

He despised the English language, as well as those who used it, or, in imitation of the Duke of Ormond, adopted English manners and customs. To him English was "harsh and grating in sound"; it was "simpering and lisping"; "the babbling of foreigners"; "a messy hotch-potch of a language"; "treacherous and dry-lipped"; "with spluttering sound and a stuttering utterance." Holding a language in such utter contempt, it is unlikely that he ever became proficient in its use, although there are letters and notes of his in English in existence.

In the early part of his life O Bruadair frequently complains of his poverty and his inability to care for his family. During this period he seems to have wandered over all Munster, never staying long enough with one patron to establish himself. In middle life he settled in Co. Limerick, where he found rich and powerful supporters. Here he lived in comfort, writing pleasant panegyrics on the hospitality, the comeliness, etc., etc., of his patrons. But the siege of Limerick, the defeat of James II, and the outlawing of the Irish aristocracy did away with all that. He was left again penniless, lived in misery and eked out a meagre existence by copying and translating ancient manuscripts.

Even of O Bruadair's death, no details are known. The one record of it is in the manuscript of his friend, Owen O'Keeffe: — "David O Bruadair died in the month of January, 1698. Sad, indeed, is his death to me."

Besides the poetry written in praise of his great patrons, O Bruadair wrote many bitter satires, particularly during his poverty stricken years. The following poem, on a servant girl who refused him a drink, has been aptly translated by James Stephens: —

The lanky hank of a she in the inn over there  
 Nearly killed me for asking the loan of a glass of beer  
 May the devil grip the whey-faced slut by the hair,  
 And beat bad manners out of her skin for a year.  
 That parboiled ape, with the toughest jaw you will see  
 On virtue's path, and a voice that would rasp the dead,  
 Came roaring and raging the minute she looked at me,  
 And threw me out of the house on the back of my head!  
 If I asked her master he'd give me a cask a day;  
 But she, with the beer at hand, not a gill would arrange!  
 May she marry a ghost and bear him a kitten and may  
 The High King of Glory permit her to get the mange.

### SIR FREDERICK WILLIAM BURTON, R.H.A.

Sir Frederick William Burton, R.H.A., Water-colour Painter and Director of the National Gallery, was born at Corofin House, Co. Clare, on 8th April, 1816, the third son of Samuel Frederick Burton, also an Irish painter of distinction, by his wife, Hannah Mullet, of Dublin.

Burton was quick to follow his father's footsteps and, while still young, was sent to the Brocas brothers in Dublin to learn the rudiments of his art. Here he met George Petrie with whom he became very friendly and who influenced both his mind and his art for a time. Burton, however, with the help of his very keen colour sense, soon outstripped his friend and established his reputation as a painter of miniatures and water-colours. When only twenty-one he exhibited three portraits in the Royal Hibernian Academy and was elected an Associate; and, two years later, at the early age of twenty-three, he was elected a member.

He continued to paint and exhibit in Dublin until 1854, when he went to live and study on the Continent. During these early years his best known works, apart from his portraits, were: "The Arran Fisherman's Drowned Child," and "A Connaught Toilette." Among his early portraits were pencil sketches of Thomas Davis, George Elliot, Paddy Conneely, the Galway Piper, Sir Samuel Ferguson, Eugene O'Curry, Charlotte Grace O'Brien, Sir Lucius O'Brien, Smith O'Brien, etc. In fact, there were few Irish celebrities of the period he did not paint or draw. When the famous collection of Irish songs and music was first published by Davis and Gavan Duffy, Burton designed the beautiful frontispiece, a work which was kept secret for many years.

He stayed in Germany for five years, working on the old masters as well as making sketches and studies for future use, and, when he took up residence in London, he used many of these latter for his exhibits to the Royal Academy and the Old Water-colour Society. He was an extremely popular painter, and, in being compared to Holbein, Cranach, Hemling and Van Eyck, received greater praise from *The Times* than any painter during his lifetime. He was, however, a conscientious as well as a highly original and accomplished artist, and he earned the high price which his best works fetched. It is interesting to note that he always painted with the left hand, as his right one had been injured in a childhood accident, and that his eyesight was so weak that he was often compelled to stop work for long periods.

In 1847, Gladstone appointed him Director of the National Gallery in London, and he never painted another picture. In fact, "A Venetian Lady," on which he was working when he received news of the appointment, was never finished.

However, his loss to painting was more than made up for by his magnificent work in accumulating the present great collection of the National Gallery, a collection which makes it one of the greatest in the world. His indefatigable energy, his knowledge and judgement in art, and his courage in buying were the qualities which made him the greatest Director the Gallery has known. Leonarda da Vinci's "Madonna Among Rocks," was acquired by him at a cost of £9,00; Mantegna's "Samson

and Delilah," Hogarth's "Shrimp Girl," Van Dyck's "Charles I," as well as fine works by Botticelli, Pierro della Francesca, Crevelli, Poussin, etc., were also bought by him for the Gallery.

For his great work he was knighted in 1884 and received the honorary degree of LL.D. from Trinity College, Dublin. He retired in 1894 and lived quietly in Kensington until his death on the 16th March, 1900. He never married but adopted the orphan family of his brother, Rev. Robert Burton of Borris, who had died young.

In the National Gallery of Ireland there are three portraits of Burton, as well as many of his own works in water-colours, chalks and pencil.

## THOMAS CONDON

Thomas Condon, poet, was born in Kilfinane in October, 1836. In 1843 his family went to live at Blackpool, in the City of Cork, and Condon was sent to the Christian Brothers' School at Peacock Lane. He loved the monks here and his first small book of verse was dedicated to his teachers, Brothers Wiseman and Alphonsus O'Dwyer.

Condon was intended for the priesthood, but lack of money prevented his continuing his studies, and instead he began to teach Greek and Latin at the "Select Academy," kept in Robert Street, Cork, by Healy, the well-known linguist. Condon himself had also a great facility with languages, and, in addition to Irish, English and the Classics, he learned five Continental languages and was well read in European literature. In spite of this he remained a keen Irish scholar, and several of his manuscripts, written in a beautiful hand, are still in existence.

Condon was one of those geniuses who was good at anything he undertook. He took up drawing, became a clever draughtsman, and decided to adopt civil engineering as a profession. With this in view, he served his time in a local engineering office, worked for a while in Sir Thomas Deane's office in Dublin, and went to London in 1862.

Although Condon was a man of fine physique, he was constitutionally delicate. A cold, caught in the London fogs, affected his lungs, and he was compelled to give up his work and return to Cork. In the same year he obtained an appointment with a railroad engineer in Spain, but had to turn it down on account of his rapidly-failing health. He continued to live at Sunday's Well with his family, and was at work on a translation of Dante when he died on the 9th of April, 1864.

Condon's greatest work was Gilla Hugh, or the Patriot Monk, a tale of Cork in the 12th century. He also wrote many shorter poems and a beautiful rendering of St. Alphonsus Ligouri's hymns. One of the best known of his shorter poems