LETTERS OF AN EXILE.

PART III.

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Continued from page 43.

The fifth letter of the series, which is from the Admiral to his nephew, Andrew Lysaght, son of Charles of Ballybreen, is dated 6th January, 1766, an interval of over eight years having elapsed since No. IV. was written, during which period, no doubt, notwithstanding the strained relations between England and Spain, some letters must have passed to and from of which there is no account. This epistle is of a certain interest in so far as it shews that at that time Andrew was looked upon as head of his name, and that the George Lysaght mentioned, (son of Donal cdn), whom he elsewhere styles his "nephew," was really his grand-nephew. This George Lysaght was, I believe, the man who ultimately inherited the main portion of the old man's means. From the context we can infer that he, like his cousin, Thomas Lysaght, went to Spain with great expectations, to seek his fortune under the ægis of his grand-uncle, the admiral. At any rate, George Lysaght, on his return to Ireland, became so wealthy according to popular belief that he was known in later years as Seóirmhe-an-eir, (i.e., "George of the Gold," ) wealth, however, bringing him and his family no luck. It was he who built the fine mansion of Ballykeal, near Kilsenora, which must have cost him a tidy sum, but in course of not many years the place passed into the possession of another family. By a second marriage with his own first cousin, a sister of Frank ruadh Lysaght, of Moy Castle, near Lehinch—the man whose transportation for treason in 1799, is said to have suggested to the poet Campbell the idea of the "Exile of Erin."—George was father of Christopher Lysaght, of Ardnacullia (Woodmount), near Ennistymon, High Sheriff of Clare in 1803. The latter married a Miss Fitzgibbon, a near relative of the notorious Lord Chancellor Clare.
The wealth of "George of the Gold" it appears did not thrive with him, for according to popular tradition he died a comparatively poor man. (1) For some reason or another, which I cannot explain, the people looked askance on his riches, as if there was some rumour of their being ill-got, and in proof of this I have been seriously told that, when Ballykeale mansion was being built, the tradesmen employed thereon used to find the walls they had put up the day before smeared with blood on returning to their work next morning.

We learn from letter VI., dated 6th January, 1766, how difficult was travelling between England and Spain at that particular time, due, no doubt, to the bad feeling between the two nations. It took the writer, Thomas Lysaght,—another grand-nephew, I believe, of the admiral—from the 29th of July, when he left Dublin, to the 18th of December following, five months less eleven days, to reach his destination, Ferrol. It seems almost incredible to us, accustomed as we are to quick travel, but the obstacles were unusually great in that year owing to the cause mentioned. I cannot, with certainty, identify this Thomas Lysaght, who was the first of the admiral's relatives to reside with him in Spain, and I don't know what ultimately became of him.

Dear Nephew

I have before me yr esteem'd favr of ye 29th last June wch my Nephew Thoms (2) deliver'd me ye 18th of ye expir'd rober, having pas'd 4 months & ½ on his voyage hither from Dublin seeking an occasion in various Ports in Engd to come to Spain wch att last he found on a smart price, so well as every thing else he wanted, & of wch & ye rest of his sufferance he gives you a Detaill wch excuses me to repeat it. In order to give answer to ye contents of yr Letter methodicaly, [7] am to lett you know, you gues'd right, that I insinuated ye suspension of our Epistolary Correspondance upon ye acct of ye appearance of war between both Crowns, wch of course would make itt crimial if continued, wch prudence dictated to avoid whilst ye motive subsisted, but ceasing may lawfully be resum'd. You

(1) "On Friday night [12th January, 1827], at Ballykeale, in this County, George Lysaght, Esq., aged 83 years. To say anything in praise of this Gentleman would be superfluous, as a more faithful or more upright man never existed. He was a kind parent, a tender hearted Landlord, and the social friend of all who knew him."—Ennis Chronicle, Wednesday, January 17th, 1827.

(2) That is, Thomas Lysaght, the writer of Letter No. VI, to his relative, Andrew Lysaght.
have also Judg'd ye sl I sent you wth out any nam'd destiny was for ye motives of ye expence you may be att for ye omissions I then troubled you wth, yr agency being sufft to deserve my thanks wth out any disbursmnt on yr part

I hope this youth [will answer] to ye caracter you give of him being all I expect from him inclin'd as I am to promote his good in all yt depends on me, ye same to my nephew Daniel's son George when he determines to send him to me, wch I insinuated to you & Fr Walter in 2 Letters I writ you, since I rec'd sd Fr's Letter, both directed difft ways, ye last of ye 13th of last Novr to wch I refer persuaded you have them, reminding unto you, yt ye Ports of Comerce nearest to this are Bilboa & Oporto in Portugal, to both wch I understand a frequent opportunity of ships offers to both from Cork, if it shoud hapen for Bilboa I cou'd wish it was much, as one John Morony is settled there who was civil to nephew Town,(3) & declar'd an inclination to oblige him upon acct [of] his relations ye Lysaghts wch he knows, & was sorry he was recomended to another.

