

The Luttrels of Luttrelostown.

By M. J. BOURKE (*Recorder of Cork*).

THE Luttrels of Luttrelostown! What memories the mention of them re-calls! For full 600 years they lived and ruled in their beautiful home on the banks of the Liffey. It was situate some seven miles above Dublin in a district of surpassing loveliness. The place was granted in the year 1200 by King John, to Sir Jeffrey Luttrell, as "The Castle lands and Manor of Luttrelostown." These Luttrells were the younger branch of a Norman family scattered over various counties of England. The Irish branch intermarried with the leading families in this country, and rose to the highest offices in the State. The Solicitor-General for Ireland in 1532 was Sir Thomas Luttrell, who, in 1534, was appointed Chief Justice. He kept open house in the Castle of Luttrelostown until his death in 1550. In the Civil Wars of 1641 to 1649 the Luttrells sided with the King against the Parliament. Their estates were forfeited, and Luttrelostown remained lost to them during the Commonwealth. On the accession of Charles II. their property were restored by the Act of Settlement. A critical juncture in the fortunes of the house arose on the breaking out of hostilities between James II. and William of Orange. The Luttrells like most of their countrymen declared for the Stuart King. At that time the owner of Luttrelostown was Simon Luttrell, M.P. for Dublin. He was an honest man, and was appointed by James II. Military Governor of Dublin. His younger brother, Henry, was a person of different character. He had seen military service in France, had some abilities as a soldier, but was at heart a self-seeker, a time-server, and a born intriguer. The two brothers raised two squadrons of cavalry for the Irish Army, Simon being made Colonel of Dragoons, and Henry Colonel of a regiment of Horse in the Royal Service. Henry fought at the Boyne and at Aughrim. He was suspected of having betrayed the Irish at the Battle of Aughrim, and this treachery on his part was supposed by many to have been one of the main causes of their defeat. Later on, during the Siege of Limerick, some correspondence of his with an officer of William's Army fell into the hands of Sarsfield, and led to the trial of Henry Luttrell by courtmartial. Some of the members of the tribunal were friends of his, and the Court were divided in opinion. At this time he was a prisoner in the Castle of Limerick, and the Viceroy, Tyrconnell, would have had him shot, but for a significant message from the Williamite Commander, Ginkell, that he would hang every Irish Officer in his power if Luttrell were touched. A report was forwarded to France to King James, requesting his directions concerning the accused, but the Treaty of Limerick was signed, and the City was surrendered, before the King's decision arrived. Luttrell was accordingly released.

The suspicions that had been gathering around him were strengthened by subsequent events. While his brother, Simon, with Sarsfield and the flower of the Irish Army, following the fortunes of James, went to France and entered the French service, Henry Luttrell remained in Ireland and

threw in his lot with William. Simon's estates, including his old ancestral home of Luttrellstown, were declared forfeited, and were bestowed on Henry. He entered King William's service, receiving an annuity of £500 a year as payment, it is supposed, for his treachery, but alleged to be in consideration of his bringing over his Horse Regiment of twelve troops. He was admitted to the confidence of William's Government, attended the King in Flanders, and was appointed Major-General in the Dutch Army. After William's death he retired to Luttrellstown, and chiefly resided there. His brother, Simon, served with distinction on the Continent, and died abroad, leaving his widow Catherine, but no issue. This widow was treated barbarously by Henry. He refused to pay her the jointure she was entitled to, and he prevailed upon the tenants of Catherine's own lands to pay their rents to him. On her setting out from France for Ireland to assert her rights against him, he wrote to a British Minister requesting that she might be prevented from coming to Ireland, or, if she did come, that he might be allowed to put the Act of Attainder in force against her! This base request was refused. The widow came to Ireland and successfully enforced her rights against him, recovering her lands and all the arrears of her jointure.

The traditions of him that lingered for generations around Luttrellstown, portrayed his life and character in colours of unrelieved depravity. One of them told how when at mass at the old straw-roofed parish chapel, where, being lame, he was accustomed to kneel upon one knee, he used employ himself in ogling the good-looking girls, and used to cast little pebbles, of which he kept a supply, in order to attract their attention. There is much reason to fear that many a dark episode, and many an evil deed, are enshrouded in the gloom that enveloped his life. Even his end was ghastly. On the 1st November, 1717, while proceeding between ten and eleven o'clock at night, in his sedan chair, from Lucas's Coffee House in Cork Hill (where the City Hall now stands) to his town house in Stafford Street, he was fired at and mortally wounded. He lingered until next day, and then died in his 63rd year.

