

Tennison,⁽⁴⁷⁾ who had been appointed to the Common Pleas on the resignation of French.

Marshall's health then completely broke down, and he was formally granted leave of absence for his recovery in England. He never again resumed his judicial duties, and in 1766, Edmund Malone, another brother of Anthony Malone's,⁽⁴⁸⁾ was appointed to his judgeship. He lived several years after his retirement, occupied in attending to his private affairs, and spending a portion of the time in England, and probably most of the remainder at his country house at Scapoint, near Dublin, which stood on a portion of the land now occupied by the grounds of Blackrock house, formerly the residence of Sir Harcourt Lees. There Marshall died on September 2nd, 1774. He directed that he should be buried in Waterford cathedral, where his mother and sister had been interred. His wife survived him three years, and was buried on November 27th, 1777, in accordance with her directions, in Wicklow churchyard, with her father and brother, under a tomb which Marshall had erected to them at her request.⁽⁴⁹⁾

Marshall left the principal portion of his property to his nephew, William Christmas, and to his eldest niece, who had married Sir William Osborne, lately represented by Bernal Osborne, M.P., and now by the Duke of St. Albans, and her family. He also left a considerable legacy to his niece by marriage, Mary Katherine Wooley, who had been educated as his child. She was the elder daughter of Mrs. Marshall's brother, Captain Charles Wooley, who married a daughter of the Rev. Samuel Close, the ancestor of the Closes of Drumbanagher. To this niece Mrs. Marshall also left all her property, and on Miss Wooley's death, in 1796, it passed to her only sister, Barbara, who married Robert Gibbings, of Gibbing's Grove, county Cork, by whom she had an only child, Mary Wooley Gibbings, who married the first Viscount Combermere.

⁽⁴⁷⁾ Thomas Tennison was M.P. for Dunleer from 1728 until 1761. He was appointed prime sergeant in 1759, and a judge of the Common Pleas in 1761. He died at his seat in the county Louth, on April 1st, 1771.

⁽⁴⁸⁾ Edmund Malone was M.P. for Askeaton from 1753 to 1761 and for Granard from 1761 until appointed to the Common Pleas in December, 1766. He died April 22nd, 1774. He was father of Edmund Malone, the great Shakespearian critic and author, and of Richard, first Lord Sunderlin. See under Edmund Malone in *Dictionary of National Biography*.

⁽⁴⁹⁾ Derrick's *Letters from Liverpool, Chester, Cork, and Killarney* (1767), p. 77; Faulkner's *Dublin Journal*; Rooke's *Gleanings from the Past*, p. 44.

Parish of Cill-na-Martra; its Ancient Topography and Traditions.

With Notes on Bealach Leachta, in Macroom.

By CONOR MURPHY.



THE local place names of Cill-na-Martra have come down to us in an excellent state of preservation, which is appreciable from the fact that not a few of them are of pagan origin, and in their course down through countless centuries have suffered comparatively little by corruption and other destroying influences, except very few contractions and some slight defects in pronunciation. This must be attributed to the fact that the native language always continued in use, and consequently the Anglicised modern corruption of our topographical names never obtained any favour with a people who still preserved their venerable mother tongue.

We may not be in possession now of the original names given to most of these places, or perhaps to any of them, but certain it is, however, that if we take those names which have suffered by the latest changes in the Gaelic language into consideration, we shall find that with hardly an exception they will take us back several centuries, or beyond the reach of any documentary records now in existence.

In phonetically transferring some of them into the English language mistakes have been made, which circumstance has led to an endless controversy among historians, and the most eminent Gaelic scholars and topographers of the present century have thus been led astray. Failing to receive any assistance from certain competent gentlemen of the parish in reference to securing short accurate descriptions of our pagan monumental remains, of which there is an interesting variety, including almost every specimen to be met with in Ireland, I am emboldened to offer the following. My remarks, therefore, will be confined to the names of places, with an occasional reference to some old dun, gallán, or monument, which I have to describe from memory.

I was rather fortunate in securing a fragment of my father's manuscript, containing quotations with notes from the writings and poetry of some native scribes of the last century, that will throw much light on what was known to them concerning our topography and traditions. To other

venerable Cill-na-Martra and Macroon exiles, now in the United States, I am indebted for much valuable information, which was given with that tender love for home and country that is characteristic of our race.

Cill-na-*Ṃ*artra signifies "Church of the Relics" (*i.e.* remains of the dead); by some called "Church of the Afflicted." It was anciently called Cill *La*ctain—"Church of (St.) Lachtain," who was its founder in the sixth century. The tradition regarding how it received the name of "the Afflicted" is as follows:—That the old "Cill," after the death of its founder, and for centuries thereafter, continued to be a celebrated place of pilgrimage, where the afflicted of all kind came in hopes that, through the intercession of the departed saint, they would be relieved from their sufferings.

The right hand of *La*ctain, who in life was credited with being the medium through which many miraculous cures were wrought, was, together with other relics of his, preserved in this old church. Its fame as a healing place having reached abroad, it is said that at times so great used be the number of those afflicted people congregated at the old church and shrine that their support used be a burden to the district. Hence the name Cill-na-*Ṃ*artra—"Church of the Afflicted."

