

and by the hand of persecution. *Brother Michael O'Clery* and his companions gathered the old annals around them, and then wrote the famous *Annals of the Four Masters*; *Father John Colgan* compiled the *Lives of the Irish Saints* at Louvain, in Belgium; *Rev. Dr. Geoffrey Keating* prepared his *History of Ireland* "among the caves and woods of Tipperary, to which the proscription of Protestant persecution had driven the Catholic priest;" and the learned *Duall MacFirbis*, though dogged by the penal laws, compiled the *Chronicum Scotorum*, the *Book of Pedigrees*, and other valuable works. MacFirbis was the last regularly educated Irish antiquary and historian. All those writers flourished between A.D. 1620 and 1670.

15. THE LOST BOOKS, AND THE REMAINS OF IRISH LITERATURE.—From the Danish invasion down to the dark days of the English penal laws—a period of over one thousand years—the destruction of Irish literature scarcely ever ceased. It is a wonder that it did not all perish. Prof. O'Curry in his excellent work on *The Manuscript Materials of Ancient Irish History* devotes the greater portion of the first lecture to the subject of the *lost books*. Three of these, whose names have come down to us, were works of great antiquity—*The Cuilmenn*, *The Psalter of Tara*, and *The Psalter of Cashel*.

The *Cuilmenn* was, it seems, the greatest literary treasure of ancient Ireland before the introduction of the Christian religion. The *Psalter of Tara* was a cyclopædia of Irish history prepared by King Cormac MacArt and his bards, brehons, and historians in the third century.

The *Psalter of Cashel* was from the pen of the

venerable *Cormac MacCullinan*, archbishop of Cashel, who died in the year 903. It seems to have been an historical and genealogical compilation of large size and great diversity.

But in spite of all destructive processes, the *remains* of Irish literature exhibit gigantic proportions. The quality, quantity, and variety astonish the scholars of our age. "Of Irish literature," says Matthew Arnold, "the stock, printed and manuscript, is truly vast." Professor O'Curry's estimate is noteworthy. He takes the *quarto page* of Dr. O'Donovan's *Annals of the Four Masters* as the standard of measurement. Let us hear an English writer on the result. "Eugene O'Curry says," continues Matthew Arnold, "that the great vellum* manuscript books belonging to Trinity College, Dublin, and to the Royal Irish Academy—books with fascinating titles—the *Book of the Dun Cow*, the *Book of Leinster*, the *Book of Ballymote*, the *Speckled Book*, the *Book of Lecain*, the *Yellow Book of Lecain*—have, among them, matter enough to fill 11,400 of these pages; the other vellum manuscripts in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, have matter enough to fill 8200 pages more; and the paper manuscripts of Trinity College and the Royal Irish Academy together would fill, he says, 30,000 pages more. The ancient laws of Ireland, the so-called Brehon laws, which a commission is now publishing, were not as yet completely transcribed when O'Curry wrote; but what had even then been transcribed was sufficient, he says, to fill nearly 8000 of Dr. O'Donovan's pages." †

* Vellum is a fine kind of parchment or skin rendered clear and white for writing.

† *The Study of Celtic Literature.*

It was stated on good authority, in 1875, that there were *one thousand volumes* of unpublished Irish manuscripts in the libraries of Trinity College and the Royal Irish Academy, Dublin.* In short, the number of Irish books containing the *Historic Tales* alone is "so great that the authentic list of them far surpasses in length what has been preserved of the old Greek and Latin writers."

The contents of those Irish manuscripts may be classified as follows: 1. Grammars and glossaries; 2. Annals, genealogies, and pedigrees; 3. Histories, in prose and verse; 4. Mythological and other imaginative tales; 5. Lyric poetry; 6. Satire; 7. Religious literature, including lives of the saints; 8. Law; 9. The sciences, including medicine; 10. Miscellaneous works, and translations from other languages.

Among existing Irish manuscripts are some of the most remarkable illuminated books in Europe, such as the *Book of Kells*, which is considered to be the work of St. Columbkille. These precious works are to be found chiefly in the old libraries of Italy, Switzerland, France, Belgium, and Germany.

LESSON I.

THE IRISH LANGUAGE.

1. What name is given by philologists of the present day to the primitive language of man?

The *Aryan language*. The word *Aryan* means *high, noble, illustrious*.

* The greater portion of the most valuable MS. Irish books in existence are to be found in four libraries—the Royal Irish Academy, Dublin; Trinity College, Dublin; the Bodleian Library, Oxford; and the British Museum, London. The collection in the Royal Irish Academy is the largest of all.

2. What relation does the Irish language bear to the Aryan?

It is a branch or dialect of the Aryan language. This is proved by comparative philology.*

3. Which is the most ancient living language in Europe?

The Irish language.

4. How is that known?

So far as history and philology can pronounce definitely on a question that carries us back to the very dawn of ages, we learn that the Celts were the *first* of the human family that entered Europe, and the Irish language is the oldest and purest dialect of the Celtic.†

5. Mention some of the chief characteristics of the Irish language.

The Irish is a language of rare grace, vigor, and soul-touching tenderness. It is expressive and beautiful. "If you plead for your life, plead in Irish," is a well-known saying. An old English writer confesses that it "abounds in grandeur of words, harmony of diction, and acuteness of expression."

6. What may be remarked of this ancient language in relation to poetry and music?

The Irish language is soft, lively, and melodious, and, according to an eminent musical authority, those qualities make it admirably suited "for poetical and musical compositions—far superior either to the Latin or any of the modern tongues."

* All the languages of Europe, India, and Persia have, like branches from a parent trunk, sprouted forth from that ancient tree of prehistoric speech—the Aryan. See the *Introduction* to Chapter I., Book I.

† The Celts seem to have been the *first* of the Aryans to arrive in Europe. The pressure of subsequent migrations, particularly of Teutonic tribes, has driven them towards the westernmost parts, and latterly from Ireland across the Atlantic.—*Max Müller*.

Moore says that the Celtic language was "the vehicle of the first knowledge that dawned upon Europe."

7. What may be said of the Irish language as a literary instrument?

This venerable language has been the polished medium of every form of literary composition from the simple tale to the exquisite productions of the poet and the sententious wisdom of the philosopher.

8. Of what practical value would a knowledge of the Irish language be to the scholar of our day?

It would greatly aid in the labor of acquiring other languages. The Irish is a *primitive tongue*, and, as such, *it is the key to a host of others*.*

9. What does Sir William Betham say of its value in the study of philology?

"The Irish language," says Sir William Betham, "is a mine of philological wealth—a guide that will explain most of the difficulties which have hitherto so much obscured the history of the ancient people and languages of Europe."

10. Which two members of the Aryan family most resemble each other?

The Irish and the Latin.†

11. Of the three ancient European languages, Irish, Latin, and Greek, which is the latest in Europe?

The Irish, as it was the *first* to arrive in Europe.‡

* I think it a great pity that Irish is not more studied as a key to Greek and Latin and the modern dialects of Latin. One who knows Irish well will readily master Latin, French, Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese.—*P. MacMahon, M.P.*

† I would give a thousand dollars to be able to hear confessions in the language of my fathers.—*Bishop Lynch, of Charleston, S. C.*

‡ Many Latin words retain only secondary meanings where the primary ones are manifest in the Celtic. Thus *monile*, a necklace, is from the Irish *muineal*.—*Newman in his Regal Rome.*

§ Irish is an older language than either the Latin or the Greek. "Comparative philology," says Canon Bourke, "furnishes abundant reasons to show that Irish is an older language than that in which Homer and Sappho or Virgil and Horace wove their wreaths of deathless song and story."

12. In point of age and value, what is the *rank* of the Irish language as a member of the Aryan family?

Irish is one of the oldest members of the Aryan family. It is the sister of Sanskrit, Latin, and Greek. In the field of philology its usefulness is admitted to be equal to that of Sanskrit.*

13. In what language are the most ancient existing manuscripts in Europe written?

The Irish. Sir William Betham truly says: "It is a singular fact, not generally known, that the most ancient European manuscripts now existing are in the Irish language, and that the most ancient Latin manuscripts in Europe were written by Irishmen."

LESSON II.

THE IRISH BARDS.

