

the 1916 memorial stands today, was blown up by some secret organisation and found a watery grave in the Shannon some sixteen years ago. The statue should never have been set up in Limerick. It commemorated Viscount Fitzgibbon who lost his life at Balaclava. He was the son of the infamous John Fitzgibbon, first earl of Clare (second creation) who was the willing tool of Pitt in carrying the Union of 1800, and who more than any other of the garrison class, fomented the rebellion of 1798 in order the more effectively to secure the Union. The ruins of the Fitzgibbon mansion, Mount Shannon, may be seen near Annacotty from the Dublin road. The fortunes of the family had been built one generation earlier by the father of John Fitzgibbon who, during the course of his education for the Church at the expense of the Catholic poor, renounced the faith and entered the law where he rose to eminence in the profession.

The Spring Rice Monument in the public park, Pery Square, is a worthy memorial to a great man. Thomas Spring Rice (1790-1866) first Baron Monteagle of Brandon. A liberal Protestant, he worked strenuously for the uplift of the Catholics and gave good service in causing the Orange Corporation to be swept out of existence in 1823. He was a strenuous opponent of Repeal in after years, however, and thus lost much of his earlier popularity with the citizens. Limerick men condone his limited political outlook in view of his initial good services.

The Memorial of the Manchester Martyrs. Allen, Larkin and O'Brien, is a noble Celtic cross with figure-group, inset into the boundary wall of St. Laurence's cemetery on the Bruff road. The three men were executed at Manchester in 1867 for their part in the rescue of two Fenian leaders. It will be recalled that Michael Hogan (Bard of Thomond) dedicated his collected poems, *Lays and Legends of Thomond*, to Caroline Marchioness of Queensberry who nobly tried to have the unfortunate men reprieved.

The Tait Memorial Clock Tower in Baker Place recalls the story of a great captain of industry of a century ago. Tait's life has never yet been written, though his story, oddly enough, might provide more material for a novel than a page of Limerick's history. As a poor Scots boy, Peter Tait first made the acquaintance of Limerick as a shop hand in the great firm of Canmook & Co. In the course of the years, Tait succeeded Sir John Arnott as partner in the firm. He established the Limerick Clothing Factory in 1850. In the Corporation he was elected Mayor of Limerick for three successive years, 1866, 1867 and 1868. His benefactions to the poor and his efforts for their uplift made him the idol of the city. Unfortunately, he began to dabble in politics, where he soon found himself out of his depth. He was persuaded by the Tory elements in the city to go forward for Parliament in the elections which were to decide the fate of the Church establishment. The two Liberal candidates nominated expressly to support Gladstone's disestablishment of the Irish Protestant Church, found themselves opposed by Tait and the editor of the Irish newspaper! The situation had all the elements of high comedy but for the violence with which the campaign was conducted, when a man lost his life in the angry demonstrations around the Tait clock. Tait hired in his cause the services of Michael Hogan who liberally pilloried the families and ancestry of the leading men of the city. Hogan's praise of his master and the mysterious newspaper editor met a strange nemesis some twenty years later when Tait's former colleague at the 1868 elections was unmasked to the world as Richard Piggott, the forger of the letters published by the London *Times* newspapers to bring Parnell to ruin. Tait's greatest memorial in Limerick today is, admittedly, the Limerick Clothing Factory, which has never ceased production since its establishment 102 years ago.

The 1916 Memorial on Sarsfield bridge has not yet been completed. The plinth and bronze scroll, which bears a Gaelic translation of the memorable 1916 proclamation

of the Provisional Government, have been designed with a dignity that befits the greatest event in Irish History of the present century. The first of the bronze statues, a somewhat realistic figure of Thomas Clarke has recently been set in place.

Ancient Treasure of the City

In 1950, on the suggestion of the Lord Bishop of Limerick, an exhibition of ecclesiastical relics was held in the city. The Archbishop of Cashel and the Bishop of Killaloe graciously consented to further the purpose of the exhibition by loaning objects of religious and historic interest. The splendid collection of chalices, mostly of the seventeenth century, won universal admiration. A short list of some of the more interesting objects may be given here.

i. The O'Dea Mitre and Crozier, 1418, are the finest examples of medieval post-Conquest art remaining in Ireland. The Mitre is signed by the craftsman who made it—Thomas O'Carryd. The Arthur Crucifix, dated 1625, is named after Bishop Richard Arthur who ruled the see of Limerick from 1623 to 1646. The Arthur Chalice, 1625. The MSS Annals of Limerick written by Fr. James White (1715-1768). The above-mentioned are in the custody of the Bishop of Limerick. The Black Book of Limerick (1362) is also diocesan property but has remained in the custody of Maynooth College for many years past.