The word *Ṃ*artra, when used to denote relics, it is well to understand, *has reference only to remains* of the dead, *i.e.* the remains of a human body or any part thereof; in no other instance can it be used to signify relics. In the spoken language this sense is well understood—for instance, it is the first exclamation coming from an Irish-speaking person upon beholding a human skull, bones, or skeleton; and this expression seems to imply that the object is regarded as a symbol of death—a grim reminder to us of the destructible material of which our body is composed, showing the transformation wrought by death, from whence the word is derived. This technical shade of meaning is not given in Irish dictionaries. O'Donovan detected it in manuscript literature (see his *Supplement to O'Reilly's Irish Dictionary*, where he gives references under the word *Ṃ*artra.) There is no tradition or record connecting the church with martyrdom.

*Ṃ*artra is another word for human relics. In the spoken language now this word is understood as relating more to *the spirit* of the departed than to their *material remains*.

That Cill *La*ctain received the appellation of *Ṃ*artra arose from the fact that the relics or remains of its founder were preserved therein after being exhumed by the suffering or semi-fanatical pilgrims, and not, as tradition avers, from the afflicted community themselves. Its site is in Clohina, a townland situated almost in the centre of the parish. This is remarkable also as being in pre-Christian times a great Druidical

stronghold. St. *La*ctain erected this church about the middle of the sixth century, or contemporary with the time Cill *Ab*an was founded in the neighbouring parish of Ballyvourney. It stood within a few yards underneath *Be*alac *Fe*abrac, the ancient highway of Cill-na-Martra. According to tradition, the famous church builder, the celebrated Gobban Saoir, of whom there are so many legends still preserved in Muskerry, built both Abban and Lachtain's churches.

These two saints, as well as *Ṃ*artra, the abbess of the female monastery founded by Abban in Ballyvourney, were said to have been very intimate, and as neighbours used often pay friendly visits to one another. Innumerable are the legends yet associated with their names in the district. The many different places throughout this rugged country that were made sacred by the occurrence of some incident or another in connection with the early history of our primitive churches, and the patient, self-sacrificing simplicity that marked the daily lives of their founders, would take many chapters to relate.

There is no trace now left of the ruins of Cill *La*ctain, the place having been cleared for cultivation towards the end of the last century. It was built of very large, well-shaped stones, which may be seen now in the construction of the huge "dry" stone fence that lines the modern *Be*alac *Fe*abrac close by. Like most of the primitive ecclesiastical structures of Ireland, Cill Lachtain was of small or modest dimensions, of quadrangular shape, and in size about sixty feet long by eighteen wide, built east and west, with the altar in the east end and the entrance in the west. The outlines of its foundation can yet be traced, but it is brought out more distinct when the field is being tilled. The tradition in reference to its plunder and destruction by the Danes is verified in the *Annals of the Four Masters*. Under date A.D. 836, among a great many churches burned and plundered in that year by the foreigners they mention those of St. Lachtain—"Cealla *La*ctainne *Ṃ*artra, *Ṃ* Cill *F*innce do *Lo*rccao le *F*allab." It was restored again, and continued to flourish for a great many centuries, until its final collapse and abandonment in the sixteenth century.

There are yet remaining some interesting relics belonging to it, consisting of fonts, six in number as far as is now known. Why so many of them should be required in connection with the church seems to be a matter not easily explained. Some of them must have been used as baptismal fonts, and others as receptacles for holy water. They were made of hard basaltic stones, some of which are of considerable size. The stone is in its natural unhewn state, without any attempt being made to form it into an artistic design. Great care, however, seemed to have been exercised in selecting ones approaching as near as

possible to a proper or becoming shape. Three of these fonts may be considered as pre-Christian relics, and will be mentioned later on. The other three, which appear to be of Christian origin, differ from them in size, shape, etc., being made of larger stones, which stand considerably higher from the ground. On top they have a uniform level surface, and in the centre of each is formed a round basin-like well, somewhat like an ordinary font. They are ascribed to the handiwork of Lachtain, who is said to have been skilled in the stoneworker's art. Some of them were situated at his holy well close by. There is another well called after him at Ballyvouig, two miles further east.

By far the most attractive in this respect in the parish are two other wells attributed to him, that are situated in a range of hills over half a mile south from the site of the old church, in the townland of Clohina. The "holy wells," as they are called, are probably the most interesting objects of the kind to be found in Ireland, for we have yet to learn the existence of any others similar to them in the country. (I have to describe them from memory, but, being familiar with all the particulars, I may be considered accurate.) In the southern slope of the above range, and within a short distance of the road that leads from Macroom through this parish to Ballingeary, there is a small, unattractive little rock, of low size. On its north there is a bench-like ledge, raised three feet from the ground, which forms a table-like platform about four feet wide, and having an upright wall of rock to back it on the south. Upon this platform are situated two wells close together, on a line east and west, hollowed or bored down into the solid rock. They are most perfectly round in shape, of equal size, and similar in every respect, being about three feet deep by eighteen inches in diameter, with a dividing wall of four inches between them. They reach perpendicularly down until very near the bottom, where the walls all round curve in abruptly towards the centre, coming to a point somewhat like an egg-shell. From an artistic point of view they are simply marvels of perfection. So beautifully polished is their finish that not the least mark or impression of the tools with which they were made is discernible. A very singular thing in connection with them is that while they have no visible source of supply or outlet, yet they keep filled with water all the year round, even in the driest summer season, when the best of springs give out and become entirely exhausted. The water in them is dark in colour, resembling bog water; in one of them it appears to be a shade lighter in colour than in the other.

