of Ireland did *Captain Macmorrice* hail from? Why, when the dramatist set himself to personify an Irish officer, did he select that particular name as the most suitable one? This question presents a puzzle, because at the present day Macmorrice is not a familiar surname in Ireland. Perhaps the attempt to solve such a problem may strike some readers as a vain pursuit. Yet, surely, when the quarry is a link between Ireland and Shakespeare, the chase can never be quite devoid of interest for an Irishman.

The dramatist must have regarded *Macmorrice* as a characteristically Irish name. His captains were national types, and he chose names to fit them. The name *Fluellen* was a variant of Llywelyn, the surname of the line of princes of North Wales, who were famous in history for having championed the independence of their principality throughout the thirteenth century. There were plenty of Llywelyns in Shakespeare's time. A Llywelyn of Llangewydd was a celebrated bard of Glamorganshire, who devoted his life to the study of the traditional lore of Wales, and especially of the bardic order. He lived during the whole period of Shakespeare's activity, and died in the same year as our dramatist.¹⁰⁵

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James had been the name borne by six of the kings of Scotland, and *Jamie* was a familiar soubriquet for a Scotsman. It has been mentioned that this scene was probably interpolated into the play after James I came to the throne. If so, the choice of this name for his Scottish captain was one of the many compliments, which the poet paid to the successor of Queen Elizabeth.

The name *Macmorrice* is hardly to be found in any modern book of reference. On the other hand, a search through the Irish Annals and public records from the thirteenth century down to Shakespeare's day, makes it evident that this surname, or some variant of it, was well known in three of the provinces of Ireland. It was borne by nobles, by rebels, and by fighting men. Most of them lived their lives in the twilight of provincial life. But there were several who emerged into the glare of a wider publicity. Shakespeare may have become familiar with the name from the notoriety of some of the events with which it was mixed up; or, he may, perchance, have met some bearers of the name, or of some name like it, when they visited England as soldiers, lawyers, merchants, travellers, or prisoners of State.

Several writers have jumped to the conclusion that the dramatist borrowed his stage Irishman from the MacMurroughs of Leinster. In support of such a theory something may be said. In the twelfth century, and again in the fourteenth century, the MacMurroughs of Leinster had loomed larger in the public eye than any Irish sept. But the spelling of the name, as it appears in the folio, does not support this hypothesis.

In *Holinshed the King of Leinster of Strongbow's* day is called "Dermote Macmurche," and the name is elsewhere written by the chronicler as "Macmourche" or "Macmorrow." In the Irish Annals, the name more commonly appears in its correct Irish form of

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MacMurchadha. As time went on, the clan surname underwent further changes. An Irish antiquary, who has searched the State documents of the Tudor sovereigns, writes that this sept is sometimes alluded to in the records of Tudor times as "Kavanagh," but "more frequently as O'Morcho, or O'Murcho, or such like cognomen."¹⁰⁶ The English form of the name was in later times Murphy, but not Macmorrice or anything like it.

The form, in which the name is spelt in the folio of 1623, suggests a clue, which may serve as a guide in tracing its origin. The word Macmorrice has an Irish prefix and a Norman termination. Such a combination of different elements in a surname was one of the symptoms of a movement which was at its height in Shakespeare's day. The Anglo-Norman families, besides adopting Irish customs, often assumed Irish prefixes. When they did so, they never took the prefix O, but they frequently dropped the Norman prefix Fitz, and assumed its Irish equivalent Mac.

When Shakespeare put *Captain Macmorrice* on the stage, Ireland possessed, quite irrespective of the Mac-Murroughs of Leinster, a number of families or septs, in which a name corresponding to, or nearly resembling, that of Shakespeare's Irish captain was, or had been recently, in use. They are to be found not only in the Province of Leinster, but also in the Provinces of Munster and of Connaught. To which of the three provinces did *Captain Macmorrice* belong? We shall place some facts before our readers so as to help them to give an answer to this question.

Whenever a Norman settler with a name like that of Maurice, founded a family, it was usual for his descendants to take the name of Fitzmaurice, and to be called MacMaurice by their Irish neighbours. The Irish name

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quickly superseded the other. Among the Leinster families which took the Irish prefix was the ancient house which is now represented by Lords Montmorres and Frankfort. Another Leinster family of the name settled among the O'Connors of Offaly. Very little seems to be known about them, except that they remained for several generations in the midst of this powerful Irish sept, like a fly enclosed in amber.¹⁰⁷

These MacMaurices of Leinster did not take a prominent part in public affairs, and are hardly likely to have come under the dramatist's notice. Very different was the case with their namesakes in the Southern Province. In the next chapter something will be said of *Captain Macmorrice's* namefellows in Munster, and of the stir which they made in the era in which Shakespeare wrote *King Henry V.*

CHAPTER XXI

KING HENRY V—WAS CAPTAIN MACMORRICE A MUNSTER MAN?

Macmaurice of Kerry died. . . . Patrickin, his heir, was at this time in captivity in Dublin.—*Annals of the Four Masters* (1590 A.D.).

In Shakespeare's day the name of MacMaurice, of which *Macmorrice* is a mere variant, was a household word in Munster. During the poet's lifetime it was used by at least four personages, all of whom were men of more or less repute not only in their native province, but far beyond its confines. These four notabilities were James, son of Maurice Fitzgerald, and cousin of the fifteenth Earl of Desmond; Thomas Fitzmaurice, sixteenth Lord of Kerry; Patrick Fitzmaurice, seventeenth Lord of Kerry; and Thomas Fitzmaurice, eighteenth Lord of Kerry.

The Fitzgeralds of Desmond, which lay in West Cork and East Kerry, and the Fitzmaurices of Lixnaw, which was situate in North Kerry, were the two most distinguished Anglo-Norman families of the south-west of Ireland. Both of these families were of Geraldine extraction, being respectively descended from two younger brothers of the ancestor of the Geraldines of Leinster. The male line of the Desmonds disappeared in the political storm which swept Munster in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The Fitzmaurices rode the storm; and the twenty-sixth Lord of Kerry is the present Marquess of Lansdowne.

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James, son of Maurice Fitzgerald, appears to have dropped the surname of Fitzgerald, and to have used his father's Christain name Maurice, with the prefix Fitz, or its Irish equivalent Mac. In the Annals and in the public records his name sometimes appears as James MacMaurice. In England he was more commonly known as James Fitzmaurice, and was also frequently referred to as "James Geraldine," or "the Arch Traitor." He was a comparatively obscure cadet of his house, until the imprisonment of his cousins, the fifteenth Earl of Desmond, and the earl's brother, Sir John Desmond, left the leadership of the family vacant. James MacMaurice jumped into the breach. The remainder of his career covered ten years, the chequered character of which will be best illustrated by mentioning three stirring incidents which occurred at short intervals in the town of Kilmallock, then a fortified place of strategic importance. In 1570 he stormed the town and made it a covert for wolves. Three years afterwards he knelt in its church, and received the Queen's pardon, holding the sword-point of the President of Munster to his heart. Another six years had hardly passed away when his dead body was hanged and quartered in its market place, and the quarters fixed upon the town gates. Shakespeare was fifteen years of age when James MacMaurice's agitated life came to an end; and he is likely to have heard of his doings, and of the name.¹⁰⁸

Closely associated with the Desmonds were the Fitzmaurices of Lixnaw, who had been Lords of Kerry for three centuries. For several generations they had assumed, at all events in their own country, the Irish prefix Mac in lieu of Fitz. In the *Annals of the Four Masters* they are referred to as Mac muiiris *anglice* MacMaurice in at least eighteen places between the years 1405

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and 1602. There is a reference to them under that name in the *Annals of Clonmacnoise* in the year 1405, in the *Annals of Ulster* in the year 1446, and in the *Annals of Loch Cé* in the year 1568. They bore at this disturbed epoch of our history, the character of an Irish sept; and, in a map of Kerry dated 1597, the MacMorrishes (*sic*) of Lixnaw are described as a clan in the same way as their neighbours the MacCarthies and the O'Sullivans of Beare. In the *Irish Calendar of State Papers* they are often referred to, especially between 1597 and 1602 (a period which covered the date of the production of *Henry V*), under their Irish appellation of Macmaurice, or some variant of that name.

In Shakespeare's time there were three successive Lords of Kerry, who were known in their own country by what was substantially the same name as the dramatist's Irish captain. Thomas MacMaurice, the sixteenth Lord of Kerry, was an interesting personage. He appears to have been a cultivated sportsman and a *bon vivant*, but not to have had any ambition to shine at court. It is recorded in the State Papers that, when he went to Dublin to explain his conduct to the government, he presented himself to the Lord Deputy "in all his bravery," which consisted of "a russet Irish mantle, a hat, a leather jerkin, a pair of hosen which they call trews, and a pair of brogues, but not all worth a noble." On the other hand the Irish Annals describe him as the handsomest man of his day, and of such strength that within a few months of his death not three men in Kerry could bend his bow. They go on to say that he surpassed all other Kerry men of his wealth and patrimony as "a purchaser of wine, horses, and literary works." His career came to an end in 1590 when Shakespeare was beginning to write plays. In that year the *Annals of the Four Masters* record that "MacMaurice of Kerry died," and add that

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“Patrickin, his heir, was at this time in captivity in Dublin.”

Let us take a glimpse at the personality of the seventeenth Lord of Kerry, to whom his clansmen gave the endearing nickname of “Patrickin.” It will serve to remind us of the difficulties which beset the path of a Kerry lord in Shakespeare’s day. He was brought up at the court of Queen Elizabeth, and is described by John Hooker as leading a sort of “Jekyll-Hyde” existence between London and Lixnaw. In London he appears to have been known as Patrick Fitzmaurice, and to have been regarded by Hooker as “a sworne servant of Her Majesty, in good favour and countenance at court, and apperelled according to his degree, dailie nurtured and brought up in all civilitie.” But in his native wilds he was Patrickin MacMaurice; and he seems to have lived up to his local appellation. “He was no sooner come home,” writes Hooker, “but away with his English attire, and on with his brogs, his shirt, and the other Irish rags, being become as verie a traitor as the veriest knave of them all.” Hooker goes on to compare his backslidings to those of Jupiter’s cat, of whom he says that “let her be transformed to never so fine a ladye, and let her be never so attired and accompanied with the best ladies, yet if the mouse come once in her sight she will be a cat and show her kind.”¹⁰⁹ We must not take John Hooker too seriously. He evidently regarded the wearing of Irish “brogs” as an overt act of treason; and he probably does scant justice to Patrickin, who was doubtless doing his best to “square a circle” by reconciling his duty to his sovereign with the obligations and necessities of his local station as chief of a Kerry clan. Patrickin MacMaurice was involved in the Desmond Rebellion, and died in 1600, the year after the production of *King Henry V.* His death is said to have been

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caused by grief at the ruin which confronted him, and at seeing the ancient castle of his family occupied by the forces of the Crown.

Thomas MacMaurice, eighteenth Lord of Kerry, followed in his father's footsteps, and fell into sad straits. In October 1603, we find Sir Richard Boyle, who afterwards became known as the "Great Earl of Cork," writing that "none in Munster are in action saving MacMorris (*sic*), whose force is but seven horse and twelve foot."¹¹⁰ He ultimately obtained a pardon and a re-grant of his estates; but his life, which ended in 1630, was a troubled one, and he was more than once a prisoner in London.

In justice to the MacMaurices of Munster, it should be borne in mind that, in the spacious days of Queen Elizabeth, it was well-nigh impossible for a chieftain in the south-west of Ireland to be on good terms with the queen's government. The policy of the State was directed not only against the chiefs, but also against their retainers and against their neighbours. Many a MacMaurice of Munster who, under different conditions, might have made as valiant a captain in the royal army as his Shakespearian namesake, was reluctantly drawn or driven into rebellious courses.

It is highly probable that some of the events which have been referred to in this chapter, familiarized the name of MacMaurice or Macmorrice to the dramatist, and either suggested the name to him, or at all events helped to render it, in his opinion, a suitable one to give to an Irish stage character.

CHAPTER XXII

KING HENRY V—WAS CAPTAIN MACMORRICE A CONNAUGHT MAN?

Richard Macmorris of the Brees, chief of his nation.

—*Knox's History of the County Mayo*, p. 322.

Having traversed the provinces of Leinster and Munster, in a search for the original of Shakespeare's *Captain Macmorrice*, we now propose to ferry the reader across the River Shannon, and to conduct him to the southern borders of the County of Mayo, in the very heart of Connaught. Here will be found at the present day a territorial division called the Barony of Clannmorris, the principal town of which is Claremorris. This barony and its principal town derive their names from a clan or family, usually known as MacMorris, which, in Shakespeare's day, occupied nearly the whole of the district.

The MacMorrises of Mayo were descended from Maurice de Prendergast, one of Strongbow's Anglo-Norman comrades, to whom tradition has attributed a noble and chivalrous character. Holinshed¹¹¹ refers to him as "a righte valiaunte captayne," and Aubrey de Vere has made him the hero of a poem called "The Faithful Norman":

"Praise to the valiant and faithful foe!
Give us noble foes, not the friend who lies!
We dread the drugg'd cup, not the open blow;
We dread the old hate in the new disguise.

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To Ossory's prince they had pledged their word,
He stood in their camp, and their pledge they broke;
Then *Maurice the Norman* upraised his sword,
The cross on its hilt he kissed and spoke,
'So long as this sword or this arm hath might
I swear by the cross which is lord of all,
By the faith and honour of noble and knight,
Who touches yon prince by this hand shall fall!'
So side by side through the throng they passed,
And Eire gave praise to the just and true.
Brave foe! The Past truth heals at last:
There is room in the great heart of Eire for you!"¹¹²

One of Maurice de Prendergast's sons was named Gerald, or Garrett, which is the Anglo-Irish form of Gerald. He settled in Mayo about the same time as the de Burghs. His descendants were at first called Fitzgeralds or MacGarretts. As time went on they took the name of their distinguished ancestor, Maurice the Norman, and were known as MacMuiris, *anglice* Mac-Maurice, or more commonly MacMorris.

The MacMorrises adopted Irish customs. The chief was elected according to the native law of Tanistry. They had a brehon, who was the judge or official arbitrator of the clan. In an ancient document, evidence of which has been preserved, a witness described himself as the son of "MacMorris's brehon."¹¹³ The overlord of this part of Connaught was the elected chief of the de Burghs, who, in the sixteenth century, were already known as Burkes. On his election, the chief always assumed the title of "MacWilliam," after an ancestor whose christian name was William. The MacMorrises are named eight times in the *Annals of the Four Masters*, three times in the *Annals of Ulster*, twice in the *Annals of Clonmacnoise*, six times in the *Annals of*

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Loch Cé, usually in connection with tribal conflicts. In these passages they are found, sometimes supporting, sometimes resisting, their overlord; and sometimes allied with, sometimes embroiled with, their Roscommon neighbours, the O'Connors Don, the O'Connors Roe, and the Macdermots.¹¹⁴

It was in Shakespeare's lifetime that the province of Connaught was brought under English law. The first stage of this operation was the division of the province into counties, and of the counties into baronies. These counties and baronies were formed by defining or grouping the territories of the local chieftains. The County of Mayo was supposed to represent the overlordship of the "MacWilliam," chief of the Mayo Burkes; and the baronies, in most instances, represented the districts which were respectively subject to the immediate authority of his underlords.

One of the nine baronies, into which the County of Mayo was divided, was called Crossboyne or Clanmorris, and is still known by the latter name. In a State document, dated in 1574, and entitled the "Division of Connaught," this barony was referred to as "Macmoriss's Country," and was described as "measuring nine miles long and eight miles broad," and as containing ten castles, eight of which were occupied by gentlemen of that surname.¹¹⁵ The original stronghold of the sept was the Castle of Brees, built in the thirteenth century. The ruins of the old keep are to be seen today, perched upon a hill, constituting a picturesque monument of the family which occupied it for generations. Another fortress of this "nation" was Castle MacGarrett, now the seat of Lord Oranmore and Browne who, according to tradition, represents in the female line the family of MacMorris of Castle MacGarrett. In his demesne are the ruins of the old

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donjon, as well as of Castle Keel, another of the strongholds of the Macmorrises. At Ballyhowley (famous in song under the name of "Ballyhooley"), there are the remains of a moated castle which belonged to another member of this clan. As the chieftainship went by election not by heredity, we find at one time a MacMorris of Brees, and at another time a MacMorris of Castle MacGarrett, elected to be chief of his "nation."¹¹⁶

The transformation of Mayo into "Shireland" was initiated by the Viceroy, Sir Henry Sidney, father of the celebrated Sir Philip Sidney, with the help of Sir Edward Fitton, Governor of Connaught, one of whose daughters was Mary Fitton, the supposed "dark lady" of Shakespeare's sonnets. The viceroy visited Connaught in March 1576 for the purpose of completing the new organization of the province and of paving the way for the introduction of English laws and customs. He wrote an interesting report to the queen, which affords an illuminating "snapshot" of the provincial society in which the MacMorrises of Mayo moved and lived. First among those who came to meet the viceroy was "MacWilliam," the overlord of Mayo, whom he describes as "very sensible, though wanting in English, yet understanding the Latin." With MacWilliam came five of his underlords, who were styled barons. One of them was MacMorris the "Baron" of Crossboyne, or Clanmorris. It is evident that they did not fail to remind the viceroy of their English ancestry, and to make the most of their rank and station. He reported to the queen that "these five (chieftains) show matter of some record and credit, that they have not only been English, which every man confesseth, but also lords and barons of Parliament, as they themselves affirm, and surely they have lands sufficient for barons if they might

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hold their own quietly ; but so bare, barbarous, barons are they now, as they have not three hackneys to carry them and their train home."

Among the other notabilities, who came to meet the viceroy with MacWilliam, was O Maylle (*i.e.* O'Malley) "who," writes Sidney, "is an original Irishman and strong in galleys and seamen ; he earnestly sued to hold of the queen, and to pay her rent and service." He was chief of Murrisk and Lord of the western islands. To his house belonged the celebrated Grania O'Malley. Grania herself came to Galway to meet the viceroy on the occasion of his visit in the following September ; and the viceroy thus writes of her : "There came to me also a most famous feminine sea-captain called Grany Omallye, and offered her services to me wheresoever I would command her, with three galleys and two hundred fighting men, either in Ireland or Scotland. She brought with her her husband, for she was as well by sea as by land more than Mrs. Mate with him."¹¹⁷

The next step towards the new organization of Connaught was to obtain engagements from the chieftains for fixed services and rents in lieu of the irregular levies and exactions which had previously prevailed. This measure was carried out by Sir Nicholas Malby, who succeeded Fitton as Governor of Connaught in 1576. The record is still preserved of the agreement by which Richard MacMorris of the Brees, chief of his nation, with the co-operation of David MacMorris of Castle MacGarrett, undertook, "on behalf of his country," to furnish six horsemen, fifteen kernes (*i.e.* foot soldiers), and twenty labourers for twelve months for the queen's service.¹¹⁸ Sir Nicholas Malby visited Galway in 1582. He reported that there was a great assembly of the nobility, which included MacWilliam and MacMorris, as well as "many gentlemen and their wives, among

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whom Gracey O'Mally is one, and thinketh herself to be no small lady." ¹¹⁹

The final step towards introducing the new order of things was the abolition of the tribal law of property, and the institution of the English law of inheritance. This was carried out by Sir Richard Bingham, who succeeded Malby in 1584. The change of tenure was effectuated by feudal grants, and by a State document called the "Indenture of Composition," dated in 1585. By these instruments certain lands in the Barony of Clanmorris were granted to Richard MacMorris of the Brees, chief of his nation. He was to hold by the service of a knight's fee, £40 rent, a goshawk, as well as the obligation to furnish Her Majesty with his share of horsemen, kernes and labourers. From this time forward it is reasonable to infer that the MacMorrises contributed officers as well as men to the queen's service. ¹²⁰

These changes were not carried into execution without arousing protests and antagonisms, in the course of which the Macmorrises appear to have made themselves conspicuous more than once by siding with the Crown. On the other hand they were sometimes found resisting the new regime. For example, in 1595 MacMorris of Brees took the field against Sir Conyers Clifford, Bingham's successor as Governor of Connaught, with the result that Clifford captured the Castle of Brees and made MacMorris a prisoner. ¹²¹

Some of MacMorris's fellow-chieftains bore strange nicknames, by which they are referred to in official documents and in legal instruments. The last of the recognized "MacWilliams" was known as Richard an Iarainn, which was translated into "Richard of the Iron," or "Iron Dick." Two other chieftains of the race of Burke assumed the MacWilliamship, and became titular "MacWilliams" after the abolition of that title.

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These were William Burke, who was always described as "The Blind Abbot," although he does not appear to have been either blind or an abbot, and Richard Burke, called Mac Deamhain an Chorrain, which meant the Son of the Demon of the Reaping Hook. This weird name was translated into English as "The Devil Hook's Son," by which soubriquet he is referred to in public despatches and in solemn documents. Two other notabilities of the province rejoiced in the popular nicknames of "Ear to Cheek," and "Ear to Storm." Connaught, in the days of the Elizabethan MacMorrises, was indeed the "Wild West."

One of the contemporaries of the last of the MacMorrises was the celebrated Grania O'Malley. MacMorris's Castle of Brees was distant less than twenty miles from the O'Malley's fortress near Westport. MacMorris and Grania were often associated in the stirring events of their time. Twice they attended gatherings at Galway to meet the viceroy or the provincial governor. On these occasions they did not travel together, for Grania went by sea, and MacMorris by land. Who will not envy MacMorris his good fortune in having been privileged to know Grania, and to have many opportunities of meeting, and conversing with her? Her life-story remains to be written; but some light has been recently thrown upon it by the members of the Galway Archæological and Historical Society, especially by the late Archbishop Healy, and by Mr. Hubert T. Knox, the historian of Mayo.

The O'Malleys' territory included the coast-line of South Mayo, as well as the islands of Clare, Innisturk, and Innisboffin. While a mere girl Grania made herself so finished a seawoman that she earned, and never lost, the title of the uncrowned "Queen of Clew Bay." But, as time went on, she enlarged her empire

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far beyond Clew Bay. Her first husband was O'Flaherty, chief of Ballinahinch in Connemara, the coastline of whose dominions ran down to the Arran Islands and to Galway Bay. Her second husband was Richard Burke an Iarainn, called "Iron Dick," whose chieftaincy extended northwards along the sea-board to Achill and Blacksod Bay. When "Iron Dick" was elected "Mac-William," she became chieftainess of Mayo, and mistress of the western seas. She is best known for the legends, according to which she is said to have visited Queen Elizabeth for the purpose of giving the queen an opportunity of being introduced to her, and to have kidnapped the heir of the St. Lawrences because she was dissatisfied with the hospitality of Howth Castle. She was made the heroine of many other romantic stories, some of which historical research has not altogether confirmed. Nevertheless, after making ample allowance for what is exaggerated or legendary, enough remains to crowd half a dozen ordinary lives with adventure. Her voyages, her imprisonments, her forays and escapes by sea and land, her courage, her endurance, and her commanding personality have left such an impression upon the country in which she lived, that she ranks with Queen Méve in the traditions of western womanhood.

A daughter of Grania's married the Richard Burke, already mentioned, who was called "The Devil Hook's Son"; and we find him on one occasion going bail for his mother-in-law when she was accused of pillaging some islanders, and on another occasion involving her in rebellion. She had a son called Tibbot "na Long," meaning "of the ships" or "born at sea." The soubriquet suggests that Grania may have given birth to Tibbot during one of her adventurous expeditions. Tibbot na Long appears to have "trimmed his sails" on land; for Archbishop Healy tells us that he was created

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Viscount Mayo, and that the title ended tragically in the next generation.¹²²

We leave it to our readers to say to what part of Ireland, in their opinion, Shakespeare's *Captain Macmorrice* is likely to have belonged. Was he a MacMurrough of Leinster? The idea is an obvious and attractive one; but the Norman termination of the surname, as written by Shakespeare, does not favour it. The other families of the name in Leinster were not very prominent in the poet's day. Was he a Desmond, or a MacMaurice of Munster? It is possible, because they were very conspicuous families. On the other hand, they were people of more polished manners than Shakespeare's unconventional captain. From such models we should expect the dramatist to have painted a more courtly cavalier. Perhaps *Captain Macmorrice's* fighting temperament and the "wild and whirling" style of his conversation would better fit some adventurous cadet of the ancient house of the "bare, barbarous barons" of Clanmorris.

CHAPTER XXIII

KING HENRY VI—THREE NOTABLE
VICEROYS

Great Earl of Washford, Waterford and Valence.

—1 *King Henry VI*, Act IV, scene vii, line 63.

Three notable viceroys of Ireland are among the *dramatis personæ* in the *First Part of King Henry VI*. These were John Talbot, afterwards Earl of Shrewsbury, Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March, and—most notable of all—Richard Plantagenet, afterwards Duke of York.