14. What branch of Irish literature has suffered most from tyranny and destruction?

Poetry. The Irish annals record the names of scores of famous bards not one of whose poems has come down to our day.†

15. Who was Ossian (ósh'an)?

Ossian was a famous warrior-poet, son of the celebrated Finn MacCumhaill,‡ and he is supposed to

* In order to obtain anything like a correct notion of philology, and to be skilled in any fair way in comparative grammar, the student must learn either Sanskrit or Irish. He must learn some primitive language—one of those two.—*Canon Bourke, M.R.I.A.*

† The monk Columbkille was a poet. After Ossian, he opens the series of 200 *Irish poets*, whose memories and names, in default of their works, have remained dear to Ireland.—*Montalembert.*

‡ Pronounced *Finn MacCool*. He was the son-in-law of King Cormac MacArt, and, according to the *Annals of the Four Masters*, died A.D. 288.

have flourished about A.D. 300. He is commonly credited with the authorship of the *Fenian Poems*; but unhappily his works have come down to us only in fragments.*

16. Who was the greatest poet of the early Christian period in Ireland?

The illustrious St. Columbkille, who was at once prince and poet, monk and missionary.

17. Mention some of his best known hymns and poems.

The *Altus*, in twenty-three six-lined stanzas, the *Noli Pater*, and the *In Te Christe*—three Latin hymns. The *Altus* is a magnificent composition. The *Song of Trust*, the *Praise of St. Bridget*, and other poems are written in the Irish language.†

18. Mention an Irish poet of the ninth century who became Bishop of Fiesole in Italy?

St. Donatus, who died about the year 863. One of this saint's poems contains the following beautiful stanza:

"Far westward lies an isle of ancient fame,
By nature blessed, and Scotia † is her name;
An island rich—exhaustless is her store
Of veiny silver and of golden ore.
Her fruitful soil forever teems with wealth.
With gems her waters, and her air with health.
Her verdant fields with milk and honey flow,
While woolly fleeces vie with virgin snow."

* The poems of Ossian—*Fin'gal* and *Temora*—which were published in 1762 and 1763 by James Macpherson, a Scotchman, as translations from Scottish Gaelic manuscripts as old as the fourth century, are now regarded as clever literary forgeries.

† It is stated that St. Columbkille left 300 copies of the *New Testament* for his various churches, written by his own hand.

A precious collection of ancient Irish hymns, by various authors, is the *Liber Hymnorum*. "This beautiful manuscript," says Rev. Dr. Todd, "which cannot be assigned to a later date than the ninth or tenth century, may safely be pronounced one of the most venerable monuments of Christian antiquity now remaining in Europe."

‡ The ancient name of Ireland.

19. Who was Brian Boru's chief Bard?

MacLaig, many of whose poems are still in existence.

20. Mention one of the most popular of MacLaig's poems?

Kinkora, a touching lament for the fallen condition of Brian's famous palace of that name, after the monarch's death. It stood on the banks of the Shannon.* The second stanza runs thus:

"Oh, where, Kinkora! are thy valorous lords?
Oh, where, thou Hospitable! are they gone?
Oh, where are the Dalcassians † of the golden swords?
And where are the warriors Brian led on?"

21. What battle, fought in 1260, was the cause of two rare Irish poems still in existence?

The battle of Downpatrick, fought between Brian O'Neill, King of Ulster, and the English. O'Neill and the flower of his army were slain.

22. What two Irish poets commemorate that event in verse?

MacNamee, Brian O'Neill's chief bard, and *MacWard*, the bard of Tirconnell. MacNamee principally deplores the death of O'Neill, whose virtues and heroism are praised at length.

23. What is the burden of MacWard's poem?

He chiefly laments the loss of his foster-brother, *Manus O'Kane*, head of the famous Ulster family of that name.

"If Brian was not in the slaughter,
There would be no loss like O'Kane." ‡

* Moore has a beautiful reference to Kinkora:

"Remember the glories of Brian the Brave,
Though the days of the hero are o'er;
Though lost to Mononia, and cold in the grave,
He returns to Kinkora no more!"

† The Dalcassians were Brian's body-guard.
‡ In recording the battle of Downpatrick, the *Annals of the Four Masters* say: "Fifteen chiefs of the family of O'Kane were slain on the field."

24. Who was John O'Duggan?

John O'Duggan, the chief bard of O'Kelly, was the author of a lengthy, valuable *Topographical and Historical Poem* which is still extant, and which has been translated into English. O'Duggan died A.D. 1372.

25. What remarkable Irish poem of the seventeenth century, written by the last bard of Tirconnell, Owen Roe Mac-Ward, do we still possess?

