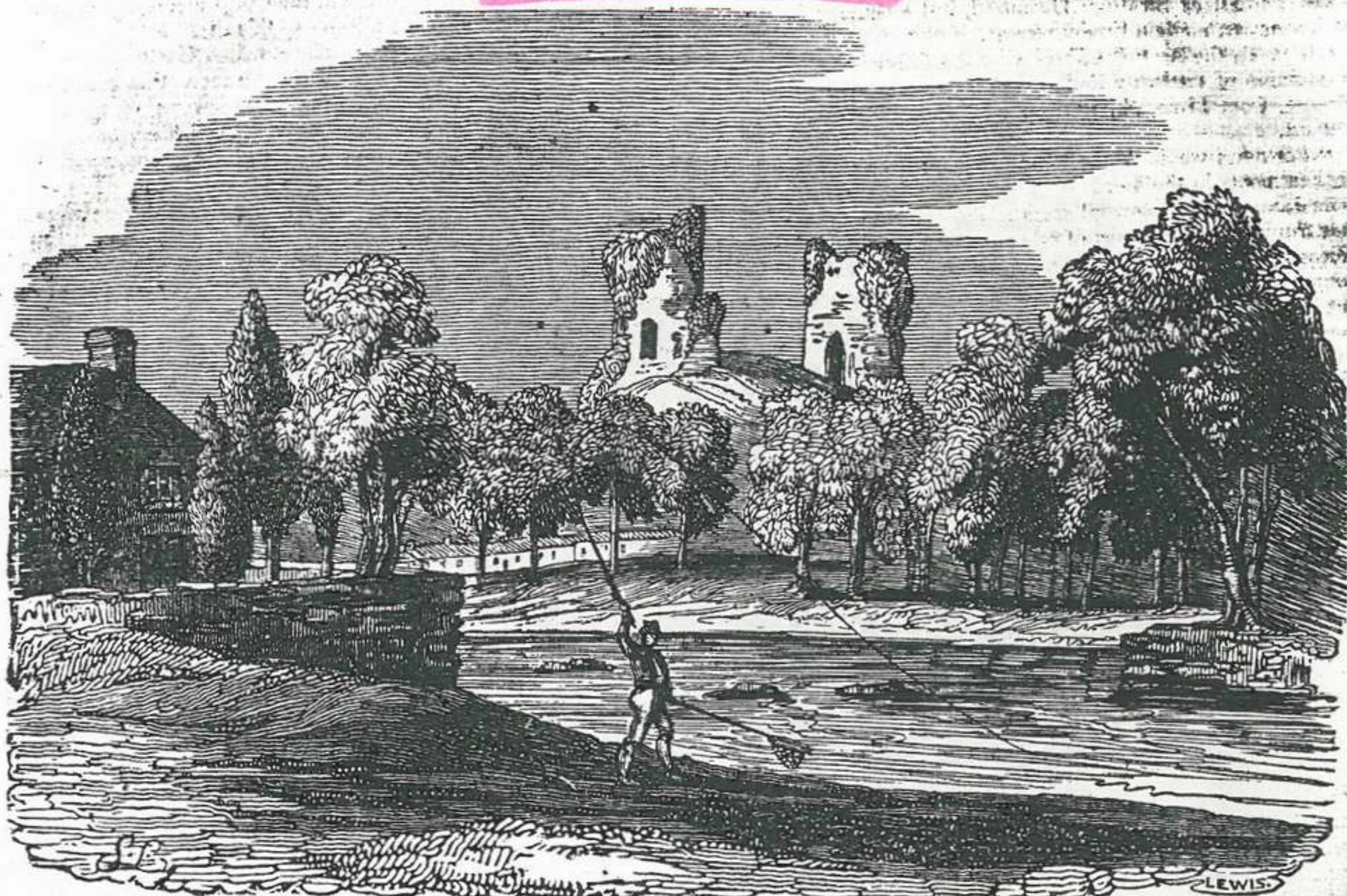


CASTLECONNEL CASTLE.