John Talbot, first Earl of Shrewsbury, was the foremost military commander of his day. He was a Hotspur in the field but a martinet in the camp. For his qualities as a stubborn, dashing, hard-bitten fighter, in the French campaigns, he won the nickname of "Talbot, our good dog"; but, to quote the chronicler, "he fared so foul with his men that they would no longer abide with him." He was sent on three occasions (1414, 1425, and 1445) to Ireland, where he and his brother, Richard, the Archbishop of Dublin, maintained a thirty years feud with the "White" Earl of Ormonde, the merits of which this is not the place to discuss.

When Sir William Lucy visits the French camp in the *First Part of King Henry VI*, to ascertain the names of the English prisoners and dead, he enquires for Talbot, and in so doing names him by all his titles in what Joan of Arc describes as a "silly stately style indeed."

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“But where’s the great Alcides of the field,
Valiant Lord Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury,
Created, for his rare success in arms,
Great Earl of Washford, Waterford and Valence :”¹²³

Washford was the old name for the modern Wexford. The dramatist was mistaken in supposing that Talbot was created Earl of Wexford. He held the “honour” of that place by descent from Joan de Valence who was grand-daughter of Strongbow. An “honour” was a peculiar kind of proprietary fief of a higher grade than a manor. The Earldom of Waterford was correctly attributed to him by the poet, and still remains one of the dignities of his descendant, who is now the twentieth Earl of Shrewsbury and of Waterford, and the premier Earl of England.

Edmund Mortimer was the son of that Roger Mortimer whose death at Kelliston in Ireland indirectly precipitated the fall of Richard II. He was the rightful heir to the throne of England; but he had been well treated by Henry VI, who had brought him up with his own children. He grew up to be a grateful unambitious person, who willingly acquiesced in the continuance of the *de facto* dynasty. The king, in 1423, appointed him Viceroy of Ireland, where he died of the plague in 1425. Here the Shakespearian play takes an extraordinary liberty with history. Following the mistake of the chronicler, to which we have already alluded, the dramatist makes Edmund Mortimer die in the Tower, and introduces a scene,¹²⁴ in which he receives his nephew, Richard Plantagenet, in his prison cell, recognizes him as the heir of the Mortimer title to the Crown, and admonishes him to be wary and politic in accomplishing his royal destiny. As a matter of fact Edmund Mortimer died in Ireland, not in the Tower;

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and Richard Plantagenet, was at the time of his uncle Edmund's death, a boy in his fourteenth year, residing in England under the guardianship of another uncle, Ralph Neville, Earl of Westmoreland. The scene was probably not written by Shakespeare, who is responsible for a small fraction only of this play.

Shakespeare is generally believed to have been the author of the immediately preceding scene,¹²⁵ in which another liberty is taken with historical accuracy. This is the Temple-Garden scene, where Richard, then a mere boy, is represented as debating his claim to the Crown with Somerset in the Temple-Garden, and as asking his followers to "pluck a white rose off this briar with me," while Somerset takes up the challenge and invites his friends "to pluck a red rose off this, then, with me." Nevertheless, the dramatist hit off the significance of events. Edmund Mortimer's death in Ireland in 1425 made his nephew, Richard Plantagenet, the sole heir to the Mortimer pretensions to the throne. The outbreak of the Wars of the Roses thereupon became a mere question of time; and Richard Plantagenet grew up to be the "White Rose" personified.

CHAPTER XXIV

KING HENRY VI—RICHARD PLANTAGENET
IS SENT TO IRELAND

The Wild O'Neill, my Lords, is up in arms.

—*From the Old Play revised by Shakespeare.*

Several allusions to the relations of Richard Plantagenet, the "White Rose" of the great Civil War, with Ireland are to be found in Shakespeare's trilogy of *King Henry VI*. The second of these plays opens with the marriage of the king to Margaret of Anjou, and with the conclusion of a treaty by which Henry VI ceded to France the duchies of Anjou and of Maine. Richard Plantagenet, as the Yorkist pretender to the throne, regarded the cession of the duchies as the sacrifice of a part of his rightful dominions. In a soliloquy at the end of Scene I, he refers to Ireland as an essential part of his inheritance :

"So York must sit and fret and bite his tongue,
While his own lands are bargain'd for and sold,
Methinks the realm of England, France and Ireland,
Bear that proportion to my flesh and blood
As did the fatal brand Althea burn'd
Unto the prince's heart of Calydon."¹²⁶

As Richard Plantagenet was a stumbling block in the path of the party of the new queen, which was led by Cardinal Beaufort and the Dukes of Somerset and Suffolk, they became interested in removing him from England. They could not send him to France, because he was opposed to their foreign policy. So they found a pretext

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for getting him out of the way, when news came of the outbreak of rebellion in Ireland. In the following passage the dramatist brings on the stage the messenger who carries this timely intelligence :

“Great Lords, from Ireland am I come amain,
To signify that rebels there are up,
And put the Englishmen unto the sword :
Send succour, Lords, and stop the rage betime,
Before the wound do grow incurable ;
For, being green, there is great hope of help.”¹²⁷

This news provokes high words among the assembled lords. York sarcastically suggests the name of Somerset for the Irish command, and taunts him with the failure of his operations in France. Cardinal Beaufort intervenes and persuades York to jump into the breach.

“CARDINAL—My Lord of York, try what your
fortune is,
The uncivil kernes of Ireland are in arms,
And temper clay with blood of Englishmen :
To Ireland will you lead a band of men,
Collected choicely, from each county some,
And try your hap against the Irishmen ?

“YORK—I will my Lord, so please His Majesty.
.
.
.
My Lord of Suffolk, within fourteen days
At Bristol I expect my soldiers ;
For there I'll ship them all for Ireland.”¹²⁸

The name of the leader of the Irish “rebels” is not mentioned in the *Second Part of King Henry VI* ; but, in the older play, of which Shakespeare's drama is a revision, the speech of the messenger runs as follows :

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“Madame, I bring you news from Ireland,
The Wild O’Neill, my Lords, is up in arms,
With troops of Irish kernes that uncontroll’d
Do plant themselves within the English Pale,
And burn and spoil the country as they go.”¹²⁹

Shakespearian critics, who have made a careful analysis of these patchwork plays, have come to the conclusion that, in this scene, Shakespeare, perhaps jointly with Marlowe, took part in revising the older version.¹³⁰ If this conjecture be correct, it becomes probable that the references to the “Wild O’Neill” and to “the English Pale” were struck out by Shakespeare’s own hand. The “Wild O’Neill” would appear to have been Owen O’Neill, Lord of Tyrone from 1432 to 1455; but, to an Elizabethan audience the name of the “Wild O’Neill” would have been associated with two famous chiefs of that day, Shane O’Neill and Hugh O’Neill, Earl of Tyrone. Perhaps the dramatist may have had some diplomatic or other reason for striking out the reference to the “Wild O’Neill.”

The English “Pale,” meaning the district in which the English jurisdiction prevailed, was not a definite territory, but varied in its limits from time to time, according as the tide of English authority ebbed and flowed. In its ordinary sense it was confined to parts of the Counties of Dublin, Louth, Meath, and Kildare, with a coast line extending from Dundalk to Dalkey or Bray Head. In Elizabeth’s time the word was beginning to lose its significance, and a wider conception of the relations of England to Ireland was becoming familiar and popular. It would have been characteristic of Shakespeare’s dislike of all small and narrow points of view, if, in revising this play, he purposely struck out the reference to “The English Pale.”

CHAPTER XXV

KING HENRY VI—THE WHITE ROSE IN
IRELAND

And, brother York, thy acts in Ireland,
In bringing them to civil discipline,

.
Have made thee fear'd and honoured of the people.

2 King Henry VI, Act I, scene i, line 194.

York was appointed Viceroy of Ireland for ten years. He delayed his departure for more than a year and a half; and insisted that during his term of office he was to be invested with a very large authority, including power to appoint and displace all officers, to levy and employ such number of men as he thought fit, to make a deputy, and to return to England when he pleased. In getting rid of a possible pretender at so high a price, the Lancastrian party made a mistake which soon came home to roost. With the help of these wide powers, and of his own talents, the new viceroy succeeded in converting Ireland into a Yorkist stronghold.

Richard Plantagenet landed at Howth on 6th July, 1449, and was received by the Lord of Howth, who became one of his staunchest partizans. He seems to have been welcomed by the Irish nobility as a scion of a great Anglo-Irish house; for, besides being viceroy and first prince of the blood, he was a magnate in County Meath, where the liberties and Castle of Trim, a forfeited fief of his ancestors, the Mortimers, had been granted to him soon after his coming of age. When affairs of

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State permitted, he made the Castle of Trim his home. Among his neighbours he met both friends and enemies. On the one hand, we find him appointing his neighbour, Richard Nugent, Baron of Delvin, to be Lord Deputy pending his arrival. On the other hand, the adjoining Irish tribe of the MacGeoghegans of Westmeath was one of the few native septs that gave him serious trouble, perhaps on account of some local agrarian dispute.

That the viceroy not only organized a strong personal following, but also went nearer to incorporating a united Ireland in an imperial system than any previous governor, was recognized by chroniclers and poets. Hall wrote that he gained so much favour from the inhabitants of Ireland that "their sincere love and friendly affection could never be separated from him and his lineage." In the old play York is represented as saying of his Irish viceroyalty :

"For through the love my doings there did breed,
I had their help at all times in my need."

In a political song called the "Epitaph for Richard Duke of York," it was said that the Duke "*tout le pays regla paisiblement*," and our dramatist makes Lord Salisbury compliment York upon the success of his government in Ireland in the following lines :

"And, brother York, thy acts in Ireland
In bringing them to civil discipline,
Thy late exploits done in the heart of France,
When thou wert regent for our sovereign,
Have made thee fear'd and honoured of the people."¹³¹

The lines which have just been cited were out of place in the context in which they occur. At that

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particular moment of time York had not yet taken up the government of Ireland. Nevertheless, the compliment, although anachronistic, turned out in due course to be well deserved. Richard Plantagenet's arrival in Ireland was expected to be the signal for a vigorous campaign against the "Wild O'Neill" in Ulster, but the viceroy disappointed these expectations by tendering an olive branch which was accepted by the Northern chiefs. Dr. Richey writes of York's government: "The Duke, by his brilliant personal qualities, his moderation, and justice, acquired extreme popularity among the population, both English and Celtic, and attached to himself, to a great extent, the nobility and chiefs of both nationalities."

The Anglo-Norman nobles of the Pale, of Munster, and of Eastern Ulster, rallied to York's side. A remarkable instance of his success in the art of reconciliation deserves to be recorded. On the 21st October, 1449, his beautiful and accomplished wife, Cecilia Neville, known to her contemporaries as "The Rose of Raby," gave birth at Dublin Castle to her second son. The boy was christened George, and was destined to be known to readers of Shakespeare as "false, fleeting, perjured Clarence." At the font the sponsors were the fourth Earl of Ormonde, known as the "White Earl," and the seventh Earl of Desmond, known as "James the Usurper." To bring together these two remarkable men, who were the respective heads of rival houses—the Butlers and the Southern Geraldines—was regarded as a notable achievement.

York's departure for Ireland is announced in the third Act of the *Second Part of King Henry VI*. After fourteen months spent in Ireland, he re-appears in the fifth Act. Several events had occurred which rendered him ill at ease, and called him back to England. One

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of these was the rebellion of Jack Cade, calling himself "John Mortimer, cousin of the Viceroy Richard, Duke of York," which aroused the angry suspicions of the Lancastrian party, and seriously compromised him with the king. York remained at his castle of Trim until the end of August 1450. Early in September he sailed for England, where the War of the Roses was imminent. By his wise government he had won Ireland to his side, and had planted her far and near with rose-trees which were to yield him a rich harvest of white blossoms.

CHAPTER XXVI

KING HENRY VI—JACK CADE'S REBELLION

CADE—My wife descended from the Lacies,—
—2 *King Henry VI*, Act IV, scene ii, line 42.

The dramatist, in his version of Cade's rebellion, is neither just to York nor to Cade. According to the play, York, before going to Ireland in 1447, admitted in a cold-blooded soliloquy that he was the arch-plotter of the rebellion, and that Cade had served him as a spy in Ireland :

“YORK—Whiles I in Ireland nourish a mighty band,
I will stir up in England some black storm
Shall blow ten thousand souls to heaven or hell ;

.
I have seduced a headstrong Kentishman,
Jack Cade of Ashford,
To make commotion, as full well he can,
Under the title of John Mortimer.
In Ireland I have seen this stubborn Cade
Oppose himself against a troop of kernes,
And fought so long, till that his thighs with darts
Were almost like a sharp-quilled porcupine ;

.
Full often, like a shaghaired crafty kerne,
Hath he conversed with the enemy,
And undiscover'd come to me again,
And given me notice of their villainies.
This devil here shall be my substitute ;

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For that John Mortimer, which now is dead,
In face, in gait, in speech, he doth resemble :

So that he thrive, as 'tis great like he will,
Why, then from Ireland come I with my strength,
And reap the harvest which that rascal sowed."¹³²

This soliloquy has little of history to sustain it. York, at the date of his appointment as viceroy, had never campaigned in Ireland. He had only visited the country to take possession of his estates on coming of age. The existence of a John Mortimer, whom Cade could have been said to resemble, is not verified by any search of the genealogy of that family. Edmund Mortimer, the son-in-law of Lionel Duke of Clarence, appears to have had a son named John, who probably died young. If he had been alive at the date of the rebellion, he would have been at least seventy years of age, while Cade, according to the Chroniclers, was "a young man of goodly stature and pregnant wit." Cade's own story, according to the play, is a more romantic one, of a kind which is familiar to readers of the *Family Herald*. It was represented that a son of Edmund Mortimer's, John by name, was put out to nurse, and was stolen by a beggarwoman. The boy was said to have grown up in ignorance of his origin, and to have become a bricklayer and the father of Jack Cade.

Shakespeare probably had a very small share in the composition of York's soliloquy. But the famous Cade scene (*Act IV, scene ii*) is generally supposed to have been written by the great poet himself. It contains excellent fooling; but it constitutes a travesty of history. According to Holinshed, Jack Cade and his followers were not by any means the extravagant extremists that the dramatist paints them. It is true that the rebellion

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degenerated into pillage and violence before it was suppressed; but its leaders appear to have complained of public abuses and grievances in language which was not absurd or intemperate, to have advocated a spirited foreign policy, and to have called for the substitution of York for Somerset in the councils of the king.

The dramatist, in his presentation of Cade's Rebellion, took a very unusual liberty with history. Finding in the chronicle that Jack Cade, so far as his programme and his language were concerned, was a dull dog, he discarded Holinshed, and borrowed from the pages of John Stow a more lively account which that chronicler gave of the sayings and doings of Wat Tyler and Jack Straw in the reign of King Richard II. Accordingly we have in these scenes, the mask of Cade, but the voice of Wat Tyler.

In one respect the play follows history. Cade undoubtedly claimed to be a Mortimer. Let us stand at the edge of the crowd and listen to him boasting about his lineage to the Blackheath mob, while his henchman, Dick Butcher, makes fun of him by punctuating his pretentious assertions with humorous asides :

“CADE—Cominand silence.

DICK—Silence !

CADE—My father was a Mortimer—

DICK (*aside*)—He was an honest man, and a good bricklayer.

CADE—My mother was a Plantagenet,—

DICK (*aside*)—I knew her well ; she was a midwife.

CADE—My wife descended from the Lacies,—

DICK (*aside*)—She was, indeed, a pedlar's daughter, and sold many laces.”¹³³

It is not to be supposed that the Lacies are dragged

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in at random in this context, merely for the sake of the pun. It was well-known that the Mortimers, as has been mentioned in a former chapter, derived descent from the great Irish house of de Lacy. Jack Cade had doubtless heard of it ; but he did not aspire to be a precisian in matters of pedigree, or a mere genealogical pedant. It was enough for him that there was an Irish lady named de Lacy somewhere in the family. With commendable self-abnegation he struck her out of his own ancestry, and grafted her on the family tree of his wife.

It will be observed that the play does not adopt the statement which has (without any satisfactory proof) found favour in some quarters that Jack Cade was an Irishman, for the dramatist sets him down as a "head-strong Kentishman." It is through his supposed connection with the viceroy, York, and his claims of descent from the Mortimers and the Lacies, that he becomes qualified to constitute one of the links in the chain which connects Shakespeare with Ireland.

CHAPTER XXVII

KING HENRY VI—THE WAR OF THE
ROSES

Enter York with his army of Irish, with drums and colours.

—2 *King Henry VI*, Act V, scene i (*stage direction*).

Jack Cade's rising was suppressed, and Cade himself lost his life on July 12th, 1450. From the beginning to the end of the Cade rebellion the Duke of York was residing at his castle of Trim. To any charge of complicity he was in a position which enabled him to plead a perfect *alibi*. But his name had been bandied about, and he was seriously compromised. In September he returned to England, with an army of faithful Irishmen at his back. In the play special emphasis is laid on the help which York drew from Ireland. The messenger who carries to the king the news of his approach, does so in the following terms :

“MESSENGER—Please it, your Grace, to be advertised
The Duke of York is newly come from Ireland,
And with a puissant and mighty power
Of gallowglasses and stout kernes
Is marching hitherward in proud array.”¹³⁴

When York himself appears, he is represented in the play as encamped near London in the fields between Dartford and Blackheath. The stage direction runs “enter York with his army of Irish, with drums and colours”;

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and he is thereupon made to announce the purpose of his coming in words more candid than he is likely to have uttered in sober fact. According to the dramatist the pretender proclaimed *urbi et orbi* :

“From Ireland thus comes York to claim his right,
And pluck the crown from feeble Henry’s head.”¹³⁵

It has been noticed that Holinshed makes no mention of the Irish army which the dramatist brings on the stage in York’s train between Dartford and Blackheath. Yet we know from other sources that Shakespeare—for this is one of the scenes which Shakespeare himself is believed to have revised—was not false to history in catching sight of Irish valour and fidelity among the petals of the White Rose.

The wars of the “English roses and thorns,” as G. K. Chesterton calls them, have been severely handled by some writers, who nevertheless praise Shakespeare’s treatment of the subject. For example, Thomas MacDonagh in his *Literature in Ireland* pays homage to Shakespeare’s beauty of diction and graciousness of expression; but regrets they were used to tell the tale of “the barbarous Wars of the Roses.” “No wonder,” he writes, “that those who, lured by the felicity of gracious words, have learned to read with satisfaction in Shakespeare the easy hideous history of the English Wars of the Roses, half won to sympathy with ravening lust and barbarity, are perplexed by Gaelic literature of the Middle period.”¹³⁶ One way of resolving such perplexity is to study the Gaelic writings in the original or in the best translations, and to compare them with the plays of Shakespeare, whose “felicity of gracious words” is a tie of affinity linking his poetry with the literature of Ireland.

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The name of a distinguished Irishman figures among the officers who were wounded at the battle of St. Albans. The Yorkist leaders assemble after the battle, and congratulate each other upon their recent victory. They bring news of the enemy's casualty list, which includes among the dead or wounded many great names, such as those of the Dukes of Somerset and Buckingham, and the Lords Clifford and Stafford. When the Marquis of Montague's turn comes to make his report, he is made to exclaim :

“ And, brother, here's the Earl of Wiltshire's blood,
Whom I encounter'd as the battle join'd.”¹³⁷

This Earl of Wiltshire was none other than James, fifth Earl of Ormonde, who, during the life of his father (known as the White Earl), had been created Earl of Wiltshire by Henry VI. Although he had served under the Duke of York in France, and had acted as his Deputy in Ireland, he severed himself from many of the Anglo-Irish nobility, donned the Red Rose, and with an unquestioning loyalty which was a mark of his race, threw in his lot with his reigning sovereign. At Saint Albans he escaped with a wound, of which the Earl of Montague boasts in the conflict just cited, leaving his harness on the field. He recovered and fought for the Red Rose at Wakefield, at Mortimer's Cross, and at Towton. After Towton he fell into the hands of his enemies, with the result (if Sir John Paston was well informed) that his head was to be seen adorning London Bridge in May 1461. This reference to the “ Earl of Wiltshire ” reminds us that, in the War of the Roses, the Butlers sided with the Red Rose, while the Geraldines and the majority of the Irish lords fought for the White.

After the battle of Saint Albans a period of four years

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and a half ensued, which Shakespeare skips, because it was devoid of dramatic incident. It was during this interval of time that the Yorkist leaders were driven into exile, and that York himself took refuge across the Channel. The events which ensued upon York's resumption of the viceroyalty, constitute one of the most remarkable chapters in the history of the relations between England and Ireland. Notwithstanding the fact that York had been officially proclaimed a rebel and a traitor in England, the Irish houses of Parliament formally acknowledged his authority as viceroy. They proceeded to assert the parliamentary independence of Ireland and to authorize the establishment of an Irish mint at York's Castle at Trim. The most daring of the proceedings, which were adopted by the Irish Executive, was the mode in which they met the English proclamation that York and his supporters were rebels and traitors. The Irish Parliament declared that the Irish courts had exclusive jurisdiction in matters of treason, and that the king's subjects in Ireland were not bound to answer any writs except those under the Great Seal of Ireland. Death was made the penalty for uttering groundless accusations of treason, and it was decreed to be high treason against the king to compass the viceroy's destruction or death, or to provoke rebellion or disobedience towards him. These decrees were no mere empty fulminations. When the king's messenger, one William Overy, arrived with writs for the apprehension of the viceroy, he was seized, and after trial was condemned, hanged, drawn and quartered. For nearly twelve months the Duke of York ruled Ireland in the name of the king, but in open defiance of the sovereign and of the English Government.

Meanwhile the Civil War dragged on, until at last the tide turned in favour of the White Rose. In the

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summer of 1460 Warwick won a Yorkist victory at Northampton. York himself was encouraged to leave Ireland ; but, before the end of the year, he was defeated and killed at the battle of Wakefield. He fell a few weeks before the triumph of his cause and the accession of his son as King Edward IV. York's end is thus expressed by the dramatist :

“YORK—Open Thy gate of mercy, gracious God !
My soul flies through these wounds to seek out
Thee (*dies*).¹³⁸

KING HENRY VI—YORK'S IRISH ARMY

These sortes of men be those that do not lightly abandone the field, but byde the brunt to the death.

—*Sir Anthony St. Leger in reference to the Irish gallowglasses.*

Ireland's share in the War of the Roses is a subject which naturally arouses curiosity among Irishmen, and is calculated to make them wonder what manner of men composed the "puissant and mighty force of gallowglasses and stout kernes" who came from Ireland with York. It is not easy to find a description of York's Irish troops, but an excellent account of the Irish kernes and gallowglasses of a date nearer to the time when Shakespeare revised this play, occurs in a letter addressed by Sir Anthony St. Leger, Lord Deputy of Ireland, to King Henry VIII. The soldiers, whom the Lord Deputy writes about, might have included grandsons of York's soldiers, for the letter is dated from Maynooth, the 6th April, 1543.

St. Leger's portraiture of the Irish soldiers of his day deserves to be better known than it has yet become. Of the Irish cavalry he says that for "light scouring," which was their peculiar style of fighting, "there are no properer horsemen in christian grounde, nor none more hardie, nor yet than can better indure hardnesse." He tells us that everyone of them had three nags, either "a horse and two hackneys, or two horses and a hackney," with two boys to look after them. It is evident that the Irish cavalry comprised men of some substance

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and station. The infantry were of two sorts. First there were the gallowglasses, who carried battleaxes and wore mail-armour and small steel helmets, which were called basinets. They were men of some account, for most of them were attended by boys carrying three darts apiece, which were thrown at close quarters. Of these gallowglasses St. Leger writes these striking words of commendation: "These sortes of men be those that do not lightly abandon the felde, but byde the brunt to the death." The other kind of infantry were the kernes, who were unarmoured and lightly clad, carrying darts and short bows and arrows. St. Leger speaks of them as daring and active in the search of woods and marshes, of which kind of operation "they be harde to be beaten."¹³⁹

This letter was written more than eighty years after York fell at Wakefield, and some fifty years before Shakespeare took a part in the revision and production of the play of *King Henry VI*. But the type has always been the same from the time of Finn mac Cool's Fianna down to that of the Irish soldiers who "byded the brunt" on the shell-swept strand of Gallipoli.

It was about the time of the production of these historical plays that Grania O'Malley came to London from Connaught, and brought with her a retinue of wild Westerners. Thirty years had passed since Shane O'Neill had created a sensation in the capital, when he visited the queen attended by a company of gallowglasses, who marched through the streets with their long fair hair falling on their broad shoulders, with cloaks of wolf-skin or frieze thrown over their wide-sleeved saffron shirts, and with their short broad battle-axes in their hands.

It is evident that a deep impression was created upon the Londoners by the wild flowing locks of the Irish soldiers

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who came in the train of these Irish chieftains, as well as by their rough forelocks, "which," says Stanyhurst, "they call glibs, and the same they nourish with all their cunning." It was on account of their unkempt hair and their glibs that Shakespeare refers to the Irish kernes in several places as "rug-headed" or "shag-haired." We need not take offence at these epithets. Shaggy hair has grown upon many a magnificent head. It was by way of compliment that Carlyle said of the late poet laureate, "a fine shaggy-haired man is Alfred Tennyson."