The *Lament for the Princes*—an elegy on the death of O'Neill and O'Donnell. It was addressed to O'Donnell's sister, Nuala. Lord Jeffrey, the British critic, was a great admirer of this famous poem, the first stanza of which, as translated by Mangan, opens thus :

“ O, woman of the piercing wail,
Who mournest o'er yon mound of clay
With sigh and groan,
Would God thou wert among the Gael!
Thou wouldst not then from day to day
Weep thus alone.”

26. Mention another eminent Irish bard of the seventeenth century.

*Rory Dall O'Kane.**

27. Who is commonly considered the last and greatest of the Irish bards?

Tirlogh O'Carolan, who was justly celebrated for his musical and poetical genius. As he felt the end approaching, he called for his harp and played his famous *Farewell to Music* in a strain of tenderness that drew tears from the listeners. He then breathed a prayer, and died in 1737.

* Rory Dall O'Kane, a celebrated minstrel and author of some of the most beautiful strains that ever sounded on the harp of Ireland, was a member of the ancient sept of the O'Kanes of Kienachta (in Derry). He is the same person who is so famous in Scotland under the name of Rory Dall Morrison, and who Sir Walter Scott, with his usual skill in employing facts for the illustration of his tales, introduces as the musical instructor of Annot Lyle in the *Legend of Montrose*.—Rev. J. S. Porter, *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, Vol. IV.

LESSON III.

IRISH ANNALS AND HISTORIES.

- (1) *The Wars of the Danes with the Irish.**
- (2) *The Annals of Tighernach* (nearly *teer'nah*).
- (3) *The Annals of Innisfallen.*
- (4) *The Annals of Ulster.**
- (5) *The Annals of Loch Cé* (key).*
- (6) *Keating's History of Ireland.**
- (7) *MacFirbis's Chronicle of the Irish.**
- (8) *MacFirbis's Book of Genealogies.**
- (9) *Lynch's Cambrensis Overthrown.**
- (10) *The Annals of the Four Masters.**

28. Give a brief description of the contents of the work entitled *The Wars of the Danes with the Irish*.

It is an ample account of the dreadful warfare that covers the long unhappy period of the Danish invasions, and the final and complete overthrow of the fierce Northmen. It was written in the twelfth century.

29. Who was Tighernach (*teer'nah*)?

Tighernach O'Breen, a gifted, holy, and learned abbot of the celebrated monastery of Clonmacnoise, was one of the very greatest of the Irish annalists. He died in the year 1088.

30. What period do the *Annals of Tighernach* cover?

The *Annals of Tighernach* sweep over the history of Ireland, and many other countries, from the earliest times down to the days of the venerable author, and form the most important historical composition of Ireland in the middle ages.

31. What is the *Annals of Innisfallen*?

The *Annals of Innisfallen* is a short general history of the world down to the introduction of the Christian religion into Ireland; and from that to the year

* There is an English translation.

1318, when it ends, it is a brief chronicle of Irish affairs.

32. Describe the work called the *Annals of Ulster*.

The *Annals of Ulster*, a great body of Irish national records, is so called because it was written in Ulster, and relates more to the affairs of Ulster than to that of any other portion of Ireland. It begins at A.D. 444, and is carried down to the sixteenth century. The author was Charles Maguire, a learned and saintly priest, who died in 1498.

33. Give a brief account of the *Annals of Loch Cé* (key).

The *Annals of Loch Cé* is a chronicle of Irish affairs from the battle of Clontarf, A.D. 1014 to A.D. 1590. The account of the battle of Clontarf contains many interesting details not to be found in any of the other Annals now in existence.

34. Who was Keating and when did he write his *History of Ireland*?

Dr. Geoffrey Keating was a learned and patriotic Irish priest who wrote a valuable *History of Ireland* among the hills of Tipperary, about the year 1625. It was written in the common Irish of the seventeenth century.

35. Give a brief description of the *Chronicle of the Irish** and the *Book of Genealogies* by MacFirbis.

The first is a chronicle of Irish affairs from the earliest times to A.D. 1135; and the second is a vast work, giving the pedigrees of all the Celtic Irish families.

36. What is the nature of the work entitled *Cambrensis Overthrown*, and who wrote it?

Cambrensis Overthrown is a triumphant refutation

* Called in the original the *Chronicum Scotorum*.

of the shameful works of Giraldus Cambrensis on Ireland. Cambrensis, the foul, malicious libeller of the Irish, was a British ecclesiastic who wrote shortly after the English invasion. The author of *Cambrensis Overthrown** was John Lynch, a learned and patriotic Irish bishop of the seventeenth century.