His two sons, Robert and Simon, were after his death brought up in England. Robert dying abroad in his travels, Simon became heir to Luttrellstown. He found a congenial occupation in England in the corrupt Parliamentary life of the time. Venality and shameless profligacy were rampant among politicians, and Simon Luttrell was a typical politician of the day. He was a strenuous supporter of the Duke of Newcastle and the Earl of Bute, representing different constituencies in the English Parliament in 1754, 1764, and 1768. For these services he got his price. He was created Baron of Irnham in 1768, and was advanced later on to the Earldom of Carhampton. His character and career in private life were of a depravity quite in keeping with his political turpitude. In the Letters of Junius he and his family are touched off in these terms:—"There is a certain family in this country on which nature seems to have entailed a hereditary baseness of disposition. As far as their history has been known, the son has regularly improved upon the vices of his father, and has taken care to transmit them pure and undiminished into the bosom of his successor. In the Senate their abilities have confined them to those humble, sordid services in which the scavengers of the Ministry are usually employed. But in the memoirs of private treachery they stand first and unrivalled."

Junius then, in illustration of this, tells a story of Lord Irnham which for baseness and treachery is unequalled. It is too coarse to be repeated. He then concludes:—"Whether the depravity of the human heart can produce anything more base and detestable than this fact must be left undetermined until the son shall arrive at his father's age and experience."

The son on whose achievements the solution of this problem would depend was Henry Laws Luttrell. Through his father's political influence in England this son, without ever having seen active service, became Colonel in the Guards. When George III. and his Government found themselves involved in a deadly duel with Wilkes, whom they were furiously bent on crushing, they cast about for some daring champion who would stand as their candidate against Wilkes at the Middlesex Election. Colonel Luttrell undertook the enterprise for them, giving up a comfortable Cornish Borough, the consideration being that he should be appointed to the best paid post on the staff. Though the Electors of Middlesex voted overwhelmingly in favour of Wilkes, Parliament under pressure of Government and the King, in gross abuse of their powers, excluded Wilkes from the House, and declared Luttrell Member for Middlesex. In due course Luttrell got his remuneration—he was appointed Adjutant-General of the Army in Ireland; and thereupon Junius in his Letters concentrated upon the King and the Ministry the public indignation which this scandal had provoked. Addressing Lord North, the Prime Minister, on the 22nd August, 1770, he said:—"Mr. Luttrell's services were the chief support and ornament of the Duke of Grafton's Administration. The honour of rewarding them was reserved for your Lordship." when this accomplished youth declared himself the Champion of the Government, the world was busy in inquiring what honours or emoluments could be a sufficient recompense to a young man of his rank and fortune for submitting to mark his entrance into life with the universal contempt and detestation of his country. To vacate his seat in Parliament, to intrude upon a County in which he had no interest or connection, to possess himself of another man's right, and to maintain it in defiance of public shame as well as justice, bespoke a degree of zeal or depravity, which all the favour of a pious prince could hardly requite. I protest, my Lord, there is in this young man's conduct a strain of prostitution, which for its singularity, I cannot but admire. He has discovered a new line in the human character—he has degraded even the name of Luttrell"!!!

His father dying in 1787 he succeeded him as Earl of Carhampton. Some years afterwards, when the Civil troubles arose in Ireland, he was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Forces. In 1797 he perpetrated enormous cruelties and oppressions in Connaught, emptying the prisons of their occupants, and without form of trial sending them on his own authority to serve on board the Fleet. Subsequently a Bill of Indemnity had to be passed for his protection. He became an object of such hatred in Ireland that in 1800 he sold the residence and demesne of Luttrellstown and quitted Ireland for ever. He spent the remainder of his life at his beautiful residence, Faines Hill, Surrey, the only place in England where within the memory of man wine in considerable quantities was made from grapes growing in an open vineyard. He died without issue at his residence, Bruton Street, London, in April, 1821, in his 78 year.

The eldest sister of Lord Carhampton, Lady Anne Luttrell, married the Duke of Cumberland, brother of George III. The alliance created consternation in Royal circles, and excited the fury of the King. "Let Parliament look to it," said Junius "a Luttrell shall never succeed to the Crown of England"! Another sister, Elizabeth Luttrell, lived a good deal with the Duchess, played high, and was strongly suspected of cheating. Afterwards she was in gaol, and gave a hairdresser £50 to marry her. Subsequently she was convicted of picking pockets in Augsburg; she was condemned to clean the streets chained to a wheel-barrow. In the end she poisoned herself. Truly the Luttrells were an unlovely race.