ii. The Pectoral Cross of Bishop Terence Albert O'Brien, O.P. (1600-1651). The Kilmallock Dominican chalice (1639) and Sarsfield chalice (1647) are preserved in the Dominican Friary, Glentworth St.

iii. The O'Keeffe chalice (early sixteenth century) which was bequeathed some years ago to the Jesuit Church, is said to have been used by the Nuncio Rinuccini during his visit to Limerick in the days of the Confederation.

iv. Other noteworthy ecclesiastical objects of antiquity preserved in the city include: Bishop Arthur's altar stone (c.1625) and McCanny chalice (1688) at St. Munchin's parish church; Ferall chalice (1619) and Rice chalice (1626) at the Franciscan Friary; Meade chalice (1652), Lacy chalice (1662) and Archdeacon monstrance (1751) at St. Mary's parish church; Tully chalice (1683) at Mungret College, S.J.; Askeaton Friary chalice (1719) at St. Mary's Convent; Howly ciborium (1786) and Thady Quin monstrance (1726) at St. John's Cathedral.

Education

Except for a brief period when the Order of Preachers were in control of a Papal university at Limerick during the days of the Confederation (1644) and the years (1882-1968) when an arts degree could be gained, under the charter of the old Royal University of Ireland, at Mungret College, the city of Limerick has not enjoyed facilities for higher education. The project of setting up a recognised college of the National University of Ireland within the city has been much discussed of recent years. No one will gainsay the desirability of such a scheme in view of the fact that at present many competent students from so large an urban population centre are prevented through the high cost of living from pursuing their higher studies away from their homes. It is simply an accident of the place of birth that places a university education within the reach of the sons and daughters of middle class families in Dublin, Cork or Galway but denies the same to young people of like social status in Limerick. Financial considerations rule out the near possibility of setting up a fully organised university college with its numerous faculties in Limerick. The city is determined, however, that some beginning should be made in the near future. Up to the present two suggestions have been put forward both of which merit sympathetic consideration. Those who see Limerick as an expanding industrial centre claim that an institute of higher technology will provide an outlet and promising prospects

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for students of genuine merit. Others defend Limerick's right to have a faculty of agriculture and dairy science. There is much to be said for the latter proposal since Limerick is the capital city of the Golden Vein. Meanwhile, Limerick is splendidly provided with opportunities for secondary education.

St. Munchin's College, situated in Henry St., was established by Bishop O'Dwyer in 1886. It is the diocesan seminary. Although it was founded late in the century as compared with the Irish seminaries throughout the country, it can trace its lineage back to the first foundation made by Bishop Young at Palmerstown in 1796. It had varying fortunes of location and periods of duration. For some years before the seminary was finally set up in its present home (the former town residence of Lord Limerick), its pupils studied at Mungret College.

Sacred Heart College Limerick. The Jesuits returned to Limerick in March 1859. The Society of Jesus had been suppressed in 1773 but restored in 1814. It was only natural to expect that for many years to come the Society in Ireland had to go through the uphill work of rebuilding their mission on the few members who came to Ireland in the year of their restoration. The Society was ready, however, by 1859, on the invitation of Bishop Ryan, to return to a city with which it had been associated back to the days of its founder, St. Ignatius. The Jesuit College of today proudly claims continuity with the old Jesuit foundations at Limerick, of the XVIth, XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries. The visitor will notice on the facade of the new College building in the Crescent that the corner stone of the old residence in Englishtown dated 1647, occupies a position symmetrical with the corner stone placed by the Lord Bishop of Limerick, Most Rev. Dr. O'Neill, in November 1946.

Schools of the Irish Christian Brothers are in the four city parishes. Their secondary school in Sexton Street is the largest in the city. The Brothers also have schools in Co. Limerick, at Glin and Adare.

The Brothers of the Christian Schools (de la Salle) have two schools in the county. Their foundation at Hospital (diocese of Emly) caters for primary, preparatory and secondary pupils. The Brothers' foundation at Bruff is the parochial primary school for boys.