Another mysterious thing about them is that while their existence was always known to tradition in connection with St. Lachtain's retreat in these hills, yet their exact location became lost, and not until about

forty-six years ago were they discovered. Sceptics may be amused at the incident which led to their discovery, but the facts, nevertheless true, are that this came about in the year 1851, and through the agency of a vision that appeared several times to a woman from Kerry, who happened to be visiting in the neighbourhood. So accurately did she describe their location that my father, John Murphy, who was of an antiquarian turn of mind, went directly to the very place and found them. When discovered, the whole surface of the platform in which they are situated was covered with a sod several inches deep, and out of the wells were growing two large bunches of rushes. After the sod and rushes were cleared away it was found that both wells were filled with small round stones to within six or eight inches of the top. It has been a place of pilgrimage ever since, and of late years seems to be growing more popular.

The disappearance of LACHTAIN from Cill-na-Martra was ascribed to a miracle, owing to the efforts made by a certain English official to secure possession of it. This is said to have occurred in the reign of Henry VIII, and several years after the collapse of the old church.

Great political changes are said to have taken place in the parish about this period, and later on during the reign of Elizabeth, the particulars of which we have no means of finding out unless State or ecclesiastical records may furnish some information. How interesting the history of these feudal disturbances would be can be imagined when we know that they culminated in the breaking-up of the ancient " $\text{SHOET CUAIRE NA H-DRIOGANN}$," and probably their complete dispersion among the other tribes of Muskerry. Among the first changes inaugurated in the parish after this epoch was the opening of a new cemetery and the gradual abandonment of the splendid old ones, together with the closing up of the pilgrimage of CILL-NA-MARTRA, and perhaps the concealment of the two wells in the hills. All of this seems like a romance, but it is nevertheless true, and is spoken of to this day among the old people, who claim that it is the descendants of those strange settlers who entered the parish at the time its tribe lands were confiscated that *are now interred* in the new cemetery at DÚN DÁ RAÓDARIC .

It is highly probable that it was during this confused state of things the shrine of St. Lachtain passed out of the parish. It was probably taken care of by the O'Flynn's, who were the old chieftains, or may have passed into the hands of the McCarthys of Muskerry, by whom it was subsequently deposited at Donoughmore, no church having been then in existence in Cill-na-Martra; the parish having been divided up into three parts, remained for a long time united to the parishes of Ballyvourney, Clondrohid and Macroom, respectively. Donoughmore also

had a claim upon it, Λαχτάν being its patron saint, although he built no church there. This venerable Cill-na-Martra relic is now preserved in the Royal Irish Academy Museum, Dublin, from whence I received a very fine photograph of it.

O'Curry considered the Shrine of St. Lachtain's Hand one of the most beautiful specimens of ancient Irish art in existence. It has been described in p. 142, vol. ii., of this *Journal*:—"A beautiful gem of ancient Irish art called 'St. Lachteen's hand,' which was preserved in the church of Donoughmore, county Cork, till about the year 1740, when it passed into the hands of the Fountain family, of Norfolk, England. On the sale of the Fountain collection it was purchased by Government, at the instance of Lord Powerscourt, for £450, and was deposited in the Royal Irish Academy Museum, Dublin, where it now lies. This reliquary of St. Lachteen (who was a native of the county Cork) is described as in the form of a hand and forearm of yew, covered with bronze gilt, and inlaid with silver in interlaced patterns nielloed, and enriched with silver filagree. Small bosses of glass are set round its base, and inscriptions in Irish are engraved and nielloed in narrow slips along the arm. On the four narrow fillets down the arm are Irish inscriptions, of which the following are translations :—1st. 'A prayer for Maelseachnail O'Callachan, chief king of Ua (Echach Mumhain, county Cork), who made this reliquary.' 2nd. 'A prayer for Cormac, son of MacCarthy Righ-damhna (i.e. next heir) of Munster, who gave . . . ' 3rd. 'A prayer for Tachg (Thady), son of MacCarthy Righ.' 4th. 'A prayer for Darmaid, son of MacDenis Comharb, successor of L. (Lachteen).' As the O'Callachan mentioned in the first prayer died in the year 1121, this reliquary accordingly may be regarded as a specimen of Irish art in the early part of the 12th century." Smith, in his *Notes on Donoughmore*, called it "a brazen hand," and said that it was "removed by one of the bishops of Cloyne."

Λαχτάν, our traditions say, attained a venerable old age, so that he became entirely helpless to move in the latter end. I have not seen his *Life*, nor any translation thereof; these works are very scarce now. We hope the original, in Gaelic, will see the light some day in the columns of this *Journal*. In olden times his festival, which occurs on the nineteenth of March, used be observed with great solemnity, and with a pilgrimage to his old shrine and wells in the parish. Down to the last century this custom, though on the wane or forgotten, used be observed by strangers from outside the parish. The following notice of his death in the year A.D. 622, is given in the *Annals of the Four Masters*, p. 224, vol. i.:—"S. Lachtanaiii Macc Torben, Abb Achadh Ur, Decc 10 co Mairte."—"St. Lachtain, son of Torben, abbot of Achadh Ur, died on the 10th (*recte* 19th) of March."