What you inform of my sister Honoras circumstances agreeably banish's ye gloom. Fr Walters melancholy relation of her infirmity & lownes of means, obliged her to retire to live with her maryed Daughter, accompanied by 2 others, ye one of them Bedridden, adding yt probably her son in Law woud think them a burthen to him wch ye unfortunat man exagerated, or probably may be induc'd to it, and as I am persuaded she is incapable of managing her proper affairs, it will be a meritoious Deed to find one for ye purpos & a faithful to do it, gratifying him in proportion to his merit, and as by inference she will want protection to do her Heirs Justice, I hope yt as you are att ye Head of those of yr name, and her relations, you will employ yr credit to prevt her commiting or consenting to any disposal or act that may be contrary to her own good, or her Childrens right, & God will reward you for itt, and as for unfortunat Fr Walter is so wth out recall I leave him to proceed after his own way countin' itt happy he refus'd coming to live wth me, leaving to yr descretion to act with him & my sister Honora & issue what you Judge proper, recomending good intelligence and perfect union between all my relations, & friends unto whom ye Cordial love & esteem ye same you will accept in a particular maner yr selfe and family wth ye assurance yt I remain Dr Nephew

Your most afft uncle &
Humble Servt

DANIEL HUONY.

Its requisit, & precise yt my Nephew George shou'd bring with him a Batister (in Latin) of his Baptism, & being born of Cathlick Parents all in ye form of ye instrut given by Fr Michael ÓBrien to my nephew Thomas, ye want of wch may be of detriment to him hereafter.

Mr. Andrew Lysaght.

(3) Meaning "'Tom." The admiral's English spelling seems to be getting worse, which is not to be wondered at.
Ferrol the 6th January, 1766.

Dr Sr

The many instances I have had of your good inclinations towards me, cause me to think you are now desirous of hearing from me, my reasons for deferring writing till now by the sequel you will see together with the various disasters and disappointments I met with in my Journey hither. And as an account of them alone is subject enough for this letter, I will without longer preface proceed minutely to relate them to you. From the 29th July, that I left Dublin, until the 5th August that I arrived safely in Bristol nothing material happened to me, from thence I was well recommended to Falmouth, through a letter I had from Mr. Terry to Mr. James Weldon. I left Bristol the 10th and arrived in Falmouth the 20th, an expensive and fatiguing journey. Upon my arrival there I was little pleased to find I had gone that tedious way to no purpose, then I learned there were no packets established between Spain and England since the last war, neither was there any other opportunity there fit for me, nor a likelyhood of it for a long time, by advice of the gentleman to whom I was directed there, I went to Plymouth, for really it was useless to remain in Falmouth. But there I succeeded no better, he to whom I was recommended told me [he] had received a letter from Exeter that post, in which it was mentioned that there was a vessel there immediately bound to Bilboa, and said it was adviseable for me to go there. Accordingly I did, and went to the owners of her who told me she would be ready infallibly to sail in 15 days thereafter: in the mean they chanced to fall out which occasioned her a delay of 11 weeks, which time I passed uncomfortably, but being (as you will judge) tired of England, and wondering in it uppon Uncertainties, I thought proper to wait in Exeter. I do [so] untill the 18th October, when we set sail for Bilboa where we arrived the 17th November. I waited there a month for a vessel to Corunna, from thence I came here the 18th December, thus have you an account of my adventures, and I believe you have rarely heard of so many accidents all conspiring to disappoint anybody, on so trivial an occasion as mine, but I was directed so as that it was impossible to evade them. I cannot blame Mr. Terry for directing me to Falmouth, as people of more business than he, were unacquainted with what I told you.

What I admire (4) is, why he sent me by the way of Bristol which is 200 miles distant from Falmouth, and I assure you tis not cheap traveling in England. However, I thank God it was not worse; although I assure you I managed what little money I had with the utmost frugality and economy that decency would permit, I was not master of a crown, after paying for my passage to Bilboa. I applied to an Irish merchant there for 300 royles, he knowing my uncle upon his account gave me them, my passage and expences in another port where we put in came to 100 more, which in all amount to £6 12s. 6d. of your money, you know how it grieved me to trouble my uncle with paying them, coming as I did he upon my arrival payed them, without ever reprehending me for making use of his name without his knowledge and received me, as if he encourged my

(4) Admire, i.e., wonder at.
coming, through a consideration of what compell'd me to it, together with his own natural goodness, for which may the almighty reward him.

