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THE O'BRIENS.

BY

W. A. LINDSAY, ESQ.,

M.A. TRIN. COLL., CAMBR.

AND OF THE MIDDLE TEMPLE, BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

*Reprinted from the St. James's Magazine and United Empire Review
for January, 1876.*

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LONDON: HAZELL, WATSON, AND VINEY, 1876.

1876

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PRINTED BY HAZELL, WATSON, AND VINEY.

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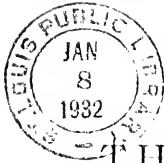
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THE O'BRIENS.

THE illustrious race of O'Brien has left an indelible mark on the history of Ireland. For the proper comprehension of that history one most necessary qualification is the study of the Celtic races. Long before the English invasion of Ireland there existed a people highly civilized, a system of law, a mode of succession, and a patriarchal government both of Church and State in that country, which, whether for good or evil, has left an influence on the Irish that no time or policy is at all likely to eradicate. Yet many people who are ignorant of the Brehon code, of the law of tanistry in succession to land, and of all the triumphs and sorrows of the Celtic race, think themselves acquainted for all necessary purposes with the history of Ireland. Such a misconception is unfortunate wherever it may exist, but it becomes more than unfortunate when it animates the policy of rulers, only too liable to be hated in the country which is ruled.

It would far transcend the capacity of an article to give a sketch of Irish history from a Celtic point of view, but it may contribute to inspire some with the desire of such a study, if we offer a few remarks upon the great family we have named—a family which for centuries occupied a kingdom; which possesses a longer line of ancestry in the male line than (to the best of our belief) any other now included in the social life of Great Britain; and which fills perhaps the most prominent place amongst the Celtic clans of Ireland. For our authority we refer to the historical memoir of the O'Briens written by Mr. John O'Donoghue, barrister-at-law, and published in Dublin in the year 1860. This work is of great interest, condensing into one volume a history of no mean importance, and written with great apparent care and accuracy.

The ancestor of the O'Briens was Cormac Cas, second son of Olioll Olum by his wife Sabia, daughter to Con of the Hundred Battles, King of Ireland. Of Con it is curious to record that he divided Ireland

with Mogha Nuadhat, King of Munster, the father of Olioll Olum, after a long and indecisive struggle. This division resulted in the northern half of the kingdom being named Leathcuin, or Con's half, and in the southern being named Leath Mogha, or Mogha's half. In the language of the people, these descriptions subsist to the present day. Mogha, the male ancestor of the O'Briens, was of the Heberian, and Con, his father-in-law, of the Hemeronian descent from Milesius. Authentic history does not, however, witness to any long period antecedent to the date of this division, which occurred in the year of our Lord 166. It is material to notice the manner in which the dynasties which ruled over Ireland during these centuries became established. Olioll Olum settled the succession to the throne of Munster upon the descendants of three sons, who were alternately to furnish a king. This settlement led, as might reasonably be presumed, to much intrigue and many wars, but it continued to be regarded as sacred for several hundred years. The first successor to Olioll as King of Munster was his grandson, Fiacha Muilleathan, the contemporary of Cormac, monarch of Ireland. Fiacha was succeeded by Mogheorb, son of Cormac Cas, the second son of Olioll Olum, in accordance with the alternate rule of succession already mentioned. In the meantime Muireadhach Tireach established himself on the supreme throne after a struggle with his cousins, the three Collas. He reigned for thirty years, and was succeeded by his son Eochy Muighmheadhoin. This Eochy had two wives, of whom the second was Carinna, daughter of the King of Britain, and mother of Niall, of the Nine Hostages, in the descendants of which Prince the monarchy of Ireland rested for no less than six centuries.

Niall became Monarch of Ireland in A.D. 378, being elected thereto on the death of his uncle, Crinthan (who had been raised to the throne during the infancy of Eochy's children), while Brian, eldest half-brother to Niall, became King of Connaught, and ancestor of the O'Conors. He, Niall, had fourteen sons, ancestors of a great many Irish families, whose names it is not necessary here to mention; and after a reign of twenty-seven years was succeeded by his nephew Dathi, the last Pagan monarch of Ireland. Dathi was killed by lightning at the foot of the Alps, at a date fixed by the Four Masters at 428. Laeghaire, the eldest son of Niall, then mounted the throne; and it was in his reign that Palladius was sent—"ad scotos in Christum credentes"—by Pope Celestine. His mission was not very successful, but he was the forerunner of the great Irish apostle S. Patrick, who arrived in 432, and became the means of the conversion of the whole island to the Christian faith. The conversion of Laeghaire was followed by that of Aengus, King of Munster.

