A DECORATED BRONZE ZOOMORPHIC BROOCH. By Joseph Raftery.

The increased turf-production due to war conditions has occasioned a great increase in the number of finds or archaeological importance in this country and the object here described may be attributed to the new conditions, for it was recovered from a sod of turf delivered to a householder in Limerick who would otherwise normally not have used turf. The exact provenance of the brooch is uncertain, though it can be stated that the turf supplied to Limerick under the Emergency schemes comes from bogs in north Kerry, Clare and western Limerick. It is thus clear that the find-spot of the brooch is to be located in west Munster.

It was reported to the National Museum (Reg. No. 1945:10) by Mr. J. N. A. Wallace, to whom we are very grateful for his kind collaboration.

As the illustration shows, the object in question consists of a pin, 8.5 cm. long (the point is missing) and an open or penannular ring with an internal diameter of 5.6 cm. The pin is ribbed along its length, the strokes of the "ribbing" being chased transversely to the long axis. The head of the pin, which is cast as a closed tube, is barrel-shaped and is decorated by simple lines running around its outer circumference and which appear to have been made in the casting. The penannular portion of the brooch is also cast; the hoop is decorated by transverse sores in the manner of the pin. Each terminal consists of a triangular plate whose shape is that of a conventionalised animal's head, the two angular corners representing the ears, the central constriction the eyes and the bulbous junction with the hoop the snout. This is, perhaps, more clearly seen in a side view; the terminal plate is quite thin and the "eyes" and "snout" project clearly from the plane of the metal. The section between "snout" and "eyes" is decorated by a cast herring-bone or feather pattern, while the triangular area itself bears in each case a triskele round a central depression. Attached to each of the three arms of the triskele is a thin flowing line, and these lines are joined back to the triskele in a not unpleasing pattern. The area between the lines of the design is all sunken, having obviously been prepared for the reception of enamel—presumably red—in the champhévé manner. The ground of the sunken surfaces is roughly finished by crossing incisions to enable the molten glass to adhere more readily.

The conventionalised animal head of the terminal plate has given to brooches of this class their generally accepted title of "Penannular Brooches with Zoomorphic Terminals" or, briefly, "Zoomorphic Brooches." Ultimately the type goes back to a safety-pin brooch which in western Europe, certainly in Spain and probably also in Gaul, underwent certain transformations in the Early Iron Age. It was largely developed under Roman influence, but quite likely by native artificers in the different provinces and it is probably through Roman mediation that the ring-brooch reached this country. The Roman role may have been purely passive in that the prototype of the zoomorphic brooch appears to have been a native adaptation in Britain or Ireland of a Roman original. This earliest form is simply a ring-brooch of penannular form with rolled-back terminals which were constructed in the centre. This apparently suggested to the imagination of a Celtic metal-worker an animal's head and the development of this imaginary resemblance has produced the typical zoomorphic brooch.

It is a type which is confined to these islands and may be roughly grouped into three main classes—(I) those with plain terminals, (II) those with decorated terminals and monochrome enamels, and (III) those with decorated terminals and millefiori (1) insertions. (2) Dating evidence for the group as a whole is extremely scanty and for Ireland non-existent, but the three main groups here outlined may be said to be roughly in chronological sequence. The earliest are those of Group I, and evidence of association from the Scottish habitation site at Traprain Law in East Lothian suggests an initial date in the second half of the 2nd century A.D. for them. How long they remained in fashion is uncertain; but in view of the great similarity in detail and numerical smallness of the group (about 20 examples in all) it can hardly be thought to extend over anything more than a century at the outside. The plain brooch may thus be said to have ceased production not later than 250 or 300 A.D.

Decoration was quite likely added at an early stage: the terminals obviously call for such and some of the ornamented brooches, i.e., those of Group II, may date to the 3rd century A.D. They had probably fallen into disuse by about 300 when they were followed by decorated brooches of Group III, which lasted until about 700, when their place was taken by the better-known penannular brooches of Tara and related types.

The west Munster brooch under discussion belongs to Group II. The nature of the decoration provides the only clue to a closer dating than the general period—3rd to end of 5th century A.D.—assigned to the group. The design, though not unpleasant, is not indica-
tive of a high degree of metallurgical skill, but whether this is due to the bad craftsmanship of an individual workman or to general lack of experience in the execution of this particular design, or to degeneracy, it is not easy to assess. Having examined the piece, it appears more likely that the design is still in its experimental stage: it is far removed from the excellence and perfection of the triskele on the tinned bronze button from Garranes, Co. Cork, which has been dated by the excavator to c.500 A.D. (3). The triskele itself is not particularly well formed and there is a rather clumsy attempt to fill the vacant spaces of the triangular terminal by the addition of the streaming lines from the ends of the triskele. These are very reminiscent of somewhat similar appendages to the arms of the triskele on the bronze disc found on Lambay Island,(4) and which can be dated to about the middle of the 1st century A.D. I should hesitate to support such an early date for the Munster brooch but consider that it must stand quite early in the series of decorated zoomorphic brooches.