O'Donovan continues—

"Colgan gives a short *Life* of this saint at 19 Martii. He was a native of Musraighe (Muskerry) in the present county of Cork, and erected a church at Bealach-Feabhradh, which is probably the place now called Ballaghary or Ballaghawry, a townland situated in the west of the parish of Kilbolane, barony of Orbhraighe, or Orery, and county of Cork."

Strange how O'Donovan should fail to identify the site of Lachtain's church, when a simple inquiry in Cloyne or Cork would furnish him the necessary information. It is to be regretted he made no effort in this direction, with a view to ascertain facts, or carry the inquiry further concerning the matter; for he not only missed an opportunity of locating the church site, but he also held in his hand, as he must have been well aware, a key to the identity of Bealach Leachta, the famous battle site. O'Donovan at this time was apparently suffering from what may be called a topographical illusion concerning this battle ground, which only required a better acquaintance with the topography of West Muskerry to dispel. Evidently influenced by this delusion, he takes Cill Λαχτάν and Bealach Feabhradh entirely out of Muskerry, and conjectures a situation for them as close to the alleged site of this battle in Limerick as the confines of the county Cork would permit; and let me say here, in plain and unmistakable language, that this was done notwithstanding every ancient authority and tradition to the contrary.

O'Donovan was led into committing this error by the frequent mention in ancient MS. and topographical tracts, etc., of a mountain in the county of Limerick called Sliabh Caoin. It is known as "Sliabh Caoin 211c Deap15 Dualar5." This, according to the etymology of the ancients, would be translated "Sliabh (of) Caín, son (of the) red locks"; and the legend of a Bealach Leachta, in the *Tripartite Life of St. Patrick*, said to be situated on top of one of these hills, supposed to be this Sliabh Caín (*qy*). He had no authority other than the above names to justify his assertions that the battle was fought in Limerick, for in no ancient MS. giving an account of the engagement is there any intimation to this effect; while on the other hand he had several unquestionably ancient as well as modern authorities stating that it was fought in Muskerry, and near Macroon, in the county Cork. In some of the old MS. it is referred to as Bealach Leachta, without details as to location. In the *Annals of the Four Masters*, p. 704, vol. ii., it is thus mentioned:—"Caé Bealach Leachta eisece Bhiuian, Macc Ciueieieis, i Mairteuio Tiseaia Deapmumai i Toréaui Mairteuieie aiio i ári feaii Mairteu." O'Donovan's note:—

"Some antiquaries, and particularly our author [*i.e.* the original compiler of the *Annals of Innisfallen*], say that this battle was fought at Bearnadhearg (red chair) on Sliabh Caoin."

"We find in another ancient MS. that it was at Conocramhra, south of Mallow, on the road to Cork, that Brian defeated the enemy; and in another ancient MS. we find that the battle of Bealach-Leachta was fought by the side of Magh Cromtha [Macroon] near Muisire-na-Mona-Moire [Mushera mountain].

"Dr. O'Brien in his *Law of Tanistry*, etc., published under Vallancey's name in the *Collectanea de Robus Hibernicis*, says that Leacht Mathghabhana was near Macroon.

"John Collins of Myross (Μυρσορ) in his MS. *Pedigree of the O'Donovan Family*, says that Bealach Leachta is situated in Muskerry, a mile east of Macroon, at the confluence of the Lee and the Sullane."

O'Donovan continues (p. 705):—

"The gap of Bearnadhearg is situated about one mile to the south of the parish church of Killin, on the borders of the counties of Cork and Limerick. It is a chasm lying between the hills of Kilcruaig and Red-Chair, the former on its east and the latter on its west side. The high road from Limerick to Cork passes through it."

O'Donovan here only follows Vallancey's opinion, agreeing with him who seems to have been the first to conjecture this location. I consider it necessary to quote further from John Collins, for he has given us the most detailed account of the battle in question.

Annals of the Four Masters, p. 706, O'Donovan says:—

"John Collins of Myross, in his *Pedigree of the O'Donovan Family*, gives the following notice of this defeat of Donovan and Auliffe by Brian Borumha, as if from an authority different from the *Annals of Innisfallen*; but the editor has not been able to find any original authority to corroborate his details:—

"O'Donovan (*recte* Donovan), who was well acquainted with the personal abilities and spirit of Brian, Mahon's brother, who now succeeded him as king of North Munster, took into his pay, besides his own troops, fifteen hundred heavily-armed Danes, commanded by Avlavius, a Danish soldier of great experience.

"Brian, in the spring of 976, entered Kerry (*recte* Ui Fedhgeinte), where at Crome (on the river Mague) he gave battle, in which O'Donovan (*recte* Donovan, the progenitor of the O'Donovans of Ui Fidhgeinte), Avlavius, and their party, were cut to pieces.

"After that battle was fought, Brian sent a herald to Maolmuaidh, then King of Munster, denouncing war and vengeance against him, and letting him know he would meet him at Bealach-Lachta, in Muskerry, near Macroon (at the confluence of the Lee and Sullane).