Besides his shaggy hair and "glibs" there was another characteristic of the Irish soldier, which Shakespeare makes the Dauphin of France allude to in the following passage, namely the style of his riding-breeches :

"O then belike . . . you rode like a kerne of Ireland, your French hose off, and in your straight strossers. . . . They that ride so and ride not warily fall into foul bogs."¹⁴⁰

Some of the commentators have understood this passage to mean that the Irish soldiers, like the Scottish, wore no breeches. They suggest that it would have been as difficult to "take the breeks off" an Irish kerne as off a Highlander, and for the same reason. But it has been pointed out by Malone that this reading of the Dauphin's words is incorrect, and that it was the fashion for Irish horsemen to wear straight breeches, fitting close to the legs. These garments were called "strossers"; and the word is the lineal ancestor of our modern "trousers."

These tight "strossers" presented in the eyes of the dandies of that day, a striking contrast to the "round" or "French" hose, which were large and wide. Their graceful balloon-like shape is preserved for our delectation in the portraits of innumerable Elizabethan cavaliers.

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Fashion changed from year to year, and from season to season ; but the straight strossers of the Irish soldier was the very opposite of the fashionable riding-gear of that time. Malone tells a story which illustrates the difference which sometimes prevailed between English and Irish fashions in dress. He relates that when Sir John Perrott, Lord Deputy of Ireland, insisted on the Irish nobility of his day appearing in Parliament in English dress, one of them requested the deputy to lend him his chaplain to walk through the streets of Dublin with him in trowsers, "for then," said he, "the boys will laugh at him as well as at me."¹⁴¹ The whirligig of time has brought the laugh round to the side of the Irish kerne—for his "straight strossers" are more like the conventional riding-breeches of our time than were the round hose of Shakespeare's day.

This digression will enable us better to picture the appearance of York's Irish army, with their long wild locks, their strange weapons, and their peculiar style of dress. We have ample evidence that then, as always, they bore themselves as the bravest of the brave.

CHAPTER XXIX

KING RICHARD III

A Bard of Ireland.—*King Richard III, Act IV, scene ii, line 109.*

There is in the play of *King Richard III* a direct reference to Ireland which is all the more interesting because it was added by the poet, and was not to be found in the passage in Holinshed from which he was taking his information.

Holinshed tells us that in November 1483 the town of Exeter was visited by the king "whome the mayor and his brethren in the best manner they could did receive and then presented him in a purse of two hundred nobles, which he thankfully accepted. And during his abode there he went about the citie . . . and at length he came to the castell; and when he understood that it was called Rougemont suddenlie he fell into a dumpe and as one astonied said, 'Well I see my daies be not long.' He spake thus of a prophecie told him that when he came once to Richmond, he would not long live after, which fell out in the end to be true, not in respect of this castle, but in respect of Henrie, Earl of Richmond, who the next yeare following met him at Bosworth field, where he was slain."¹⁴²

Shakespeare introduces this incident into the scene in which Richard is represented as casting about to find some unscrupulous agent who will carry out the murder of the princes in the Tower. He suggests the crime to the Duke of Buckingham, who hesitates and asks for time for consideration.

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“Give me some breath, some little pause, my lord.” Richard, who is in a hurry and will not wait, seeks and finds a less irresolute instrument in Sir James Tyrrell. This personage, by the by, was not an Irishman, and did not belong to the Irish family of that name. After Tyrrell has departed to carry out his ghastly purpose, Buckingham returns and sounds the king as to his intentions towards himself. In particular he presses him in reference to the Earldom of Hereford, which had been promised him, and claims the performance of the promise. The king, having secured the services of Tyrrell, and having no further need of Buckingham, treats him with contemptuous indifference. He takes no notice of his questions, and turns away to Lord Stanley and addresses to him some idle chatter about Henry Earl of Richmond, who is threatening to raise the standard of revolt. It is at this point that he says to Stanley :

“When last I was in Exeter,
The Mayor in courtesy showed me the castle,
And call'd it Rougemont: at which name I started,
Because a bard of Ireland told me once
I should not live long after I saw Richmond.”¹⁴³

Here we find a bard of Ireland credited by Shakespeare with the power of prophecy. There had been a time when the Irish bards dabbled in magic, and were weavers of spells and of incantations. But, long before the reign of Richard III, they had ceased to be sorcerers, and had become more famous as poets than as seers. The world has seldom, if ever, seen a more elaborate organization for the cultivation of the art of poetry than the Bardic Order of Ireland. The bards, properly so-called, were professional court poets attached to the persons of the native kings or chieftains. They formed an hereditary

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caste; and every bard had to undergo a training, which extended over six or seven years, in the technical rules and traditional lore of his order, as well as in the history of his country, and in the literary dialect which the bards preserved for centuries.

The hereditary system was less calculated to encourage originality than to ensure perfection of technique and of artistic finish. Professor Osborn Bergin, who has made a special study of the Bardic Order, has pointed out that the hereditary bard was not necessarily an inspired poet, for he had to be "both born and made." Yet, for dignity of style, for rhythmical balance, for grace and polish, for the music of cadence, for beauty and diversity of metre, the bard of Ireland had few rivals among his compeers in other countries. His poems were mainly taken up with praises of the Royal or noble House to which he was attached, or with satires on its enemies. Some writers have complained of the monotony of the subject matter of the bardic poems. But it cannot be denied that the old familiar themes were often treated with uncommon brilliancy. For example, some matchless sword-songs have been preserved, of which the "Song of the Sword of Cerball" is the most famous. In this spirited poem the bard apostrophises a sword which is the precious heirloom of his master's house; enumerates the great warriors who have wielded it, and the formidable enemies who have fallen by it; and, so to speak, wreathes the old blade with a garlandry of glory.

The court bard sometimes indulged in predictions of victory for his nation, or of disaster for her foes; but these passages were rhetorical rather than prophetic. The same observation is applicable to the elegies upon the death of kings or chiefs, which were often accompanied by prophecies of the evil consequences which must follow an irreparable bereavement. For example,

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Tadhig Og O'Higgins in a dirge on the death of Ulick MacWilliam, who died in 1424, prophesied that their enemies would now encircle the "nation" of the Burkes "like a ring of smouldering fire." Prophecies of this kind were mere poetical figures of speech. In the days of Richard III, as well as in those of Shakespeare, the court bards of Ireland did not, as a rule, lay claim to the gift of prophecy.

Besides the official bards attached to kings or chieftains there were also unattached poets, who were sometimes called bards, but were outside the ranks of the Bardic Order. In the earliest times these unofficial bards were usually monks or students. In the Middle Ages they included cultivated persons of leisure, such as the poet Earl of Desmond, who has been twice mentioned in former chapters. The older poems were usually anonymous; and a beautiful piece of verse has often been found in a margin or blank space of some dull old book or manuscript, like a diamond in a dustheap. A poem of this kind, which has won the unstinted praise of foreign critics, is the "Lament of the Old Woman of Beare," in which the singer contrasts the brilliancy of her youth with the privations and hardships of her old age, and draws her poetical images from the ebb and flow of the Atlantic tide. It is just such a lament as Grania O'Malley might have uttered during her widow-hood in her lonely tower on the shores of Clew Bay. Another famous poem of the same class is the "King and the Hermit," in which a hermit paints the charms of the simple woodland life in such glowing and attractive colours as to persuade the king to think them more enviable than throne and sceptre.

Among these non-professional bards there was no marked tendency towards Prophetism. Sometimes a poem was written containing predictions attributed to

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saints, heroes, and other persons whether fabulous or famous, but these compositions are linguistically of a later age than that of the personages to whom they are attributed, and they were in the nature of historical poems thrown into a prophetic shape. The Welsh bards, in Shakespeare's time, were more given to foretelling the future than the Irish bards.

Shakespeare had, doubtless, read about Irish bards and poets in Holinshed's *Chronicles*, and in Spenser's writings about Ireland. He may have seen or heard of the court bards, who occasionally came to London with an Irish lord or chieftain. He may have listened, as Dr. Sigerson has suggested, to some wandering minstrel singing, as Turlogh O'Carolan did a century afterwards, songs of the Gael to the music of his harp. Be that as it may, this passage in *King Richard III* affords weighty proof that somewhere or somehow a Bard of Ireland had impressed himself upon the mind of the Bard of Avon.¹⁴⁴

CHAPTER XXX

KING RICHARD III—GEORGE PLANTAGENET, DUKE OF CLARENCE

False, fleeting, perjured Clarence.—*King Richard III, Act I, sc. iv, l. 55.*

One of the secondary characters in the play of *King Richard III* was doubly connected with Ireland. This was George Plantagenet, Duke of Clarence. He was born at Dublin Castle in 1449, during the viceroyalty of his father, Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, and he was himself the titular Viceroy of Ireland during the greater part of his life. Ireland owes nothing to the ill-starred prince whom Shakespeare immortalized in the line "false, fleeting, perjured Clarence." Nevertheless, as he was born in Dublin, let us inquire how he came by these three expressive adjectives.

George Plantagenet was in his thirteenth year when the victory of Towton (1461) secured the possession of the throne to his brother Edward IV. In the *Third Part of King Henry VI* the dramatist brings George upon the field of Towton. But, as a matter of fact, the boy was in the Netherlands, from which he was not recalled until after the battle. Edward, having ascended the throne, lost no time in conferring upon him the Dukedom of Clarence, and in appointing him Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

Clarence, a fatherless and weak-willed boy, grew up under the influence of the strongest man of that day, Warwick the Kingmaker, who married him, while he was still under age, to the elder of his two daughters. The marriage drew Clarence into a net of Lancastrian

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intrigue. In this way he was led to desert his brother the king, and to involve himself with Warwick in the Lancastrian revolution, which in 1470 deposed Edward IV and restored Henry VI to the throne. The dramatist seizes the opportunity of making Edward reproach Clarence with ingratitude in the terms in which Cæsar reproached Brutus. When Edward sees his brother, whom he had loaded with honour, uniting with Warwick to dethrone him, he is made to exclaim :

“Yea, brother of Clarence, art thou here too ?

Nay, then I see that Edward needs must down.”¹⁴⁵

When Clarence began to realize that he had been merely used as a pawn by his father-in-law, he became secretly reconciled to his exiled brother. He is said to have acted with as much duplicity towards Warwick, as he had previously shown towards Edward. Having induced the Kingmaker to await his arrival, he availed himself of the delay to march his 4,000 men into his brother's camp. His help contributed materially to the Yorkist victories at Barnet, where Warwick himself was killed, and at Tewkesbury, where other prominent Lancastrians lost their lives.

In the play Clarence is made to take the Red Rose from his hat and to toss it into Warwick's face, exclaiming :

“Father of Warwick, know you what this means ?

Look here, I throw my infamy at thee :

.

I here proclaim myself thy mortal foe,

.

And to my brother turn my blushing cheeks.

Pardon me, Edward, I will make amends :

And, Richard, do not frown upon my faults,

For I will henceforth be no more unconstant.”

FALSE, FLEETING, PERJURED CLARENCE

Warwick flings back the angry retort :

“ O passing traitor, perjured and unjust ! ” ¹⁴⁶

The historians are not agreed as to Clarence's share in the death of Edward, Prince of Wales, who was slain at Tewkesbury. The dramatist makes the young prince revile the three Plantagenet brothers :

“ PRINCE EDWARD—I know my duty ; you are all undutiful :

Lascivious Edward, and thou perjured George,
And thou mis-shapen Dick, I tell ye all
I am your better, traitors as ye are : ”

The three brothers then stab the prince, Clarence dealing the final blow, and exclaiming :

“ And there's for twitting me with perjury. ” ¹⁴⁷

Clarence was weak, unstable, treacherous, and perhaps worse. But it should be remembered, in palliation of his faults, that he was only twenty-two years of age when the latest of these events occurred, and that he had never had a disinterested adviser.

During the remaining six years of his life Clarence was involved in quarrels and litigation with his younger brother, Richard Duke of Gloucester, who having married Warwick's younger daughter, known to readers of Shakespeare as Lady Anne, claimed half the Warwick inheritance. Clarence also fell under the suspicions of his elder brother the king, who, from time to time complained of his treasonable intrigues abroad and at home, and ultimately declared him to be “ incorrigible. ” He was charged with fomenting a new rebellion, in which event, it was said, he had made arrangements to send his son to Ireland, substituting another

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child to impersonate him at Warwick Castle. A Bill of Attainder was passed by both Houses of Parliament, and a Court of Chivalry sentenced him to death.

Shakespeare in *King Richard III* represents Richard as procuring Clarence's imprisonment, and as employing murderers to assassinate him. History does not confirm Shakespeare's account of Gloucester's direct responsibility for Clarence's death. He may have defended his brother "somewhat faintly," but Clarence's end appears to have been a private execution after trial and sentence, and not an assassination.

The scene in which Clarence tells his terrible dream to Brakenbury, the lieutenant of the Tower, and argues with his murderers before they despatch him, is one of the finest in the play. Clarence's dream is remarkable both for what it contains and for what it omits. He tells Brakenbury that in his sleep he thought he had been on board ship with his brother Richard, that Richard had thrown him overboard, and that he had died a terrible death by drowning. Brakenbury enquires if this sore agony did not wake him. Then follows the passage in which Clarence recounts his ghastly dream :

“CLARENCE—O no, my dream was lengthened after life ;
O then began the tempest of my soul,
Who pass'd, methought, the melancholy flood,
With that grim ferryman which poets write of,
Unto the kingdom of perpetual night.
The first that there did greet my stranger soul,
Was my great father-in-law, renowned Warwick ;
Who cried aloud, ‘ What scourge for perjury
Can this dark monarchy afford false Clarence ? ’
And so he vanished : then came wandering by
A shadow like an angel, with bright hair
Dabbled in blood ; and he squeaked out aloud,

FALSE, FLEETING, PERJURED CLARENCE

Clarence is come; false, fleeting, perjured Clarence,
That stabb'd me in the field by Tewkesbury :
Seize on him, Furies, take him to your torments !
With that, methought, a legion of foul fiends
Environ'd me about, and howled in mine ears
Such hideous cries, that with the very noise
I trembling waked, and for a season after
Could not believe but that I was in hell,
Such terrible impression made the dream." ¹⁴⁸

It is noticeable that the accusing spirits of Clarence's dream are those of Warwick and of the Lancastrians who had fallen at Barnet and Tewkesbury. His conscience does not seem to accuse him of any breach of faith towards his brother Edward IV. Although he had helped to drive his brother from his throne, and had just been convicted of treason against his authority, he appears to feel no qualms, but on the contrary is disposed to reproach him for ingratitude. Speaking of the king he exclaims : "See how he requites me." In reading the historical plays one is sometimes tempted to suspect that the dramatist was a Lancastrian, and, so to speak, wore the red rose in his considering cap.

We have stepped aside to recall the events which moved Shakespeare to attach for ever to the name of Clarence the adjectives "false," "fleeting," and "perjured." Who could have foreseen the tragic destiny that was in store for the child who first saw the light at Dublin Castle in 1449? What a future seemed before him when he received the name George, with a Butler and a Geraldine for his sponsors, starting in the race of life with all those aids to success which princely rank and great connections offer to those who have anything in them that is brave and strong and true.

CHAPTER XXXI

KING HENRY VIII

Kildare's Attainder.—*King Henry VIII, Act II, scene ii, line 41.*

There are two allusions to Ireland in the play of *King Henry VIII*, both of which relate to an event which occurred in 1520. This event was the removal of Gerald FitzGerald, ninth Earl of Kildare, from the Lord Deputyship of Ireland, and the appointment in his place of the Earl of Surrey. In the present chapter we propose to explain the allusions by inquiring who this Earl of Kildare was, what part he played, and what were the causes and consequences of the incident to which the dramatist refers.

When Henry VIII succeeded to the throne in 1509, the eighth Earl of Kildare, called the Great Earl, had been for about thirty years Lord Deputy of Ireland. As a Yorkist he had espoused the cause of Lambert Simnel, and had been compromised in the affair of Perkin Warbeck. When brought to book his accusers had concluded their indictment with the words: "Finally all Ireland cannot rule this Earle." "No," replied Henry VIII, "then in good faith shall this Earle rule all Ireland." Rule all Ireland he did, until, in the course of a tribal war, he was shot while watering his horse in a Kildare river.

At the death of the Great Earl, his son Gerald, called Garrett Og by the Irish annalists, succeeded him both as earl and as viceroy. He was a man of energy and courage, who went forth and did battle in all directions with the king's enemies and with his own.

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In those days there was a rivalry in Ireland between the great houses of Geraldine and Butler of the same character as the feud between the Montagues and the Capulets, which split Verona in the time of Romeo and Juliet. The head of the house of Butler was Sir Piers. He was the next male heir of his kinsman, the fourth Earl of Ormonde, who had died leaving two daughters and no male issue. One of the daughters had married Sir William Boleyn, whose son, Sir Thomas, was the father of Anne Boleyn, and was ambitious of obtaining the Ormonde earldom and estates. While the matter remained in doubt, Sir Piers Butler assumed the title and defied all-comers. He had strengthened his position, and had temporarily patched up the family quarrel, by marrying Kildare's sister, the Lady Margaret FitzGerald. She was a remarkable woman, who earned in her country the name of the Great Countess. The Irish of those days had nicknames of their own for everyone. Sir Piers Butler was known as "Red Piers," while the people, with what Mr. Richard Bagwell calls an "endearing irony," gave to his wife, on account of her lofty stature, the soubriquet of Magheen, or Little Margaret. The marriage did not compose the inter-family difference, in which Lady Margaret sided actively with her husband against her brother.

After several years of Deputyship, Kildare was summoned to London to answer complaints which had been made against his government. It was a moment when the course of Cardinal Wolsey's ambitious career was at its full flood. Among the great nobles who stood in his path were the Duke of Buckingham, and his son-in-law the Earl of Surrey. Wolsey was believed to have set himself to weaken Buckingham by depriving him of Surrey's support and backing. With this object in view he was supposed to have procured the removal

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After Buckingham's execution, the Earl of Surrey obtained his recall from Ireland, but had to wait nearly ten years before he was able to "requite" Wolsey. Meanwhile Sir Piers Butler was appointed Lord Deputy in succession to Surrey; and Kildare, after accompanying the king to the Field of the Cloth of Gold, and after marrying his majesty's cousin Lady Elizabeth Grey, was allowed to return to Ireland.

It was soon made clear that Sir Piers Butler could not rely upon Kildare's help, and could not do without it. Accordingly the king, having appointed a commission to enquire and report, reverted to his father's policy of entrusting all Ireland to a man whom all Ireland could not govern. Kildare was restored as Deputy in 1524. History repeated itself. Complaints accumulated against Kildare, and Sir Piers Butler went to London in 1526 to press his own claims to the Earldom of Ormonde, and to prefer charges against his rival. Kildare was summoned to London in the following year, and was impeached before the Privy Council, where, according to Holinshed, Cardinal Wolsey himself acted as prosecutor. The Cardinal fiercely denounced the Geraldine Earl for having connived at the treason of his cousin, the Earl of Desmond, who was alleged to have been in communication with a foreign enemy, and for having neglected to bring Desmond to justice.

The Cardinal, according to Holinshed, opened the proceedings with the following characteristic exordium: "I wot well, my Lord, that I am not the meetest at this board to charge you with these treasons, because it hath pleased one of your pew-fellows (*i.e.* your advocates) to report that I am a professed enemy to all nobility, and namely to the Geraldines; but seeing every curst boy can say as much when he is controlled, and seeing these points are so weighty, that they should not be

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dissembled of us, and so apparent, that they cannot be denied of you, I must have leave (notwithstanding your stale slander) to be the mouth of these honourables at this present, and to trumpe your treasons in your way, howsoever you take me."¹⁵⁰ Continuing in this strain Wolsey is represented in the chronicle as having pressed the case so hard that if Kildare had not conducted himself adroitly, and if he had not had the support of the same Surrey who had recently supplanted him, it might have gone hard with him. Surrey, who seems to have sided with Kildare as against both Cardinal Wolsey and Sir Piers Butler, bailed the earl out, and kept him a prisoner in his house, until the Cardinal brought further charges against him, and had him committed to the Tower.

While Kildare was a prisoner, Wolsey, according to Holinshed, obtained an order for his immediate execution, and carried it to the Constable of the Tower, who took it upon himself to exercise a right, inherent in his office, of demanding a personal interview with the king, with the result that the execution was respited. Soon afterwards Kildare was allowed to return to Ireland, where he completely overshadowed the Lord Deputy, Sir William Skeffington, an ex-Master of the Ordnance, who was on that account, somewhat contemptuously, known as "the Gunner." While Kildare's star was rising in Ireland, Wolsey's was setting in England.

CHAPTER XXXII

KING HENRY VIII—KILDARE'S ATTAINDER
—WOLSEY'S FALL—SILKEN THOMAS
AND THE FAIR GERALDINE.

You sent me Deputy for Ireland.—*Surrey to Wolsey.*

—*King Henry VIII, Act III, scene ii, line 260.*

Kildare was in Ireland when Cardinal Wolsey fell from his high estate. In the events, which led up to and attended the Cardinal's disgrace, the Earl of Surrey, who had succeeded his father as Duke of Norfolk, took a prominent part. One of the best scenes in the play of *King Henry VIII* represents Surrey as one of the four lords who deliver to the Cardinal the Royal Mandate "to render up the Great Seal presently into our hands." It is Surrey who gloats most exultantly over Wolsey's fall, addresses him as "thou scarlet sin," and reproaches him with having procured the death of his father-in-law Buckingham, and with having sent him (Surrey) to Ireland so as to deprive Buckingham of his support.

"Plague of your policy !

You sent me Deputy for Ireland ;

Far from his succour."¹⁵¹

After Wolsey's disappearance, the star of Anne Boleyn held a brief ascendancy. Kildare was re-appointed deputy in the place of "the Gunner," who was there-upon added to the list of his enemies. His viceroyalty hardly lasted a year. His accusers renewed their attacks. Kildare, whose speech and limbs had been paralysed as

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the result of a severe wound, was again summoned to London, and was again committed to the Tower.

Kildare had left as his vice-deputy in Dublin his son, Thomas FitzGerald, Lord Offaly, known in history as Silken Thomas, a youth of twenty years of age. False information reached him in the early summer of 1534 that his father had been executed in London. Disregarding the advice of his best friends, this impetuous young man broke out into a wild rebellion, which has been referred to by some writers as the nearest parallel in history to the outbreak of Easter Week 1916. "Gunner" Skeffington was recalled and the rebellion was put down. Silken Thomas and five of his uncles were attainted and executed at Tyburn, and it looked as if the star of the noble family of Geraldine had set never to rise again. Meanwhile the old earl had died in the Tower of a broken heart.

It will be observed that the dramatist was thinking of the ninth earl when he wrote the words "Kildare's attainder." Yet the ninth earl, although thrice summoned to London to answer for his conduct, was never actually attainted. That penalty was reserved for his son, Silken Thomas.

Something remains to be said about the Butlers, the Boleyns, and the Geraldines. Henry VIII, for the sake of Anne Boleyn's *beaux yeux*, gratified Sir Thomas Boleyn's ambition to bear the title of Earl of Ormonde, while he consoled Sir Piers Butler with the title of Earl of Ossory. After the star of Anne Boleyn had set, the title of Ormonde was restored to Sir Piers Butler, who with his countess made a deep impression on their contemporaries, leaving behind them sundry memorials of their activity, including a famous school of learning, where Richard Stanyhurst and other men of note were educated. After the execution of Anne Boleyn and of her

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brother (Viscount Rochford), the Boleyn family, or at all events some of them, sought refuge in Ireland. A grave was recently discovered near Clonooney Castle in the King's County with a slab identifying it as the grave of two ladies named Bullen, great grandchildren of Anne Boleyn's brother.¹⁵²

A chapter which has to do with the relations between the Earl of Surrey and the Great Earl of Kildare would be incomplete without a reference to the celebrated sonnet which Surrey's gifted son addressed to Lady Elizabeth FitzGerald, generally known as the Fair Geraldine, who was a daughter of the ninth earl, and a half-sister of Silken Thomas. Her mother was Lady Elizabeth Grey, a cousin of the king. Drayton and Walter Scott have made the relations between Surrey and the Fair Geraldine the theme of some romantic poetry. But Surrey's admiration for the Lady Elizabeth appears to have been as platonic as that of Petrarch for Laura. Surrey's sonnet refers to the Florentine origin of this great Irish family, and to the young lady's beauty and charm. Two couplets will serve as a sample of this famous sonnet :

“ Foster'd she was with milke of Irish breast.
Her sire an earle ; her dame of prince's blood ;
.
.
.
Her beauty of kind, her virtues from above,
Happy is he that can obtain her love.”

What a play Shakespeare might have made out of these Irish episodes in the reign of Henry VIII, with the King, Wolsey, Anne Boleyn, Surrey, Kildare, Red Piers, the Great Countess, Silken Thomas, and the Fair Geraldine for the *dramatis personæ* ! Let us hope that some Irish dramatist may arise, and fill the gap which he has left.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE FIRST EARL OF ESSEX—*ROMEO AND JULIET*—*MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM*

Ah, well-a-day ! he's dead, he's dead, he's dead !