Drawn for the Irish Penny Magazine, by Samuel Lover, Esq. R. H. A. from a Sketch by G. H. Pitt, Esq

ILLUSTRATIONS OF IRISH TOPOGRAPHY.--No. XXIV.

[From Original MS. Collections.]

CASTLECONNEL.

CASTLECONNEL, a town of 112 houses, and 700 inhabitants, is situated in the barony of Clanwilliam, County Limerick.—It lies very beautifully on the eastern side of the river Shannon, and consists chiefly of lodging houses, which in the summer months are much frequented by the neighbouring gentry. The river is here of considerable width, rolling over a rocky bed, the opposite side of which is richly planted. At the N. E. the Keeper mountains finely terminate the prospect.

It derives its name from the CASTLE, whose now scanty ruins are above exhibited. Yet this once magnificent edifice was raised upon a commanding rock, and was withal so spacious, and rendered so easy of ascent to its garrison, that, according to tradition, a troop of horse has been drawn up in its hall.

There is an excellent spaw here, which Dr. Ruddy places in the same class with the German Spaw. The soil about it is of a calcareous nature, the water every where leaving an ochre-coloured matter, the sediment of which has been successfully applied to the cure of ulcers, and sores, while the waters are considered very efficacious in all scorbutic disorders, bilious complaints, obstructions in the liver, the jaundice and against worms. They are a strong chalybeate, but not purely such, having a mixture of absorbent earth and marine salt.—Milk mixed with the water of this spa keeps longer unsoured than it would without it.

The parish in which this town is situated is sometimes called Stradbally, but more usually by the name of Castleconnel.—It is a rectory and vicarage in the diocese of Killaloe, the patronage being in the bishop of that see. There is a church here

but no glebe-house. The parish contains nine townlands, being 1187 acres. The townland of Castleconnel comprises 339 of these. Part of the parish, including the town, is in the barony of Clanwilliam, the remainder in the County of the City of Limerick. The population of the former is 3236 persons, that of the latter portion 831 persons. The tithes are wholly payable to the incumbent, and have been compounded for at £244 12s. 3^d., while it is valued to the First Fruits at £2.

Near the town is the beautiful seat of Lord Massey, "whose demesne," says Wakefield, "or at least that part of it near the Shannon, seems most delightful. On the opposite side the river makes a bend, and winding round a rocky promontory with a continued shallow stream, enters a bed of rock, in which it proceeds till it disappears among the distant hills. On the west the view is highly picturesque, and in the east is seen the village of Castleconnel, with its white houses, while the remote mountains fading on the sight, produce a most pleasing effect. But in the upper part of the demesne the prospect is exceedingly different, for when the spectator has got so high as to be elevated above the tops of the trees, the beauty of the scenery seems lost amidst the immense extent of the naked and barren hills."

Previous to the English invasion the O'Briens, Kings of Munster, had a fortress on the rock of Castleconnel, and it is related that the grandson of Brien Boru was there slain by the Prince of Thomond.

1199, King John gave five knights' fees to William de Burgo, a baron of the family of Fitz-Andelm. In this grant was included Castleconnel, with a condition that he should erect a castle there, and when demanded restore it on receiving a fair equivalent.

1462, The sept of the O'Briens issuing from their native district of Thomond, crossed the Shannon near this town,

AND TALLOW CHANDLERS maker, Main-street
 Coffee John, Main-street
 Lomasny Margaret, Main-street

and returns at a quarter before two
 in the afternoon.
PICOTS DIRECTOR
 182

CASTLE-CONNELL

IN the county of Limerick, is a neat village on the banks of the river Shannon; it is situated two miles to the left of the mail road from Limerick to Dublin, at a distance of six miles from the former place, and 90 from the latter. It possesses a neat church, and contains the ruins of a very ancient castle, formerly one of the strong holds of the O'Briens. About two miles from this place is O'Brien's bridge, a very singular structure of 14 arches, no two of which are turned alike. Castle Connell is the residence of the Earl of Clare who possesses a spacious domain, in the neighbourhood; it is also the seat of Lord Massy.