37. Which is the greatest and most comprehensive of all the Irish annals?

The *Annals of the Four Masters*, which begins at the earliest period and comes down year by year to A.D. 1616. The last record is the death of the illustrious Hugh O'Neill.

38. Why is this great work called the *Annals of the Four Masters*?

Because it was written by four eminent Irish historians, masters in antiquarian lore—Michael O'Clery, Conary O'Clery, Peregrine O'Clery, and Ferfeasa O'Mulconary. The chief of these was Michael O'Clery. The *Annals of the Four Masters* was finished in 1636.

39. Which is the best English translation of the *Annals of the Four Masters*?

That by Dr. John O'Donovan, in seven large quarto volumes, first published in 1851.†

* It was written in Latin, and the original title is *Cambrensis Eversus*.

† "We regard the *Annals of the Four Masters* as the largest collection of national, civil, military, and family history ever brought together in this or perhaps any other country."—Prof. O'Curry.

LESSON IV.

ANCIENT IRISH BIOGRAPHY.

- (1) *The Confession of St. Patrick.*
- (2) *St. Fiacc's Metrical Life of St. Patrick.*
- (3) *St. Evin's Tripartite Life of St. Patrick.*
- (4) *St. Adamnan's Life of St. Columbkille.*
- (5) *Colgan's Lives of the Irish Saints.*

40. What is the *Confession of St. Patrick*?

It may be described as a brief, humble autobiography of the great Apostle of Ireland, who died A.D. 465.

41. Who was St. Fiacc?

St. Fiacc, a famous bard, was converted by St. Patrick, and afterwards became first Bishop of Leinster. He was the father of Christian biography in Ireland.

42. What is his *Metrical Life of St. Patrick*?

It is a brief eulogistic sketch of the Apostle of Ireland in thirty-four four-lined rhyming stanzas. The twelfth stanza runs thus:

"Renowned was St. Patrick through life,
And of error he was a dire foe;
Hence forever his name shall be grand
Among the nations, as ages shall flow."*

43. What can you say of St. Evin's *Tripartite Life of St. Patrick*, and why was it so named?

The *Tripartite Life* is one of the most remarkable literary monuments of ancient Irish Church history. The book derives its name from the fact that it is divided into *three parts*. The author, St. Evin, wrote in the sixth century.

* As this was written 1400 years ago, the last two lines are truly prophetic.

44. Is the life of St. Columbkille by St. Adamnan a valuable work?

It is a work of great value—an inestimable literary relic of the ancient Irish Church. St. Adamnan was the cousin and ninth successor of St. Columbkille, as abbot of Iona. He died in 704.

45. Who was Father John Colgan?

He was a learned and patriotic Franciscan who has forever made Irish literature his debtor by his *Lives of the Irish Saints*. Colgan died in the year 1658.

LESSON V.

MISCELLANEOUS ANCIENT IRISH BOOKS.

- (1) *The Book of the Dun Cow*.*
- (2) *The Book of Leinster.*
- (3) *The Book of Armagh.*
- (4) *The Book of Ballymote.*
- (5) *The Speckled Book.*
- (6) *The Yellow Book of Lecain.*
- (7) *The Cattle Spoil of Cooley*.*

46. What is the *Book of the Dun Cow*?

The *Book of the Dun Cow* is the most ancient work existing in the Irish language, but only a splendid fragment of it remains. It is a precious collection of tales, poetry, and history. It was written by Maelmuri, who died in 1106.

47. Give a brief description of the contents of the *Book of Leinster*.

The *Book of Leinster* is a collection of historical tracts, tales, poems, genealogies, and pictures of social life in ancient Ireland. The author was Finn MacGorman, Bishop of Kildare, who died in the year 1160.

* There is an English translation.

48. What is the *Book of Armagh*?

The *Book of Armagh* is a religious work, containing the life of St. Patrick, the Confession of St. Patrick, the life of St. Martin of Tours, and a large portion of the New Testament. It was compiled by Ferdomnach in the year 807.