I am making what progress I can in learning Spanish without which I am qualify'd for nothing here. Please (Sr) to give my humble service to the families of Ardnakelly (5) and Kilcorman, to your brother John, and good James Patt and Thomas, Mrs. Lysaght and Miss's Peggy and Jane, to all my good friends: which is what offers at present from

(Dr Sr) Your ever humble and obedient servant, always acknowledging your favours

THOS. LYSAGHT.

Letter VII. is also from Thomas Lysaght to Andrew, the then head of the family. It contains little of interest, except some genealogical details. It bears no date, but must have been written soon after the preceding, probably early in February 1766. (6)

VII.

Ferol the * * * * *

(No date to this letter, but it must be soon after the preceding, probably February, 1766. See following letter of Admiral O'Huonyn.—G.U.M.)

My Dr and Honourd Sr

Having upon my arrival here wrote a letter directed to you which I committed to the care of the Commander of a Dublin vessel who sailed from this port about that time, in which I gave an account of the obstacles which retarded my arrival herein the 18th December, therefore should not have troubled you now especially as nothing worthy your attention different from what I have already mentioned offers; were I not well assured of your goodness which wont take it amiss: this goes by the vessel in which George Lysaght had a speedy and prosperous passage hither, otherwise I would not put you to expences in freeing a letter wrote without urgent cause, but I will make bold to write should I have occasion, by the post, no other opportunity serving.

Being hurried at the time I wrote the other letter by reason of the vessels being then ready to sail, therefore had not leisure to tell you our Uncle intends immediately to ask the Kings licence for changing this Galicia climate for the more wholesome of Andalusia, which is probable he will obtain, as there is another Admiral here who can supply his place.

And in Cadiz he wont be inconvenient to the King's service, the weather continues to be extreme rigorous here, a thing never seen before, the cold is very severe, which is pernicious to his health.

(5) "Ardnakelly," recte Ardnacullia, now Englished Woodmount, near Ennistymon. Kilcorman, where another branch of the Lysaght family lived, is a townland in par. of Kilmanaheen, barony of Corcomroe, also near Ennistymon.

(6) See Letter VIII. from the admiral to his nephew Andrew, in proof of this.
In the beginning he asked me if I was disposed for study or for what, I said I was not attached particularly to any thing, but resolved to apply myself to whatever his generosity should pitch upon for me, knowing he could better guess what my Capacity promised to quafe ye me for, he said he would do what in him lay to serve me as he will, George, provided we behave well. He asked me about all his friends, I gave him the account which my knowledge of them dictated to me, strictly adhering to truth, he asked who they were that assisted my grandmother, I told him they all were kind to her but none more so than your Brother Jam's (7) as was very true, he said what I said of him was agreeable to the sayings of all who knew him, and desired me as he did George to let him know that any services he could render him he should not want, I think Jam's would not do amiss should he write to him, I am sure it could do no harm I mean if he has any notions of doing as he once told me he would, if this man should conntenance him, he will judge best himself: my Uncle told me he always knew my Grandmother was in a station much inferior to the rest of her relations, but never thought she was, as she really is, I believe he wont suffer her to want for the future: father Walter in his first letter to him intimated that the extreme poverty and necessity in which [my uncle] Thoms left his sister Honor obliged [her] Daughter to seek James Lysaght's protection, the only way they had of avoiding starving, he says that at least he understood it so, upon which he ordered forty pounds for them, by your hands, in the letter I brought him from you he was surprised to see the contrary, he asked me about it, I undeceived him by telling truth and giving the natural causes of their living with James: I hope you wont [attribute] that to any desire I had of hindering his doing good, but in reality I could not say otherwise than as I said. What George Lysaght tells me of my poor brother gives me a most sensible concern, he says he refused complying with your goodnatured endeavours of putting him in a capacity of living he will repent of his folly, However the confidence I have in your good-ness gives me cause to hope you wont neglect him: and do the best [for him that] his temper and circumstances will admit, though tis difficult to force a person to do well. Please (Sr) to give my cordial love and most humble service to all my good friends, and accept for yourself the most sincere wishes and grateful acknowledgments of (Dr Sr)

Your much obliged ever humble, and obedient servant

THOMS. LYSAGHT.

I will expect you will condescend to write to me, and direct according to the instructions George Lysaght gives his father, with regard to his sending his letter.

(7) i.e., James.