—*Romeo and Juliet, Act III, scene ii, line 37.*

Yet mark'd I where the bolt of Cupid fell :
It fell upon a little western flower.

—*Midsummer Night's Dream, Act II, scene i, line 165.*

When Juliet's nurse enters the orchard of the Capulets, carrying the ladder of cords by which Romeo is to climb to his "bird's nest soon when it is dark," her mistress, remarking her extreme agitation, exclaims :

"Ay, me ! what news ? why dost thou wring thy hands !"

The nurse's answer tells Juliet of the death of her brother Tybalt.

"Ah, well-a-day ! he's dead, he's dead, he's dead !"

In a later scene in the same play, when the nurse undraws the curtains of Juliet's bed, and finds her mistress lying on the coverlet cold and lifeless, she exclaims :

"Alas, alas ! Help, help ! my lady's dead !
O well-a-day that ever I was born !" ¹⁵³

It will be observed that in both these passages, in which respectively the nurse is bewailing the tragical

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deaths first of Tybalt, and then of her mistress, the word of lamentation which she uses is "well-a-day." Dr. Grattan Flood, the historian of Irish music, connects these "well-a-days" with an Irish keen, or funeral tune, to which a dirge had been set to commemorate the death of Walter Devereux, first Earl of Essex.¹⁵⁴ The Earl died in Dublin on the 22nd September, 1576, two months after his arrival there with the rank and title of Earl Marshal of Ireland. This dirge was entitled "Welladay," or "Essex's last Good Night." It did not represent any widespread sentiment of national regret; for the first Earl of Essex did evil deeds in the north of Ireland, which no impartial historian can excuse or palliate. Nevertheless, some keeners were found to sing his "Well-a-day"; and the air became a popular one. Twenty-five years afterwards, it was again availed of as a song of mourning after the execution for treason, of Robert Devereux, second Earl of Essex, eldest son of the first earl.

The reference—if reference it really be—to the death of the first Essex, leads naturally to the consideration of one of the most charming passages in the entire range of Shakespeare's plays, which is supposed by some critics to refer to the marriage of the earl's widow. If this supposition be a correct one—and it would be rash for anyone to give a confident opinion upon so vexed a question—it has a claim to come within the ambit of this volume, because the events, to which it is supposed to relate, were consequential upon the death in Dublin of the Earl Marshal of Ireland.

The most prominent man of the hour in 1576 was the Earl of Leicester, who was known to be an admirer of two ladies of the Court, the Lady Sheffield and the Countess of Essex, and was believed to have on that account used his influence, from time to time,

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to procure the appointment of their respective husbands to distant employments. In the previous year (1575) Lady Essex had been at Kenilworth on the celebrated occasion when Leicester entertained the queen with such extraordinary pomp and magnificence; and tongues began to wag, when her husband died suddenly in Dublin. Leicester's attentions to Lady Essex were calculated to wound Lady Sheffield, with whom he had been deeply involved; and they could not fail to offend the queen, with whom his name was linked so mysteriously, that the world of that day was led to wonder whether he was her suitor, her lover, or her friend. The news of Essex's death was followed by rumours that he had died of a disease, to which the malicious gossips of that time gave the sinister name of "the Leicester cold"; but a post-mortem examination, which was held in Dublin by order of Sir Henry Sidney, the then viceroy, resulted in a finding that the rumours were groundless. They were, however, revived when Leicester married the widowed countess.

Shakespeare was a boy in his twelfth year when Queen Elizabeth passed through Warwickshire on her way to Kenilworth. Whether or not he was a spectator of the revels, it is, at all events, impossible to doubt that the occasion of her visit made a deep impression upon his mind. Some writers have surmised that the suspicions which surrounded Essex's death in Dublin, suggested to the dramatist the motive of the play of *Hamlet*, and that he took Leicester as his model for the character of King Claudius, the murderer of Hamlet's father.¹⁵⁵ The suggestion is not a convincing one. But there is another surmise founded upon a passage in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for which more can be said.

The plot of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* hinges upon the punishment which Oberon, King of the Fairies,

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plans for his Queen, Titania. He orders his trusty messenger, Puck, to procure the juice of a little flower called Love-in-Idleness. The juice laid on the eyelids of the sleeping queen will make her dote upon the first thing she sees on waking. Oberon explains to Puck that the little flower gained its magical qualities when a shaft from Cupid's bow fell upon it; and he relates the story in a vision, which has been rightly described as the "pivot of the whole play."¹⁵⁶ He reminds Puck that once, when "sitting upon a promontory," he had "heard a mermaid, on a dolphin's back, uttering such dulcet" sounds that "the rude sea grew civil at her song and certain stars shot madly from their spheres to hear the sea-maid's music." For many years the critics accepted the suggestion that the mermaid sitting on the dolphin's back was Mary Queen of Scots, whose husband had been the Dauphin of France. A time came when some brave commentator ventured to throw a doubt upon this theory, and to ask the pertinent question: Why should the Queen of Scots have been represented as sitting on her husband's back? No satisfactory answer having ever been given to this simple query, it became the fashion to explain this passage by reference to the festivities at Kenilworth, which included among its spectacular effects a Triton on a mermaid's back, an Arion mounted on a Dolphin, a display of shooting stars, and some sweet music which tranquillized the waters.¹⁵⁷

The passage in which the fairy king tells "his gentle Puck" how the little flower had acquired its magical force, is admittedly allegorical, although there is a wide difference of opinion as to its meaning. On one point all the critics are agreed, namely, that under the semblance of the moon and of a fair vestal, an elaborate and graceful compliment was conveyed to Queen

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Elizabeth, against whom the poet had as yet no ground of complaint.

A larger meaning has been attached to the whole passage by the author of a monograph entitled *Oberon's Vision in the Midsummer Night's Dream, illustrated by a comparison with Lyly's Endymion*.¹⁵⁸ This larger meaning which has been adopted by the Danish writer Brandes, is an attractive one. He introduces us to an Elizabethan play called *Endymion*. This play was one of those mythological comedies, full of topical allusions and of allegorical references to the personages of the moment, with which John Lyly used to tickle the ears of the courtiers and court ladies of Queen Elizabeth's time. Lyly, in this drawingroom drama, represented the love affairs of Leicester in the manner that would be most pleasing to Elizabeth. Leicester was figured as Endymion, hopelessly enamoured of the moon-goddess, Cynthia, who symbolized the queen. Lady Sheffield, under the name of the earth (Tellus), is represented as being passionately in love with Endymion, who is adored for his supposed virtues by a little flower (Floscula), personifying Lady Essex.

Let us turn to the passage which Shakespeare is said to have borrowed from the plot of *Endymion*. It is as superior in language and in thought to Lyly's allegory as gold is more precious than brass. In reading it, let us remember that, according to this interpretation, the moon or fair vestal is Elizabeth, the earth is Lady Sheffield, Cupid is Lord Leicester, and the little flower is Lady Essex.

“OBERON—That very time I saw, but thou couldst
not,
Flying between the cold moon and the earth,
Cupid all arm'd : a certain aim he took

OBERON'S VISION

At a fair vestal throned by the west,
And loos'd his love-shaft smartly from his bow,
As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts :
But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft
Quench'd in the chaste beams of the watery moon,
And the imperial votaress passed on,
In maiden meditation, fancy free.
Yet marked I where the bolt of Cupid fell :
It fell upon a little western flower,
Before milk-white, now purple with love's wound,
The maidens call it Love-in-Idleness."¹⁵⁹

The critics who trace this passage to Lyly's *Endymion*, are by no means agreed as to the identification of all the persons in the allegory. Some have preferred to see Lady Sheffield in the little flower. Others, while admitting that this allegorical explanation is an interesting and ingenious one, regard it as more fanciful than convincing.

The interest which surrounds this passage would be heightened, if another theory of the Danish author Brandes, were well founded. He supposes that *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was played in honour of the marriage of the younger Essex (1590).¹⁶⁰ There can be little doubt that it was a wedding masque, but the date and the surrounding circumstances do not favour Brandes' hypothesis. Others have suggested that it was produced at the marriage of Sir Thomas Heneage (1594), or of the Earl of Bedford (1594), or of the Earl of Derby (1595), or of the Earl of Southampton (1598).¹⁶¹ If we are to suppose that the queen was present, the occasion could hardly have been the wedding of either Essex or Southampton, since their marriages were kept secret from her, and, when she became aware of them, caused her deep offence.

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The relation of Oberon's vision to the first Essex's widow is a doubtful one; and its connection with Ireland may perhaps be thought to be too remote to justify its inclusion in this volume. Be that as it may, we are approaching an indubitable reference to Ireland, connected with the career of the second Essex, which will be the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE YOUNGER ESSEX AND THE IRISH
EXPEDITION OF 1599

Were now the general of our gracious Empress,
As in good time he may, from Ireland coming,
Bringing Rebellion broached upon his sword,
How many would the peaceful city quit,
To welcome him !

—*King Henry V, Act V, Prologue, line 29.*

In the present chapter we approach what is perhaps the most interesting of Shakespeare's allusions to the co-temporary history of his time. This is the reference which occurs in the play of *King Henry V* to the expeditionary force which was sent to Ireland in March 1599, under the command of Robert Devereux, second Earl of Essex. Essex was accompanied by Henry Wriothesley, Lord Southampton, the friend and patron of Shakespeare, to whom the dramatist dedicated his poems, "Venus and Adonis" and "Lucrece." At this date Shakespeare was in his thirty-fifth year ; Essex was in his thirty-third year ; and Southampton was in his twenty-sixth year. We shall better understand the significance of this link between Ireland and Shakespeare if we first remind ourselves of some of the exciting incidents which had already crowded the lives of Essex and of Southampton.

At the time of his father's death in Dublin, which has been referred to in the preceding chapter, Robert Devereux was in his tenth year. He was born into Royal favour ; and his star, from its first appearance

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in the sky, blazed as the centre of a brilliant constellation. As a boy he signalized his presentation at court by wearing his hat in the queen's presence, and by refusing her request for a kiss. As a youth he became Burghley's ward, Leicester's stepson, and, much against his will, one of the jailers of Mary Queen of Scots. He was not slow to seize his opportunities. Before he came of age, he had obtained his degree at Cambridge, had been knighted for gallantry as General of Horse in the Netherlands, and had gained a reputation at court for his "goodly person" and "innate courtesy." He was something more than soldier and courtier. He was a poet, skilled at penning a sonnet, inventing a masque, or designing those fashionable and chivalric devices, which under the name of *impressas* were carried by the combatants on their shields at tournaments. Brave, handsome, and accomplished, he gained such a prominent place in the queen's entourage as almost to monopolize the Royal confidence. While young Essex had the entrée to her boudoir, ambassadors had to kick their heels in the ante-chamber, and Sir Walter Raleigh had to stand on guard in the corridor.

Essex, whose closest friend was Shakespeare's patron, Southampton, patronised the drama; and, while he was still a boy, had taken under his wing a company of players, who visited Stratford before Shakespeare left it. He was an enthusiastic amateur in the arts in which Shakespeare excelled—in poetry, sonneteering, and in the composition of *impressas*. Most of the writers, who have touched upon the subject, assume that Essex and Shakespeare were known to each other. Doctor Brandes supposes their acquaintance to have begun in 1590, and thinks it probable that Essex introduced the poet to Southampton.¹⁶² Be that as it may, we know that Essex was a leader among the golden youth which

ESSEX AND RICHARD II

glittered during the brilliant decade, in which the first twenty of the Shakespearian plays were produced at the London theatres. Essex, Southampton, Pembroke, and Rutland are believed to have been the models whom the dramatist reproduced under the names of Bassanio, Gratiano, Romeo, Mercutio, Benedick, Florizel, Valentine, and the rest.

Essex was a man of action as well as a poet and a leader of fashion. While Shakespeare was writing his early plays, the earl commanded three foreign expeditions to Navarre, Cadiz, and the Azores respectively, and took Southampton with him in two of them. Essex offended the queen by a secret marriage with Sir Philip Sidney's widow, and was only restored to favour when an arrangement was made that his wife should "live retired in her mother's house." Passionate, impulsive, and vain, he treated the queen in such an overbearing way, that, on one occasion in July 1598, she boxed his ears at the council. Meanwhile, Southampton followed a like path, for he contracted a secret marriage with Elizabeth Vernon, who was a cousin of Essex's and a Maid of Honour, and was committed to the Fleet Prison for a honeymoon.

Shakespeare had not been directly involved in these serious troubles; but something had happened which foreboded danger. The story of the deposition of King Richard II had, says Sir Sidney Lee, long exercised a mysterious fascination over Essex. It is well known that the same story filled the queen with mysterious apprehensions. It was on that account that the passage in Shakespeare's *King Richard II* dealing with that king's deposition had been struck out of that play by the official censor. Early in 1597, before Essex started for Ireland, John Hayward, an historian of that day, published a history of the first year of the reign of

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King Henry IV, which included a description of the deposition of King Richard II; and he dedicated the work to Essex in an epistle full of elaborate praise. The queen's suspicions were aroused. Hayward, having been brought before the Star Chamber, was committed to prison; and orders were given for the removal from the book of the dedication to Essex.¹⁶⁸

It was soon after this incident that the news reached the queen that her army in Ireland under Marshal Bagenal had been decisively defeated at the Yellow Ford on the Blackwater by Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone, and that the whole island had broken out in rebellion. An expeditionary force was immediately collected; and Essex was appointed to the command. Accompanied by Southampton, he took horse on the 27th March 1599, and rode away through the streets of London, amidst the plaudits and good wishes of the citizens who pressed round him and followed him for several miles into the country. He had already become a popular hero, and was called "the good earl" by the Londoners. When he had gone, public attention was riveted upon the Irish expedition.

It was at this point of time that Shakespeare in the spring of 1599 produced the play of *King Henry V*. In those days the young men of fashion did not occupy stalls in the front of the house. The stage projected like a platform into the auditorium; and the young gallants sat along its sides on benches, or reclined on their cloaks or on rushes. Among them at the production of *King Henry V* we may be sure that the "first nighters" included many friends and admirers of Essex and of Southampton. At the beginning of the fifth act of the play the chorus comes forward to explain to the audience in a prologue that more than four years have passed since the end of the fourth act, which had been taken up with

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the battle of Agincourt, and to remind them of what had happened in the interval. The chorus, in the course of this prologue, tells of Henry V's journey to England after Agincourt, and of his enthusiastic reception by the citizens of London, who poured out to meet him. It is here that the dramatist introduces a reference to the Irish expedition, upon which Essex and Southampton were then actually engaged, and, to quote George Wyndham, presents to a sympathetic audience "a prophetic picture of their victorious return."¹⁶⁴

The passage runs as follows :

“ As by a lower but a loving likelihood,
Were now the general of our gracious Empress,
As in good time he may, from Ireland coming,
Bringing rebellion broached upon his sword,
How many would the peaceful city quit,
To welcome him ! ”¹⁶⁵

Our ears seem to tingle with the applause with which this topical allusion to the most interesting of current events must assuredly have been received by a popular audience at the Globe Theatre in the spring of 1599 ; and we cannot entertain a doubt that the author of these lines felt a deep personal interest in an enterprise with which his patrons and friends were so prominently associated. A disappointment no less deep was to follow. The high hopes of success, to which Shakespeare gave expression in the play of *King Henry V*, were destined to be rudely disillusioned ; and Essex, like so many other men of promise, was to find in Ireland the tomb of his career.

CHAPTER XXXV

THE YOUNGER ESSEX—THE IRISH EXPEDITION OF 1599—*MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING*—*AS YOU LIKE IT*

You had musty victual.

—*Beatrice in Much Ado About Nothing, Act I, scene i, line 50.*

This is not the place to tell the story of Essex's Irish Expedition and of the tragical ending of his career, save in so far as those events may serve to link Shakespeare with Ireland. From this point of view there is plenty of evidence to be found which has led several competent writers to infer that Shakespeare's sympathies must have been engaged on the side of Essex and Southampton. That Shakespeare's mind was directed towards the Irish Expedition from the start is proved by the reference in *King Henry V*, which was quoted in the preceding chapter. Sir Sidney Lee writes that the fact that Southampton went to Ireland with Essex "probably accounted for Shakespeare's avowal of sympathy"; and in another place the same writer remarks that "Essex's close friend Southampton, Shakespeare's patron, bore him company, and the dramatist shared in the general expectation of an early and triumphant home-coming."¹⁶⁶ Evidence that Shakespeare continued to be interested in the Irish Expedition is to be found in his next play.

Essex arrived in Dublin on April 5th. The main object of the expedition was to deal with Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone, whose stronghold was in the North.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

Essex was drawn by the advice of the Irish Government into operations in the South, which occupied him until July. In London the progress of the expedition must have been eagerly followed, and not least by the players and the playgoers who were interested in the personalities of men like Essex and Southampton. It would appear that, in the early stages of the campaign, some favourable accounts of the military operations reached London, and that serious complaints, at the same time, were rife against the contractors, who were accused of having supplied mouldy provisions to the army.

It was in the early summer of 1599, while Essex was campaigning in Leinster and Munster, that Shakespeare produced that sparkling comedy *Much Ado About Nothing*, which presents on the stage the whimsical love affairs of Benedick and Beatrice, and the ingenuous vagaries of Constables Dogberry and Verges. The play opens with the arrival of a messenger bringing to Beatrice's father, Leonato, Governor of Messina, some news of an overseas campaign which had just been brought to a successful conclusion. It is supposed that the following passage was inspired by some recent bulletin from the Irish front:

“LEONATO—How many gentlemen have you lost in the action?

MESSENGER—But few of any sort, and none of name.

LEONATO—A victory is twice itself when the achiever brings home full numbers.”¹⁶⁷

If this passage contains an allusion to Essex's expedition it turned out to be a roseate and misleading one, since Essex, before the end of the summer, lost more than half his army through sickness, casualties or desertion. More appropriate to this campaign is a later passage in the same scene. Leonato and the Messenger are praising

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the war services of Benedick, and Beatrice is making light of them.

“LEONATO—Faith, niece, you tax Signor Benedick too much, but he’ll be meet with you, I doubt it not.

MESSENGER—He has done good service, lady, in these wars.

BEATRICE—You had musty victual, and he has help to eat it ; he is a very valiant trencher-man ; he hath an excellent stomach.”¹⁶⁸

“Musty victual” was the least of the troubles which Essex experienced in his Irish expedition. His operations in Leinster and Munster ended disastrously, and he returned to Dublin in July with damaged prestige and diminished numbers. It was during these operations that a rift began between the earl and Elizabeth which was to widen into an impassable gulf. The first cause of quarrel was one which was calculated to interest Shakespeare, since it arose out of Essex’s conduct in appointing Southampton to be General of his Horse. The queen cancelled the appointment ; and, when Essex warned her that, if Southampton were displaced, some of his officers would retire in indignation, she insisted upon her orders being carried out, and refused to pay attention to what looked like a covert threat. The queen also blamed him for a too lavish distribution of knighthoods, and found fault with his conduct of the campaign. So chagrined was Essex at the attitude of the government that he seriously discussed with his stepfather, Sir Christopher Blount, a plan for conducting part of his army to London and removing his enemies from the queen’s counsels.

Essex did not start for the North until the queen had

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expressly commanded him to do so. He left Dublin on August 28th, marched by Drogheda towards Dungannon, and came into touch with Tyrone near the place where the River Lagan divides the counties of Louth and Monaghan. After a couple of days of military and diplomatic skirmishing, Essex was drawn into an interview which the most recent writer on the subject has described as "one of the mysteries of history."¹⁶⁹ The meeting was a highly dramatic one in point of situation and of circumstance. The two commanders met at the ford of Annagh Clint, on the River Lagan. The river was in flood, and was too wide to admit of conversation. Tyrone rode into mid-stream until the water lapped his horse's girths. Essex came to the water's edge. Essex was about thirty-three years of age, Tyrone was about sixty. Both men were brave soldiers and accomplished men of the world. Tyrone was much more. Doctor Richey describes him as the ablest man whom the Celtic race had produced since the arrival of the English in Ireland. It is not surprising that the interview made a lasting impression upon Essex. What they said was not committed to writing; but it may be reasonably inferred that O'Neill stated in general terms the conditions upon which he was prepared to recognize the queen's authority, and that Essex expressed his readiness to convey and recommend his conditions to the queen. The interview was followed by a conference between commissioners on both sides, at which a truce was arranged. Essex and Southampton were among the commissioners who were parties to this arrangement.

Essex's imprudence in holding a personal interview with Tyrone exposed him to groundless suspicions and imputations on the part of his enemies at court. A passionate letter of disapproval and dismissal from the queen caused him to make a hurried departure from

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Ireland. He sailed from Dublin on September 24th, accompanied by six officers, one of whom was Southampton, and rode direct from Wales to London, where, on the morning of September 28th, he forced himself, booted, spurred, and travel-stained, into the royal presence at ten o'clock in the morning, finding the queen with her toilet unfinished and her hair undressed. Elizabeth does not appear to have seriously resented this intrusion ; but its unmannerliness was made much of, as soon as his conduct in Ireland had come under the condemnation of the council. When the incident became public property, it created a sensation, and was referred to afterwards by Ben Jonson in the couplet :

“Seems it no crime to enter sacred bowers
And hallowed places with impure aspect ?”

From the day of his arrival until the following June, Essex was a prisoner of State. He fell into bad health, and became the object of popular sympathy on both sides of the Channel. Prayers were offered up in the London churches for his restoration to health, and to the queen's favour. Tyrone declared that he was the only Englishman in whom he placed any confidence. Information reached the government from Ireland that there was a disposition among the rebels to regard him as a martyr for their cause, and that he was spoken of as a possible King of Ireland.

It would be outside the scope of this book to enter upon the vexed question of Tyrone's "Articles for demand of peace or yet not," which reached the government after Essex became a prisoner. They present an interesting problem for the discussion of which the reader is referred to Doctor Abbott's *Bacon and Essex*, and to Mr. Darrell Figgis's recently published *Byeways of Study*. Suffice it

ESSEX IN DISGRACE

to say, for our present purpose, that no charge of treason in respect of the Irish Expedition was ever formulated against Essex. He was accused of many things; but his conduct in Ireland was not alleged to have been treasonable.

During the autumn of 1599 and the winter of 1599-1600 Southampton remained at large. Although he did not share Essex's imprisonment, he frequently visited him, and he participated in his disgrace. We know from a letter of the time, which has been preserved, that he kept away from court, and devoted himself to the theatre. The letter runs as follows: "My Lord Southampton and Lord Rutland come not to court . . . they pass away the tyme in London, merely in going to plaies every day."¹⁷⁰ It was probably in the autumn of 1599 that Shakespeare produced *As You Like It*. If so, it is not likely that Southampton and Rutland missed the first night of that perfect comedy.

In a former chapter attention has been called to the unusual number of Irish allusions to be found in *As You Like It*. Is it not possible that it was from Southampton, who was fresh from Ireland, and was frequently at the theatre, that the poet heard about Irish wolves and rhymers, and, perhaps, picked up the words of Irish poems and the refrains of Irish songs? At all events there can be no doubt that Shakespeare's mind rested upon Essex during the composition of this play. One of its sources was a manual on self-defence written by Vincentio Saviolo, who was a fencing-master in Essex's service. From this book Shakespeare drew several hints for the scene of Orlando's combat with Charles the Wrestler. It was from the same work that Touchstone borrowed the various shades of mendacity which he represents as the preliminary of a duel *à outrance*. They are the "retort courteous," the "quip modest," the

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“reply churlish,” the “reproof valiant,” the “counter-check quarrelsome,” the “lie circumstantial,” and the “lie direct”; and they came straight from the pen of Essex’s armourer.¹⁷¹

After remaining in disgrace for nine months Essex was brought to trial in June 1600, was accused of disobedience, of contemptuous conduct towards the queen’s government, and of coming to a dishonourable and dangerous treaty with Tyrone. He was also blamed for minor offences, including the unauthorized promotion of Southampton. The charge of treason was not pressed. Ultimately he was sentenced to removal from all his offices and to remain a prisoner at Essex House at the queen’s pleasure. His detention lasted until August 1600.

Meanwhile Southampton returned to Ireland on a mission from Essex to Mountjoy. The mission was a fruitless one; but Mountjoy took the opportunity of recommending Southampton to the queen for the government of Connaught. When the queen refused to sanction the appointment, Southampton offered to go on foreign service in the Low Countries to redeem her favour. His offer received no encouragement, and before the end of the year he was back in England in dangerous sympathy with his friend Essex, who was becoming more malcontent every day. It was in the winter of 1600-1601 that Shakespeare was putting *Twelfth Night* on the stage. The only Irish references in this admirable comedy consist of allusions to two popular Irish airs of that day, “Peg a Ramsey” and “Yellow Stockings.”¹⁷² It would be fanciful to draw any inferences from such trifles; but we shall find something in another play to indicate that Shakespeare’s mind was beginning to dwell upon the dangerous situation into which Essex and Southampton were being drawn.