As this period must, therefore, be considered the most important in the ancient history of Ireland, we think it opportune to lay down the principles in which the monarchy and government of the country were founded. Mr. O'Donoghue has put this in our power by giving in his preface the translation of a most interesting passage in the work of O'Flaherty, author of the "Oxygia," from which we extract the following facts :—

In every order of dynasty, from the chief prince downwards, the rule belonged to a special family, descendants of the founder of the dominion in question. Any male descendant of such founder was capable of being elected for life by the people to the chief dignity, and was therefore styled Righdamna, or the material of a king. The ruler thus united in himself right of hereditary descent, and that derived from the election of the ruled. But the choice could not be arbitrary, it being confined to the uncle, brother, son, or other near relation of the last chief, according to the law that the selection should be made of one who was the eldest and worthiest of the blood of the defunct prince. On choosing the ruler, a successor was at the same time appointed, who was to assume the sovereignty in case of the prince's death. This person was styled the Tanist, from, it is said, the ring finger, which, being next in length and position to the middle finger, illustrated the rank of the Tanist relatively to the lord. There are, however, many other suggestions as to the primary meaning of the word. In the constitution there were three orders: 1. Kings; 2. Druids, and literary persons; 3. Handicraftsmen and plebeians, of which last class there were seven ranks, each possessing peculiar laws and privileges. After the introduction of the Christian religion there existed a supreme monarch and a primate, and in each province a subordinate king and an archbishop, while in each petty kingdom there was besides a ruler—under whom were *tawiseachs* or barons—a bishop and abbot, with the judge or brehon to administer the law and the ollavs in the other professions, who had over him a higher order in the province, the highest being styled ollavs of the entire kingdom.

From the establishment of the Catholic Church as the successor of the ancient Druids to the year 908, it is not material to our subject to dwell on Irish history. During these centuries the descendants of Niall kept possession of the supreme monarchy, and those of Olioll Olum continued to be kings of Munster. The children of Cormac Cas were not, however, allowed their fair share of the alternate succession established by their progenitor; and actuated by a sense of justice, Cormac MacCuillenan, bishop of Cashel, and King of Munster, named Lorcan, King of Thomond, as his successor on the provincial throne. His endeavour was not, however, immediately suc-

cessful. It was followed (after a severe struggle) by the treacherous murder of Mahon, grandson of Lorcan, at the instigation of Molloy Mac Bran, King of Desmond, who observed with great alarm the rising power of the Dalgeais, of which races the kings of Thomond were the chiefs. Molloy was assisted in his conspiracy by Donovan, King of Hy-Fidhginte, a territory now included in Limerick, and by Ivar, King of the Danes, in Limerick.

The result of his crime was to call to the head of his race Brian, brother of Mahon, whose historical designation is *Bóroimhe*, taken, according to some, from an earthen fort of which the remains are still visible in Killaloe. Within ten years of his brother's murder he defeated and slew two successive Danish kings, as well as the Donovan we have mentioned. In 978 he further annihilated the power of Molloy, whom he slew with his own hand, and thus achieved the crown of Munster. His genius and character being well understood by Maelseachlain, Monarch of Ireland, that prince, after defeating the Danes, who, being repeatedly reinforced by their countrymen, were a constant scourge to Ireland, twice invaded Thomond—these inroads being revenged by Brian with similar expeditions. At last the quarrel ended in an alliance against the Danes, their common enemy, whom the two princes routed at Glenmama. The name Wicklow was adopted for the district in commemoration of this victory, which further resulted in the taking of Dublin. The alliance, however, only lasted until its object was attained, and Brian now determined to grasp the supreme throne. Supported by a Danish contingent (which included cavalry), he waged a continual war, at first unsuccessfully, until the year 1002, when, having collected a large army from Leinster and Munster, he proceeded to Athlone, and was there acknowledged Supreme Monarch of Ireland—Maelseachlain subsiding into the kingship of Meath.

The revolution thus effected was another crisis in Irish history. By it a dynasty which had ruled for six centuries was displaced, and a descendant of Heber supplanted the elder race of Heremon, accomplishing at the commencement of the eleventh century the object for which Mogha Nuadhat had contended in the second.