"Maolmuaidh, besides his provincial troops, had collected a great body of Danes, and by mutual consent the battle was fought at the time and place appointed. In this bloody engagement Morrough, son of Brian, by More, daughter to O'Hine, prince of Ibh-Feachra-Aidhne, in Connaught, made his first campaign, and though but thirteen [*que*. eighteen ?] years old, engaged Maolmuaidh hand to hand, and slew this murderer of his uncle. Brian hereby became King of Munster A.D. 978."

It will be noticed here that the phrase "at the confluence of the Lee and Sullane" is placed in parenthesis by O'Donovan, who still persisted, notwithstanding all the proof to the contrary, that the different places concerned were situated in Limerick, and he is yet faithfully followed in this opinion by several distinguished Gaelic scholars and authors.

The alleged Bealach Leachta in Limerick is said to be a ravine or chasm on top of a mountain. Let us see what a celebrated scribe early in the seventeenth century, who lived not very far from this place, says about the battle site. In a translation of that famous chronological poem of John O'Dugan, the *Kings of the Race of Eibhear*, by Michael Kearney, a native of Ballyloskye, county of Tipperary, in the year A.D. 1635. Bringing down the kingly line to this period of our history, O'Dugan proceeds, after relating the treacherous murder of Mahon through Maolmuaidh:—

"Dá bliadhain do Mhachnaimhach mairé,
Tair éir pill ar an b-riomh-flaite;
Tá a s-cait leacta a leact,
Uair a fearc an éirfeact."

Kearney translates this verse:—

"Proud Maolmuaidh reigned, that treachery down,
2 yeares without controule;
At Leachta-floord, in his heape of stones,
And buryalls place in molde."

"At Leachta-floord." Surely he must have in his mind a different place to a chasm or ravine situated on top of a mountain. The different places mentioned in connection with this battle could never be identified in Limerick. I refer to the writings of O'Donovan, O'Curry, Dr. Joyce, and Standish Hayes O'Grady, four of the most celebrated Gaelic scholars of this century. When these literary giants failed, as they hopelessly did, it must be considered that there were no grounds to work upon.

In justice to the great John O'Donovan, however, I will say that he acknowledged his mistake several years later. For fifteen years he laboured patiently in editing and translating the *Annals of the Four Masters*. All of this time was not exclusively given to the *Annals*, for these long and arduous years were occupied at intervals by him in editing and translating many other volumes of valuable Gaelic literature for the Archaeological, Celtic and Ossianic Societies, besides his magazine articles, during which time, and research in the vast field of Celtic study, his knowledge of our ancient topography and literature must have greatly increased.

In completing the *Annals* he added an Appendix, and in this he published a pedigree of the O'Donovan family. To insure unquestionable accuracy he secured some old MS. from Cork, in addition to those already mentioned as in the handwriting of John Collins, and the conclusion to which he arrived at after their perusal can best be told in his own words:—

"Brian Borumha did not satisfy his revenge by the slaughter of Donovan and his people of Ui Fegeinte, together with their allies, the Danes of Munster. In the year 978 he marched a second time against the rival race of Eoghan, or Eoghanachts, and came to an engagement with them at Bealach-Leachta in Muskerry, near Macroom, in the now county of Cork, where he vanquished them and their Danish allies with dreadful havoc." (Page 2,436, vol. vi., appendix xxv. Note on Cahal MacDonovan.)

These are O'Donovan's notes, and as far as I am aware they were the last he ever made on the subject. The topography of Muskerry might as well be a blank, or be situated in some unexplored region in Africa, or the North Pole, as far as modern historians are concerned; they are groping in the dark equally as much in reference to it. The first duty devolving upon me in order to make them acquainted with a very small section of it will be to lift the mask from off Sliabh Caoin, and expose its magnificent form to their gaze.

This is a remarkable Sliabh, for it is certainly the most valuable mountain in Ireland from an agricultural stand-point; I may go further and say without fear of exaggeration that probably it is the most fertile mountain of its elevation in the world, from whence it takes its name—Caoin (*i.e.* fertile, smooth-surfaced, gentle). Its modern name is "Sliabh Mhinn," having topographically the same meaning—fertile, smooth, gentle. It is a contracted genitive of Sliabh Mhinn that has been phonetically transferred, thus forming the corrupt modern Anglicised name "Sleven." Sliabh, "a mountain," is one of the very few masculine nouns that forms its genitive by a slender increase. In the spoken language the gen. sing. followed by an adj. is invariably contracted, thus the well-known street in Macroom which runs up part of this mountain is called in Irish Bóear an t-Slé' Mhinn, to prevent a hiatus that would occur if it were spoken correctly as Bóear an t-Sleibe Mhinn.

Dr. Joyce, mistaking this corrupt English form—Slé-veen, the "m" by aspiration changing its sound to "v" by the rule, "caol lé caol"—for the diminutive of Sliabh, calls it in his *Irish Names of Places* "a little hill," evidently not knowing that this same "little hill" comprised one of the largest townlands in the barony of Muskerry, every acre of which is on its inclined slopes. As a proof of the proverbial fertility of this famous Sliabh Caoin, I may mention a fact well worth speaking of, *viz.*, that for several seasons in succession a certain part of its southern slope has produced two crops of potatoes each year in the open air without any artificial warmth. That its ancient name was Sliabh Caoin we have sufficient proof from the Muskerry bards of the last two or three centuries, who seemed to have used both names indifferently.