CHAPTER XXXVI

THE FALL OF ESSEX AND SOUTHAMPTON —KING RICHARD II—JULIUS CÆSAR— HAMLET—KING LEAR

The storm which ruined Essex and Southampton lifted at least a ripple in the stream of Shakespeare's life.—*George Wyndham, The Poems of Shakespeare, xxxvi.*

Essex's alleged delinquencies in Ireland had been purged but had not been forgiven. He was now in his thirty-fifth year, a vigorous man, consumed with wounded ambition, and with a feverish desire to regain his former power and prominence. When the queen treated his advances with studied indifference, he conceived the mad design of forcibly removing from her councils the statesmen to whose advice he attributed his exclusion from favour. He entered into confidential negotiations with King James of Scotland, at first encouraging the king to make a military demonstration on the borders in assertion of his right to be Elizabeth's successor, and afterwards urging him at all events to send a special embassy to obtain his formal recognition as her successor. The idea was entertained of sending a force to Scotland to co-operate with James; and for a short time Mountjoy, who succeeded Essex in Ireland, appears to have been a party to this proposal.

As the winter of 1600 set in, the political intrigues in which Essex and Southampton had become involved, assumed the shape of dangerous conspiracy; and Southampton's town house became the rendezvous of a crowd

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of sympathisers. No harm was designed against the queen personally ; but Whitehall was to be seized, and the dismissal of her majesty's ministers was to be insisted upon. We have seen that, when he was in Ireland in 1599, Essex had begun to harbour a similar idea.

Before the end of 1600 a *coup d'etat* was decided upon ; and it was contemplated that the date of the outbreak should depend upon the coming of the envoys from King James of Scotland. But, in the first week of February 1601, the conspirators became aware that the court had wind of their proceedings ; and thereupon the rising was fixed for Sunday, February 8th.

Essex was popular in the city ; but it required something more than personal esteem to rouse the citizens of London to a revolt against the constituted authorities. Accordingly Southampton sent a message to the Globe Theatre, and paid the actors to produce the play of *King Richard II* on the evening of Saturday, February 7th, so that the people might be stimulated to action by the representation of the deposition of a king upon the stage. The significance of the production of that particular play was not likely to be misunderstood by the queen. Two years had hardly passed since Hayward, the historian, had been brought before the Star Chamber and had been imprisoned for writing the story of Richard's deposition and for dedicating it to Essex. More must have happened than a single performance of the piece, for we find Elizabeth afterwards complaining that the play had been acted "some forty times in open streets and houses." The acting of *King Richard II* seriously alarmed the queen, who remarked afterwards to Lambarde, the Keeper of the Rolls, when looking over the records of Richard's reign : "I am Richard the Second, know ye not that?"

If the play, which was acted at the Globe in February

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1601, was Shakespeare's play, and Sir Sidney Lee says that "beyond doubt" it was so,¹⁷³ the dramatist may well have felt some personal apprehension when the rebellion broke out, and when it ended in a fiasco. At all events, his sympathies must have been deeply moved by the events which ensued. Essex and Southampton were sentenced to death. Essex suffered the supreme penalty. Southampton's sentence was commuted to imprisonment for life, which meant imprisonment during the life of Elizabeth. Rutland, another of Shakespeare's patrons, was imprisoned and heavily fined.

The poet did not abandon his fallen friends. When other dramatists, notably Ben Jonson and Dekker, attacked the earl and his fellow-conspirators, and applauded the action of the queen in punishing their presumption, Shakespeare preserved an eloquent silence. When Elizabeth died in March 1603, he alone among the poets of the day refrained from laying a poetical tribute upon the queen's tomb. This omission on his part was so observable that Chettle, a co-temporary playwright, was provoked to reproach him in an oft-quoted stanza :

“Nor doth the silver-tongued Melicert
Drop from his honied muse one sable teare
To mourne her death that graced his desert,
And to his laies open'd her royal eare,
Shepherd, remember our Elizabeth,
And sing her rape, done by that Tarquin, Death.”

It would be surprising if Shakespeare's dramatic work, in and after 1601, had not been coloured by the impression which the death of Essex, and the imprisonment of Southampton, must have made upon him. His next plays were *Julius Cæsar* and *Hamlet*.

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Several writers have suggested that what attracted Shakespeare to the theme of Julius Cæsar was a resemblance between the conspiracy of Brutus and that of Essex. Both conspiracies were imprudent and ill-starred. In both cases the principal conspirators were impractical and unsuccessful. Although the play bears Cæsar's name, it is obvious that Brutus, not Cæsar, is the real hero of the piece. Shakespeare may have made him so, because his mind was engrossed with an analogous episode. If those writers who date *Julius Cæsar* in 1599 or 1600 are correct, the suggestion would fall to the ground. On the other hand some of the best critics date the play in or after 1601. There was no similarity between the personalities of Brutus and of Essex, still less between those of Cassius and of Southampton. We may, however, agree with Doctor Furnivall that such a subject would be the very one to come home to the ears and hearts of a London audience in 1601, and that the pathetic words "*Et tu Brute*" were likely to remind such an audience of the favourite's outbreak against his sovereign.¹⁷⁴

An Irish writer, who has made some striking and original contributions to Shakespearian literature, has made the interesting suggestion that there was an echo of Essex's personality in the character of Hamlet. He refers to the play within the play, which Hamlet caused to be acted before his parents, in order to show them that he knew their guilt, and he compares it to the play of *Richard II*, which Essex caused to be acted, in order to stimulate the Londoners to insurrection. "*Hamlet*," he writes, "is the poet's *Defensio* of Essex. . . . If any historical identification of the master character is needed it should fall upon the young earl, whose fate was the turning point of Shakespeare's muse."¹⁷⁵

Whether Essex contributed to the dramatist's concep-

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tion of Brutus or of Hamlet is a question too remotely connected with the Irish episodes in Essex's career to justify us in following it up. But it seems certain that the tragedy of real life, in which Essex and Southampton played the principal part, must have turned Shakespeare's attention to Ireland from more than one point of view.

The accession of James I opened the gates of Southampton's prison. James sent for him when he was on his way from Scotland, and loaded him with honours and preferment. It was probably owing to Southampton's influence that one of the first acts of the new king on his arrival in London was to grant a patent promoting Shakespeare's company to be the king's own actors. In that capacity the dramatist became one of his majesty's servants, and, as such, took a prominent place in the ceremonies of the coronation.

That Shakespeare displayed a pronounced sympathy with King James' policy of uniting his two kingdoms into one, is made abundantly clear in the plays which were produced after the accession of the Scottish king. We have already noticed the two-fold balls and treble sceptres which figure in the Vision of Kings in *Macbeth*. In *King Lear* we find another example of the same tendency. In that play the dramatist introduces the nursery rhyme, "Fie foh and fum, I smell the blood of an Englishman," but he changes an "Englishman" to "Britishman." Scotland would never agree to merger of her name in that of England, but would consent, and has since consented, to her union with England under the name of Britain.¹⁷⁶

The Danish writer Brandes, who has been successful in lighting up many dark corners in the plays, has put forward the view that King James had conceived a broad conciliatory policy for Ireland, that Essex had been its instrument, and that Shakespeare sympathised

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with it. He points to the introduction on the stage in *King Henry V* of the four soldiers representing England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland, in a scene which we have good reason to suppose was added to the play after King James' accession. In a former chapter we have quoted Doctor Brandes' opinion that "Shakespeare evidently dreamed of a greater England, as we nowadays speak of a greater Britain." Doctor Brandes added that "Essex in Ireland was, at this very time, carrying out the policy which was to lead to his destruction—that, namely, of smoothing away hatred by means of leniency. . . . Southampton was with him in Ireland as his master of the horse, and we cannot doubt that Shakespeare's heart was in the campaign."¹⁷⁷

We submit Mr. Brandes' suggestive observations to the consideration of our readers. If, in their judgment, he has, in this instance, dived too deep in search of hidden meanings, we may at least adopt with confidence George Wyndham's conclusion that "the storms which ruined Essex and Southampton lifted at least a ripple in the stream of Shakespeare's life,"¹⁷⁸ and we cannot doubt that Ireland, as the source and centre of those storms, was much and often in his mind.

CHAPTER XXXVII

SHAKESPEARE AND STANYHURST

At times Shakespeare adopted not only Holinshed's facts, but some of his phrases.—*Sir Sidney Lee in D.N.B. sub nom. Holinshed.*

Richard Stanyhurst belonged to a family which was settled in or near Dublin from the fourteenth century. His grandfather was Mayor of Dublin. His father was Recorder of Dublin and Speaker of the Irish House of Commons. At Oxford he became the pupil and the friend of Edmund Campion, who was collaborating with Raphael Holinshed, and had undertaken to contribute a History of Ireland to Holinshed's great collection of Chronicles.

It was in this way that it came about that Stanyhurst, under Campion's guidance, wrote the *Description of Irelande*, which is comprised in Holinshed's *Chronicles*, and completed the *Historie of Irelande* which Campion had begun. The second edition of Holinshed's *Chronicles*, published in 1586-7, was in Shakespeare's library, and was a source of nearly all his historical plays, as well as of *Macbeth*, *King Lear*, and *Cymbeline*; and it has been assumed by all the writers who have referred to the subject that Shakespeare was familiar with Stanyhurst's *Description of Irelande*, and with the *Historie of Irelande*, for which he was partly responsible. Several expressions of the dramatist have been traced to Stanyhurst. It may be doubted whether all of them were borrowed from this particular source. But, even if they were accidental

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parallels, they are in themselves sufficiently interesting to be worthy of mention.

In his dying speech Hamlet exclaims: "O, I die, Horatio; the potent poison quite o'ercrows my spirit." Writers so eminent as Malone have thought it possible that this word "o'ercrow" may have been borrowed from Stanyhurst, who, in his *Historie of Irelande*, uses it in connection with the rivalry which was maintained between the heads of the great families of Geraldine and Butler. "These noblemen," he writes, "laboured with tooth and nayle to overcroe and consequently to overthrow one another."¹⁷⁹ But as the word "o'ercrow," or "overcrow," is used in the same sense by Heywood, Spenser, and other writers of that time, it seems hardly necessary to suppose that Shakespeare got it from reading Stanyhurst's *Historie of Irelande*.

Malone also points out, in reference to Hamlet's command to Horatio and Marcellus to swear secrecy "on his sword," that "Spenser observes that the Irish in his time used commonly to swear by their sword." But swearing on the sword seems to have been a common form of adjuration among warlike nations from a very early era; and Shakespeare need not have caught the idea from an Irish source.¹⁸⁰

Another supposed link between Shakespeare and Stanyhurst occurs in the play of *All's Well that Ends Well*, or (as it was originally called) *Love's Labour Won*. The fun of the piece mainly turns upon the character of Parolles, who was the first sketch for the finished picture which Shakespeare afterwards drew, when he portrayed Sir John Falstaff. Parolles makes a great deal of the loss of a drum in battle, and in a boastful spirit undertakes its recovery. Thereupon a trap is laid for him, in which he is caught in a way which reminds us of the exposure of Falstaff after the Gadshill robbery in *Henry IV*. The

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laying of the trap is introduced by one of the Florentine lords in the following speech : "O, for the love of laughter, let him fetch his drum ; he says he has a stratagem for't : when your lordship sees the bottom of his success in't, and to what metal this counterfeit lump of ore will be melted, if you give him not John Drum's Entertainment, your inclining cannot be removed. Here he comes." Elsewhere in the play Parolles is addressed as "Good Tom Drum."¹⁸¹

This punning allusion to John Drum's Entertainment has been traced by some of the critics to a passage in Stanyhurst's *Description of Irelande* in which the chronicler refers to the lavish hospitality of the mayors of Dublin in the sixteenth century, and especially of Patricke Sarcefield, who was mayor in 1551. Stanyhurst gives a quaint description of Sarcefield's year of office. He describes how the mayor exhausted the contents of three barns stacked with corn ; how he consumed, in entertaining his fellow-citizens, "twentie tonnes of claret wine, over and above whyte wine, sacke, maulmesey, Muscadel, etc." ; and how his guests were "the sooner allured" to his table "for that you should never marck" him or his amiable consort, the mayoress, "once frowne, or wrinkle their foreheads, or bende their browes, or gloome their countenances, or make a sower face at any guest were he never so meane." Stanyhurst adds that "his porter or any other officer durst not give the simplest man, that resorted to his house, Tom Drum his entertaynement, which is to hale a man in by the heade, and to thrust him out by both the shoulders."¹⁸²

The idea that Shakespeare borrowed this allusion from Stanyhurst seems to be a far-fetched one. The expression to give a visitor "John, or Tom, Drum's entertainment," meaning to turn an unwelcome guest forcibly out of doors, was a common one in Shakespeare's day. There

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was a well-known dramatic interlude called "*Jacke Drum's Entertainment*," in the authorship of which John Marston was believed to have had a share; and other references to "John Drum" are to be found in co-temporary writings.¹⁸³

More convincing are the links between Shakespeare and Stanyhurst which have been collected by that ripe Shakespearian scholar, Mr. Justice Madden, who in his *Classical Learning in Ireland*, remarks that Shakespeare's "inquiring mind was evidently attracted by" Stanyhurst's *Description of Irelande*. In an Appendix he gives several "proofs" of Shakespeare's "study and appreciation of the pages of Holinshed which told him of Ireland." He finds in Stanyhurst the sources of the dramatist's reference in *King Richard II* to the expulsion of the snakes by Saint Patrick; in the same play, and in *King Henry VI* to the "rug-headed" or "shag-haired" kernes; in *King Richard III* to the "Bard of Ireland"; and in the *Merry Wives* to the Irishman's "aquavitae bottle." It seems evident that Shakespeare may have gathered his knowledge of these subjects from the pages of Stanyhurst.

The most interesting of Mr. Justice Madden's links between Shakespeare and Stanyhurst is the allusion to "barnacles" in *The Tempest*, which he traces to a quaint reference to "barnacles," which is to be found in Stanyhurst's *Description of Irelande*, "The inhabitants of Ireland," wrote Stanyhurst, "are accustomed to move question, whether barnacles be fishe or fleshe, and as yet they are not fully resolved, but most usually the religious of strictest abstinence do eat them on fish dayes. Giraldus Cambrensis, and after him Polichronicon, suppose that the Irishe cleargy in this poynt stray." Then follows an interesting discussion of this vexed controversy, in the course of which Stanyhurst delivers a judgment worthy of Solomon himself. He comes to the sapient conclusion,

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sapiently expressed, that, "according to my simple judgment, under the correction of both parties," barnacles are "neither fishe nor fleshe, but rather a meane betweene both."¹⁸⁴ Mr. Justice Madden connects this passage with the words in *The Tempest* in which Caliban warned Trinculo about the conspiracy against the wonder-working Prospero. "We shall lose our time," he said, "and all be turned to barnacles, or to apes." Mr. Justice Madden proceeds to point out that the question, which agitated Ireland in reference to barnacles, agitated Trinculo when he first came across Caliban: "What have we here, a man or a fish? dead or alive? A fish: he smells like a fish: a very ancient and fish-like smell."¹⁸⁵ The last word upon the classification of barnacles was not said by Caliban or Trinculo. It was left for Darwin in his *Origin of Species* to announce the discovery that an examination of the larva shows unmistakably that a barnacle is a crustacean.¹⁸⁶

We like to picture Shakespeare dipping into the Irish volume of Holinshed's *Chronicles*, which is known to have occupied a shelf in his library, and to speculate, whether, and if so, how far, he borrowed words and ideas from its pages. Such speculation is quite legitimate, for it cannot be denied that Shakespeare "at times," to quote Sir Sidney Lee, "adopted not only Holinshed's facts, but some of his phrases."¹⁸⁷

CHAPTER XXXVIII

SHAKESPEARE IN IRELAND

Was Shakespeare ever in Ireland?—*W. J. Lawrence.*

The question which makes the title of this chapter has often been asked by Irish admirers of the greatest of dramatists; and a vague notion that Shakespeare acted in some of his own plays upon an Irish stage has become prevalent among them. This supposition, so far as the present writer can trace it, flows from an article contributed in 1906 to a foreign magazine by Mr. W. J. Lawrence,¹⁸⁸ himself an Irishman, a learned Elizabethan and Shakespearian scholar, and a literary link between the poet and Ireland. The article in question is an interesting essay which the author aptly describes as "a conjectural study." He adduces a chain of circumstantial evidence, which leads him to surmise that Shakespeare between the years 1596 and 1598, may have visited the seaport of Youghal in the County of Cork.

The first stage of the argument in support of Shakespeare's supposed visit rests upon some solid foundation. It was customary, in the reigns of Elizabeth and James, for the London players to go "on tour" in the provinces, and they were sometimes driven to do so by occasional recurrences of the plague. One of the actors' circuits was a western tour which comprised the important towns of Bath and Bristol; and the company to which Shakespeare belonged performed in one or other of these places on several occasions between 1593 and 1604, and in particular visited both Bath and Bristol in 1597.¹⁸⁹

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No direct evidence has been discovered that Shakespeare himself accompanied the players on these occasions; but it is probable that the poet went on tour with his fellows. In this way Shakespeare is brought to a port on the west coast of England, from which to take sail for Ireland.

The second stage in the argument is of a more speculative character than the first. It is pointed out that, during Raleigh's governorship, Queen Elizabeth's anxiety for the colonization of Munster led to a constant stream of traffic between Bristol and Youghal, which was continued during the ascendancy in Munster of Richard Boyle, the "great" Earl of Cork; that it appears from the *Lismore Papers* and from the *Council Book of the Corporation of Youghal* that some English theatrical companies visited Youghal in the years 1616 (the year of Shakespeare's death) and 1619; that the company to which Shakespeare had belonged was there in 1625; that it is possible that Shakespeare's company may have paid an unrecorded visit to Youghal in other years; that Sir Walter Raleigh's Irish home was at Youghal; that Edmund Spenser was his neighbour at Kilcolman; and that, on the occasions of their visits to London, Raleigh, who was the originator of the symposia at the Mermaid, and Spenser, who was one of its habitués, may have met Shakespeare, and may have encouraged the players to visit Youghal.

The suggestion that Youghal was a likely rendezvous with Boyle, Raleigh, or Spenser is hardly a convincing one; although any one of them would doubtless have welcomed a visit from Shakespeare and his fellows. Richard Boyle's pre-eminence in Munster was the fruit of his purchase of Raleigh's estates, the negotiations for which only began in the winter of 1602; and he did not become Earl of Cork until 1620. Raleigh's visits to Munster between 1596 and 1598 were very

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occasional; and there does not seem to be any valid reason for placing him amongst Shakespeare's friends or patrons. It seems strange that Shakespeare should never have alluded to so picturesque a personage as Raleigh. Perhaps the poet was more likely to be found in the opposite camp. Edmund Spenser was in England from 1595 to the beginning of 1597. He returned to Ireland in no playgoing mind, for he was depressed in mind and in failing health. In August 1598 there was an outburst of rebellion. His home was burned over his head. His connection with Ireland was cut short in October 1598, and he died in London in the following January. It is probable, but not certain, that Spenser was a friend of Shakespeare, and referred to him in the *Faerie Queen* under the name of "Aetion" whose "muse doth like himself heroically sound." But, if we may assume that Spenser and Shakespeare were friends, it would be rash to infer that they made a rendezvous at Youghal in 1597 or 1598.

The third branch of the argument in favour of the supposed visit of Shakespeare to Ireland, depends upon what Mr. Lawrence happily describes as a certain "quaint Milesian allusiveness" which is to be found in the two plays which were probably produced in the year 1599, *King Henry V* and *As You Like It*. He draws the inference that this "allusiveness" may have been "inspired by the rich impressions gleaned during a sojourn in Ireland," and that the sojourn in question must have taken place, if at all, between the years 1596 and 1598.

The reader will find in previous chapters some discussion of the allusions which were made to Ireland in the plays which have just been mentioned. So far as *King Henry V* is concerned, the scene in which Captain Macmorrice appears was probably written long after 1599; while the well-known reference to Essex's Irish

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campaign is sufficiently accounted for by the interest which the dramatist took in an expedition in which Lord Southampton was a prominent participator. When *As You Like It* was produced, Lord Southampton had returned from the Irish front and was frequenting the theatres. It need not surprise us that the dramatist's mind was dwelling upon Ireland, and that a strain of "Milesian allusiveness" crept into the play upon which he was engaged.

Mr. Lawrence's article upon the subject of Shakespeare's supposed visit to Ireland is, like all his Shakespearian writings, a scholarly and an inspiring piece of work.¹⁹⁰ He admits that he can only offer "loose links in a possible chain of evidence," and that we must "await the master-stroke of research" to weld these links together. It is to be hoped that some further facts may come to light in support of the supposed visit of the dramatist to Youghal.

CHAPTER XXXIX

IRISH SONG, DANCE, AND ACCENT IN SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS

There are eleven Irish tunes mentioned under various *aliases* by the Bard of Avon.—*History of Irish Music*, by Wm. H. Grattan Flood, *Mus.D.*, p. 167.

He is afar'd to come.—*Antony and Cleopatra*, Act II, scene v, line 81.

In his *History of Irish Music*, Doctor Grattan Flood names eleven Irish airs, which he refers to as having been "mentioned under various *aliases* by the Bard of Avon."¹⁹¹ Some of them have been dealt with elsewhere.¹⁹² Let us glance at the Shakespearian setting of the others. "Bonny Sweet Robin" is mentioned in *Hamlet*. It is the song which is sung by Ophelia with such pathos, that her brother, Laertes, remarks that in her madness she turns everything "to favour and to prettiness." "Whoop, do me no harm, good man" occurs in *Winter's Tale*. It is the bantering protest with which the maids of Bohemia are supposed to ward off the advances of the wheedling pedlar, Autolycus; and "The Fading" is the refrain or burden of his song. The "Light o' Love" is recommended jestingly as a tune for a love-song by Margaret in *Much Ado about Nothing* and by Julia in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*. "Yellow Stockings" is referred to in *Twelfth Night*, in connection with the cross-gartering of Malvolio; and "Peg-a-Ramsey" is one of the names applied to Malvolio by Sir Toby Belch, who shows a special knowledge of all the popular songs of Shakespeare's day. It was to King Lear and to

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his jester that Edgar in his assumed madness addressed the refrain : " Come o'er the bourne, Bessy, to me," to which the Fool promptly replied :

" Her boat hath a leak,
And she must not speak
Why she dares not come over to thee." ¹⁹³

John Dowland, Irish lutenist and composer, was about a year older than Shakespeare, and is believed to have been his friend. In 1600 he was at Elsinore, in the capacity of Court lutenist to the King of Denmark, and it has been suggested that he may have supplied some of the Danish colour of the setting of *Hamlet*. It has also been surmised that it was through Dowland that Shakespeare acquired any knowledge which he may have possessed of Irish music.

Dr. Grattan Flood has pointed out that the name of the Irish *Uilleann* bagpipe of the sixteenth century—the direct ancestor of the Union bagpipe of modern times—was derived from the Irish word *uilleann*, the genitive of *uile*, anglice "elbow." It was so called because the bellows of the pipe was inflated by the action of the arms, not of the mouth. The Irish word *uilleann* appears to afford the true explanation of the reference to "a woollen bag-pipe" in the *Merchant of Venice*, which has puzzled successive generations of commentators. ¹⁹⁴

Shakespeare does not make any direct allusion to the Irish dances of his day ; but he mentions jigs, hornpipes, and hays, which were, as we know from other sources, popular dances in Ireland. The Irish jig was a well-established institution long before Shakespeare's time. Sir Henry Sidney, writing to Queen Elizabeth from Galway, was enthusiastic in his praises of the ladies of Connaught, who came with their lords to meet the queen's

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deputy, and of the way in which they danced the jig. He described them as very beautiful, magnificently dressed, and "first-class dancers." No wonder! Grania O'Malley used to meet the deputy when he came west, and those were the days when Grania was young and light of foot. The jig seems to have been associated in Shakespeare's mind with Scotland rather than with Ireland. In *Much Ado about Nothing* we find Beatrice jesting upon the time-worn topic of "wooing, wedding, and repenting." Wooing, she says, is "hot and hasty, like a Scotch jig, and full as fantastical." The hornpipe was a well-known dance in Ireland in the sixteenth century. But, when in *Winter's Tale* the clown says of the sheep-shearers, "There is but one Puritan amongst them, and he sings Psalms to hornpipes," it would be rash to claim the allusion as Irish; for hornpipes were danced in England for two centuries before Shakespeare's time.¹⁹⁶

Doctor Grattan Flood claims the hay as an Irish dance, and reminds us that Thomas Nash and other Elizabethan playwrights mention "Irish hayes" among the dances of their day. Whatever its origin may have been, the hay was certainly danced in Ireland, and is mentioned by Shakespeare. In *Love's Labour Lost*, Constable Dull, from whose heavy intellect jokes sometimes flash like lightning from a black cloud, refers to a dance called the "Hay."¹⁹⁶ It is the scene in which that pompous pedant Holofernes proposed to present a masque for the benefit of the princess of France, and chose the grotesque theme of the "Nine Worthies." The "Nine Worthies" were a miscellaneous company of remarkable men, who included Joshua, Judas Maccabeus, Pompey the Great, and Hercules. Constable Dull, when invited to contribute to the entertainment, offered "to play the tabor to the Nine Worthies, and let them dance the hay."