From 1002 to 1004, Brian consolidated his power as King of Ireland, while the Danes prepared for a final effort to acquire ascendancy in the country. War was at last precipitated by various causes. From Torfœus' history of the Orkneys we learn that on the invitation of Sitric (a Dane), stepson of Brian—whose mother, Kormlod, had been put away for immorality of life—Sigurd, Earl of Orkney, invaded Ireland. His reward was to be the hand of Kormlod, and Brian's throne. The lady, however, offered her hand also to Brodar, a pirate

(who, together with his companion Upsacus, was reputed invincible), as a means of securing his support. This Brodar had been a professed Christian, and an ordained deacon, but had relapsed into idolatry, plunged into all sorts of wickedness, and is further said to have engaged in magic. Upsacus refused, however, to engage in the design, and on the contrary went over to the support of Brian, adopting the Christian faith.

Such was the prelude to the battle of Clontarf. There were Danes and Irish on both sides ; but it was without doubt the great and last struggle for ascendancy in Ireland by the two races. It was fought in 1014, and the Irish conquered. But so terrible was the fight that the losses of the Danes alone are computed at thousands. Brian himself was slain, as also his son Morrogh, his grandson Torlogh, and his nephew Conaing, while many Irish chiefs fell with them. The battle was continued by Maelseachlain, who succeeded Brian both in the command of the army and in the occupation of the throne, from which twelve years previously he had been deposed, and the victory attained was so complete that, as we have said, it settled finally the question of ascendancy in Ireland.

It is from Brian, the great hero of their race, that the O'Briens take their name. Although they did not retain the monarchy of Ireland, and failed to keep possession of Munster, his descendants became one of the greatest families of their country, producing not a few persons of celebrity, some mention of whom will follow.

After the death of Brian, a quarrel for the succession commenced among his sons, of whom Donogh, the younger, was the more able. But the Irish respect for seniority having prevailed, it is said that Donogh caused his brother to be murdered. Be this as it may, he established himself on the throne of Thomond, notwithstanding that he had been defeated in battle previously. In 1026, we find him king of the southern half of Ireland, and striving for the supreme monarchy, vacant by the death of Maelseachlain, a prize which only escaped him in consequence of the resistance of his own son-in-law Diarmid, afterwards King of Leinster. After several battles, the fortune of war declared itself finally against Donogh, who, abandoning the contest, departed to Rome, where he died in 1064, having left with the Pope the crown and regalia of Ireland. More than a century later this crown was given by Adrian IV. to Henry II., King of England, as a symbol of the sovereignty of Ireland.

Although Donogh left issue, the chieftainship now returned to the elder line ; and Torlogh, son of Teige, elder brother of Donogh, became King of Thomond.

This prince attempted, like his uncle, to regain the power of Brian Boroinhe, but he never succeeded in acquiring full possession of the supreme monarchy. This dignity was reserved for his son Mortogh, who was the last O'Brien who reigned over Ireland. He it was who granted Cashel to the Church, a grant such as no king ever made before, being "without any claim of layman or clergyman upon it, but the religion of Ireland in general." Thus the Royal Palace of so many kings, the place where the gospel was preached by S. Patrick, was devoted to the service of the Church for ever.

It was at this period that the power of the O'Briens began to decline. Mortogh died in 1119. His fame appears to have reached beyond the limits of his country, for it is related by Malmesbury that Henry I. of England availed himself of his advice. None of his descendants, however, occupied a similar position or dignity. It would be wearisome to attempt any chronicle of the many feuds with which the records of the race abound. Irish history is at this period made up of wars. The custom of making a "hosting" or invasion of some neighbouring province whenever a new chief succeeded, together with that of only recognising him as supreme who could obtain the greatest number of hostages from his compeers, led, as might be expected, to constant anarchy and civil war. It will suffice if we notice only such chiefs of the name as were contemporaneous with the great events which befell their country.

First of these then is Donaldmore, who succeeded to the chieftainship of O'Brien in 1168, and became afterwards King of Munster. It was during this period (1169) that the English first landed in Ireland under the Earl of Pembroke. They came as the forerunners of a new dynasty destined to overthrow the ancient race of Milesius.

Pembroke, commonly called Strongbow, married Eva, the daughter of Dermot, King of Leinster, and on his death claimed the whole of his lands, on the principle of the feudal law of succession. This claim he was the more able to enforce, since all the Irish princes were engaged in war with each other. The next event was the landing of King Henry II. to assume the sovereignty now conferred on him by the Pope.