1. Small plaques of thin glass with patterns formed of many different colours, produced by melting together differently coloured glass rods and then cutting sectionally.

2. An elaborate typological series has been proposed by H. E. Kilbride-Jones in Proc. Roy. Ir. Acad. 43, C, 1937, 379 ff. See also Raftery in Journ. Roy. Soc. Ant. Ireland, 71, 1941, 56 ff. I have reduced the typology to its simplest form here.


4. E. T. Leeds, Celtic Ornament in the British Isles down to A.D. 700. Fig. 24: a.b, p. 59.

A BRONZE TRIANGULAR DAGGER FROM CO. LIMERICK.

About fifty years ago the small dagger here discussed was found in the stream known as the Collavaragh at a point on the boundary line between the townlands of Curragh Bridge and Tuogha, Co. Limerick. It is preserved in the Limerick Municipal Museum. Measuring 14.7 cm. (5.8 ins.) in total length, the tang accounts for 5.7 cm. (2.25 ins.). The implement may be described as a triangular, tanged knife-dagger; the tang is quite flat and very thin. The triangular blade has a slightly rounded point, and this appears to have been an original feature, rather than the result of wear or subsequent and frequent sharpening. The dagger is double-edged and the edges are sharp. The blade is absolutely flat: there is a slight thickening towards the middle, a mid-rib being produced. By hammering, two slightly raised ridges, running at an oblique angle from half-way down the mid-rib to the angular corners of the blade, have been formed. These, coupled with the midrib, are of interest for the appredication of this specimen of a widely distributed class.

Technically known as knife-daggers of West European type, they are, on the Continent, mainly associated with the Bell Beaker Culture of Early Bronze Age date (c.1800 B.C.). In Britain they accompany Beakers of B Type and it is possible that the people who reached England as invaders from the Continent and continued to place pottery vessels of Beaker shape with their crouched burials brought these daggers with them. On the other hand, it is conceivable, as Professor Childe points out (Prehistoric Communities of the British Isles, 93), that these daggers may have been imports from Ireland as a mould for one shows that such daggers were manufactured there. This statement must be taken in conjunction with the extreme likelihood that, for the Early Bronze, at any rate, Ireland was the chief source of supply for Britain’s metal weapons and tools. As against this, however, must be reckoned the facts that in Ireland itself only seven or eight daggers of this type have been found, that from Scotland only one stray specimen is reported (Childe, The Prehistory of Scotland, 87), and that elsewhere in Britain the triangular, tanged daggers are an undoubted integral part of the imported Beaker Culture. The assumption seems, therefore, justified that the daggers were brought to Britain by the Beaker invaders.

The idea of making such daggers may have been introduced to Ireland either through southern England (with which area Ireland had intimate contacts during the Beaker phase) or from the Iberian Peninsula, the chief centre of the Bell Beaker Culture, and also a region with which Ireland had even more intimate associations along the Atlantic Trade Route, and as evidenced by, amongst many other features, the megaliths of Passage Grave type.

The discovery of the mould shows that Ireland manufactured these daggers; the present specimen from Co. Limerick indicates a conscious attempt to improve on an imported idea. The original daggers were perfectly flat with no strengthening in their blades; this was, of course, not so important so long as they remained short (they were never more than six inches in length) and so long as no hard work was required of them. To be satisfactorily effective weapons or implements they had to be strengthened; this could be done in two ways, by widening considerably the base of the blade, or by adding a midrib. The former course
was not as satisfactory as the latter, as a wide-butted blade formed a poor stabbing implement. It could only be used satisfactorily for cutting: even for hunting it was not useful. On the Continent the midrib was added when the dagger increased in length, but at a later stage than that of the smaller West European dagger itself. It appears thus as if we are here dealing, in the Limerick specimen, with a form that was adopted but not considered to be functionally satisfactory by Irish artificers; they added a midrib when such was unknown elsewhere in western Europe; or, alternatively, the Limerick dagger belongs to a period when the type was obsolescent in Europe and when the midrib had already been developed there on the increase in size of the blade; and this is an assumption that is unwarranted in view, not only of Irish metallurgical excellence during the Early Bronze Age, but of Ireland's undoubted premier position as one of the producer peoples in Europe of that time.

