

REVIEWS.

THE DIOCESE OF EMLY, *

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The North Munster Archaeological Society is to be congratulated on the contributions by its members to the history of the district. The late James Frost gave us a history of the County Clare. Father Begley has published the first volume of a history of the Diocese of Limerick, and we have now to welcome a history of the Diocese of Emly, by Rev. Mr. Seymour. It is much to be regretted that we have not more of these histories in Ireland ; when will some writer do for Cashel, what the Rev. Dr. Carrigan has done so well for Ossory ? The materials are ready, only awaiting the expert hand to arrange them into form.

The author does not appear to have set himself the task of writing an exhaustive history, but rather to condense the records at his disposal, into a moderately sized volume, acceptable to the general reader ; and in this he has admirably succeeded. It is a pleasure to find so much that is of interest in the history of this ancient diocese, recorded in a pleasing, and impartial style ; there is so much temptation for weak human nature, when dealing with Irish history, to leave the straight path, and roam through the bye-ways of controversy. There are a few slips as when " chapel " is used instead of " church," but they are so trifling as to be unworthy of notice.

To the student of history the Celtic period is the most interesting, but the early church was so mixed up with the tribal system, that their histories cannot be separated. It is to be regretted that the author did not devote more space to this period ; a diocese which embraces Lough Gur, Aney, Clar, Uaithne and Ui Cuanach, afforded fine scope for inquiry into the tribal boundaries of its ancient divisions.

In a history of *Imleach Iubhair* all interest naturally centres around St. Ailbhe. Much as the events in the lives of these pioneers of Christianity have been obscured, by the mistaken zeal of mediaeval biographers, their personality is always clear ; not only as apostles of the

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Christian faith, but as founders of the early schools, which, as Zimmer truly states, carried civilization and culture over the continent of Europe. The author leaves the troublesome question as to the date of Ailbhe's mission, somewhat as he found it; but his opinion is that Ailbhe's missionary labours had not commenced before the coming of St. Patrick. It is worth noting that he believes the birth place of Ailbhe to be in Cliach; Canon O'Hanlon fixed it in Eliach (Ely), which he equated with Eliogarty in Co. Tipperary; Rev Mr. Seymour states Eliach was taken for Cliach, though in his text he does not make that quite clear. We believe Rev. Mr. Seymour to be correct, as the tradition, locating the rock under which the Saint was exposed at Lackelly, was alive forty years ago, up to which time the place was held in veneration; and that this had been continued from the time these ancient lives were written, is evident from the fact, that the rock is referred to in them as "a place of veneration" at that time, see Plummer's *Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae*.

The author does not attempt to clear up the mystery about Cell Rath, which Archdall states was near Clar. Killeenalick, too, is a church we would like to see identified. It may be that both are the same, and at Lackelly. There was a Killeen at the *leacht* of Ailbhe (Killeenalick could be explained in this way), and also a church; and Rathgullane (or Raheen) is an adjoining townland, all in Galbally parish. In this way our historical appetite is whetted, by turning over the pages of this interesting volume; and we ask for more.

The Norman period is the next in importance, and the author has dealt more fully with it, collecting his information from various sources, some of which however are not entirely free from doubt. He has adopted the narrative style, which is probably the most acceptable to the general reader, though there are some, who would prefer diocesan histories treated under sub-heads for each ecclesiastical division; certainly, for the parishes: it would no doubt increase the bulk of the volume, but against that we could have spared the chapter on the Depositions of 1641. This opinion is formed, not because of the matter of these documents, much of which is no doubt true; there is a legal witticism, which has passed into a proverb "the truth will out, even in an affidavit;" nor do we wish to make use of the *tu quoque* argument which

the author suggests might apply, but because we realise they cannot be recognised as historical records. Prendergast depreciated them, Gilbert dealt with them before the Royal Commission on Historical MSS. and reported against their historical value, Lecky didn't think them worth examining; and the present writer is aware that Froude hadn't seen them when he wrote the preface to Miss Hickson's volumes, and unfortunately Miss Hickson cannot be considered unprejudiced by those who knew her intimately. Froude did not know her well enough to form an opinion.

On reading through this volume one cannot fail to notice the fact that almost all its ancient religious houses have been entirely cleared away; such complete destruction is unusual. Emly, Abbey Owey, Miltown Abbey, the Preceptory at Aney, and seven or eight friaries are all gone. Truly this Diocese fell upon evil days; and we owe much to Dinely for having preserved for us those sketches of some of them, which are reproduced in this volume. In conclusion we wish to congratulate the author on having accomplished so much for his Diocese. This volume represents a vast amount of labour and research and we can confidently recommend it to all who desire to acquire a knowledge of the history of Emly.

P. J. L.

MURRAY'S HANDBOOK FOR TRAVELLERS IN IRELAND.

EIGHTH EDITION REVISED AND EDITED,

BY JOHN COOKE, M.A., M.R.I.A., F.R.S.A.I.

How frequently has the question been asked by travellers in Ireland—and we regret to have to admit, by natives also. "Where can I find a succinct description of the antiquities, or learn a little reliable history of this portion of the country"? We have invariably recommended—from past experience—a Murray's Handbook; hence it is that we are pleased to see this new and enlarged edition edited by Mr. John Cooke.

As a rule the intelligent antiquary takes up the average guide book, in a dubious frame of mind, and generally lays it down with a smile. However, in Murray's Handbook there is no danger of meeting with any of these imaginary descriptions, or impossible dates, so often served up, to the trusting traveller : on the contrary, the particulars have been compiled with care, and from the most reliable authorities.

The antiquities and ancient monuments of Ireland, are a valuable asset ; even if we judge them from the tourist point of view only ; and it must be said that the editor appears to realise it fully. We can judge of this best by a reference to our own district, Clare with its wealth of ecclesiastical remains, we find, receives well-deserved attention. The district around Holy Cross and Cashel, with the churches, &c., are described at length ; while passing along on the G. S. & W. Railway to Knocklong, Kilmallock (for Lough Gur, &c.), and continuing with the Co. Cork, the many attractions for the antiquary are all carefully noticed—and so it is with the rest of Ireland.

It is not the antiquary alone that is considered ; interesting information bearing on the natural history of the district, is provided in many cases, and there are useful notes and particulars to serve the interests and tastes of the sportsman, as well as full information for the ordinary tourists ; while the sectional maps, which are numerous, must prove useful to all.

On the whole, it is a book containing a good deal of information about Ireland, and as useful in the library, as on the road.