Strongbow at once surrendered his castle of Waterford to Henry as his liege lord, and his example was speedily followed by the Macarthy, Prince of Desmond, who gave up the city of Cork and did homage to the king. The King of Thomond surrendered Limerick, doing homage and undertaking to pay tribute to his liege lord. Then followed a synod at Cashel, presided over by the Bishop of Lismore as papal legate, at which the regulation was passed that the Church of Ireland should conform to the Church of England, and accept the usages, rites,

and ceremonies of Salisbury. The king then proceeded to Dublin, instituted several nobles, gave the Earl of Pembroke chief authority as his representative, and departed to England in 1173. The most noteworthy submission which ensued was that of Roderick O'Connor, King of Connaught, who sent deputies to Windsor to make a special treaty, and do homage to the new sovereign, who sent him in return the peace and sovereignty of all Ireland.

In 1315 occurred the invasion of Ireland by Edward Bruce, who was sent by his brother to follow up the advantage gained at Bannockburn. Among the first to welcome the new invader was Donogh O'Brien, whose grandfather had been murdered by De Clare. The result of this step was that on the failure of the Scotch expedition his cousin Mortogh was acknowledged King of Thomond, to which dignity he had in any case an elder claim. In 1466 we find the reigning O'Brien not only at war with the English, but actually attempting the supremacy of his great ancestor; a circumstance which indicates that at this period there was a temporary decline of English prestige.

We have now to record the great change in the position of the race of O'Brien, which signalises the period of their passing into the new social system. In 1539 died Conor O'Brien, and there succeeded to the kingship of Thomond his brother Monogh, up to this time Tanist. The title King of Ireland was now first assumed by the English monarch, and an act of confirmation was passed by a Parliament held in Dublin in 1541; the previous year having witnessed the passing of another act by which Henry VIII. was declared supreme head on earth of the Church of Ireland—all appeals to Rome being taken away. An ancient statute was at the same time revived prohibiting marriages between the English and Irish. The Irish chiefs attempted to rebel, but failed to make any serious stand, while they found the formation even of a confederacy impossible. Further resistance to the king was therefore abandoned, and in 1542 Monogh O'Brien attended the Deputy at Limerick, and proffered terms of absolute submission to King Henry as supreme monarch. The King in reply suggested that O'Brien should apply for some suitable dignity, such as would render his presence at the counsels of his sovereign necessary. The result of this negotiation was the creation of the Earldom of Thomond. But as it happened that Monogh had succeeded as Tanist, and not as heir male, an arrangement was made that the Earldom of Thomond should be settled in remainder to Donogh, son of Monogh's elder brother, and that a barony of Inchiquin should be created to descend to the heir male of Monogh's body. This recognition of his nephew's rights on the part of the Tanist, and the action of the King in conforming

to the Irish law of succession, reflect great credit on all concerned. Monogh and Donogh then proceeded to England, and at the palace of Greenwich on 1st July, 1543, O'Brien was created Earl of Thomond by belting and investiture, his nephew being made Baron of Ibrickan. The MacWilliam was at the same time created Earl of Clanrickarde. Thus ended the kingship of Thomond, and from henceforth we treat of earls instead of kings. Seventeenth in descent from Brian Boroihme, monarch of all Ireland, representative of a royal race for many previous centuries, Monogh becomes the feudal vassal of a Norman dynasty, and accepts, on behalf of his race, an earldom for a tributary crown. Wise in his opportunity, he saved his family from obliteration, and gave his descendants and successors the opportunity of attaining a wider renown for their race.

Monogh, Earl of Thomond, died in 1551, and his nephew Donogh succeeded him. He procured a new creation, limiting the honour to his heirs, in accordance with the Norman system, and his lands were at the same time settled to devolve for the future in accordance with the English Common Law. The result of these proceedings was a rebellion on the part of those members of the family who suffered by the change in the law of succession; but in 1555 peace was restored by the action of the Deputy. There followed in 1558, on the 10th July, a remarkable ceremony in the cathedral of Limerick,—where, after divine service, Conor, 3rd Earl of Thomond, renounced for ever the name O'Brien, and some of the freeholders of Thomond at the same time promised to be faithful subjects of the Queen, and oppose any person who should presume thenceforward to take or use the name of O'Brien. Earl Conor reigned until 1580, during which period he was sometimes at war; but before the conclusion of his life he waited upon Queen Elizabeth, and obtained from her new charters of his lands, together with nearly all the church livings in Thomond, including the lands of the dissolved monastery of Clare.

It will be convenient now to state that from the time of Monogh, Earl of Thomond, the race of O'Brien is represented by four principal families: I. The Earls of Thomond, Barons of Ibrickan, descended from Donogh, 2nd Earl of Thomond; II. The Viscounts of Clare, of whom the first was the second son of Conor, 3rd Earl of Thomond; III. The Barons of Inchiquin, eldest heirs male of the first Earl's body,—subsequently Earls of Inchiquin, and Marquesses of Thomond; IV. The O'Briens of Lemeneagh and Dromoland, a family usually designated by the latter territory, and springing from Donogh, younger son of the first Earl. All these different houses produced men worthy of mention; but at the present moment the first three are in the male line extinct.

