MISCELLANEA.

Literary Notes.


The Royal Irish Academy began the formation of its now famous Museum of Antiquities about the year 1840.

Since then it has been enriched by priceless specimens of Celtic Art, notably the private collections of Dean Dawson and Dr. Petrie.

When the Museum was built in Kildare Street in 1890, the Royal Irish Academy collection was transferred to the new buildings.

This guide is not intended merely for the casual visitor to the Museum, but is written for all who take an interest in the study of Irish antiquities. It gives in a small compass the most up-to-date history of the Irish interlaced style.

In the opening chapter the principles underlying Celtic art are explained, and afterwards aptly applied in elucidating the ornaments that adorn the Penannular Brooches, Shrines, Bells, Croziers, etc., in the Museum.

For the readers of our Journal perhaps the most interesting portion of the Guide is the description that is given of the great find near the village of Ardagh in 1868, including the Ardagh chalice—the name it is now known by—which is not only rare but unique, being the one and only Celtic example that has survived down to our time. Inside
the chalice were found a bronze vessel and four brooches, which are here described for the first time, accompanied with suitable illustrations.

Clare readers will be interested in the crozier head of St. Tola, of Dysert O'Dea Monastery.

What would be more instructive to the children attending our schools than a hand-book of this kind, which contains so much delightful and entertaining information, so attractively turned out, that could not fail to make a deep impression in the youthful mind. The Guide is handsomely bound and contains 18 plates and 94 illustrations.

Mr. Coffey has placed all lovers of Irish antiquities under a deep obligation to him for having supplied them with such an erudite description of those invaluable works of Celtic art, that have survived the vicissitudes of centuries, and are now carefully preserved in the National Museum, Kildare Street, Dublin.—J. B.


This collection of poems, edited by the veteran antiquary, Dr. P. W. Joyce, cannot fail to prove interesting to the members of the N.M.A.S. The author has drawn largely on the history and folk lore of Munster for inspiration, and many of the poems and ballads are word pictures of the crystal streams and silent glens of the Ballyhoura mountains, a district he knew and loved so well.

"Afar in the vales of green Houra, my heart lingers all the day long,
Mid the dance of the light-footed maidens, with the music of Ounanaar's song,
Where the steep hills uprise all empurpled with the bloom of the bright heather bells,
Looking down on their murmuring daughters the blue streams of Houra's wild dells."

Such are the opening lines to the fine poem "Sir Donall," and in this and "Glenara," The Well of the Omen," "The Fairy Mill," and many other ballads, the natural beauties of these hills and dales are wedded to charming verse. Other ballads commemorate the fairy folk lore of the district, while many follow the fame and fortunes of the Geraldines of Desmond.
Apart from the great merit of some of the poems selected for publication, this volume has a special interest for the members of the N.M.A.S. by reason of the valuable topographical and historical notes which have been added by the Editor.

An leabharlann.


We have received the first part of Vol. III. of this publication, and the supplemental volume which is even still more valuable, consisting of copies from the Ordnance Survey Series in the R. I. A., of the letters written by John O'Donovan while he was engaged in deciding on the orthography of the place names in the Co. Down, with some notes on the history and antiquities of the county, and maps, notably one, shewing the ancient boundary fortification of Uladh.

We wish that the space at our disposal was sufficient to permit us to deal as fully with these letters as we would wish. They reveal throughout, O'Donovan's anxiety to do his work thoroughly, and the difficulties he had to encounter where the Irish speaking people had passed away.

There are some valuable notes for those interested in local place names—for instance, O'Donovan found that some places commencing with "Castle," were not derived from an ancient Castle, but from a Cashel, or stone fort. He also observed that an Irish word ending with "nn," when anglicised is usually made "no," terminating in land, as Rathfriland (Rathfraoileann).

The Journal contains a chronological record of the events in the life of John Kells Ingram, L.L.D.; and much that is useful to Committees of Public Libraries and those interested in Bibliography.

It is to be hoped that this Society will receive every encouragement from Antiquaries and those interested in the Libraries movement. The subscription is only 10/-, payable to the Hon. Treasurers, Free Library Kevin Street, Dublin.
We regret that want of space compels us to limit our notices of the Journals of kindred societies. We wish it were not so, as they all contain some valuable contributions to History and Archæology, and bear evidence of the growing interest that is being taken in the study of these subjects.

The Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland.—The Journal for the September quarter of 1909 is principally devoted to notes on the places visited by the Society during the summer excursion at Clonmel. These include Mr. Goddard Orpen's Notes on the Mote of Knockgraffon, which he considers a typical Norman earthwork. A theory can be carried too far; and it can scarcely be held that no such earthworks as this were raised in Ireland by an earlier race than the Normans. No one has yet established any connection between the equally fine Mote of Kilfinane and the Normans, and most certainly, Shanid Castle, the most typical early Norman keep in Ireland, probably the earliest, was not erected on the summit of a recently formed earthwork. No builder would think of erecting such a structure, with its thick heavy walls of masonry, or what would be—technically speaking—"made ground," and such it would be considered by builders for a very long period after its formation, so that the Mote of Shanid must have existed and been consolidating for many hundreds of years before the Norman keep was erected on it.

Dr. Cochrane contributes a valuable paper, well illustrated, on the Augustinian Priory of Athassel.

Mr. R. A. S. MacAlister, M.A., F.S.A., enumerates and describes the Ogham stones in the Clonmel District.

The Galway Archæological and Historical Society.—The last number of the Journal is a very good one. Our attention has been particularly directed to the paper on the Abbey of Kilnalahan, by Mr. J. P. Dalton, M.A., as it appears to be the only instance of a Carthusian Monastery in Ireland. It afterwards became a Franciscan Friary. The sketch plan provided, cannot be said to be satisfactory, and we hope it may be found possible to have a regular plan prepared, shewing the walls and buildings, as it would be of interest to note how far the original
plan followed the Carthusian arrangement of a Monastery, or if the present plan is entirely of the Franciscan type.

The paper on the Mac Egan family and the Leabhar Breac, by Mr. M. J. Blake, will recommend itself to our members from the Killaloe Diocese, and the Ormond District. The Wardenship of Galway, by Mr. R. J. Kelly, B.L., is an interesting item of ecclesiastical history.

Cork Historical and Archaeological Society.—The Journal for the December quarter is up to the usual standard, and continues the good work of preserving the memory of Cork worthies, and the records of local history.

Rev. Canon Courtenay Moore has a note on the connection between early Irish Art and Italian Christian Art, suggested by "Leader Scott's" history of the Comacine Masters.

This connection was fully dealt with in the Paper on "Early Christian Architecture in Ireland," by Mr. P. J. Lynch, in the Limerick Field Club Journal.*

"Leader Scott's" Cathedral Builders—Cattaneo's work on Early Christian Architecture in Italy, and Miss Stokes' labours in the footsteps of Irish Saints on the Continent, would have proved invaluable supports to Petrie in his belief in an early style of ornamental Architecture in Ireland, which he could not prove, and also verified the early historians in connecting Cormac's chapel with Cormac of the Xth century, rather than to Cormac of the XIIth century, to which period the architects of Petrie's time—we think—wrongfully assigned it.

The Kerry Archæological Magazine for October, 1909, concludes the story of Castle Magne, by Father James Carmody, P.P. Amongst other papers it contains a short note on the Legend of Sybil Head, by Capt. Crane, D.S.O., and a useful list of the Castles and Abbeys in Kerry, compiled by Mr. James Coleman, Hon. Sec. Cork A.A.S.

The Journal of the Waterford and S.E. of Ireland Archæological Society contains some notes on Waterford News-

papers and Books, by "P," and the continuation of Bishop Miler Magrath's Visitation of Waterford and Lismore, by Father Power.

The Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland.—We have received a copy of the Annual Report for 1908, the second Report we believe of this Society, the objects of which are to collect and preserve all records relating to the history of Presbyterianism in Ireland.

The object is commendable, most people interested in local history and genealogy, know how much we have lost by the carelessness of those in charge of parochial and other church records in the past.

The Hon. Secs. date from Presbyterian Church House, Belfast.

The Architectural and Topographical Society whose Record we noticed in the last number of our Journal, appeals for members to assist in carrying out its work, which is well described as of national interest. The subscription is 10/6, and the Hon. Sec. for Ireland is Mr. Conor O'Brien, 7 Stephen's Green, Dublin.

The Antiquary.—Amongst the publications of interest we cannot forget to note the monthly issues of the "Antiquary." In the number for January there are articles on "Fonts with representations of the Seven Sacraments," by A. C. Fryer, Ph. D., F.S.A.; "Mediæval Gotland," by J. Baker, F.R.G.S., and "Notes on the Abbey of Fontevrault," by J. Tavenor-Perry, and amongst the reviews we are pleased to find a hearty welcome for the first number of our Journal.

P. J. L.

We have to acknowledge from Mr. James Coleman, with thanks, a collection of cuttings of the description of each Parish in the Co. Limerick, as found in Lewis's Topographical Dictionary of Ireland, bound up in a paper cover.

This, with any other contributions or exchanges, which the Society may receive from time to time, it is proposed to deposit in the Limerick Free Library.