

To save the situation his father brought him back to Ireland and, resigning in his favour, had him made Member of Parliament for the Borough of Ennis. Instead of doing him harm, the Clarke scandal reacted in his favour, for he wriggled out by giving evidence and bringing to light facts which the Commission of Inquiry was anxious to obtain. As a reward he was appointed a Lord of the Irish Treasury and a Privy Councillor. Mrs. Clarke published "a letter to the Rt. Hon. William Fitzgerald," impugning his motives for giving evidence, but she was unable to prove what was probably a fact and was imprisoned for nine months for libel.

Continuing in favour, Fitzgerald was appointed a Lord of the English Treasury, first Lord of the Irish Treasury and Chancellor of the Irish Exchequer, which offices he held until their amalgamation with the English Treasury in 1816. In 1820 he was appointed Minister to Sweden, but, failing in his mission, he was recalled in 1823, in what looked suspiciously like disgrace. In 1826 he was back in favour and was made Paymaster-General to the Forces, and in 1828 President of the Board of Trade. This latter post necessitated a seat in Parliament but he was defeated in the great Clare Election of that year by Daniel O'Connell. A local ballad-writer of the day sang:—

"All hands aloft," the Sheriff cries, the least is for poor Vesey.  
O what a slap was on their pride, which set the landlords crazy.  
But now the day is just at hand, that we so long remember,  
When Vesey must jump and scratch his shins and consent  
to a Papist member.

And another ballad-monger wrote a song with the chorus:  
"Down, down, poor Vesey, lie down."

However, a seat was engineered for Fitzgerald in England and he held it until he retired from office in 1830. In 1831 he was again returned for Ennis and held the seat until his mother's death when he became an Irish Peer.

In 1835, Sir Robert Peel rewarded his faithful services to the Crown with an English Peerage, Lord Fitzgerald of Desmond and Clangibbon, and in 1831 he entered on his last public office, President of the Board of Control. He died in Belgrave Square, London, on 11th May, 1843, and was, at the time, a Trustee of the British Museum, President of the Institute of Irish Architects and a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries. His English title died with him for he had no children, but his Irish title, which he had inherited from his mother, passed to his youngest brother, Henry, the Dean of Kilmore.

## EDWARD FITZGIBBON

Edward Fitzgibbon, author and fisherman, the son of a Limerick land agent, was born in Limerick in 1803. When he was fourteen years old his father died and he was articled to a surgeon in London, but he quitted the profession in disgust

after two years. He then became a classical tutor in various parts of England, and seems to have pursued his favourite sport of fishing wherever he went.

In 1824 he went to Marseilles, where he studied French, became interested in politics, and seems to have been welcome in all the literary circles. However, after taking a small part in the 1830 Revolution, he thought it better to return to England, and obtained a post as reporter in the House of Commons.

For twenty-eight years he worked for the daily press, and during all this time wrote articles on angling for "Bell's Life of London." He was also a distinguished literary and dramatic critic, and his "Lucid Intervals of a Lunatic" attracted much attention at the time.

Fitzgibbon was a man of many talents but one great weakness. He was a periodic drunkard. In the intervals he was completely abstemious, and often promised his friends that he would one day write his experiences of intoxication. But he never did. He became a wreck for some years before his death, which took place on the 19th of November, 1857, and was buried in Highgate Cemetery, London. He was a Catholic, and left no family to mourn him.

Fitzgibbon "made a great impression upon all who knew him by the brilliancy of his gifts. He possessed unblemished integrity, a kind and liberal disposition, much fire and eloquence, and the power of attaching to him many friends." His published works are "Handbook on Angling," 1847, which reached a third edition in 1853; "A True Treatise on the Art of Fly-fishing," 1838; and "The Book of the Salmon," 1850. He also edited what has been described as the best of all practical editions of "Walton's Compleat Angler." Fitzgibbon usually wrote under the pen-name "Ephemera."

## JOHN FITZGIBBON, EARL OF CLARE

John Fitzgibbon, First Earl of Clare, Lord Chancellor of Ireland, was the second son of John Fitzgibbon, lawyer, of Ballysheedy, County Limerick. He was born at Donnybrook in 1749, achieved great distinctions both at school and at Trinity College, where Grattan was his closest rival, obtained a B.A. at Trinity in 1767, and an M.A. at Oxford in 1772.

He was called to the Irish Bar in 1772, earned £343 7s. during his first year, £8,973 6s. 3d. during the next few years when he became Attorney-General; and £36,939 3s. 11d. from 1783 to 1789, when he was appointed Lord Chancellor.

From 1778 to 1783 he represented Trinity College in the Irish Parliament, and although he was a moderate supporter of the national cause, he succeeded in keeping on good terms both with the Government and Grattan's party. He was described by Jonah Barrington: —