We will conclude our historical sketch by giving a short account of each of these families.

I. Of the eldest line we have mentioned Earls Donogh and Conor, the latter of whom died in 1580. To him succeeded Donogh, afterwards called the great Earl, whose attendance we find recorded at the Parliament of 1585, together with his cousin Lord Inchiquin. Sir John Perrot, President of Munster, succeeded this year in inducing these peers and their vassals to take out new grants of their lands in order to simplify their tenure. A commission was issued directed to Sir Robert Bingham, Governor of Connaught, the Earl of Thomond and others, to call the nobility, spiritual and temporal, before them in order to pave the way for a new "Indenture." This Indenture was entered into in the counties of Clare and Thomond by the Earl of Thomond, the Lord Inchiquin, and six different O'Briens; from which it follows that at that time there were, at least, eight houses of the name of sufficient standing to treat with the representative of the Crown. The Indenture completed the settlement of Thomond. By it every head and chief of a sept was deprived of title and tribute, as well as every lord of a *tvoiscach* or barony, with the one exception of Macnamara, lord of West Clancuilan, who did not sign the composition. Similar settlements were made in Galway, Roscommon, Mayo, and Sligo. It was now that the worst features of the English rule may be said to have begun. Previously the races had been rivals; but now that a union was to some extent effected, the stronger began to tyrannize over the weaker. We find that in 1586 the Governor of Connaught put many persons to death, including women and children. It is impossible of course to realise all the circumstances of the time—circumstances which may have made terrorism to be the only mode of self-defence; but neither is it possible to read of the barbarities committed in this and the following centuries without horror and disgust. The O'Briens, at any rate, loyally fulfilled their part of the contract with the English Crown. We find them under the leadership of Lord Thomond and Lord Inchiquin aiding in the suppression of a rising made in 1597 by O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone, with the result of having the earldom invaded by O'Neill in revenge. In 1599 the Earl of Thomond accompanied the Earl of Essex in his progress through the south of Ireland, and in 1601, as Governor of Clare, he held a session of gaol delivery at Ennis, when sixteen persons were put to death. In this year died MacBrien-Ara, an important member of the clan, high in favour with Queen Elizabeth, who bestowed on his second son, Mortogh, the bishopric of Killaloe. The Earl then took part in the siege of Kinsale, which had been occupied by the Spaniards, and on his return to Clare found it necessary to sup-

press a new outbreak among some of the rebellious vassals of his earldom. It would seem that the notion of superiority over the other septa of Thomond was not yet abandoned by this chief; and there is extant, under the date of 1591, a curious document, by which the O'Loughlins, of Burren, bound themselves to obey him as their chief, and not to alienate a sod of their ground without his consent. The original of this interesting deed is said to have remained with the MacClanchys, of Knockfin—hereditary judges or brehons of Thomond—until 1684. In 1603 the succession of King James I. rendered it necessary that all the oaths of allegiance to the English sovereign should be taken over again. The enemies of the new order of things of course took advantage of this necessity to raise scruples of conscience. Recusants became numerous, and even judges retired from the Bench rather than take the new oath of supremacy. No doubt impatience of the new system must have been intensified as the objects of the Reforming party in the Church became not only obvious, but likely to be attained; and as Puritan views began to influence English society, and that society to influence Irish life in consequence of the closer connection which the recent settlements had established, the claims of faith led the consciences of the Irish somewhat in the same direction as did the love of their ancient clan life.

If Ireland had been unanimous, the new sovereignty must have been destroyed. Fortunately for the cause of civilization that unanimity was impossible. Not only had some of the great chiefs—such as the O'Briens—recognised the true path of progress, and determined to lead their people in it; but (and perhaps this had a greater influence on the Irish) the sovereignty had been granted to England by the head of that Church whose faith they preferred to retain. Had there been any “legitimate” king of the ancient line, it might have been different. As it was, the choice lay between the feudal supremacy of a Norman king, whose claim was based on Papal authority, and the anarchy of perpetual civil war. The King was determined to summon a Parliament, which met in May, 1613. In order to secure a majority for the Government, forty new boroughs were created, and in the result the assembly consisted of 125 Protestants and 101 recusants—their names applying probably rather to the political creed of the parties than to the religious. As is well known, the result was a hopeless quarrel. The Earl of Thomond supported the Crown, and was created Lord President of Munster, with which province he succeeded in getting the county of Clare incorporated, instead of as heretofore with Connaught.