POST OFFICE.—*Post Master*, Mr. George Patrick Madden. The mail from Dublin arrives at a quarter past ten in the morning, and is despatched every afternoon at a quarter past four. The Limerick mail arrives at a quarter past four in the afternoon, and leaves every morning at a quarter past ten.

NOBILITY, GENTRY AND CLERGY.

The Right Honbl. Lord Clare, Mount Shannon	Crotty The Rev. Michael, parish priest, Ballinacurty	Lloyd George, esq. Mount Catherine
The Right Honbl. Lord Massy, Hermitage	Crawley Wm. esq. White-hill	Lloyd John, esq. Woodbine-cottage
Abjohn Wm. esq. O'Brien's-bridge	Davis George, esq. O'Brien's-bridge	Massy The Honbl. George William, Bellmount
Arthur Thos. esq. World's end	Faulkner Hugh, esq. O'Brien's- Bridge	Massy Sir Hugh Dillon, Bart. Doonas
Bindon Saml. esq. Cottage	Faulkner Mrs. M. O'Brien's-Bridge	Massy Hugh Dillon, esq. Summer-hill
Boucher Major Daniel M. Ardloony	Fennessy Wm. esq. Castle Connell	M'Kay George, esq. Castle Connell
Boucher Wm. esq. Castle Connell	Gabbett Wm. esq. Carlisle	Norcott Hugh, esq. Arina-house
Bourke Major General, Thornfield	Gavin Captain Wm. Fisher's-lodge, O'Brien's-bridge	Powell Captain Ayre, World's-end
Bourke Captain John, O'Brien's- Bridge	Goff Colonel Hugh, Wood's-town	Rich Lieutenant J. S. Woodlands
Brown Captain John, Bridge-town	Green Francis, esq. Landskip	Rivers Wm. esq. New-garden
Clarke John, esq. Raheen	Henn Mrs. Bridget, Coolbane	Tuohy The Right Rev. Dr. Lodge
Clarke Nicholas, esq. Springfield	Kelly John C. esq. Stormount	Vincent George, esq. Arina
Crampton The Rev. Joshua, rector, Mulchair	Lane Wm. esq. Castle Connell	Waller Mrs. Maria, Castle Connell
	Ledwin Mrs. Eliza, Castle Connell	Westropp Thos. esq. Ross, O'Brien's- Bridge
		White Wm. esq. Shaanon-lodge

MERCHANTS, TRADESMEN, &c.

PROFESSIONAL GENTLEMEN.	BLEACHERS.	Browne Richd. tailor & publican
Ryan Joseph, attorney, O'Brien's- Bridge	Fisher James, Bleach-prospect	Collins John, baker
Dunnagan John, apothecary, Castle Connell	Massey John, Water-park	Dondon John, hotel
	SHOPKEEPERS, TRADERS, &c.	Doyle Wm. parish clerk and diocesan schoolmaster
	Browne James, baker	Frewen George, publican
		Madden G. P. grocer, &c.

CASTLE-LYONS,

ANCIENTLY called Castle Lehan, from the O'Lehans, an ancient Irish Sept, is in the county of Cork, and distant from Dublin 111 miles, nearly south west, and 15 north by east of Cork. It is a neat small town, pleasantly situated in a fertile valley, near the river Bride. The ruins of an old abbey of Franciscans, founded in 1307, are still to be seen. On its dissolution it was granted to the Earl of Cork, who assigned it to his son-in-law, David, first Earl of Barrymore. On the ruins of O'Leahan's Castle stood the

and having expelled the English settlers of Munster, and peaceably negotiated with the native Irish in Leinster, hung upon the marches of the English Pale with dreadful denunciations.