After the confiscations under Elizabeth, followed by the sad disaster of Kinsale, which brought utter ruin and desolation upon this unhappy country, and upon the hopes and aspirations of those who remained

true to her cause, an old Ballyvourney poet (presumably one of the O'Herlihs), lamenting the extermination of that noble and ancient tribe, the brave O'Flynn's,⁽¹⁾ who ruled over the neighbouring parish of "Cuaé na n-Dromann Uj Flonn," says of them—

"Fion éairé raon flaité,
Fearta-coin Ná zélféad;
U t-uaé éireb Uj flonn,
Fearta n-éinn na féile.
Póin, d'fuit élanh jte:
Sjocé Coanrae, nó éadé ziaé,
'Na n-Dún-Briú zé-anrae;
Coin éinn n-éin a t-Slé' Caoin."

True order of free nobility,
Heroes that would not yield;
In the country of the O'Flynn tribe,
High-land of hospitality.

Progeny of the blood of Clann Ithe,
Race of Coanrae, of the mighty conflicts;
In their dun-palace of two prospects,
In range with the summit of Sliabh Caoin.

The famous poet, scholar, and antiquarian of Cill-na-Martra, Seáan (Máire) O'Connell, John (Master) O'Connell, who flourished about the beginning of the last century, author of "Uj t-é Seáan Uj Coanrae" (*Dirge of Ireland*) and a great many other historical poems of great value (*The alleged "Bishop" of "O'Brennan's Antiquities"*), mentions Sliabh Min; he calls it "Sliabh Caoin n-éinn féar zlar."⁽²⁾ Bealac leacra passed up diagonally through the north side of this mountain, entering at the north-east, where it crossed the Sullane at its junction with the Laine, and ascending its slope in a south-westerly direction until it reached the elevated pass of Beanna Deana, where it turned south towards the "Gaortha."

Smith, in his *History of Cork* (present edition), p. 159, vol. i., mentions the battle of Bealach-Leachta, giving almost the same details from an old chronicle, as he states, as were given by John Collins. He gave a fanciful derivation to the name, translating it "'the road of St. Leachta,' the patron of Donoughmore." Yet he noticed the real object from which it is derived, as follows:—

(1) The O'Flynn's lost their territory in the grant made by Elizabeth to "Cormac na n-Gall (Cormac of the English), *i.e.* Cormac MacTadhg MacCarthy, in the year 1578.

(2) "Richard" O'Connell was bishop of Kerry 1641-50.

"About three hundred yards north-west of New bridge (this bridge is east of the confluence of the Laine and the Sullane) in a meadow near the bank of the river, are three large stones set on end, edgewise to each other, the middle one being five feet broad, by seven in height, and two thick, but the others much smaller; about sixty yards south-east from the former is another stone set up, less than the middle one before mentioned, but larger than the side ones. These stones are said to be erected in memory of a celebrated battle fought here by Brien Borumha, king of Munster, and the O'Mahonys of Carbery."



PILLAR STONES AT CONFLUENCE OF SULLANE AND LANY RIVERS.

Photo by D. Franklin.

Béalac Léacta signifies "road of the monument," nominative leact, gen. leacta, the article being left out. It took its name from this leact (i.e. the three pillar stones mentioned by Smith), which is situated a short distance west of Ḃṡṡ Ṣṡṡṡṡṡṡ (ford of the conflict), where the old road crossed the Sullane. It was not erected to commemorate the defeat of Maolmuaidh and the Danes of Munster by Brian Borumha; first, because the name existed prior to that battle being fought, and secondly, the fact that the battle was fought on the south side of the Sullane, not a blow having been struck on the north side of that river, as we are told, and as the *Annals* bear out.

Maolmuaidh, compelled to act on the defensive, very naturally selected this strong position, thus placing the invading army at a tremendous disadvantage of fording the river and ascending its opposite bank. Our traditions say that the two armies were encamped in the vicinity of Macroom for three days preparing for the battle; that of Brian on the

north and Molloy on the south bank of the river. The battle lasted from early morning until the shadows of night were fast approaching, and witnessed the final struggle which closed one of the fiercest engagements ever fought in Muskerry. From the terrific fighting which took place at the river, the ford afterwards was known as Ḃṡṡ ṡṡṡṡṡṡṡṡ (ford of the conflict). Brian's superior army must have soon turned the tide of battle, for Molloy's forces kept retreating westwards along the base of the Sliabh Caoin, until a "cúil," or angle flat, that is situated south-west of the Castle of Macroom, was reached. Here they must have rallied or received some reinforcements, for the desperate fighting which ensued at this place is said to have lasted for the greater part of the day, until the ultimate "Ḃṡṡṡṡṡṡ," or breaking of the battle occurred, and the rout south-westward to where the complete annihilation of Maolmuaidh's forces at Beanna Dhearg, the celebrated "Red or Bloody Gap" of the *Annals*, took place, whose name has survived to the present day as a living witness to bear testimony against our "modern historians," and to corroborate the statement of the *Annals* and our no less reliable traditions.