It was now that the miserable policy was adopted by England of dispossessing the Irish gentry of their lands, on various frivolous pretences,

in order to found English plantations. The proprietors having entered into the arrangements for altering the tenure of land in 1585, had surrendered their estates, but in ignorance of the new law omitted to enrol their surrenders and to take out letters patent. The omission was supplied by the King, and £3,000 was disbursed for the enrolment in Chancery; but this necessary formality, owing either to the negligence or the underhand dealing of the officials, never was completed.

Here was the origin of all subsequent evils. Persons who coveted estates, showed the titles to them to be defective, and that the lands had vested in the Crown. The King then readily agreed to schemes for plantations, thus committing an injustice to the old lords of the soil which produced the wars of the seventeenth century, as well as the agrarian bitterness of which some trace remains even to the present day.

At this time the Lord Deputy was the famous Wentworth, afterwards Earl of Strafford, and the planting of settlements was no mean part of this great ruler's policy. He atoned, however, for his injustice, of which perhaps he was scarcely conscious, by vast improvements in the finances, as well as by an energetic and successful attempt to destroy the pirates who continued to infest the coasts of Ireland. Such was the prelude to the drama which ended in the Parliamentary rebellion in England and the murder of the King. The principal mover in all these events on the part of the O'Briens was Lord Inchiquin, of whom we shall speak presently. We find Lord Thomond acquiescing in the Protectorate in 1658, and the eldest line seem to have had little further influence in politics. The last Earl died in 1741, when the chieftainship passed to the line of the Viscounts of Clare.

II. The first Viscount of Clare was brother of Donogh, fourth Earl of Thomond, and was created Viscount by King Charles in 1662, principally on account of the loyal exertions of his grandson. The letters patent bear testimony to the loyalty of these O'Briens, called of Carrigaholt; a loyalty which was again exemplified at the Revolution of 1688, when Daniel, third Viscount Clare, took up arms for King James II. His example was not followed by the other leaders of the clan, and it was certainly fortunate for the O'Briens as a race that no second restoration took place. In the proscribed list presented to King James in 1689, by Nagle the attorney-general, there are to be found the names of Thomond, Inchiquin, and of Conor O'Brien. As it was, the lands of Lord Clare were confiscated by the Prince of Orange, and bestowed on Joost van Keppel, ancestor to the present Lord Albemarle, who illustrated the sagacity and prudence of his nationality by selling them as soon as possible for the sum of £10,161 17s. 5d., the purchasers

being tenants holding of Lord Clare, named Francis Burton, Nicholas Westby, and James Macdonnell. Daniel, son of Lord Clare, now departed from Ireland, at the head of an Irish army consisting of 6000 men, and entered the service of the King of France. After the capitulation of Limerick, in 1691, twelve more Irish regiments followed their countrymen. Thus was formed the celebrated Irish Brigade, the romance and daring of whose history fires the imagination even of a nineteenth century student. In 1692 they defeated the Swedes at the attack of Dahlenhaven, being then known as the King of England's Guards. We find them constantly exhibiting prodigies of valour on the Rhine, in France, Germany, and Italy. In 1693 Daniel died of his wounds received at Pignerol, and Lieut.-Colonel Lee received the command. The next feat of the Brigade was the defence of Cremona in 1702, when, a number of German soldiers having been secretly introduced into the town by an aqueduct, the Irish regiments of Burke and Dillon defended the Po gate with such persistency that the enemy was forced to retreat: the magnificence of this exploit attracted the attention of all Europe, and gave rise to the statement in the English House of Commons that the Irish had done more harm to the allies than they could possibly have done at home if left in possession of their estates. Lord Clare, the fifth Viscount, commanded the Brigade at the first battle of Blenheim, when the imperialists were routed,—in great measure owing to the conduct of the Irish. The second, and more celebrated, action fought on the same field had a very different result; but even here the Irish valour was remarkable, for, when twenty-seven battalions and twelve squadrons of French dragoons surrendered themselves as prisoners of war, Lord Clare cut his way through a German corps, and led his three regiments by a masterly retreat to the Rhine. At Ramilies he fell mortally wounded; but in this action his troop took two English colours, which were hung up in the Irish Benedictine Convent at Ypres.