1578, Queen Elizabeth wrote letters of condolence to Sir William de Burgo, for the loss of his eldest son, slain in a skirmish with the Earl of Desmond, and by letters patent of said year she created him Baron of Castleconnel, and gave him a yearly pension of one hundred marks, to be paid out of her Majesty's Exchequer, during his life: whereof, says Hollingshed, "he took so sudden joy that he swooned, and seemed to be quite dead."

1579, The Lord Justice Drury marched towards Castleconnel, to attack Sir John Desmond, but he having intelligence of his design made a timely retreat.

1640, In the August of this year the following extraordinary production of credulity and superstition, was written by a Mr. Holme, from Limerick, to the Archbishop of Armagh, then in Oxford.

"For news we have the strangest that ever was heard of, of enchantments in the Lord of Castleconnel's Castle, six miles from Limerick, and several sorts of noises, sometimes of drums, and trumpets, sometimes of other curious music, with heavenly voices; then fearful screeches, and such outcries that the neighbours near it cannot sleep. Priests have adventured to be there, but have been cruelly beaten for their pains, and carried away they know not how—some two, some four miles. Sometimes minstrels, at other times armed men, as well on foot as on horseback, do appear to the view. What to make of this neither my Lord, nor the best divines we have, can tell, though they have had many consultations about it. * * * * * Mrs. Mary Burke, with twelve of her servants lie in the house, and never are hurt, only she must dance with them every night, they saying—'Mrs. Mary come away!' and telling her she must be wife to the enchanted Earl of Desmond. Moreover, a country-fellow going to Knockinny fair, to sell his horse, a gentleman standing in the way demanded whether he would sell his horse; he answered yea, for five pounds. The gentleman would give him but £4 10s., saying he would not get so much money at the fair. He went, however, and could not get so much money, and at his return he found the gentleman in the same place, who proffered the fellow the same money, which he then accepted. The other thereupon, bid him come in to receive his money, and carried him into a fair spacious castle, paid him his price every penny, and showed him the finest black horse that ever he had seen, and told him that that horse was the Earl of Desmond's, that he had three shoes already, and when he had the fourth shoe, which should be very shortly, then should the Earl be as he was before. This done, the fellow, guarded by many men, was conveyed out of the gates, and he came home; but never was any castle in that place before or since."

1641, The Lord Castleconnel was attainted, but restored on the accession of King James the Second.

1659, Ireton, the son-in-law of Cromwell, in the prosecution of his intention of blockading Limerick, threw a garrison into Castleconnel; and it is recorded of him, that having himself advanced with Ludlow about half way between Killaloe and Castleconnel, with the object of effectuating a passage over the Shannon, all whose bridges and fords were guarded by the Irish, "they observed a place where a bridge had been formerly, with an old castle still standing at the foot of it, on the other side of the Shannon, whereupon they ordered the roads to be mended by laying hurdles and great pieces of timber on the bogs, that they might bear heavy carriages, which they did, under the pretence of making a passable way between the camp and Castleconnel, where provisions were laid up for the army. Every thing being ready in about ten days, Colonel Reeves was appointed to bring three boats of his to a particular bank by one o'clock in the morning. In the beginning of the night three regiments of foot and one of horse, with four pieces of cannon marched silently towards the boats, and arrived there an hour before day, where they found but two boats, yet they served to carry over two files of musketeers, and six troopers, who having unsaddled their horses caused them to swim by the boats, and were safely landed. Two Irish centinels were on the castle, one of whom was killed, and the other made his escape."