This famous Beanna Dhearg lies west of Sliabh Caoin proper, in the same townland—Sleeven. It is situated on a gradual slope that extends west from it, and on to the great elevated ridge of Cill-na-Martra. The land about this place underwent great changes since it came into the possession of the White family (the lords of Bantry); all the small old fields have been broken up, and the place cleared to form those vast fields of the present day. That part of it now called Beanna Dhearg is situated in a hollow flat that lies immediately west of Carriganine, between it and "Corkery's hill," that is some distance to the west. This is on the road from the new cemetery of Cill-na-Martra to Macroom. The remains of an old road still exists here; it crossed the new road at Beanna Dhearg, and ran south down hill towards the Gaortha. Its track north through Lord Bantry's fifty-acre field is now obliterated, but its probable course led to the mouth of the great hollow or pass of Beanna Dhearg proper. This pass is situated at the eastern end of the "big field." It is a deep chasm that leads down hill in a north-easterly direction towards Macroom, from which place it is about a mile distant. It is connected at its lower end with Bealach Feabhradh, now the middle or wood road. Here, and for some distance in each side of the junction of these roads, the place is known as Leaca Dub (Black Slope), where Molloy is said to have been buried. Tradition claims that the name Leaca Dub is so called because the sun never shines on it. This probably is owing not only to the very abrupt declivity in a part of it, but also to the fact that it always has been densely covered with timber. Here is where the

old road, or continuation of Bealach Leachta, must have turned south, and not what is called the "Turret" road, which crossed over Sliabh Caoin hill further east. The latter trail was too steep for practical use. This pass is the "Red or Bloody Gap" where the slaughter of Maol-muaidh's army and the Danes of Munster took place, and the tradition concerning it is verified by the *Annals of Innisfallen*, which state distinctly that it was at *Bearna Dhearg*, on *Sliabh Caoin* the celebrated, conflict terminated.

Bealach Leachta was only a sectional name of this old road, its limits being strictly confined to the plain or valley of Macroon, and did not extend further than it in either direction. It did not give name to the townland of "Béilic," (pronounced Bail Lick) a well-preserved word signifying the modern name for a cave. The name being compounded in the genitive in this contracted form—*recte*, *Béil leise*. The ancient road of Cill-na-Martra, *Bealach Feabhra* (pron. Bealach Foura), *i.e.* "Road of [the hill] Brow," connected with Bealach Leachta at Sliabh Caoin, and it is highly probable that this name reached down the foot of the mountain to the very plain of Macroon. The road running south by *Bearna Dhearg* branched off from this road some distance east of Carriganine, and its old sectional name was "*Céim Corcra*" (purple or red height), from the purple clay and rock that is to be found there, reaching all the way down to the Gaortha.

The ancient roads, like our modern ones, had their sectional as well as general names, which were usually derived from the physical appearance of the ground through which they traversed, or some other remarkable object that would happen to be there. Thus it was with Bealach Leachta, its name came from the Leacht already mentioned. Bealach Feabhradh was the general name of the Cill-na-Martra road, from Sliabh Caoin in Macroon, until it reached *lománac* in the western part of Ballyvourney parish, the full length of its course; it had its sub-divisional names also. These ancient highways continued to be used until replaced by the present splendid road system. When their usefulness ceased their names also gradually vanished, except that occasionally they are mentioned in connection with ghost stories. It is a belief yet among certain people that the "*Sluaí Sjö*" continue still to use the old Bealachs in preference to the magnificently-constructed modern highways, for which they are supposed to have the most profound contempt. *Bearna Dhearg* was a well-known haunt in olden times for these airy beings, and so was "*Lochan Buidhe*," in Bealach Feabhradh, at Clohina.

NOTES BY THE EDITORS.

Lacht Mahon.—Two pillar stones in a field west of the junction of the Lany and Sullane rivers, near Macroon. A distance of twelve feet separates the stones, the

larger of which is in height 7 feet 6 inches, in breadth 3 feet 10 inches, and in thickness 2 feet 9 inches. The smaller stone, which is to the north-east of the larger, is 39 inches high, 44 inches broad, and 26 inches thick. The third stone mentioned by Smith has—if it ever existed—disappeared.

Clohina Gallane.—This remarkable rock is in the boundary of a field west of Mr. Murphy's house on the townland of Clohina, parish Kilnamartra. It is still called "The Fire Altar." Its dimensions are 20 feet in height, 18 feet in breadth, and 8 feet in thickness, and if detached it would probably weigh two hundred tons. The rock is flat on the top, and its breadth (18 feet) lies east and west. It appears to be in its original natural position, and to be part of the rock of the locality; its planes of stratification are vertical, as is the case with all the rock in its vicinity—a light-coloured variation of the old red sandstone.



THE FIRE ALTAR OF CLOHINA.

Photo by D. Franklin.

St. Lachteen's Wells.—These remarkable formations lie close together, cut into a natural rock, on the townland of Clohina. They are six inches apart, and a line joining their centres points east and west. In shape each is like half an egg, the western well being 27½ inches deep, and at the surface 29 inches from north to south, and 26½ inches in the transverse direction. The eastern well is of slightly different dimensions, being 30½ inches deep, and at the surface 27½ inches from north to south, and 24 inches in the transverse direction. They are not supplied with water from any spring, but at the date of our visit were full of dirty water, that in the western well being of a brownish colour, and that in the eastern greenish. The usual remains left by persons paying rounds at these wells lie scattered about the rock. These formations resemble the "pot-holes" made by an eddy in the rocky floor of a stream; but they could not have been thus formed, for the rock is in its natural position, and in a situation where it could not possibly have been under a stream within any moderate period of geological time.