Glenstal Priory, Murroe. The Benedictines opened their school of art and craftsmanship about twenty-five years ago. Their work now includes a secondary school. **Salesian Agricultural College**. The Society of St. John Bosco have for many years conducted this College, at Copsewood, Pallaskeury. Students from all parts of the country pursue here a course of agricultural science and farming method recognised by the Department of Agriculture.

Convents of the Faithful Companions of Jesus. The foundations at Laurel Hill (in the city) and at Bruff, founded in the 1840's are the oldest secondary schools for girls in the diocese.

Secondary schools for girls have been opened in Limerick in the last few decades by the Sisters of Mercy, the Sisters of the Presentation and by the Salesian nuns. The Sisters of Mercy, whose work is widely extended and varied, throughout the diocese, conduct a governmental Training College for women in primary education.

Villiers' School, Henry Street, was founded under the will of Hannah Villiers for the education of children of all Protestant denominations particularly of the city and counties Limerick, Clare and Tipperary. It is a secondary school for boys and girls. The original endowment still enables the board of governors to allot a limited number of scholarships. The chairman of the board of governors is *ex officio* manager of the Villiers Primary School (off Nicholas St.) which is now under the National Board of Primary Education. There is also a primary school for Protestant children in Pery Square of which the Rector of St. Michael's church is manager.

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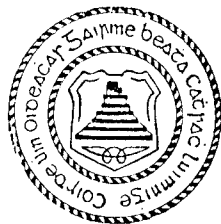
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Technical Education

Technical education in the city traces its origin to a very small beginning made by two Limerick women in the early 'nineties'. The city had reached its nadir in population and commercial activity and its citizens were fleeing from the spectre of unemployment. To meet the emergency, Miss Mary Caroline Doyle (daughter of the Young Irelander) and Miss Graves (daughter of the Protestant Bishop of Limerick) assembled a group of poor boys and began to teach them fretwork and general wood-crafts. The teaching was, of course, entirely gratuitous. Soon they added a domestic economy class for girls. Such was the success of the work that the authorities decided to place it on a less precarious basis than its dependance upon unremunerated service. Salaried teachers were engaged and for many years classes were conducted in the Atheneum until the fine Renaissance building in O'Connell Avenue was erected, in 1912. Scoil Aine, for girls, was built in 1939.

The Technical schools not only fulfil an excellent function in preparing young men and women to take their part in the industrial and commercial life of the city, but provide for their cultural development as well. Each school has its orchestra and its debating society. Athletics are also excellently catered for.

The Churches of Limerick

The churches of Limerick, whether parochial or attached to the houses of the religious orders, all belong to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This is not surprising when one considers that the Catholic Church in Ireland has been emancipated only 123 years. The parochial churches with one exception all belong to the post-emancipation period. All the churches of the religious orders are also modern. The restoration of full civic rights to Catholics in 1829, encouraged the people and stimulated their generosity to provide fitting homes for Catholic worship. In the present work, it is possible only to give a fleeting glance at the story of each of Limerick's noble churches.

Pride of place in any account of the churches must be conceded to the splendid **Cathedral Church of St. John**, the spiritual centre of the See of Limerick. Its style is Revival Gothic and was designed by Thomas Hardwicke. The foundation stone was laid by Bishop Ryan on May 1st, 1856. It seems that at first the plan was to build a commodious parish church and that it was only after the building had been in progress that it was decided the new church should be the cathedral of the diocese. The width of the aisles alone is a remarkable feature of the Cathedral. The "A" shaped roofs over them have the effect of darkening the nave of the building. Messrs. Hennessy, a Limerick firm of architects, designed the spire which is the highest in Ireland. It will be noticed that the spire is more ornate in design than the main building, yet its integration in the general plan is happily achieved. The Cathedral which was first opened for public worship in July 1861, was consecrated in June 1894. The old Church of St. John was built in 1753. Its site was between the present Cathedral and the adjoining presbytery.

Parish Church of St. Michael. The present church of St. Michael, which was built in 1881, replaced an earlier building which was erected in 1779. A small part of the gospel transept of the old church was incorporated in the present building. In the old church was held the first public meeting summoned to demand Catholic emancipation and the abolition of the tithe-system. During the erection of the present church, the corporation placed the Council Chamber of the town hall at the disposal of the clergy to accommodate the faithful for Sunday Mass. St. Michael's church is Hiberno-Romanesque in style and was the first of the city parish churches to be rebuilt since Catholic Emancipation. St. Michael's is a mensal parish of the Lord Bishop of Limerick.