Charles, fifth Viscount, was succeeded in his title and command by his son, during whose minority the charge of the regiment was entrusted to Monogh O'Brien, of Carrigounnell, who died in Spain in the year 1720, just as Lord Clare had been initiated into the art of war by his uncle the Duke of Berwick. After the Peace of Utrecht, the young Viscount visited his friends in England. The Earl of Thomond was then in high favour with George I., who created him Viscount Tadcaster in England. By his chief and relative Lord Clare was presented to the King, and attempts were made to procure his peaceable succession to the earldom and lands (for his cousin being childless he was the next heir); but the condition being insisted upon of uniformity to the Anglican Church, which Lord Clare declined, these attempts failed.

Returning to France, he served in the campaign against Germany of 1733-35; and at its conclusion he was created a *mareschal-de-camp*. His cousin dying in 1741, he assumed the title, and was thenceforward known as the *Mareschal Comte de Thomond*. The crowning triumph of the Irish Brigade was obtained at the battle of Fontenoy, when victory lay almost within the grasp of the English, and was snatched from them by the charge of the Irish, who defeated the advancing column, and gave time to the French for recovery. Such is the account of Mr. Crowe in his *History of France*. Lord Clare married late in life Marie de Chiffreville, Marchioness of Chiffreville, a Norman heiress, by whom he had two sons and a daughter. It was in his presentation at court after this marriage that he made the following celebrated reply: "Mareschal," said the King, "some of your countrymen give me a great deal of trouble." "Sire," replied the Count, "your Majesty's enemies make the same complaint in every part of the world." At his death in 1761, the *Comte de Thomond* was succeeded by his son Charles, seventh Viscount Clare, and Earl of Thomond. He died issueless in 1774, the last heir male of the eldest line of O'Brien, the headship of which now passed to the descendants of the Tanist and his successors in the barony of Inchiquin. It remains but to record the extinction of his regiment, which occurred only when the monarchy it had served was doomed and dethroned. It received from the King of France, when obliged by the convention to part with his Irish, a banner bearing the proud testimonial—"1692-1792. *Semper et ubique fideles.*"

III. We have already recorded the origin of the Lords of Inchiquin, and the loyalty with which the baron of that name supported his sovereign in 1597. The grandson of this lord—Monogh—who succeeded to the barony in 1624, became the principal leader of the O'Briens during the parliamentary wars. He was appointed vice-president of Munster in 1640, and did good service to the Crown in suppressing a rebellion at Cork in 1642. In 1643 he proceeded to Oxford, to solicit the office of President of Munster, but being unsuccessful in his suit, and finding that he had been calumniated, he returned to Ireland alienated from his master. Having thrown in his cause with the parliamentary army, Inchiquin took a very prominent part in the Irish campaign. The journals of the time are full of his proceedings. It is, however, due to him to say that the enemies against whom he fought were as much at war with the King as with the Parliament. A serious attempt was made by the Roman Catholics, acting under the advice of John Baptist Rinuccini, Prince and Archbishop of Fermo in Italy, who had been accredited as *Nuncio extraordinary*, to shake off the yoke of England.

Thus the English party, whether Royal or Parliamentary, were,

however divided, fighting on the same side in Ireland. When, however, Lord Inchiquin saw to what an extent of rebellion the Parliament was leading him, he seems to have been touched with remorse, and in 1647, when his command had expired, being called upon by Lord Lisle, the Parliamentary Deputy, to surrender it, he declined to do so. The murder of the King, in 1649, having added its culminating crime to the rebellion, Inchiquin threw in his lot with those who at once proclaimed King Charles II. His resistance to the Parliament, in company with the Marquess of Ormond, was not, however, protracted, and seeing that further attempts would be unavailing, the two lords embarked at Galway for France. Immediately afterwards Ireton took Limerick, where he massacred in cold blood four-and-twenty persons, including two bishops.

Lord Inchiquin now rendered great service to France by inducing some thousands of his countrymen, who had entered the service of Spain, to abandon it. He was at the time created Earl by King Charles II., who nominated him and Ormond on the Privy Council. He was shortly afterwards taken prisoner by an Algerine corsair, but was soon liberated.

The Earl of Inchiquin undertook the charge of Munster as Vice-President in 1665, and died in 1674. He has been described as a relentless persecutor of Catholics, but it ought not to be forgotten that, during the period of his activity, resistance to the Roman Catholics meant resistance to foreign invasion. His Protestantism seems to have been rather of a political character, and we find that during his exile he wished his son to be brought up as a Roman Catholic.