JOSEPH RAPERTY.

THE ARMENIAN VISITS DUBLIN.

When the mid eighteenth century cast about for new forms to convey social comment, the fiction of the observant visitor from exotic lands became a fashionable and at least a hackneyed mould. At least, a colourful stranger could make criticism seem less stale, especially when the stranger alternated with odder autobiographers like Francis Coventry's small dog, *Pompey the Little*, or Limerick-born Charles Johnstone's wandering and reminiscing guinea-piece in his novel, *Chrysalid*. So we find Macaulay's New Zealander at the end of a queue of eighteenth century literary Orientalists and Antipodeans. There were hosts of these nottious foreigners, like Goldsmith's educated Chinaman, or Sam Johnson's *Rasselas*, Prince of Abyssinia. And Dublin produced a critical Armenian, Aza, whose *Letters to his Friends at Trebizond* appeared first in 1757.

It is strange that these *Letters from an Armenian* have been forgotten so completely, for they give a brilliantly witty picture of Anglo-Irish institutions at the beginning of the second half of the eighteenth century. They come, too, from the pen of a man who, in his reforming way, was something of another Swift. This was Edmond Sexton Pery, stormy petrel of the Irish Parliament from the middle of the century, and Speaker of the House of Commons from 1771 up to his retirement in 1785.

This small book is a neat piece of satire on Dublin circles in the seventeen fifties. It is written in the form of a series of communications from Aza the Armenian to his friends Abdullah, Ali Izra and Usbec, with an occasional turkish-delight love letter to the beautiful Zelima thrown in for the sake of atmosphere. Sexton Pery's cold piercing eyes probe a wide range of Anglo-Irish characteristics—and abuses. It is interesting to skim over his pages and see Dubliners as he sees them—Dubliners with their pride of family, their gift of barney and their amiable sociability and weaknesses—Dubliners who "are a people with whom thou mightest live happily, and they themselves would be happier if they followed the command our holy Prophet and abstained from Wine."

Here is a cinematograph display of Dublin life and politics. The Parliament, the Lords and the Commons, and their satellites are all dissected with sharp irony. It was in 1756, the year when he wrote the book, that he had opposed the usual vote of thanks to the Lord Lieutenant, the Duke of Devonshire. And so there is urgency of emotion behind his criticism of this office. "It is seldom known that a new Governor is not acceptable, and often made so by the Conduct of his predecessor." What scathing implications there are in that sentence! All sides of life are painted. For example, there is a Hogarthian picture of high life and gaming in this account of an evening at the Lord Mayor's.

"I observed that several of the Men and Women no sooner saluted the Mayoress, than they ran precipitately, as if some Daemon had hurried them, to tables which were disposed in several Parts of the Room, and began to shuffle and throw from Hand to Hand these painted Papers called Cards, of which thou hast read; the Men sometimes cursing, and the Women chaffing and fanning to cool their anger, while others seemed to smile because the first were enraged. 'You see,' my friend, 'what a polite people we are: there is not a Folly or a Vice in England which we do not import Duty-free.'"

Or again, here is Trinity College, with its Front Square in process of building. Sexton Pery paints a university still with medievals examinations; a university where young noblemen are excused by Birth and Fortune from studying moral knowledge; a university where degrees in law are still being awarded without qualifications. No, indeed, that Oxford at the time was any better. University reform all round was badly needed. The venom becomes more acid as the writer tells of the Grand Tour, which completes education with an importation of foreign vices, and as he writes of Bishop Steane's Printing House: "Since the house has been built, no Man of the Academy had employed the Press with any original Work, either of Genius or
of Industry; the younger Masters have too small income, and therefore are engaged in the sole pursuit of acquiring pupils to support them; the Elder have too great income, and Opulence is an Enemy to the exercise of Genius."

The satire continues, tilting at land tenures, where he castigates in round terms the landlord's system—"The Lord is a poor Tyrant and the Peasant a poor Slave." He tilts at government pensions (having just been fighting them in the Commons); at lotteries and clerical preferments; at neglect of mines and fisheries; at parliamentary hypocrisy and fashionable morality; even at the Dublin architectural renaissance, which he will only allow as "Owing more to a vein of extravagance lately encountered here, than to any general improvement of taste, few being Judges of Fitness or Beauty."