The new owner of Luttrellstown was a different stamp of man from the Luttrells, and had a very different history. His name was Luke White. He had come from the Isle of Man to Dublin a poor boy about the year 1781. He began life in Dublin by crying newspapers about the streets. For some time he kept a little bookstall on Ormonde Quay. Later on he became clerk to an auctioneer whose business consisted largely in the sale of books and libraries. He showed skill in figures and accounts; his attention to business and his integrity recommended him to his employer; gradually he rose to the position of manager, and finally succeeded to the business. He exhibited ability in finance, and all his undertakings prospered. A vivid description of him is given in a letter written in 1803 by the then Lord Lieutenant's wife, the Countess of Hardwick:—

"Dublin,

"October, 7th, 1803.

"I must tell you of a great fête given this morning by a most extraordinary man, a certain Mr. Luke White, who waited on the Chief Secretary a fortnight ago requesting him to inform the Lord Lieutenant that if it would be any accommodation to the Government he had £500,000 at their service at 5%. You will naturally ask who is this man of £500,000? He was the servant of an Auctioneer of books (some say he first cried newspapers about the street). As he rose in his finances he sold a few pamphlets on his own account from his apron while still in service. His talent for figures soon made him his master's clerk, and he was afterwards taken into a lottery office, where his calculations soon procured him a partnership. Good luck accompanied him in every speculation, and he knew how to profit by it, but with the fairest fame. He continued his trade in books on a great scale, and was equally successful in all the train of many transactions. His next view was landed property to a great amount. Lord Carhampton becoming disgusted with Ireland after the Rebellion, determined to sell his estate at Luttrellstown, which Mr. White bought to the great offence of all the aristocracy in Ireland. It had been 600 years in Lord Carhampton's family."

This superciliousness of the aristocracy was a trifle grotesque. They had cherished the reprobate Luttrell, but affected to slight the honest financier. Luke White treated their insolent airs with disdain.

After the agreement was entered into for the purchase of Luttrellstown, Carhampton sought to withdraw from it. He wrote a note saying:—"Lord Carhampton begs to inform Mr. White that Lord Carhampton's family object to his carrying out the sale of Luttrellstown, and he proposes

accordingly not to proceed any further in the matter." The reply was:—"Mr. White presents his compliments to Lord Carhampton, and begs to say that when Mr. White enters into a bargain he always carries it out, and he intends to compel Lord Carhampton to do the same." He did so, and became owner of Luttrellstown.

Luke White bought estates in several Irish counties, and died M.P. for one of them. Three of his sons attained similar positions, and one of them was elevated to the House of Peers as Lord Annaly.

Two Forgotten Kerry men.

By J. F. FULLER, F.S.A., M.R.I.A.



LIEUTENANT Hastings FitzEdward Murphy, of the Royal Engineers, F.R.S., F.R.A.S and F.G.S., Official Astronomer to the Euphrates Expedition, who died on August 9th, 1836, at Bussora, was a son of the Revd. John Murphy, Rector of Kiltallagh, Co. Kerry. As a cadet in the Royal Military Academy he obtained, by his good conduct and mathematical attainments, the friendship of the Governor, General Mudge, from whose example he acquired a love for the scientific employments appertaining to his profession. He got his commission in 1815, and after six or seven years he was selected for employment in the Ordnance Trigonometrical Survey, in which his early friend and patron had so greatly distinguished himself. On this duty he was chiefly engaged in the great "triangulation," and in the exceedingly intricate and delicate operation of measuring a base line on the shores of Lough Foyle, with the "compensation bars" invented by Colonel Colby. In 1834 he took a prominent part with other eminent men of science in carrying on a series of minute and interesting experiments made for the purpose of comparing the parliamentary and other scales of linear measure, with the standard one of the Royal Astronomical Society; and the value of his services was specially alluded to in the detailed account of that operation by Francis Baily, the President, in his published report to that Society. Before he had entirely completed the share he took in this operation he was appointed to the Expedition for exploring the Euphrates, under Colonel Chesney, in the capacity of its astronomer. The duties of this important office he performed with zeal and ardour, though they were attended with difficulties and obstacles of no common nature. He had completed his observations to the mouth of the Euphrates, together with experiments on the pendulum and terrestrial magnetism, so as to furnish data for their publication in Colonel Chesney's intended Journal of the Expedition; but the Government abandoned the further patronage and prosecution of the enterprise, and transferred the steamer engaged in it to the East India Company, Colonel Chesney and his party returning to England. I hoped to obtain some particulars of Lieutenant Murphy's early career at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, but was informed officially that none were available, as the records were destroyed in a fire