His son William, second earl, supported the cause of the Prince of Orange at the Revolution. He was appointed Governor of Jamaica, which office he held till his death, in 1691. His son William succeeded him as third earl, and served in the Privy Council during the reigns of Anne and George I. The fourth earl became Governor of Clare on the death of the eighth Earl of Thomond, and at his death the succession devolved upon his nephew, Monogh, all his sons having died in his lifetime. Owing to this failure of heirs to Earl William, the estates of Thomond, which had been settled on his sons by the will of the eighth earl, passed under the same instrument to Percy Wyndham. These ancient lands were thus conveyed away from the race of O'Brien, and are possessed at the present day in accordance with this will by Lord Leconfield.

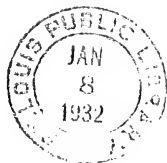
Monogh, fifth Earl of Inchiquin, was created in 1800 Marquess of Thomond, a title which subsisted until 1855, when it became extinct in the person of James, third Marquess, and Admiral in the Navy. This

nobleman was the last heir male of the Tanist earl's eldest son, and the barony of Inchiquin, carrying with it the headship of the clan, passed again to a collateral, the next heir being the head of the family of Dromoland.

IV. Donogh, younger son of the Tanist, was seated at Lemeneagh. His grandson, Donogh, was knighted in 1624 by King Charles I., and died in 1637. His successor, Conor, took up arms for the King in the civil war, and assisted Lord Inchiquin to maintain order in the county of Clare. He fell in a skirmish at Inchicronan, with the troops of Ludlow, who occupied for a long period the baronial house, from this time deserted by the family. His son was barely ten years old when he died. He was restored to his estates by Charles II., and created a baronet, and his descendants constantly served as members in Parliament for the county of Clare. His son, Sir Lucius, was married to Catherine Keightley, a cousin of the Queens Mary and Anne, but died in the lifetime of his father, so that his grandson, Edward, succeeded as second baronet. This gentleman was declared member of Parliament, 1727, in lieu of George Pardon, upon the ground that persons who, since 1697, had married Papist wives, and had failed to make them conform to the established religion within one year, had no right to vote at elections! Sir Edward was also elected on the accession of George III., his son Lucius being returned for the borough of Ennis. After a membership of thirty-eight years, Sir Edward died in 1765, and was succeeded by Sir Lucius O'Brien, as third baronet. No inconsiderable portion of Mr. O'Donoghue's able work is devoted to the career of Sir Lucius, who appears to have been the greatest authority in matters of commerce and industry possessed by the Irish House of Commons. He it was who proposed and carried the bill for establishing judges in their seats for life, like their English brethren; who was ordered by the House to prepare bills for reducing the rate of interest, relieving the distress in trade, and who drew attention to the scandals of the pension list. In 1773 Sir Lucius proceeded to London to watch the bills for extending to Ireland the trade privileges enjoyed by the colonies, and which were strenuously opposed by the merchants of the principal English towns, an opposition which was only ultimately overcome by a resolution on the part of the Irish not to use for the future any English manufactured goods. The boon was at last extorted, but the manner of the victory, together with the martial spirit which had now, through the raising of the volunteers, overspread the country, led to the further demand for a free and independent Parliament. Sir Lucius O'Brien delivered a speech upon the subject of the Portuguese trade, in which he recommended his countrymen to call on the King of Ireland to

assert the rights of the kingdom; and the passage made a marked impression on the House. It would be inappropriate to enter upon the declaration of Irish parliamentary independence in 1782. Such a subject requires to be examined in greater detail than is possible at the end of a family history. Suffice it to say that the Act of Union was brought about by no cause more powerful than the sense of inconvenience which two independent Parliaments within the same empire were found to produce. In the Act of Union itself Sir Lucius had no part, for he died in 1794, thus ending a life of the greatest value to his country. His son Edward did all in his power to resist the passing of the act, not only by opposing it at every stage, but by leaving a bed of sickness to record a final vote against it. He died in 1837, when his son Lucius became fifth baronet, and, on the death of the Marquess of Thomond, head of his ancient race. He presented a petition to the House of Lords that he might be declared entitled to the barony of Inchiquin. A resolution to that effect passed the Committee of Privileges on the 11th April, 1862. It would be obviously undesirable to make any comments upon the members of the family now living or recently dead. That one of the race should have allowed his patriotism to carry him to a point of inexcusable disloyalty must be a cause of deep regret, and to enter upon his career at the present time would be out of place.

The present peer is thirteenth baron of his name, and thirty-ninth chief of his race since Brian Boroihme, who occupies a middle place in the reliable pedigree of the clan. So illustrious both for antiquity and for their merits, this great family is indeed worthy of a memoir; but its history has a far more impressive claim, that of representing in some degree an aspect of every phase in Irish history. The O'Briens have, in short, offered many brilliant examples to Irishmen, and contributed many heroes to Ireland.



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