49. What is the *Book of Ballymote*?

The *Book of Ballymote* is a large historical, biographical, and genealogical compilation, and is the work of several hands. Portions of it were written about the year 1590.*

50. What is the *Speckled Book*?

According to Dr. Petrie, the *Speckled Book* is the oldest and best Irish manuscript relating to church history now preserved.†

* "The Book of Ballymote," says Professor Eugene O'Curry, "begins with an imperfect copy of the ancient *Leabhar Gabhála*, or Book of Invasions of Erin, differing in a few details from other copies of the same tract. This is followed by a series of ancient chronological, historical, and genealogical pieces in prose and verse. Then follow the pedigrees of Irish saints; the history and pedigrees of all the great families of the Milesian race, with the various minor tribes and families which have branched off from them in the succession of ages: so that there scarcely exists an O' or a Mac at the present day who may not find in this book the name of the particular remote ancestor whose name he bears as a surname, as well as the time at which he lived, what he was, and from what ancient line he was descended. These genealogies may appear unimportant to ordinary readers; but those who have essayed to illustrate any branch of the ancient history of this country, and who could have availed themselves of them, have found in them the most authentic, accurate, and important auxiliaries—in fact, a history which has remained so long unwritten as that of ancient Erin could never be satisfactorily compiled at all without them."—*Lectures on the Manuscript Materials of Ancient Irish History*.

† This venerable book is thus described by Professor O'Curry: "The volume is written in a most beautiful style of penmanship, on fine large folio vellum. The contents are all, with one exception of a religious character, and all, or nearly all, in the purest style of Gaelic. Many of the tracts are translations and narratives from the Latin. Among these are found a Scripture narrative from the creation to Solomon; the birth, life, passion, and resurrection of our Lord; and the lives and manner of death of several of the apostles; various versions of the finding of the Cross, etc.

51. What is the *Yellow Book of Lecain*?

The *Yellow Book of Lecain* is a great work, a portion of which has perished. In its original form it seems to have been a valuable collection of ancient historical pieces, civil and ecclesiastical, in prose and verse.

52. What is the *Cattle Spoil of Cooley*?*

The *Cattle Spoil of Cooley* is a famous historic tale which has been styled the great epic of Ireland. The wild events described in it took place about A.D. 39.†

There are besides these several pieces, ancient sermons or homilies for certain days and periods of the year—such as sermons for Lent, Palm-Sunday, Easter-Sunday, Pentecost, on the institution of the Holy Eucharist, and others of a similar kind. In these sermons the Scripture text is always given in Latin, and then freely and copiously expounded and commented on in pure Gaelic; and in the course of these expositions various commentators are often mentioned and quoted. Besides these sermons, there are many small tracts on moral subjects, illustrative of the divine teachings of our Lord. St. Sechnall's *Hymn*, in praise of his uncle St. Patrick, is also to be found there, as well as the celebrated *Attus* of St. Columbkille, etc., etc."—*Lectures*.

* The title in the original Irish is *Táin Bo Chualigme*.

† I am not acquainted with any tale in the whole range of our literature in which the student will find more of valuable details concerning general and local history—more of description of the manners and customs of the people—of the druidical and fairy influence supposed to be exercised in the affairs of men—of the laws of Irish chivalry and honor—of the standards of beauty, morality, valor, truth, and fidelity recognized by the people of old—of the regal power and dignity of the monarch and the provincial kings, as well as much concerning the division of the country into its local dependencies—lists of its chieftains and chieftainesses—many valuable topographical names, the names and kinds of articles of dress and ornament, of military weapons, of horses, chariots and trappings, of leechcraft and of medicinal plants and springs, as well as instances of, perhaps, every occurrence that could be supposed to happen in ancient Irish life.—O'Curry.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER I., BOOK III.

1. The Celts were the *first* inhabitants of Europe after the Deluge.
2. Ireland was inhabited at a very early period.
3. Thirteen centuries before Christ Ireland was invaded by the Milesians, who became the ruling race.
4. Scotia and Hibernia were the ancient names of Ireland.
5. The most famous of the Milesian monarchs, before the introduction of Christianity, was Cormac MacArt, who died A.D. 267.
6. In A.D. 432 St. Patrick began to preach in Ireland.
7. Ireland became the school of Europe during the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries, which constitute the golden age of Irish history.
8. The early Irish missionaries traversed Europe, and became the apostles of Scotland, Northern England, Eastern France, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, Norway, and Iceland.
9. Prince Alfred of Northumbria has left us in his poem a glowing picture of Ireland in the seventh century.
10. In A.D. 795 the Danes first appeared on the coasts of Ireland.
11. The celebrated Irish monarch, Brian Boru, utterly crushed the power of the Danes at the battle of Clontarf, A.D. 1014.
12. Irish surnames, which were always preceded by *O'* or *Mac*, originated in the tenth century.