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The hay appears to have been a country dance, with serpentine or interlacing figures, the dancers winding in and out round chairs or trees, or other impediments. Another name for it was the "heydaygies," and the character of the dance is well expressed by a figurative couplet, in which Drayton hits off the winding course of the rivers of Wales :

"Whilst the nimble Cambrian rills
Dance heydaygies among the hills."

These references in Shakespeare to the songs and dances of his day serve to remind us of the extent to which Irish music made its influence felt in the time of Elizabeth.

When we turn from the subject of Irish song and dance to the subject of Irish accent, we are quickly reminded that in the Irish brogue is preserved a great deal of Shakespearian phonology. Sometimes our modern dialect is writ large in the dramatist's spelling. For example, there is the Irish habit of pronouncing "d" or "t" as if it were "th." In Shakespeare we have "Macbeth does murther sleepe, the innocent sleepe."¹⁹⁷ Again we are familiar with the Irish tendency to pronounce "e" as "a." The word clergy in the sixteenth century was often pronounced as "clargy," learn as "larn," concern as "concern," while "steak" is still pronounced "stake." Then there is the old-time use of "gould" for gold, "ould" for old, of "hant" or "dant" for haunt or daunt, and of "wesht" and "shure" for west and sure.

Sometimes it is made clear by a play upon words that our modern brogue was the fashionable accent of Shakespeare's day. For example, when Poins asked Falstaff for a reason, the Fat Knight replied, "Give you a reason on compulsion! If reasons were as plentiful as black-

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berries, I would give no man a reason on compulsion." The pun only becomes intelligible when we realize that in Shakespeare's day "reason" was pronounced like "rasin."¹⁹⁸ The Irish brogue is sometimes betrayed by the agency of a rhyme. For example, in the time of Shakespeare, or even in much later times, we find "again" and "pen" rhyming with "pin," "tea" with "obey," "drought" with "youth," "conceit" and "receipt" with "bait" and "straight," "devil" with "evil."

Another link between the English of Shakespeare and that of modern Ireland is a certain absence of precision in reference to the proper use of the little words "shall" and "will," "should" and "would." Shakespeare was ordinarily in the habit of observing the general rule as we are taught it, namely, that it is correct, when we desire to convey the idea of simple futurity, to use "shall" in the first person and "will" in the second and third person. If, on the other hand, we desire to represent a future event as determined by our present will, it is correct to use "will" in the first person, and "shall" in the second and third person.

Shakespeare's idiom in these respects does not differ widely from the correct modern use of "shall" and "will." But he sometimes uses "shall" in the second or third person to express simply futurity. For example, when Lady Macbeth is explaining away Macbeth's terror at the sight of Banquo's ghost, she says to his guests :

"If you note him
You *shall* offend him and extend his passion."

Again when Brutus sees Antony acting as chief mourner for the murdered Cæsar, he makes the cynical remark: "Here comes his body, mourned by Mark

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Antony: who, though he had no hand in his death, *shall* receive the benefit of his dying, a place in the commonwealth, as which of you shall not.”¹⁹⁹

There is another misuse of the word “shall,” which is to be found both in Ireland and in Shakespeare, namely, its use in the first person in acceding to a request or a command. When Macbeth tempts the two murderers to rid him of Banquo, one of them exclaims “*We shall*, my Lord, perform what you command us.” When Henry V tells Erpingham to collect the nobles in his camp and bring them to his tent; when Cæsar tells Agrippa to make it known that he wishes Antony to be taken alive; and, again, when he sends Dolabella to obtain Antony’s surrender, the answer to these and similar requests and commands always comes in the form “*I shall*.”²⁰⁰ In an interesting Essay, of which our gifted countrywoman, Miss Mary Hayden, was part author, it is stated broadly that “no Irishman ever uses ‘shall’ for the simple future.”²⁰¹

If, in Ireland, we sometimes find a difficulty in adhering steadfastly to the correct grammatical use of “shall” and “will,” it is consolatory to learn that the modern idiom had not been fixed in Shakespeare’s time, and that we can find some shelter under his wing.²⁰²

Many Shakespearian words are still preserved in Ireland. For example, in *Antony and Cleopatra*, the unlucky messenger who comes to the “gipsey” queen with the news of the marriage of Antony, is so terrified by the reception which he experiences that he flies from the royal presence. When Cleopatra recalls him, her attendant Charmian says: “He is afar’d to come.” The word “keel” is also in use in some parts of Ireland, meaning to “skim” or “to cool by skimming,” thus affording an explanation of the winter song in *Love’s Labour Lost*, “while greasy Joan doth keel the pot.”

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In *Troilus and Cressida* we meet with the exclamation, "Faith and troth!" and in *Coriolanus*, as well as in other plays, we find the word "handkercher" in literary use as a form of the word handkerchief.²⁰³ The word has lingered to our day as a dialect form in Ireland, and, as Lowell tells us, also in America. When Daly's company acted Shakespeare in London they were criticized for the use of Americanisms, which they were able to defend as being more like the English of Shakespeare than the language spoken by their critics.

We may conclude this chapter by mentioning a metrical refinement which Shakespeare may have derived from the Irish Celtic poets. Doctor Sigerson notices, among the verse forms of the Cuchulainn sagas the internal or inlaid rhyme, and gives an example from the concluding stanza of "Fand's Welcome to Cuchulainn," which he translates :

"Blood drips from his lofty lance :
In his *glance* gleams battle fire.
Haughty, high, the victor goes,
Woe to *those* who wake his ire."

The "internal rime" which is shown in this stanza is, writes Doctor Sigerson, the progenitor of the so-called "inverse rime" in English poetry. He cites, as an example, a line spoken by King Ferdinand in *Love's Labour Lost*.

"She must lie *here* on *mere* necessity."

It has been pointed out by Irish scholars that the "internal rime" occurred in Latin hymn poetry before it was adopted in Ireland. But, whatever may have been the origin of the "inverse rime," there can be no doubt that English literature owes a heavy debt to the wonderful diversity of the Gaelic verse forms.²⁰⁴

CHAPTER XL

SOME IRISH PLAYERS OF SHAKESPEARIAN
PARTS

This is the Jew
That Shakespeare drew.

—*Pope in reference to Macklin.*

The comic muse with her retired,
And shed a tear when she expired.

—*Horace Walpole in reference to Kitty Clive.*

An industrious searcher of old newspapers and records has counted nearly 2,500 performances of Shakespearian plays in Dublin down to the time of Queen Victoria. The following plays were each performed more than two hundred times: *Hamlet*, *Richard III*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, and *Romeo and Juliet*. The following were performed more than a hundred times: *Merchant of Venice*, *King Lear*, *Tempest*, and *King Henry IV, Part I*. The earliest of this series was the production of *Othello* with Wilkes in the principal part in 1691.²⁰⁵ It would be interesting to pursue the inquiry still further. We know that *Cymbeline* was played by amateurs at Shane's Castle, the seat of Lord O'Neill, in 1785.²⁰⁶

It would be out of place to attempt a complete category of the Irishmen and Irishwomen who have distinguished themselves in the portrayal of Shakespearian characters. They would make a long list. An exhaustive study of their careers would require a volume; and our readers' curiosity about the details of their lives can be satisfied by reference to biographical

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books of reference. It will suffice, for our present purpose, to recall the names of a few of these Irish players, and of some of the Shakespearian parts with which their names are traditionally associated.

James Quin (1693-1766) was the son of an Irish barrister and the grandson of a Mayor of Dublin. He made his first appearance at the Smock Alley Theatre in Dublin. During his career he portrayed more than twenty Shakespearian characters. He is said to have made his first success in London in the small part of Brakenbury, the Lieutenant of the Tower, in *King Richard III*. He was surpassed by Garrick and by others of his contemporaries in such parts as Macbeth, Othello, Iago, Lear, Richard III, and Antony; but he was the greatest Falstaff of them all. In the next generation another actor of Irish descent, John Henderson, "the Bath Roscius," rivalled Quin's reputation in the same part. It is interesting to note that as a young man Quin played Hotspur in the *First Part of King Henry IV*, long before he had any notion of figuring in the same play as the Fat Knight. In a former chapter we have referred to Quin's rivalry with Garrick, and to Churchill's couplet criticising the actor for being "always Quin." Yet he must have had some versatility, because he was successful as the Ghost in *Hamlet*, which, in the matter of make up as well as of personality, might well be regarded as the direct antipodes of Falstaff.

Spranger Barry (1719-1777) hailed from Dublin. Born in Skinner's Row, he made his first appearance at the Smock Alley Theatre in 1744, and built the Crow Street Theatre in 1758. In Dublin he acted Lear, Henry V, and Hotspur. In London he began as Othello, which was always his favourite part; but he gained most applause as Romeo. He also acted with Garrick alternately as Hamlet and Macbeth. Barry

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had to yield the palm to Garrick in these parts, but remained unsurpassed as Romeo. His superior height, his handsome face and his graceful figure fitted him for so romantic a rôle. Barry gave his heart and his purse to Ireland. Unfortunately, the theatres which he built in Dublin and in Cork were not financially successful. Ruined, harassed, and gouty, he had to give up the part of Romeo, but he continued to play "brave Othello" to the last.

To the same epoch belonged Charles McLaughlin, known in the history of the stage as Charles Macklin (1697-1797). He came of a mixed marriage, in which Orange and Green was so intermingled that he used to boast that in the Siege of Derry he had three uncles among the besiegers, and three others among the defenders of the Maiden City. This clash of colours may have been responsible for a quarrelsomeness which marred an otherwise amiable personality. He was in constant hot water. A squabble over a wig on one occasion ended in the manslaughter of a fellow-actor. A dispute with an audience involved him in an action which developed into a *cause célèbre*. He received heavy damages which he generously elected to accept in tickets for a benefit. His Shakespearian parts included Malvolio, Touchstone, and Shylock. It was his Shylock that elicited Pope's comment, "this is the Jew that Shakespeare drew." His last appearance was in that character, and ended in an unrehearsed tragedy. In one of the early scenes the actor broke down, mumbled his apologies for loss of memory, and doffed for the last time his Jewish gabardine.

To the next generation of actors belonged Macready (1793-1873), born in London, but of Dublin parentage. His father had been an actor in the Smock Alley Theatre. He made his *début* as Romeo in 1810, and took leave of

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the stage more than forty years afterwards as Macbeth in 1851. His Lear has perhaps never been excelled. He also played Hamlet, Coriolanus, Julius Cæsar, Prospero, and Othello. As Othello he was less successful than another famous Irish player, Gustavus Brooke. Among the notable incidents of his career was his rivalry with the American actor Forrest. Their quarrel culminated in a disturbance in the Astor Opera House, New York, and in a riot, which was quelled by a military force at the cost of seventeen lives.

There remains an actor of Irish blood, whose delineation of Shakespearian parts is vividly impressed upon the memory of many living play-goers. If Barry Sullivan (1821-1891) had been supported by more competent companies of players, and by more adequate stage accessories, he might have left behind him an even deeper impression. The Shakespearian actors of a later day, such as Irving and Tree, knew better how to group and grade the constellations of which they were the central stars. Barry Sullivan was magnificent in Macbeth, acted by him and Phelps alternately for a long engagement in 1867. His favourite part was Hamlet, and his best part was Richard III. In 1876 he appeared for sixty consecutive nights at Drury Lane as the hunch-back king. More than a century had passed since another Irish actor, Henry Mossop, had outshone Garrick in the same part. In Melbourne Barry Sullivan "starred" against Charles Kean in 1865; and, according to the verdict of the Australian public, Kean surpassed him in no part except in that of Louis XI. In America he maintained his reputation in rivalry with Davenport; and he had the weird experience of having acted in company with the murderer of President Lincoln.

Barry Sullivan was never so happy as on the occasion of his Irish tours. Dublin, Belfast, and Cork vied with

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each other in doing him honour. His reception at Belfast railway station on one occasion was so noisily enthusiastic, that a Cockney tourist mistook it for an outbreak of rebellion, and sought refuge under the seat of the railway carriage. In Dublin he once sustained a car accident, and the house seemed to go mad when the actor appeared on the same evening as Falstaff with his arm in a sling. He had a particular affection for Cork as the "Cradle of the O'Sullivans." A noble statue by Farrell stands in Glasnevin Cemetery, and represents the actor in the part of Hamlet holding in his hand the skull of poor Yorick.

Among the interpretresses of Shakespearian parts eight Irishwomen may be mentioned whom it would be difficult to match for their excellence in that department of acting.

Peg Woffington (died 1760), after charming her native Dublin as Ophelia, went to London, where she played brilliantly as Rosalind, Helena, Beatrice, and Cordelia. Ophelia always remained her favourite rôle, and it was in that part that Garrick liked her best. In May 1757, she was playing Rosalind at Covent Garden. As she was speaking the epilogue, she was seized with sudden illness, and the spectators were horrified to see the beautiful actress losing her strength and tottering feebly to her last exit.

From Dublin, following in Peg Woffington's footsteps, came the "blue-eyed Bellamy" (died 1788). With an expressive face, a lively manner, and a sweet touching voice, she excelled in all of Shakespeare's great tragic rôles. Perhaps her best performance was her Juliet to Garrick's Romeo. After she had attained success, she delighted in visiting Dublin. The air of her native city seemed to bring out the best points of her acting and the best side of her character.

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Another Irish Juliet was Mary Robinson (died 1800), better known as Perdita, because it was as Perdita in *The Winter's Tale* that she made the impression upon a prince which led to her withdrawal from the stage, and altered the whole current of her life. Hardly any person of that time was portrayed by so many great artists. Portraits of her were painted by Reynolds, Gainsborough, Hoppner, Romney, and Cosway. Less successful than Mary Robinson in the part of Perdita was Kitty Clive, who came of Kilkenny parentage (died 1715). Her chief successes were in broad comedy as is evidenced by a couplet in the epitaph written by her friend and neighbour, Horace Walpole :

“The comic muse with her retired,
And shed a tear when she expired.”

Dr. Johnson said of her : “Mrs. Clive was the best player I ever saw, she was a better romp than any I ever saw in nature.” Off the stage she showed humour, judgment, strength of purpose, and generosity. It was said of her friendship with Horace Walpole that “it seemed as if she was the man of the two, and he was the woman.”

Another charming Irish actress was Dorothea Jordan (died 1816). She was of Irish parentage, and made her *début* in Dublin at the age of fifteen in the small part of Phœbe in *As You Like It* in 1777, little thinking that she was subsequently to become famous as Rosalind in the same play. Hazlitt, who had Shakespeare at his fingers' end, and was author of a popular book on the characters of Shakespeare's plays, wrote of Dorothea Jordan : “Her face, her tones, her manner were irresistible ; her smile had the effect of sunshine . . . and was all gaiety, openness, and good nature : she rioted in her fine animal spirits, and gave more pleasure

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than any other actress, because she had the greatest spirit of enjoyment in herself." This is not the place to tell the interesting and pathetic story of her life.

Another actress who hailed from Waterford was Maria Campion, known on the stage as Mrs. Pope (died 1803), who was much admired in the parts of Juliet, Desdemona, and Cordelia. She was very emotional, as was exhibited both in the first entrance and the last exit of her dramatic career. At her *début* she fainted on the stage, and it was while acting in *Othello* that she finally broke down. Many a time had she acted a dying scene as the Moor's unhappy wife. On the 10th of June, 1803, she played the part for the last time. Half way through the play she swooned, and a few days afterwards the playgoing public learned with sorrow that "sweet Desdemona" was really dead.

More peaceful and more brilliant were the destinies of two other Irish actresses, Elizabeth Farren (died 1824) and Elizabeth O'Neill (died 1872). Elizabeth Farren came from County Cork. Her favourite part was Lady Teazle in Sheridan's *School for Scandal*, but she was also successful in Shakespearian parts, and especially as Olivia, Portia, and Juliet. She had a slight, graceful figure. Her face was not regularly beautiful, but she had an animated expression and a fascinating smile. At the height of her success she retired from the stage to become the wife of the twelfth Earl of Derby.

Elizabeth O'Neill was born in Drogheda, and, while a mere child, made her *début* in Dublin in the character of one of the Princes in the Tower, in the play of *King Richard III*. She became the rival of Mrs. Siddons. While Mrs. Siddons excelled in dignity of carriage and in depicting strong and terrible passions, Miss O'Neill surpassed her in tenderness and in natural pathos. Her

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career in London only lasted five years. Her best part was Juliet. The play of *King Richard III* seems to have been strangely mixed up with her destiny. She had begun her stage career in that play, and she was to end it in the same play in another part. She was a regular participator in the Kilkenny private theatricals which attained wide celebrity during the first twenty years of the nineteenth century. It was at Kilkenny that she played Lady Anne to the King Richard of Mr. Wrixon Becher, who was member of Parliament for Mallow, and was afterwards better known as Sir Wrixon Becher. Their courtship ran more happily "off" than "on" the stage, for in December 1819, Miss O'Neill married Mr. Wrixon Becher at Kilfane, near Kilkenny. Thenceforward for more than fifty years, she gracefully played the part of an Irish chatelaine at her husband's home in County Cork.

Not in vain did these Irish players strut and fret their hours upon the stage. It would be difficult to name an equal number of actors and actresses who have done so much to popularize Shakespeare, and to raise and maintain at a high level the standard of dramatic taste in these islands and throughout the English-speaking world.

CHAPTER XLI

THE CELT IN SHAKESPEARE

Shakespeare in handling nature, touches the Celtic note so exquisitely that perhaps one is inclined to be always looking for the Celtic note in him.—*Matthew Arnold, Celtic Literature (Dent's Edition), 126.*

An expert upon the subject of the pedigree of the English people has shrewdly observed that great minds like Shakespeare's are not the product of a single type, but of the admixture of several in proportions which it is impossible to determine. In Shakespeare's imagination there was a blend of Greek radiancy, of Roman dignity, of Norman strenuousness, of Anglo-Saxon sincerity, with a plentiful dash of the fire, the mystical grandeur, and lively appreciation of natural beauty, which were marks of Celtic literature.

It is probable that Shakespeare received his Celtic impressions less from the study of old books than from the influence of environment and heredity. Sir Bertram Windle in his *Shakespeare's Country* reminds us that Arden was a forest of refuge for the ancient Britons, and remarks that it is not wonderful that the district of which Stratford was a centre "should contain many places and objects, such as the River Avon itself, with Celtic names, and that its inhabitants should have a strong infusion of Celtic blood in their veins." Shakespeare "was born," writes a Shakespearian student, "at the very heart of this island, in Stratford-on-Avon, a town in the ancient Kingdom of Mercia—the Kingdom of the Marches—whose place-names still

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attest the close and full commingling of Angle with Celt." The result of that "close and full commingling" has been forcibly summed up by Henry Morley in his volume on the English writers down to Chaucer's time. He does not hesitate to affirm that "but for early, frequent and various contact with the race that in its half-barbarous days invented Ossian's dialogues with Saint Patrick, and that quickened afterwards the Northmen's blood in France, Germanic England would not have produced a Shakespeare."²⁰⁷

Henry Morley tantalizes us by exciting a wish that he had pursued the subject further. For a more extended treatment of the theme we must turn to Matthew Arnold, who in his essay on the study of Celtic literature puts to himself the question : where did English poetry get three of its characteristics, namely, its turn for style, its turn for melancholy, and its turn for natural magic ?" He answers the question by declaring, with some doubt, that English poetry got much of its style from a Celtic source ; with less doubt, that it got much of its turn of melancholy from a Celtic source ; and with no doubt at all that from a Celtic source it got nearly all its natural magic.

By "style" Matthew Arnold meant the expression of a writer's thoughts in such a polished and elevated form as to invest them with dignity and distinction. So far as Shakespeare's style is concerned, he found traces of Celtic influence in the poetic simplicity of the poet's simple passages, while he gave to the Celt the credit of giving to English literature all its rhyme and much of its rhythm. Dr. Sigerson has referred to the subtle and refined character of the Irish verse-structure, and to the epoch-making consequences of the introduction of rhyme, and has aptly compared the artistic delicacy and taste, with which early Irish poetry was cultivated,

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to the exquisite ingenuity which was displayed by Irishmen of the same era in the illumination of books and in the workmanship of ornaments of gold and silver.

When Matthew Arnold comes to deal with the "turn of melancholy in English literature," and to trace it partly to a Celtic source, he mentions Byron, Southey and others, but not Shakespeare. Yet, surely, he might have mentioned Shakespeare in this connexion. Could the atmosphere of the play of *King Lear* be better described than in the following passage, in which Matthew Arnold sums up his conception of the Celtic melancholy. "The Celts, with their vehement reaction against the despotism of fact, with their sensuous nature, their manifold striving, their adverse destiny, their immense calamities, the Celts are the prime authors of this vein of piercing regret and passion—of this Titanism in poetry." In these sentences Matthew Arnold reproduces the very atmosphere in which Shakespeare makes King Lear live and think and speak. It is true that the main source from which Shakespeare took King Lear was Holinshed's *Chronicles*. "But the story," says Dr. Brandes, "came originally from Wales, and had a distinct Celtic impress which Shakespeare, with his fine feelings for all national peculiarities, has succeeded in retaining and intensifying. No play of Shakespeare's is so full of suffering, of anguish, and of pathos."²⁰⁸

Matthew Arnold proceeds to trace to a Celtic source the "turn for natural magic in English poetry," meaning thereby its turn for catching and rendering the charm of nature in a wonderfully near and vivid way. He distinguishes between the "Greek note of clearness and brightness" and "the Celtic note of aeriellness and magic"; and illustrates his meaning by quoting the following lines from the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, as

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one in which the Greek note of clearness and brightness is struck without any Celtic magic :

“I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,
Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows,
Quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine,
With sweet musk-roses and with eglantine.”

Here we have nature described in terms that are faithful, poetical, and graceful, but we miss the glowing imagery of the following passages, in which Matthew Arnold recognizes the Celtic note. The first is from the *Merchant of Venice* :

“ . . . look how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold.”

The second is from the *Midsummer Night's Dream* :

“Met we on hill, in dale, forest, or mead,
By paved fountains or by rushing brook,
Or in the bleached margent of the sea.”²⁰⁹

W. B. Yeats, in the spirit of Ernest Renan's “realistic naturalism” traces the mysterious magic of the Celtic poetry to the worship of nature which was the ancient religion of the race. For him literature would be no better than an old almanac unless it were constantly “flooded with the passions and beliefs” of ancient and especially of Celtic times.²¹⁰

It must be conceded that Matthew Arnold's methods of argument were not always fair. As an example of the Celtic style he selected some lines from what he called an “epitaph on Angus,” and contrasted them with the utter stylelessness of a memorial inscription which

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he had culled from a modern English churchyard. The "Epitaph on Angus" runs as follows :

"Angus in the assembly of heaven,
Here are his tomb and his bed ;
It is from hence he went to death,
In the Friday, to holy heaven.

It was in Cluain Eidhnech he was rear'd ;
It was in Cluain Eidhnech he was buried ;
In Cluain Eidhnech, of many crosses,
He first read his Psalms."

The sepulchral inscription, with which Matthew Arnold compared these stately lines, was of the usual humdrum description :

"Affliction sore long time I bore,
Physicians were in vain,
Till God did please Death should me seize
And ease me of my pain—"211

It would be hardly possible to imagine a comparison more incongruous in point alike of date and of subject matter ; and the comparison becomes even more incongruous, when we are informed by an Irish scholar that the so-called "Epitaph on Angus" was not an epitaph, but a laudatory poem by an ancient bard. But Matthew Arnold was carried to extremes by his chivalrous indignation at the contemptuous attitude which some contemporary writers took up towards the ancient literature of Ireland and of Scotland.

It would be less incongruous to compare a memorial song of Shakespeare's with some verses of the same kind, written by an Irish bard who flourished in the same and

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in the next century. Let us take the song in *Cymbeline*, to the accompaniment of which the sons of Cymbeline strewed with flowers the corpse, as they supposed, of Fidele :

“Fear no more the heat o’ the sun,
Nor the furious winter’s rages ;
Thou thy worldly task has done,
Home art gone, and ta’en thy wages ;
Golden lads and girls all must,
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.

Fear no more the frown o’ the great ;
Thou art past the tyrant’s stroke ;
Care no more to clothe and eat ;
To thee the reed is as the oak :
The sceptre, learning, physic, must
All follow this and come to dust.”

There have been critics who have rejected these lines as unworthy of Shakespeare. Yet, surely Dr. Brandes is right in praising their “wonderful harmony of metre and poetic art,” and in saying that their rhythm contains the germ of all that later became Shelley’s poetry. Let us compare these verses with an elegy, written by a Kerry bard, Egan O’Rahilly, in memory of three children, “Eileen, Diarmid, and Teig.” The English version is one of James Stephens’ “Re-Incarnations,” a remarkable series of translations by the author of *The Crock of Gold*, which seem to stand out from their background, each with its marked individual character, like a group of Rodin’s statuettes :

“Be kind unto these three, O king !
For they were fragrant-skinned, cheerful and giving ;

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Three stainless pearls, three of mild, winning ways,
Three candles sending forth three pleasant rays,
Three vines, three doves, three apples from a bough,
Three graces in a house, three who refused nohow
Help to the needy, three of slenderness,
Three memories for the companionless,
Three strings of music, three deep holes in clay,
Three lovely children who loved Christ alway,
Three mouths, three hearts, three minds beneath a stone;
Ruin it is ! three causes for the moan
That rises everywhere now they are gone :
Be kind, O King, unto this two and one !”²¹²

For perfect grace and harmony of thought and of language Shakespeare's song could not be surpassed. The Irish elegy appeals more directly to the emotions, taking up, so to speak, the harp of fond memory and striking its every chord.