Reenanaree Townland, parish Kilnamartra.—On this is an alignment of six stones, placed in an east and west line, at about four feet between each pair of stones. The stones are rather smaller than usual in such arrangements, the largest being the western, one which is 5½ feet high, 2 wide, and from 8 to 12 inches thick.

Reenanane Roman Catholic Chapel.—The old "font" lies beside the wall surrounding this edifice; it consists of a circular bowl-shaped depression, 5 inches deep and 11 inches diameter at top, cut out of the top surface of a stone which is about two feet high, and has an oval-shaped horizontal upper surface 44 inches in its longer axis, and 26 inches in its shorter. The edge of the bowl is about 12 inches from the broader end of the stone, while it is 21 inches from the other end, so that it is possible that this latter end may have formerly been inserted into the wall of some primitive church.

Gortanimill Stone Circle.—The circle is about 24 feet in diameter, marked out by low upright stones arranged round the circumference. These stones were placed about 5 feet apart, and vary in breadth from 22 to 40 inches, and in height from 2 to 3 feet. Eleven of the stones still remain standing. At the centre of the circle is a pair of white stones placed one over the other, which may be original.

(To be Continued.)

Permanent Influence of the Religious Orders.

BY REV. JAMES A. DWYER, O.P., VICE-PRESIDENT.



THE celebration of the Thirteenth Centenary of St. Colomba or Colombkill, solemnized in the month of June, this year, suggested the appropriateness of giving some idea of the influence exercised by the Religious Orders in Ireland, especially in the city of Cork. When we consider the achievements of that great saint, on whose life I shall briefly touch, the undying glory of his name is recalled to us in glowing colours, while we see it reflected in the monuments of Iona erected by him and his followers.

Colombkill was born at Gartan, county Donegal, December 7th, in the year 521. To show how great was his zeal, it is recorded of him that he founded from one to three hundred monasteries, amongst which were those of Doire-Chalgaigh, now the town of Derry and Durrow, in King's County. In his forty-second year he quarrelled with King Diarmaid, and a battle ensued at Cooldrewny, on the borders of Ulster and Connaught. In atonement for the death of those who fell victims to his impetuosity he voluntarily exiled himself from his native land, and, accompanied by twelve favourite disciples, immediately left for the island of Hy or Iona, which had been given him by Conall, king of the Albanian Scots, to whom he was related. On the eve of Pentecost, 563, he landed on the island, where he founded a monastery, and for thirty-four years laboured assiduously in spreading the Gospel. He died on the 9th June, 597, whilst kneeling at the altar at midnight, when his monks had assembled in choir to recite matins.⁽¹⁾

(1) Dr. Reeves,

The following prophecy made by him has been literally fulfilled:—"Small and mean though this place is, yet it shall be held in great and universal honour, not only by Scotie kings and people, but also by the rulers of foreign and barbarous nations and their subjects. The holy men also of other churches shall regard it with no common reverence."

Iona furnished bishops and missionaries to various parts of Britain, and its monks took a leading part in the conversion of the Saxons. Aidan, king of the Scots of Britain, was here anointed by St. Colomba, before assuming his royal authority. This was the first instance, not only in these countries but even in the whole of Europe, of such a ceremony at the inauguration of kingly power.⁽²⁾ It is said that there are buried in Iona forty-eight Scottish kings, four Irish kings, eight Norwegian princes, three royal infants, as well as many lords of the Isles, bishops, abbots, priors, and chieftains.⁽³⁾

St. Colomba was one of a long line of Irish saints, whose light and leading proceeded from those fruitful sources of Christian perfection—the monastic institutions—from which spread throughout the country monks who left all they prized most to preach the Gospel in foreign lands. To show how true is this assertion, there are at present venerated in Italy, as patron saints, thirteen of Erin's children; in Belgium, 30; in England, 44; in France, 45; and in Germany, 150. Of these thirty-six shed their blood for the faith, and amongst them St. Colman, patron of Austria, holds a distinguished place.⁽⁴⁾

We now come to what more nearly concerns us, the various places and religious institutions with their founders of the beautiful "citie" by the Lee. A copy of an interesting French map, here given, the different parts of which I shall describe, will go far towards enlightening us.⁽⁵⁾

ST. BARRIES.

St. Fin Barr,⁽⁶⁾ our patron saint, whose church is illustrated on the map, was born in Galway, in the district of Athenry, towards the end of the sixth century. He was educated by MacCorb, or Macrobius, a disciple of St. Gregory the Great, and travelled through Britain, France,

(1) Haverty.

(2) *Catholic Times*, June 11th, 1897.

(3) *Christian Brothers' Geography*, 1861, p. 66.

(4) This map was kindly lent by Rev. A. C. Robinson, M.A., from his recently published work on *St. Fin Barr's Cathedral, Cork*. It was found in the British Museum, Add. MSS., 11564, Art. 28, and is headed "Plan de Corcke Ville d'Irlande." The following description of the artist's work is given in the MSS.:—"A collection of 116 coloured plans of the fortifications of various places in England, France, the Netherlands, and Germany, drawn by a French artist about 1650; large folio."

(5) This name signifies "fair haired" or "white haired." Lachan was the name he received in baptism.