1686, The ingratitude of the Stuarts to their Irish adherents is strongly exemplified in a letter of this date from Lord Clarendon, then sojourning in Limerick, to the Duke of Ormond, alluding to the before-mentioned Lord Castleconnel. "I met here my Lord Castleconnel, whom the king knows; he served under his majesty in Flanders. He is now under great mortification

to see so many of his countrymen (some of whom never served before) in employment, and nothing done for him. I have promised to move his majesty on his behalf, which I humbly beseech your Lordship to do. This lord hath two sons in the army who have served abroad. His second son, Mr. Edmund Burke, has nothing. He is a proper gentleman, and when there is an opportunity if your Lordship pleases to obtain for him a cornetcy of horse, or some employment in the foot, it will be an act of great generosity and goodness, and an obligation to a noble family."

1690, Castleconnel was taken by a party of King James's adherents. A letter written "from the camp before Limerick," to Sir Arthur Rawdon, thus alludes to this event:—"There was a castle within four miles of this place, called Castleconnel which was very strong, and in which were 200 men, this morning we took it, and they are now going to hang several of the enemy for example; the number I know not." According to Story the garrison was on this occasion but 126 men, commanded by Captain Barnwall, who surrendered at discretion. The assailants had brought four field pieces, and were led by Brigadier Stuart.

1691, The Prince Darmstadt with his own, Colonel Tiffin's, and Colonel St. John's, regiments of foot, five pieces of cannon, and about seven hundred horse, marched from Limerick, to reduce this castle, which was again, and more strongly garrisoned by the adherents of James. They refused all proffers at first, but after two days siege were compelled to surrender prisoners of war, whereupon De Ginkle ordered the castle to be dismantled and blown up, that it might no longer be "a nest of rebels and rapparees." The explosion was on this occasion so great that it shook the houses in Limerick, and broke several windows.

1803, The rectory and vicarage of Castleconnel were by the authority of the diocesan, united with those of Kilnegarruff.

1808, The church here underwent considerable improvements in aid of which undertaking £250 was lent by the board of First Fruits

At a short distance from Castleconnel, on the side of Limerick, is Mount Shannon, once the seat of the celebrated John Fitzgibbon, First Earl of Clare, and Lord Chancellor of Ireland. Very near it is Annacotty, where one of the earliest paper mills in Ireland was erected by Mr. Joseph Sexton, and one mile further off is Newcastle, where King William had his quarters during the siege of Limerick, while up the river is O'Brien's bridge, which connects the Counties of Clare and Limerick.

I cannot close this article without embracing this first available opportunity to offer my most sincere thanks to those who, as if electrified by the announcement in one of my former illustrations (No. XV.,) have offered me the grateful tribute of some national manuscripts, and the perhaps more confiding perusal of ancient family documents. They shall be, I trust, individually assured of my gratitude for compliments so peculiarly felt by me, while I almost shrink from so selfish a claim to what were professed to be for national service and promulgation.

My revered and dear friends, you are neither improvident in the exertions which you make to rescue Irish literature, nor mistaken in the zeal or patriotism of him to whom you offer them. Would that my ability to perpetuate them were equal to my will. It is at least with the purest wish to draw some portion of attention to a quarter too long neglected, that I have undertaken this and some other cotemporaneous labours. The civilization and improvement of Ireland are confessedly necessary to the happiness and power of the British empire, and the means of accomplishing these objects can only be attained by an unembarrassed intercourse with her history, her customs, her national character, and her more prominent individuals.

To effectuate this, whether in the case of county, city, town, or other Irish locality, I am ready in any summer vacation, or other interval of leisure, on being merely indemnified against the expense of publication. The resources of my long researches, my time and my own outlay I shall willingly hazard on the results of the growing intelligence of my countrymen, and the deepening interest which others begin to feel for their advancement.

My next notice in this MAGAZINE shall be of the CITY OF LIMERICK, as far as the indulgence of four columns will allow me to illustrate it; while I shall feel much pleasure in renewing my notices of it or any other locality, where the increased circulation of the MAGAZINE evinces, as in the instance of Cork, that the public are gratified by the inquiry.