To make a quantitative analysis, that would determine the Celtic element in Shakespeare's art, would be impossible. But it is not impossible to trace some of his scenes and episodes to Celtic sources, or to match some of them with Celtic parallels, and the attempt has been made here and there in the pages of this book. *Macbeth* undoubtedly breathes the atmosphere of ancient Ireland ; and *King Lear* is certainly of Celtic, although not of Irish, origin. In these two plays are mirrored some of the most striking marks of the literature of that age, its simplicity of outlook, the absence of all that is vulgar and commonplace, and a grandeur and elevation which dignified whatever was noble in human nature, and was a redeeming element in what was evil.

Victor Hugo, in the introduction to his translation of the *Tempest*, laid stress upon the mystical side of Shakespeare's psychology, and declared that, in the *Tempest*,

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the poet had given shape to the ancient dogmas of the druids. A recent writer, M. Abel Lefranc,²¹³ following in Victor Hugo's footsteps, has wondered at the fancy for magic, which, in defiance of royal antipathies and of popular prejudices, lit up several of the finest of the plays. Perhaps it was one of the Celtic rays, which so many eminent critics have distinguished among the prismatic colours of Shakespeare's brilliant imagination.

CHAPTER XLII

THE CELTIC NOTE IN *CYMBELINE* AND
IN *THE TEMPEST*

Wales, a mountainous country with a cave.

—*Cymbeline*, Act III, scene ii, stage direction.

Be not afraid ; the isle is full of noises,
Sounds and sweet airs which give delight and hurt not.
Sometimes a thousand twanging instruments
Will hum about mine ears.

—*Tempest*, Act III, scene ii, line 144.

Macbeth and *King Lear* are not the only plays of Shakespeare in which a Celtic colour is discernible. It has been caught sight of elsewhere, for example in *Cymbeline*, and above all in *The Tempest*, with its magician, its airy spirit, and its enchanted island. Doubtless, some admirers of Shakespeare will be disappointed to learn that, in spite of the existence of such obvious resemblances and analogies, no direct link can be discovered between either of these plays and Ireland.

The main element in the plot of *Cymbeline* was borrowed from the "Tales of Boccaccio." From this source came Posthumus' wager that his wife was chaste, Iachimo's treacherous scheme of concealing himself in a chest which is conveyed into Imogen's bed-chamber, and Imogen's flight from her father's court in boy's clothing. These were Italian episodes, but they were framed in a Celtic setting, for Cymbeline himself was supposed to be a king of the same line as Lear, and the principal scenes of the play were laid in Britain and in Wales, and were derived from Holinshed's *Chronicles*.²¹⁴

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One part of the complex plot of *Cymbeline* has never been traced to any literary source, namely the stealing of the young princes, their bringing up in a cave in a mountainous part of Wales, and the arcadian existence spent with them by Imogen, who is disguised as a boy and does not know that they are her brothers. Mr. Israel Gollancz connects these scenes with the folk-story of "Little Snow-white," with which they have much in common.²¹⁵ They are also paralleled in Irish folk-lore. For example, they bear some resemblance to the story of Deirdre's happy sojourn with the sons of Usnach in the islands and highlands of Scotland. When she had been lured away from this agreeable retreat, Deirdre sang a song of lamentation over the days that were no more—"Delightful land," she sang, "yon Eastern land, Alba, with its wonders . . . Glendarua, oh Glendarua! my love to every one who enjoys it; sweet the voice of the cuckoo upon bending bough upon the cliff above Glendarua."²¹⁶ Here we are reminded of the idyllic life which Imogen led with her brothers in the glens and mountains of Wales. But, save for a similarity of atmosphere, there is no connection between the two stories.

The Tempest contains two very striking points of resemblance with some of the most characteristic creations of Irish literature. The outstanding figure of the magician Prospero, the impressive way in which he sets supernatural agencies in motion for the purpose of influencing human action, and the enchanted island in which he exercises his sway, seem to correspond closely to some of the favourite themes of the poets and romancers of ancient Ireland. Here again, however, the search for a connecting link is a fruitless one.

The frame of the plot of *The Tempest* is probably of foreign workmanship. In a German comedy, as well as in the folk-lore of Spain and of other countries, we meet

THE TEMPEST

with romantic stories, in which a royal magician is represented as living in banishment with a beautiful daughter, for falling in love with whom a young prince is made prisoner, and is put to menial work. These scattered tales are not supposed to have been the sources of Shakespeare's play, but they may have been drawn from the same undiscovered source. They lack some of the characteristic features of *The Tempest*, namely, the storm, the shipwreck, and the enchanted island. The scene of the German comedy was laid in a forest, and the scene of the Spanish story in a submarine palace.²¹⁷ Accordingly, it is not surprising that the question has been mooted whether Shakespeare could have derived the shipwreck and the haunted island from an Irish source? The Irish saga were full of such materials. But there is no evidence that the dramatist resorted to them.

The shipwreck scene has been traced by the majority of the critics to the published descriptions of the wreck in 1609 off the Bermudas, of Admiral Somers's flagship, the *Sea Adventure*. Some writers have been disposed to connect the scene with an episode in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, or even with the account in the Acts of the Apostles of the shipwreck of Saint Paul. But its similarity to the story of the wreck of the *Sea Adventure* leaves little doubt that this recent event was in the poet's mind.²¹⁸

Some of the commentators have broached a further question by seriously inquiring where Shakespeare's island was situated? Was it one of the Bermudas? That seems impossible, because Ariel was sent by Prospero from Shakespeare's island to fetch dew "from the still vexed Bermoothes." The Bermudas are treated as another and a distant place. Failing the Bermudas, the critics have searched the Mediterranean Sea for some suitable *locus in quo*, with the result that one of them has made a powerful case for Lampedusa, and another has pleaded persuasively

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on behalf of Pantalaria ; while a third, roaming farther afield, has not failed to point out that in the very essay on Cannibals, from which Shakespeare borrowed Gonzalo's speech about his ideal commonwealth, Montaigne discussed the fabled Atlantis of Plato, and referred to its reputed position in the ocean beyond the Straits of Gibraltar.²¹⁹

Mr. Gollancz dismisses these enquiries as "needless questionings" ; and the best commentators are agreed in denying an "habitation and a name" to the island of *The Tempest*. "We believe," wrote Charles Knight, "that the poet had no locality whatever in his mind, just as he had no notion of any particular storm. Tempests and enchanted islands are of the oldest materials of poetry. We believe that this island sank into the sea, and was no more seen, after Prospero broke his staff and drowned his book." The same idea is expressed in a stanza of an old ballad called "The Enchanted Island."

"From that day forth the isle has been
By wandering sailors never seen.
Some say 'tis buried deep
Beneath the sea, which breaks and roars,
Above its savage rocky shores,
Nor e'er is known to sleep."²²⁰

There is a great deal to be said for the view that this geographical problem can best be solved by means of an allegorical or poetical interpretation. Sir Edward Strachey has called the island "a true Atlantis of poetry" ; and Lowell, writing "among his books," has observed that "in *The Tempest* the scene is laid nowhere, or certainly in no country laid down on any map. Nowhere then? At once nowhere and everywhere, for it is in the soul of man, that still vexed island, lying between the upper and the nether world, and liable to incursions from both."²²¹

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If the scene of *The Tempest* is rightly located in the realms of Fancy, it bears some relation to that airy archipelago of legendary islands which were believed in so firmly during the Middle Ages, that they helped to beckon Christopher Columbus to his great adventure, and were represented until quite recently on standard maps and charts as being situate in mid-Atlantic to the west of Ireland. Of these islands the most famous were Brasil and Saint Brendan, the latter of which was the exclusive creation of Irish tradition.

Saint Brendan was a real personage, who was Abbot of Clonfert, in what is now the County Galway. His voyage, which is traditionally dated in the sixth century A.D., was a veritable Odyssey. With seventeen companions he started in quest of the Land of Promise, and the story runs that, after visiting one miraculous island after another, he ultimately reached the object of his search, and found it to be a land of fruits, flowers, eternal beauty, and joy, where there was no sorrow, no death, and no decay.²²² It is customary to attribute these legends to the mirages or atmospheric illusions which are sometimes visible on the west coast of Ireland in certain conditions of the sea and sky. This explanation is not a satisfying one. A mirage may explain the belief in the existence of an imaginary island, but it can hardly account for the tradition of a voyage. It seems more reasonable to suppose that sea-legends like that of Saint Brendan represented real voyages to islands such as the Hebrides, the Orkneys, the Faroe Islands, or Iceland. In nearly all of these places the Danes, a few centuries afterwards, found books and bells and other traces of Irish Christian settlements. The imaginative instinct of the Celt added the supernatural embroidery which is so similar to that of *The Tempest*.

These fabled islands were so realistically imaged in

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the old legends, that they misled successive generations of geographers. The island of Saint Brendan was shown on the best maps down to the beginning of the eighteenth century. Brasil was marked in mid-Atlantic by those great hydrographers, John Purdy and Alexander Findlay, in their respective charts of 1830 and 1853; and was not finally discarded by the cartographers until 1865. It may be that the map-makers were not entirely astray, for there is a modern school of scientists who seriously maintain that the legends had a real foundation, and that an island or continent existed in the Atlantic, which, as the result of some mighty upheaval, has disappeared like Prospero's palaces, "leaving not a rack behind."²²³

The island of Shakespeare's *Tempest*, with its fairies, its monsters and its twanging instruments, undoubtedly bears a near resemblance to the sea-girt Elysium of ancient Ireland, which lay in the bosom of the Western Ocean, far away from pain and sorrow, with sweet music ever striking on the ear. Nevertheless, we cannot contend that there is between his island and that of Saint Brendan anything more than a mysterious affinity, which, perhaps, lay in the attitude of mind with which both Shakespeare and the ancient Gael regarded the supernatural. Shakespeare approached the supernatural, as the Celts did, with a due and loving respect. For him the supernatural was not the domain of vulgar superstition, but was a mystic realm of beauty to which his imagination rejoiced to wing its flight. What charms us most about *The Tempest* is the affectionate and reverential spirit in which the dramatist invests his magician with dignity, his airy sprite with gracefulness, and his haunted island with enchantment. Here, perhaps, lies the explanation of that mysterious affinity which links *The Tempest* to the ancient literature of Ireland.

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ABBREVIATIONS.

<i>All's Well</i> .. All's Well that Ends Well.	<i>M. of V.</i> .. Merchant of Venice.
<i>A. and C.</i> .. Antony and Cleopatra.	<i>Merry Wives</i> Merry Wives of Windsor.
<i>A. Y. L. I.</i> .. As You like It.	<i>M. N. D.</i> .. Midsummer Night's Dream.
<i>C. of E.</i> .. Comedy of Errors	<i>Much Ado</i> .. Much Ado about Nothing.
<i>Cor.</i> .. Coriolanus.	<i>Oth.</i> .. Othello.
<i>Cymb.</i> .. Cymbeline.	<i>Per.</i> .. Pericles.
<i>Haml.</i> .. Hamlet.	<i>R. 2</i> .. King Richard II.
<i>1 H. 4</i> .. First Part of King Henry IV.	<i>R. 3</i> .. King Richard III.
<i>2 H. 4</i> .. Second Part of King Henry IV.	<i>R. and J.</i> .. Romeo and Juliet.
<i>H. 5</i> .. King Henry V.	<i>T. of S.</i> .. Taming of the Shrew.
<i>1 H. 6</i> .. First Part of King Henry VI.	<i>Temp.</i> .. Tempest.
<i>2 H. 6</i> .. Second Part of King Henry VI.	<i>Timon</i> .. Timon of Athens.
<i>3 H. 6</i> .. Third Part of King Henry VI.	<i>T. A.</i> .. Titus Andronicus
<i>H. 8</i> .. King Henry VIII.	<i>T. and C.</i> .. Troilus and Cressida.
<i>J. C.</i> .. Julius Caesar.	<i>T. N.</i> .. Twelfth Night.
<i>John</i> .. King John.	<i>Two Gentle-</i> Two Gentlemen
<i>Lear</i> .. King Lear.	<i>men.</i> .. of Verona.
<i>L. L. L.</i> .. Love's Labour Lost.	<i>W's Tale</i> .. Winter's Tale.
<i>Macb.</i> .. Macbeth.	<i>D. N. B.</i> .. Dictionary of National Bi-
<i>M. for M.</i> .. Measure for Measure.	<i>R. I. A.</i> .. Proceedings of Royal Irish Academy.

NOTES.

CHAPTER I.—*MACBETH*. (1) For the Dalriadic origin of the characters in *Macb.* see genealogical chart in Dr. Reeves' edition of Adamnan's *St. Columba*, p. 438; *D.N.B. sub. nom.*, *Kenneth I.*; Skene's *Celtic Scotland* (David Doyle, Edinburgh), vol. I., pp. 139, 229, 230, 316; Andrew Laing in *Encycl. Brit. sub. nom.*, *Scotland*. The *Annals of*

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Ulster note the death of Macbeth A.D. 1040 and of Duncan A.D. 1058. (2) *Columba of the Church*. This does not refer to the Church universal, but to a particular building probably Kilmacrenan Church (near Donegal) close by which the Saint was fostered, see *Zeitschrift für Celtische Philologie* III., 559-561. Reeves' *Adamnan* lxx. note, and O'Donnell's *St. Columba*. (3) Darrell Figgis *Shakespeare, A Study*, p. 276. (4) *Macb.* II., 4, 33. (5) *ib.* I., 2, 61. (6) *ib.* III., 3, 143. (7) quoted in Henry Cuninghams' Introduction to *Macb.* (in "Arden" Shakespeare), p. xxxiv.

CHAPTER II.—*MACBETH*. (8) *Macb.* I., 1; and I. 3. 1-37. *Vide* Cuninghams, *ubi. supra.* pp. xvii.-xxviii.; *Athenæum*, July, 1896; *D. N. B. sub nom. Shakespeare*, vol. XVII., p. 1315, where Sir Sidney Lee writes that the resemblance between Middleton's *Witch* and portion of *Macb.* "may safely be ascribed to plagiarism on Middleton's part." (9) *Macb.* II. 5; and IV. 1, 39, 44, 125-132. (10) See W. M. Hennessy's *Three Irish Goddesses of War; Revue Celtique* I. (1870-1872) 32-57. (11) *Silva Gadelica, Translation and Notes*, I., 343-347. (12) For the story of Cuchulainn use has been made of Dr. Douglas Hyde's *Literary History of Ireland*, Chapters XXIV.-XXVII.

CHAPTER III.—*MACBETH*. (13) C. S. Boswell's *Irish Precursor of Dante* 135. (14) R.I.A. Todd Lecture Series, IV., p. 45. (15) *Bards of the Gael and Gall*, 2nd Ed. pp. 7-9. The following is Dr. Sigerson's comment upon this parallelism:—"The passage in Holinshed, on which the scene is apparently founded, is meagre and not suggestive. Here, on the other hand, we find two watchers on the walls, disputing as to the approach of a foe, and here, in both cases, one watcher maintains that the alleged hosts are 'slow-moving groves,' whilst his companion discredits the statement. Finally the enemy captures the fort in both instances. Is it too daring to suppose that, at a time when the Queen learned to speak Irish, and was charmed with Irish melodies, Shakespeare followed the example of Spenser in the matter of Irish poems and romances, and "caused divers of them to be translated unto him," and found also that "surely they savoured of sweet wit and good invention"? If not, if he knew nothing of this dramatic representation, then the coincidence in thought between Shakespeare and an archaic Irish bard is marvellous, and should deepen our interest in a literature which thus anticipated him in the matter." (16) *Mesca Ulad* translated by W. M. Hennessy.

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CHAPTER IV.—KING LEAR. (17) *Bards of the Gael and Gall* 43, 140, 397. See also P. W. Joyce's *Old Celtic Romances, The Fate of the Children of Lir, or The Four White Swans*. (18) For Lhyr Cf. Canon McCullagh's article on *Celts* in *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*. vol. 3, p. 287. Strictly speaking Lir is the genitive form of Ler; but Lir is the popular form of the name.

CHAPTER V.—HAMLET. A DANE OF IRELAND? etc. (19) *Hamlet in Iceland* by Israel Gollancz. Introduction, p. lv. (20) *vide Book of Homage*, p. 173, *Bits of Timber*, by Israel Gollancz. (21) *Hamlet in Iceland, ubi supra* pp. xlv.-lvi. *vide Poems attributed to Gormflaith* by Professor Osborn Bergin in *Miscellany presented to Kuno Meyer*, 343. (22) *Hamlet in Iceland*, pp. i.-xvii., xxv., xxxi. (23) *ib.* p. lxxviii.; and *Hamlet, A new commentary*, by W. F. Trench, M.A., Professor of English Literature in the University of Dublin, pp. 56, 70, 71. (24) Transactions of Ossianic Society, vol. 5, 124-127 (25) R.I.A., Todd Lectures series, vol. XVI., p. 17. Meyer's *Fiannagecht*, 5-17; *Ancient Irish Poetry*, 9. (26) *The Voyage of Bran*, Meyer and Nutt, I., 6. (27) Meyer's *Hibernica Minora* App. 81. (28) Eleanor Hull's *Cuchullinn Saga*, 275-289. (29) *Révue Celtique* (1900), 157. (30) Dr. Douglas Hyde's *Literary History of Ireland* p. 438. The author received valuable suggestions about *Hamlet* from Professor The Rev. George O'Neill, S.J., M.A., and Professor William Magennis, M.A., of University College, Dublin.

CHAPTER VI.—HAMLET. WHY DID SHAKESPEARE MAKE HAMLET SWEAR BY SAINT PATRICK? (31) See *Two Gentlemen* IV., 3, 43, and V. 1, 3 (Patrick's Cell); also R. 2, II., 1, 157. Allusions to the legend of the expulsion of the snakes were common in the works of Shakespeare's contemporaries. (32) *Hamlet* I., 5, 2. (33) *ib.* 133. (34) Gollancz's Temple Edition of *Hamlet*, Glossary, 199, *vide* Furness's *Vartorum Ed. Haml.* I., p. III. (35) Dekker's *The Honest Whore*, 2nd Part, Act I., sc. 1. (36) *St. Patrick's Purgatory*, by Thomas Wright, M.A., F.S.A., 154, and *St. Patrick's Purgatory*, by the Revd. D. Canon O'Connor, P.P., 103. Canon O'Connor refers to a metrical version of Calderon's play in the metre of Longfellow's *Hiawatha*, by Denis Florence McCarthy. (37) *Hermathena* No. XL., p. 1.

CHAPTER VII.—HAMLET—SAINT PATRICK'S PURGATORY—etc. (38) Wright *ubi supra* p. 60 *et seq.*; *St.*

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Patrick's Purgatory by St. J. D. Seymour, B.D., 17-20. (39) Canon O'Connor 91. (40) Wright 135, Canon O'Connor 95, 196. (41) Boswell's *Irish Precursor of Dante* 235, 238, compare canto XXVIII.-XXIX. of *Il Purgatorio* with chap. IX. of the *Vision of Owen*.

CHAPTER VIII.—*HAMLET*.—SAINT PATRICK'S PURGATORY—etc. (42) Seymour 22, 23. (43) Canon O'Connor 105. (44) Seymour 83, 84. (45) Seymour 53. (46) Wright 137. (47) W. S. Rose's Translation Canto X., stanzas 91, 92, quoted Seymour 105. (48) Seymour 27, 63. (49) Seymour 37, 100; Canon O'Connor 98. (50) Seymour 22, 23. (51) Canon O'Connor, 108. (52) Seymour, 84, 85, citing *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, 1st series, vol. 5, p. 62. (53) Seymour 23, 24.

CHAPTER IX.—*HAMLET*.—SAINT PATRICK'S PURGATORY—etc. (54) Wright 139, 140. (55) Wright 140; Seymour, 45. (56) Holinshed's *Description of Ireland* by Richard Stanyhurst, cap. IV., p. 16.

CHAPTER X.—*A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM*. (57) *cf. Fairy Faith in Celtic Countries* by W. Y. Evans Wentz, which contains much interesting matter about Ireland, e.g., at pp. 2, 3 (environment of Fairy Faith in Ireland); 23-84 (Taking of Evidence in Ireland with introduction by Dr. Douglas Hyde); 283-307 (The Sidhe); 332-357 (The Celtic Other-world). (58) Douglas Hyde, 76, 563. (59) *ib.* 284. (60) *M. N. D.* II., 2, 8. (61) *Bards of the Gael and Gall*, 352, 425.

CHAPTER XI.—*AS YOU LIKE IT*. (52) *A.Y.L.I.* II., 5, 52. (63) *Bards of the Gael and Gall*, 2nd Ed., 88. Grattan Flood's *History of Irish Music*, 170, 171; *Cor. I.*, 2, 300. (64) *A.Y.L.I.*, III., 2, 92-116. (65) *Bards of the Gael and Gall*, 2nd Ed., 85, 208, 421. (66) *A.Y.L.I.*, III., 2, 186. (67) *Annals of the Four Masters*, 1414, cited by David Comyn, p. 20. (68) David Comyn, 25, where there is much interesting information as to the rhyming of rats. (69) *A.Y.L.I.*, V., 2, 118. (70) David Comyn, 27.

CHAPTER XII.—*KING JOHN*. (71) *King John I.*, 1, 11. (72) *ib.* II., 1, 152. (73) *ib.* V. 7, 112. (74) Goddard Orpen's *Ireland under the Normans*, vol. 2, 146, 147; *Galway Archaeological and Historical Society Journ.*, vol. 7, 84, 93, 94. These authorities agree that William de Burgh was a brother of Hubert de Burgh, and describe as a common error the statement that William de Burgh was the same man as William Fitzaldhelm who came to

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Ireland with Henry II.; see also *D.N.B. sub nom. Fitzaldhelm, William*. The author desires to thank Mr. Edmund Curtis, M.A., Professor of Modern History in the University of Dublin, for having read the proof of this chapter and for his suggestions.

CHAPTER XIII.—*THE HOUSE OF MORTIMER*. (75) 1 *H.* 6, II., V. 91. (76) For the facts and dates about the House of Mortimer the author has used the articles in *D. N. B.* by Professor T. F. Tout, and the authorities there referred to. He has also received assistance in this chapter and in others from Mr. J. P. Dalton, A.M., one of the senior Inspectors under the Board of National Education, who has made special studies in Irish genealogical research.

CHAPTER XIV.—*KING RICHARD II.* (77) *R.* 2, I., 4, 42; *ib.* II., 1, 218. (78) *ib.* I. 4, 62. (79) *ib.* II., 4, 166. (80) Holinshed's *Historie of Irelande*, 65. (81) Webb's Translation of Creton's Metrical Narrative of the Expedition contained in *Archaeologia*, vol. XX., has been used for the purpose of this chapter, cf. George Carew, in Harris's *Hibernia*. (82) 1 *H.* 4, V., 1, 52. *Vide ib.* I., 3, 147-152; IV., 3, 88.

CHAPTER XV.—*KING HENRY IV. HOTSPUR'S IRISH WOLFHOUND*. (83) 1 *H.* 4, III., 1, 145. (84) The information contained in this chapter about the Irish Wolf-dog is drawn mainly from the *History of the Irish Wolf-dog* by the Revd. Edmund Hogan, S.J., and the authorities therein referred to.

CHAPTER XVI.—*FALSTAFF AND FASTOLF*. (85) See Sir Sidney Lee's article in *D. N. B.* on Sir John Fastolf. (86) 1 *H.* 4, II., 4, 363; 2 *H.* 4, III., 2, 28 and 70. (87) 2 *H.* 4, II., 2, 142; IV., 3, 31; 1 *H.* 4, III., 3, 208. On the character of Falstaff many essays have been written e.g. by C. Morris (1744); Professor William Richardson (1788); Maurice Morgann (1777); J. H. Hackett (1840); Halliwell Phillips (1841); S. W. Rusden (1870). The present writer's view follows and accords with that contained in the essay by Maurice Morgann.

CHAPTER XVII.—*KING HENRY IV. THE JAIL JOURNAL*. (88) *Jail Journal* (Dublin, 1913), pp. 11, 33. (89) *Tempest* I., 2, 226. (90) *Jail Journal*, p. 52.