13. We may date the Anglo-Norman invasion from the arrival of Henry II. in Ireland A.D. 1171.

14. Rory O'Conor was the last *ard-ri*, or supreme monarch, of Ireland.

15. The infamous statute of Kilkenny became a law A.D. 1367.

16. Ulster was the last stronghold of Irish independence, and O'Neill, O'Donnell, O'Kane, Maguire, and other princes of the North, battled for years against the armies of Elizabeth.

17. The shameful process of *confiscation*, which gradually outlawed the whole Irish nation and deprived the Irish people of the soil, went on with unspeakable barbarity from the so-called Reformation to the end of the present chapter, A.D. 1700, and later still.

18. From the earliest period of history down to A.D. 1700, Ireland had but one national language—the *Irish language*.

19. Irish literature was a perfect expression of the social state of the Irish people. Every king, prince, and chief had his own bard, brehon, and historian.

20. The golden age of Irish literature opens A.D. 432, and closes A.D. 800.

21. The ancient literature of Ireland suffered immensely from the Danish invasion and the Anglo-Norman invasion; but the crowning stroke of misfortune for it was the Protestant Reformation and the savage penal laws that followed.

22. The remains of Irish literature, however, that have escaped the destroying hand of Dane, Norman, and Saxon, and the action of time, are of truly gigan-

tic proportions. Over 60,000 quarto pages of ancient Irish manuscripts can be found in the libraries of the Royal Irish Academy and Trinity College, Dublin.

23. The Irish language is the most ancient in Europe.

24. *Ossian*, *St. Columbkille*, *St. Donatus*, *MacLaig*, *O'Duggan*, *MacWard*, *O'Kane*, and *O'Carolan* are a few of the names of Irish bards some of whose works have come down to us.

25. *Tighernach O'Brien*, abbot of Clonmacnoise, and *Brother Michael O'Clery*, *O.S.F.*, were the greatest of the Irish annalists.

26. *Duald MacFirbis* was the last regularly educated Irish antiquary and historian; and *Tirlogh O'Carolan* was the last of the Irish bards.

27. The *Annals of the Four Masters* is the greatest and most comprehensive of the Irish annals.

28. *St. Fiacc*, author of the *Metrical Life of St. Patrick*, was the father of Irish biography.

29. The most ancient work existing in the Irish language is the *Book of the Dun Cow*.

30. The *Táin Bo Chualgné* is the epic of ancient Ireland.

31. See *Short Dictionary* for the other Irish writers of this period most worthy of mention; namely, *John Scotus Erigena*, *James Ussher*, *Sir James Ware*, and *Roderick O'Flaherty*.*

* For a fuller account of ancient Irish literature and the Irish language, see Prof. O'Curry's *Lectures on the MS. Materials of Ancient Irish History*, Canon Bourke's *Argan Origin of the Gaelic Race and Language*, and Matthew Arnold's *Study of Celtic Literature*.

CHAPTER II.

all THE ENGLISH LITERATURE OF IRELAND.

A.D. 1700 to 1800.

THE AGE OF SWIFT, GOLDSMITH, AND BURKE.

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION.

1. GLIMPSES AT IRELAND IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.—The eighteenth century carries us through the reigns of Anne and the first three Georges, and during this mournful period Ireland was the most wretched and misgoverned nation on the round earth. It was in the reign of Queen Anne (1702–1714) that the penal laws against Catholics were brought to what Edmund Burke calls a “vicious perfection.”

2. THE PENAL LAWS.—Let us glance at some of these horrid enactments. Every Catholic in Ireland was disarmed, and forbidden the use of a gun. Every officeholder, from a clerk to an archbishop, and all professional men, were obliged to swear against the Catholic doctrine of the Holy Eucharist. A Catholic could not sit in Parliament, could not hold any office under the crown, could not enter the army or navy, could not vote at an election, could not be a lawyer, a physician, a sheriff, or even a gamekeeper. A Catholic was not permitted to own a horse of greater value than \$25; and if he owned a fine horse he was bound to sell it for that sum to any Protestant who was disposed to buy. Catholics were fined \$300