The book is thoroughly topical. In January, 1747, Pery had presented Parliament with the heads of a bill for the encouragement of tillage, and in March with another to prevent unlawful combinations to raise the price of coal in Dublin. Both these subjects are here in this book by "Robert Hellen." For instance, here is how the black market in coal is manipulated.

"When a number of Coal Ships arrive together, two or three only come at one Time to the Market, the rest stay at a distance from the Town, and thereby enhance the Price of this commodity as effectually as real Scarcity could do: so that what the People bought for thirteen Shillings, before this Device, they cannot now buy for less than seventeen, nor in Winter for less than twenty."

One may dislike this little Armenian book as a bad-tempered work. But there was every reason why it should have been scathing. Swift, too, had known, to the searing of his soul, that the corruptions and villainies of men can embitter and mortify. The book does honour to the conscience and courage of an honest and distinguished Parliamentarian.

R. WYSE JACKSON.

THE REVEREND JOHN THAYER AND GIDEON OUSELEY, Methodist Irish Missionary.

The following interesting pamphlets have recently been presented to the City Library by Mr. P. S. O'Hegarty:


John Thayer was born in Boston in 1755. He was converted to the Catholic Faith in Rome on 20th May, 1783, and became acquainted with Dr. Young, Bishop of Limerick, in London in 1811. He settled down in Limerick, after a life of missionary work in St. John's and St. Michael's Parishes, during which he became so popular that his followers were known as Thayerites, he died at Mr. James Ryan's house, 34 Patrick Street, and was buried in the tomb of Dr. McMahon, Bishop of Killaloe, in St. John's Churchyard. A fuller account of Thayer may be found in the third volume of Dr. Begley's "The Diocese of Limerick, 270-282.

Gideon Ouseley was the eldest son of John Ouseley of County Galway, and, like his brother Ralph, the antiquarian, had a long connection with the City of Limerick. He was born on 24th February, 1762. He was educated by Father Keane, a Catholic priest, and Dr. Robinson, a private tutor, and led a most dissolute youth, squandering both his own and his wife's fortunes in the process. A severe gun accident deprived him of the sight of his right eye, and it would seem that this accident, rather than his wife's reading to him from Young's "Night Thoughts," was the cause of his conversion. He became the most prominent Methodist missioner of his day, often preaching in Irish, and with great fire and humour. He wrote many tracts and pamphlets against Catholicism and died in Dublin on 13th May, 1839. His life was published by the Reverend W. Arthur in 1876, and there have also been several shorter memoirs of his ministerial life.

The present dispute arose from the following challenge of Mr. Thayer:—"Mr. Thayer, Catholic priest, will undertake to answer the objections any gentleman would wish to make
either publicly or privately, to the doctrine he preaches, and promises if any one can convince him he is in error, will as publicly and solemnly abjure it, and recant his present belief, as he has done the Protestant religion, in which he was educated. I stand forth in defence of the genuine Popery, as taught in the Councils, Cathechisms, and Schools of the Catholic Church; I not only offer this public disputation, but even conjure the Ministers, if they have real love for souls, to accept it, that the people's eyes who are kept in darkness may be opened to the light!!! I also desire them to come armed with all the arguments which Tillotson and other champions of Protestancy ever used in its behalf. JOHN THAYER, Catholic Missionary.

To which Ouseley replied:—"I Gideon Ouseley, M.Irish Missionary, and of the Established Church of Ireland, have met with, and read Mr. Thayer's Books, and his above truly surprising challenge, which if he will indeed support, I hesitate not to grant, that, of all the great men I have ever read on this subject, he is the greatest!!!—I have heretofore written to him, and do now again thus publicly ask him out of many questions I have to ask) a few relative to his present faith, to be found in the following sheets, to which, if he will give a calm, rational, and scriptural answer, I shall thankfully yield myself up his captive in the bonds of truth. But if he will not, or cannot answer, he has publicly bound himself to abjure and recant his present FAITH; which he must see, the public will surely expect, otherwise it must be concluded, he not only gives up his cause, as indefensible (on which he seemed so earnest and industrious to draw forth some attack, that he might shew how fully competent he was to defend it), but also forfeits his veracity; that his challenge was but vain boasting; and all his writings, an artful system of Ecclesiastical subtlety, to mislead the ignorant and unwary—to prevent all which unpleasant circumstances, I hope he will feel himself obliged to answer, if at all possible."

Needless to say, Mr. Thayer did not "publicly and solemnly abjure it, and recant his present belief," nor did Mr. Ouseley "thankfully yield himself up his captive in the bonds of truth."

R. HERBERT.