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CHAPTER XVIII.—*FALSTAFF'S CIRCLE*. (91) *H. 5, II.*, 1, 82. (92) *Merry Wives III.*, 3, 69. (93) *H. 5, III.*, 6, 41. (94) *ib.* IV. 4, 4. (95) see Professor Osborn Bergin's article on the *Bardic Order in Ivernian Society Journ.* V. 218; Clement Robinson, *Handful of Pleasant Delittes* (1584); William Ballet's Lute Book, MSS. dated 1590 in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin; Queen Elizabeth's (or the Fitzwilliam) Virginal Book (1602-1622); Playford's *Musical Companion* (1673). (96) *A Sonnet of a lover in praise of his lady*, set to Calen o Custure me, was registered with the Company of Stationers, London, on 10th March, 1582, and was published in Clement Robinson's *Handful of Pleasant Delittes*, and in Playford's *Musical Companion*, 222, where it is headed "Irish Tune," and is referred to in the Table of Contents as "The Irish Song." See also MacDonald's *Collection of Gaelic Poetry*, pp. xxxix., and 246; and see David Comyn, pp. 11-13. (97) *Merry Wives II.*, 2, 316. For further information about Irish *usquebaugh* see David Comyn, p. 19. (98) *ib.* V. 5, 38-39. (99) *Chronicle of Jails* (1917), p. 80. (100) *H. 5 II.*, 3, 21. (101) *H. 4, III.*, 3, 210.

CHAPTER XIX.—*KING HENRY V.* (102) *H. 5, III.*, 2, 79-153. In the Folio of 1623 Macmorrice's name is not in the list of dramatis personæ. Some modern writers account for the imperfect form of the early edition of Henry V. by supposing that they were founded on actors' copies. (103) See Chapter XXII. *infra*. p. 128. For the contemporary use of the word "nation" for an Irish Clan see Depositions taken in Connaught in 1585; O'Flaherty's *West Connaught*, p. 384 *et. seq.*; and see document signed Shane McMorice at p. 394.

CHAPTER XX.—*CAPTAIN MACMORRICE*. (105) See article in *D.N.B.* by D. Llewellyn Thomas *sub nom. Llywellyn of Llangewydd*. (106) Holinshed's *Historie of Irelande* 21, 23, 26, 67, 71. (107) *Ex relatione* R. Langrishe, (per Mr. Justice Madden), and J. Sadler of the Irish Office of Arms. In the introduction to the Topographical poems of O'Dubhagain and O'Hindrain, pp. 6 to 24. Dr. John O'Donovan discusses the derivation and proper use of the prefixes O and Mac, and the adoption of Mac by Anglo-Irish families, including the Macmorrices.

CHAPTER XXI.—*CAPTAIN MACMORRICE*. (108) *vide* Robert Dunlop's article in *D.N.B. sub nom. James FitzGerald* and the authorities referred to. See also *Modern Language Review* (Sydney, N.S.W.) July 17th,

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1917, p. 300, where Mr. J. Le Gay Brereton quotes from the *Letter book* (A.D. 1573-1580) of the poet Gabriel Harvey, who was an intimate friend of Edmund Spenser, a reference to a certain author of a "cantion" or song "against the wylde Irishe and namely Mack Morrise." Having regard to the date, the allusion is probably to James FitzMaurice. See *Camden Society*, 1884, p. 100 (ex relatione W. J. Lawrence) It shows that "Mack Morrise" was familiar to an English poet as the name of a "wylde" Irishman twenty years before Henry V. was produced, and (as Mr. Brereton points out) that it is not necessary to suppose that the name was derived from Holinshed's *Historie of Irelande*. (109) David Comyn, p. 8; Silva Gadelica, *preface* xiii. (110) See Robert Dunlop's articles on the three Lords of Kerry *sub nom. Fitzmaurice* in *D.N.B.*; *Annals of the Four Masters* 1405, 1417, 1446, 1510, 1516, 1517, 1563, 1567, 1568, 1572, 1577, 1580, 1582, 1590, 1600, 1601, 1602.

CHAPTER XXII.—CAPTAIN MACMORRICE. (111) Holinshed's *Historie of Irelande*, p. 22. (112) Aubrey de Vere. *Antar and Zara and other poems* (London, 1877), p. 64. (113) *Historia et genealogia familiae de Burgo (circa 1578)* now in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin, cited in Knox's *History of Mayo* at p. 354. (114) *Annals of the Four Masters* under the years 1300, 1341, 1366, 1367, 1412, 1419, 1446, 1472. *Annals of Ulster* 1420, 1452, 1522. *Annals of Clonmacnoise* 1335, 1342. *Annals of Lough Ce*, 1242, 1348, 1366, 1367, 1548, 1554. The Chief of the Mayo Burkes was originally called MacWilliam Eighter (*i.e.* Northern or Lower); and the Chief of the Galway Burkes—MacWilliam Oughter (*i.e.* Southern or Upper). The latter was created Earl of Clanrickard by Henry VIII. and was thereafter commonly known by that name. (115) Knox's *History of Mayo*, 346. For an account of the Castles of Connaught, their character, and method of defence, see *Castles of Clare Barony* by Col. J. P. Nolan in *Galway Archaeological and Historical Society Journ.*, Vol. I, pp. 11, 159. (116) *vide The Brownes of Castle MacGarrett* by Lord Oranmore and Browne in *Galway Archaeological and Historical Society Journ.*, vol. 5, pp. 48, 165, 221; vol. 6, p. 57, where it is stated that the name Prendergast is now one of the commonest names in the Barony of Clanmorris and neighbourhood. Soon after the change of tenure, the Macmorrises resumed their original name of Prendergast. (117) Knox's *History of Mayo*, p. 185, 186; Cal. Carew MSS. No. 50 of 1583. (118) Knox's *History of Mayo*, p. 199. (119) *ib.* 196, 202. (120) *ib.* 322, 356, 365. (121) *ib.* 231, 268, 271, 272.

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Vide Cal. Elizabeth 617. A pardon was granted to a MacMoryshe (*sic*) of Mayo in 1602. (122) For Grania O' Malley see *Galway Historical and Archaeological Society Journ.*, vol. IV., p. 65, *Grace O'Malley* by Hubert T. Knox, who throws doubt upon Grania's having carried off the heir of the St. Lawrences. He quotes MacFirbis, who died at an advanced age in 1670, as authority for the belief that it was a Richard Burke, who was MacWilliam Oughter from 1469 to 1479, that really carried off the heir of Beann Edair (Howth). See Presidential Address of Archbishop Healy, D.D., to the above society in their *Journal*, vol. 4, 123.

CHAPTER XXIII.—*KING HENRY VI.* (123). 1 *H. 6, IV.*, 7, 60. (124). *ib. II.*, 5. (125). *ib. II.*, 4. This mistake is noticed by Mr. Grant White, Mr. David Comyn, Mr. T. P. Courtney, and other writers.

CHAPTER XXIV.—*RICHARD PLANTAGENET.* (126). 2 *H. 6, I.*, 1, 225, 230. (127). *ib. III.*, 1, 281-329. (128). The folio version of 2 *King Henry VI.* is a revision of the *First Part of the Contention betwixt the two famous Houses of York and Lancaster* (quartos 1594 and 1600), republished under the name of *The Whole Contention*, etc., 1619. (129). From the *First Part of the Contention* cited by David Comyn, p. 5. The archaic spelling has been modernised. (130). *Vide* Mr. Israel Gollancz's Preface to 1 *H. 6* in "Temple Shakespeare," p. ix.; Miss Lee's conjectural table simplified by Professor Dowden in *Shakespeare Primer*, p. 76; *Shakespeare Society, Transactions*, 1896, 293 *et. seq.*

CHAPTER XXV.—*THE WHITE ROSE IN IRELAND.* (131). 2 *H. 6, I.*, 1, 194. *Vide* Richey's *Short History of the Irish People*, 231, 459.

CHAPTER XXVI.—*JACK CADE'S REBELLION.* (132). 2 *H. 6, III.*, 1, 348-381. (133). *Ib. IV.*, 2, 40. See Chap. XIII., p. 75 *supra*.

CHAPTER XXVII.—*THE WAR OF THE ROSES.* (134). 2 *H. 6, IV.*, 9, 23. (135). *Ib. V.*, 1, 1. (136). *Literature in Ireland*, p. 110. (137) 3 *H. 6, I.*, 1, 14. The Earl of Wiltshire had come from Ireland with troops of his own raising. (128). *Ib. I.*, 4, 177.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—*YORK'S IRISH ARMY.* (139). *Silva Gadelica, Translation and Notes*, p. 572. For Henry V.'s Irish soldiers see David Comyn, p. 8. (140) *H. 5, III.*, 7, 56.

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For an allusion to the bogs of Ireland see *C. of E.* III., 2, 121. (141) David Comyn, p. 15; also pp. 16-18 for the words "rug-headed" and "shag-haired" as applied to the Irish kernes.

CHAPTER XXIX.—*KING RICHARD III.* (142). *Shakespeare's Holinshed*, 392. A parallel has been pointed out between Richard's courtship of Lady Anne and the courtship of Diarmid's widow by her husband's murderer. In both cases the situation suggests the question—"Was ever woman in this humour woo'd? Was ever woman in this humour won?" (*R.* 3, I., 2, 228). See David Comyn, p. 32, citing the Rev. J. J. O'Carroll, S.J. (143). *R.* 3, IV., 2, 106-110. Lines 103-120, including the passage in question, are omitted from the Folio of 1623. (144). The references to the Irish Bards in this chapter are founded upon Professor Osborn Bergin's article on the *Bardic Order* in the *Ivernian Society's Journal*, V., 153-166, and 203-219, and upon the introduction to Meyer's *Selections from Ancient Irish Poetry* (1911), Meyer has translated the *King and the Hermit*, *The Song of Carroll's Sword*, and *The Old Woman of Beare*, pp. 47, 72, 88.

CHAPTER XXX.—*FALSE, FLEETING, PERJURED, CLARENCE.* (145). 3 *H.* 6, IV., 3, 41. (146). *Ib.* V., 1, 82, 94, 99-100, 106. (147). *Ib.* V., 5, 33-36, 40. The historians are not agreed as to Clarence's complicity in the death of Prince Edward; *vide D. N. B.* where Mr. Tait, *sub nom. George Plantaganet*, is disposed to acquit him, while Dr. Gairdner, *sub nom. Edward, Prince of Wales*, makes him a party to the assassination. (148). *R.* 3, I., 4, 42-63.

CHAPTER XXXI.—*KILDARE'S ATTAINDER.* (149). *H.* 8, II., 1, 39. Shakespeare wrote only a small part of *King Henry VIII.*; and this scene was probably by Fletcher. (150). *Holinshed's Historie of Irelande*, 81. For parallels between Father Edmund Campion's writings and certain passages in *H.* 8 see David Comyn, pp. 4 and 28.

CHAPTER XXXII.—*KILDARE'S ATTAINDER.* (151). *H.* 8, III., 2, 259. (152). *History of Birr*, 332. In the inscription on the slab the ladies are described as—"Elizabeth and Mary Bullyn, daughters of Thomas Bullyn, son of George Bullyn, the son of George Bullyn, the son of George Bullyn, Viscount Rochford, son of Sir Thomas Bullyn, Earle of Ormond and Willsheere."

CHAPTER XXXIII.—*THE FIRST EARL OF ESSEX* (153). *R and J.* III., 2, 37; and IV., 5, 14. (154). *A*

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History of Irish Music by Wm. H. Grattan Flood, Mus.D., p. 175. (155). Dr. Brandes, p. 66. (156). Mr. Israel Gollancz in *Preface to M. N. D.* (Temple Edition), p. xii. (157). The application of this passage to the Kenilworth pageant, adopted by many critics including Sir Sidney Lee, has been doubted by others including Mr. C. K. Chambers, *Book of Homage*, p. 156. (158). The author of this monograph was the Rev. N. J. Halpin. His allegorical explanation was adopted by Georg Brandes, but has been rejected by several other critics as too fanciful. (159). *M. N. D.* II., 1, 155. (160). Brandes, p. 63. (161). C. K. Chambers suggests the marriage of Thomas, son of Lord Berkeley, with Elizabeth, daughter of Sir George Carew, as a possible occasion for the production of *M. N. D.*

CHAPTER XXXIV.—*THE YOUNGER ESSEX AND THE IRISH EXPEDITION OF 1599.* (162) Brandes, p. 244. (163) Sir Sidney Lee's article on Sir John Hayward in *D.N.B.* (164) *The Poems of Shakespeare* by George Wyndham, Introduction, p. xxxi. (165) *H.* 5 V., Chorus, 7.

CHAPTER XXXV.—*THE YOUNGER ESSEX AND THE IRISH EXPEDITION OF 1599.* (166) Sir Sidney Lee's *Life of Shakespeare*, p. 253; *D. N. B. sub nom. Shakespeare*, vol. XVII., p. 1306. (167) *Much Ado*, 1, 5-9. (168) *ib.* I., 1, 46. The allusion to Essex's expedition is doubtful. The references given in *Chalmers' Supplemental Apology*, xiii., have not been verified by search, *vide* Weekly Notes, 1909, 1, 152; Furness's *Variorum Edition of Much Ado*, Preface, p. xv. Mr. Gollancz refers to the allusion as "probable," *Preface to Much Ado*, v. (169) Darrell Figgis's *Byeways of Study*, 80. (170) A. Collins' *Letters and Memorials of State* II., 132 cited by Brandes, p. 256. (171) *A.Y.L.I.* V., 4, 71. (172) *T.N.* II., 3, 81 (Peg-a-Ramsey); II., 5, 166, 218; V. 1, 346 (Yellow Stockings); Dr. W. H. Grattan Flood, *History of Irish Music*, 169, 173, 174, 176, 177.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—*THE FALL OF ESSEX AND SOUTHAMPTON*—(173) Sir Sidney Lee's *Life of Shakespeare*, 254. Gollancz *Preface to R.* 2, VI. (174) Brandes 240, 303-304; Gollancz, *Preface to J. C.* ix., citing Dr. Furnivall, Academy, Sept. 18, 1875. (175) The Revd. Vincent McNabb, O.P., in *Catholic World*. (176) *Lear*, III., 4, 188. (177) Brandes 207, and see Mr. Richard Simpson *The political uses of the stage in Shakespeare's time* (*New Shakespeare Society*, 1874) cited by David Comyn, pp. 3, 11. (178) *The Poems of Shakespeare*, by George Wyndham, Introduction, p. xxxvi.

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CHAPTER XXXVII.—SHAKESPEARE AND STANYHURST—(179) *Haml.* V., 2, 304; Holinshed's *Historie of Irelande* p. 77; Comyn, p. 30. (180) *Haml.* I., 5, 184; Comyn, 30. (181) *All's Well* III., 6, 35-43; V. 3, 322. (182) Holinshed's *Description of Irelande*, pp. 9, 10; referred to by Comyn, p. 27. (183) see Murray's *New English Dictionary*. *Drum* III., 6. (184) Holinshed's *Description of Irelande* by Stanyhurst, pp. 8, 9. (185) *Classical Learning in Ireland* by The Right Honorable Mr. Justice Madden, p. 40, and App. Pt. I. *Shakespeare and Stanyhurst*, pp. 74-79. For "Barnacles" see *Temp.* IV. 1, 269; and II., 2, 25. Gollancz in Glossary to his *Temp.* interprets "barnacles" as "barnacle geese." (186) Darwin's *Origin of Species* (London, 1872), Chap. XIV., p. 389. (187) Sir Sidney Lee's article in *D.N.B.*, *sub nom. Holinshed*.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—SHAKESPEARE IN IRELAND? (188) *Was Shakespeare ever in Ireland? A Conjectural Study*, by W. J. Lawrence, in the *Jahrbuch der Deutschen Shakespeare-Gesellschaft Berlin-Schomberg* 1906. (189) Sir Sidney Lee *William Shakespeare*, p. 82. Mr. W. J. Lawrence has informed the author that Barnstaple was another port from which the players may have crossed to Ireland. It was a packet station for Ireland. (190) Mr. W. J. Lawrence's scattered writings constitute an interesting series of links between Ireland and Shakespeare. Some of them were contributed to foreign magazines before the war. Others, since the war, have been delivered as lectures at American Universities. Among them, besides the subject of this chapter, are *Did Shadwell write an Opera on the Tempest?* (*Anglia* 1904, xxvii., pp. 205 ff.). *New Light on the old Dublin Stage*. "New Ireland Review," November, 1906, p. 156. *Music in the Elizabethan Theatre*, *Jahrbuch der Deutschen Shakespeare-Gesellschaft*, 1908, p. 36. *Who wrote the famous "Macbeth" music?* (*Anglia*, 1908); *A Famous Wexford Man* (Owen Swiney) "New Ireland Review," August, 1908, p. 354. *Plays within Plays*, *Englische Studien* (Halle) 1904; *New Light on the Elizabethan Theatre* "Fortnightly Review," 1916; *Rise and Progress of the Elizabethan Theatre Orchestra* "Musical Quarterly" (New York) 1917; *A Forgotten Custom of Shakespeare's Day*, in *Shakespeare Homage Book*; *The Mystery of Lodowick Barry*, *Journal of University of North California*, April, 1917.

CHAPTER XXXIX.—IRISH SONG, DANCE AND ACCENT IN SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS. (191) *History of Irish*

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Music by W. H. Grattan Flood, Mus.D., Chapter XVI. *Shakespeare and Irish Music*, pp. 168-180. The reader is referred to this chapter of Dr. Grattan Flood's book, which is full of interest and suggestiveness. (192) "Ducdame," Grattan Flood, pp. 170, 171; "Fortune my Foe," *ib.* pp. 108, 109; "Calen o Custure me," *ib.* pp. 110, 111; "Well-a-day," *ib.* pp. 178, 179. (193) *Hamlet*. IV., 5, 187; *W's Tale*, IV., 4, 199; *Much Ado* III., 4, 44; *Two Gentlemen* I., 2, 83; *T. N.* II., 5, 184; III., 2, 81; Mr. David Comyn at pp. 31, 32, connects the name Malvolio with the Scottish "Melville," and the Irish "Mulvihill;" *Leav* III., 6, 27. (194) Grattan Flood, 178-9 (Dowland); 30 (Woollen pipes). (195) *Much Ado* II., 1, 76; *W's Tale* IV., 3, 46. (196) Grattan Flood 174. *L. L. L.* V., 1, 161. (197) *Macb.* II., 2, 36. Spelt as in Folio of 1623. (198) *H.* IV., II., 4, 264. (199) *Macb.* III., 4, 57; *J. C.* III., 2, 45; (200) *Macb.* III., 1, 126; *H. V.* IV., 1, 305; *A. and C.* IV., 6, 3; *ib.* V., 1, 3. (201) *Irish Dialect of English; Its Origin and Vocabulary*, by Mary Hayden, and Marcus Hartog, "Fortnightly Review," January-June, 1909, pp. 775, 933. (202) These references to Shakespeare's use of the words "shall" and "will," are derived from *The Irish Difficulty, Shall and Will* (1897) by Monsignor Molloy, D.D., D.Sc., pp. 33, 34; and *English as She Is Spoke in Ireland*, by P. W. Joyce, LL.D., M.R.I.A. (1910), pp. 74-77. (203) *A. and C.* II., 5, 81; *L. L. L.* V., 2, 930; *T. and C.* IV., 5, 165; *Cor.* II., 1, 280. (204) *L. L. L.* I., 1, 149; Dr. Sigerson's *Bards of the Gael and the Gall*, Introduction, pp. 12, 13; Meyer, *Primer of Irish Metre* 9; cf. *Miscellany presented to Meyer*, p. 327, where W. P. Ker traces Byron's use of the *rime couée* or *rythmus caudatus* (exemplified in the "Bells of Shandon") to an Irish source.

CHAPTER XL.—SOME IRISH PLAYERS OF SHAKESPEARIAN PARTS. (205) Hughes, *Pre-victorian Drama in Dublin*, 31; Hitchcock's *History of the Irish Stage*, 18, 19. (206) Lord Cornwallis *Correspondence* ii., 147, cited in Lord Ashbourne's *Pitt* p. 63. Lord Edward Fitzgerald was one of the amateurs who acted in *Cymbeline* at Shane's Castle.

CHAPTER XLI.—THE CELT IN SHAKESPEARE. (207) The author desires to thank the Rev. Patrick McSweeney, M.A., Professor of English in St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, for suggestions in connexion with this chapter. *Vide* Thomas Nicholson "Pedigree of the English People"

NOTES.

(London, 1878) *ex relatione* J. P. Dalton; Sir Bertram Windle's *Shakespeare's Country*, pp. 1, 2; *The Study of Celtic Literature* by Matthew Arnold (London, J. M. Dent and Sons), p. 77, citing Professor Henry Morley. (208) Matthew Arnold, pp. 104-116; Brandes, p. 452. (209) *M. N. D.* II., 1, 249; *ib.* 83; *M. of V.*, V., 1, 59; Matthew Arnold, *ubi supra*, p. 27. (210) *Vide* W. B. Yeats *Collected Works*, Vol. IV., 111-130 (at *Stratford-on-Avon*); Vol. VI., 210-229 (*The Celtic Element in Literature*). (211) Matthew Arnold 112; *Martyrology of Ængus* in *Henry Bradshaw's Society*, vol. XXIX., p. xxiv., where Whitley Stokes in a note points out Matthew Arnold's mistake. (212) *Cymb.* IV., 2, 258; *Reincarnations*, by James Stephens, 21. (213) *Sous le masque de William Shakespeare*, par M. Abel Lefranc, Professeur au Collège de France (Payot et Cie, Paris, 1919). The main purpose of the book is to prove that the real author of the Shakespearian plays was William Stanley, 6th Earl of Derby. It is an interesting study in Elizabethan literature oriented in an entirely new direction. M. Lefranc (vol. 1, pp. 304 *et seq.*) quotes references by Montégut, the eminent French critic, to the Celtic atmosphere of *Macbeth*, and by Ernest Renan to the Celtic note in *Cymbeline*. M. Lefranc explains the "Celt in Shakespeare" by reference to the connexion of the Stanley family with the Isle of Man, of which the Earls of Derby were sovereign lords.

CHAPTER XLII.—*THE CELTIC NOTE IN CYMBELINE AND IN THE TEMPEST.* (214) Gollancz. *Cymb.* preface, ix., x. (215) *ib.* xi. (216) Douglas Hyde, 312. (217) Furness's *Variorum Temp.*, 325-343; Sir Sidney Lee's *William Shakespeare*, 429, n. 1. (218) Furness *ubi supra*, 308. (219) Cornhill Magazine, October, 1872, article cited with approval by Dowden, *Shakespeare. His mind and art*, 419 n. (220) Furness *ubi supra* 315-319. (221) Lowell quoted by Dowden, *ubi supra*, 424 n. (222) *Brendaniana* by The Rev. Denis O'Donoghue, P.P., Dublin, 1893, pp. 86-178; *Brasil and the Legendary islands of the North Atlantic*, by T. J. Westropp, M.A., with Maps and Plates in *R. I. A. Proceedings*, vol. 30 (1912-1913), pp. 223-260. (223) *Some Remarks on the Atlantis Problem* by R. F. Scharff, B.Sc., Ph.D., R.I.A. Proceedings, vol. 24 (1902-1904), pp. 268, *et seq.*

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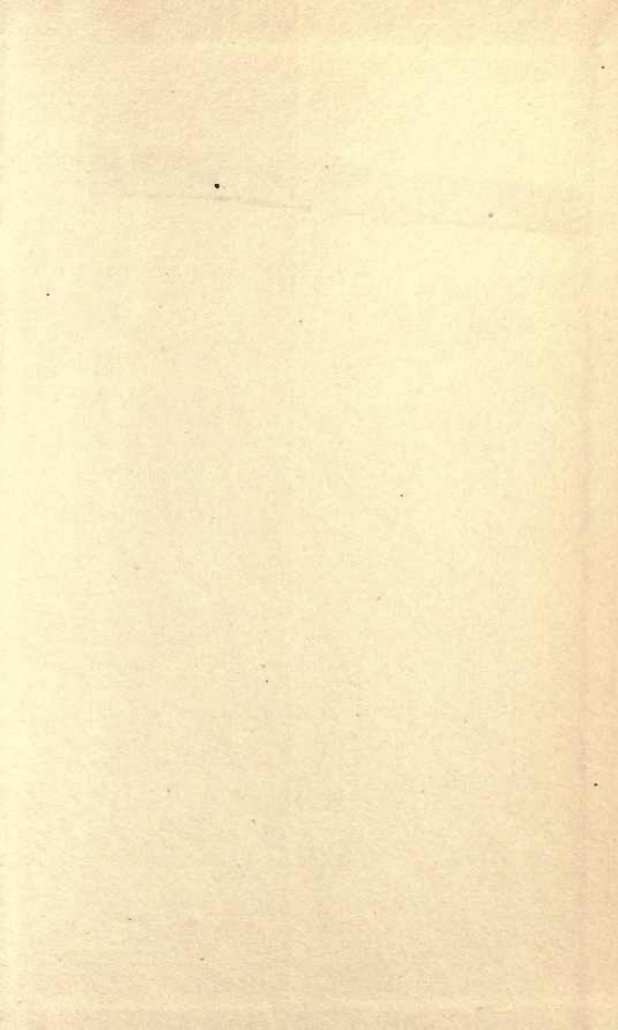
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