

of Limerick. He was called to the Bar in the Hilary Term of 1731. In the same year he published "Notes on Cases Determined at Westminster," which was much admired by Lord Hardwicke.

In 1777 he published an Essay on Commerce, maintaining that it should not be subject to an embargo; claiming that it was criminal to restrain the trade of a country by such methods, and pointing out the evil consequences which were bound to follow.

In 1768 he became a Member of Parliament for the Borough of Jamestown, and in 1773 he made his greatest speech there. It dealt with the impoverished state of the nation, the inability of the poor to pay the taxes laid on them, and he ended by voting against their increase and a request to the Government to retrench their abnormal expenditure.

Fitzgibbon was an able and industrious lawyer, and amassed a fortune by his practise. He built the mansion at Mount Shannon, which can still be seen, although without its roof, and this cost him close on £10,000. Here he died on 11th April, 1780, as Ferrar puts it, "deservedly regretted as an able lawyer, a humane landlord, an honest man who preferred the shade of retirement to the sunshine of the courts." Were it not for his offspring, Fitzgibbon might still be remembered with affection in his native city.

### **GERALD FITZGIBBON.**

Gerald Fitzgibbon, lawyer and author, the fourth son of a tenant farmer, was born at Glin on 1st January, 1793. He was educated in the district, probably by a hedge-schoolmaster and went to Dublin as a clerk in a mercantile house in 1817. He spent his spare time in studying the classics, and in 1817 he entered Trinity College,

obtained a B.A. in 1825, and an M.A. in 1832. During all this time he maintained himself by teaching.

In 1830 he was called to the Bar where his rise was rapid, and in 1841 he took silk. When defending Sir John Gray in the celebrated trial of 1844, he insulted the attorney-general who thereupon sent Fitzgibbon a challenge. Fitzgibbon declined it and when the attorney-general refused to take it back, Fitzgibbon drew the attention of the court to the occurrence. As a result the challenge was withdrawn and Fitzgibbon disclaimed any intention to impute unworthy conduct to the attorney-general.

In 1860 Fitzgibbon became Master-in-Chancery, and in 1868 he published the book "Ireland in 1868, the battle-field for English party strife; its grievances real and fictitious; remedies abortive or mischievous." The book had considerable literary merit but was very bigotted and anti-Irish.

In 1871 he published "Roman Catholic Priests and National Schools," an attack on the type of religious education then prevailing in the schools. In the same year he was accused in the House of Commons of being inhuman in the administration of certain landed property, and he defended himself in the pamphlet "Refutation of a libel on Gerald Fitzgibbon, Esq., Master-in-Chancery in Ireland." He also published "A Banded Ministry and the Upas Tree," in 1873.

Fitzgibbon resigned from the Chanceryship in 1878, and died in September, 1882. It is said that he refused to accept judicial office, as it would have involved him in party politics, which he abhorred. In 1835 he married Ellen Patterson, of Belfast, and had two sons, Gerald, Lord Justice Fitzgibbon, and Henry, Vice-President of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland.