

LETTERS OF AN EXILE.

PART IV.

BY DR. GEORGE U. MACNAMARA,
Vice-Pres. N.M.A.S. for Clare.

Concluded from page 129.

There is little to be said about Letter VIII., from the admiral to Andrew Lysaght, and dated from Ferrol 12th February, 1766, except that it shews his grandnephew, George Lysaght, had already arrived in Spain, and that poor Father Walter O'Huonyn was fast getting softening of the brain and had become quite incapable of managing his affairs.

From Letters IX and X, both dated April 20th, 1767, which conclude the series, we learn that the admiral at last got what he so longed for and well earned, viz., retirement from active service and residence in the more congenial climate of Cadiz. Before he left Ferrol, however, his patience was sorely tried by the unexpected arrival of another of his blood-relations, one Thomas * * * grandson of his sister Mary, who was wife of a Mr. O'Donnell, and of whom I know nothing.* This young man, it appears, hearing of the fabulous wealth, great influence, and proved good nature of the admiral, took it into his head, uninvited, to emulate his relations, George and Thomas Lysaght, and so one fine day dropped down on the poor man without further ceremony and in a tattered and moneyless condition.

This would be enough to sour any person's good nature, but, to his credit be it said, seems not to have had that effect on Daniel O'Huonyn. Although we must sympathise with him, we cannot help smiling at

* The following extract from the pedigree of a family named Power, transplanted from Co. Waterford to Clare and other parts of Connaught soon after 1641, makes mention of another member of the O'Huonyn family, probably the admiral's grandfather, and throws some further light also on the evolution of the name. The pedigree states that one Dominick Power (son of Andrew) the first of the name who settled down at Corofin, had by his second wife, Anne Danter, of Cork (his first wife, Elinor Creagh, daughter of John Creagh Fitzwilliam, Alderman of Limerick, died in 1673) "two sons and one daughter Margaret, married to Connor O'Honine or Honan, of Moy, in the county of Clare, gentleman," etc.

the terror of this brave old sailor, battle-scarred and racked with rheumatism, and in hopes now at last after his hard and knockabout life of spending the remainder of his days in peace, being confronted with the awful prospect of the entire stock of his poor relations, forty or more in number, emigrating bodily to Spain to suck him dry and make his position intolerable. The thought of so many raw and ill-equipped individuals from the barony of Corcomroe—as full of family pride and conceited in their own way as any hidalgo of the sunny peninsula—ready to drop in upon him any day, without a *maravedi* in their pockets, and totally ignorant of the country and its language, was something too horrible even to think of. It was indeed anything but a joke to the admiral, and the fear of such must have caused him many a nightmare, and, tough as he was, may have actually shortened his life. We are not therefore surprised at seeing the old gentleman protesting strongly in his last two letters against anything of the kind, and trying to dissuade his people, through his nephew, against making any further such attempt. Let us hope that his expostulations had the desired effect, and that things turned out better than he had anticipated.

I am unable to say how long Admiral Daniel O'Huonyn lived, but I trust he enjoyed some happy years of well-earned peace and honour in the land of his adoption before death claimed him, a reward, it must be admitted, which his strenuous life and high and honourable character richly deserved.

VIII.

Ferrol, Feby ye 12th, 1766.

Dear Nephew

I have yr favr by my nephew George with ye minute acct you give of my relatives in general for wch I render you thanks; Fr. Walter's extravagances gives me deep concern, & ye more because I consider it wth out remedy, so leave you to deal with him as you think proper. The inclos'd for him I have unseal'd for y'r perusal, yt you know how to behave wth him in what may concern me in case he should expect (as you insinuat) further succor from me, wch will be in vain, & unreasonable I shoud trow away my mony to be distributed wth out Judgmt by one depriv'd of his sences. I am well pleas'd wth those 2 Nephews I have wth me, and will not fail to give them ye proofs I can of ye same, & my desire of fomenting their good all I can. Haveing nothing to enlarge I conclude wth my cordial service to our relations in general, and assuring you I remain wth cordial love and esteem Dr Sir

Your afft uncle and Hum-
ble servt.

DANIEL HUONY.

IX.

Dear Nephew

Cadiz, April ye 20th, 1767.

Some Days ago I writ to you, under cover to Mr. Ignatius Terry (to wch I refer) and am obliedged to trouble you wth this, earnestly praying you to hand ye inclos'd to my sister Mary (wch goes open for yr perusal) in order ye may judge of ye reazons I expose agt ye unreasonableness of her procedure wth me, about sending her grandson to me in ye manner she did, hoping you will sustain with your usual capacity ye part of my alegations you consider reasonable & lett her comprehend, she acted agt her own interest, and ingrateful to me, in sending me her grandson in ye terms she did expecting I shoud provide for him more than is in my power, and often writ home to prevent any of my relations coming to me wch if published (as I requested) is forgot or unobserv'd wherefore to prevent such like determination hereafter, I crave yr favor to contrieve as you know best, that hereafter no such error be comitted by ignorant poor creatures to their utter ruin, and my great shame, and lett me remember unto you yt my Dear Nephew yr Father, observing my readiness [to] succor some of my poor relations, advertis'd me to stop my hand, on pain of haveing 40 miserable creatures wth me yt woud dishonor me, afirmiting yt ye more I gave ye more ye craveing woud increase, wch those 2 young men afirm to be certain, wch makes my case more lamentable, & deserveing of Pity for ye remedy of wch in what may be I appeal to you & conclude wth my cordial service to yr good family and assuring I am wth cordial love and esteem.

Dr Nephew

Your most afft uncle &
Humble Servt

DANIEL HUONY.

To Andrew Lysaght, Esq.

(addressed on back) To

Mr. Andrew Lysaght

att

Ennis.

X.

Dear Sister

Cadiz, April ye 20th 1767.

A few days ago, I remited 2l to succor your wants as a proof of my cordial love for you, wch gives me leave to ask you wth out offence, how you have been oversighted as to send me your son Thomas, to provide for, & put him in ye way of earning his Bread in a decent manner, wth out consulting ye case, or acquainting me with yr intention, or inquiring what I may be able to contribute towards promoting him, wch in all respects I had a right to expect, whose unexpected arival surprized me much, and moved my compassion to see his scant equipage in a sad pikle, soiled thoro his carelessness, his face disfigured, and wth all deep in debt, wch I imediatly discharg'd, & wth all speed put him in a condition to appear, for shame's sake attending him with acts of benevolence, and good nature, imediatly I took ye charge to my selfe of teaching him ye Spanish language as most necessary, together wth ye best reced morals of ye contry. I constant took a pleasure to instruct him my selfe, and in what I could not I procur'd him Masters ye best I could meet in yt poor place ye Ferrol, where nothing more could be done for him; itt was chiefly for his sake I press'd for licence to have my destiny changed from yt cold and raw climat for this more benign & favourable to my infirmity chiefly Rheumatick pains, agravated by ye results of wounds, knocks,

bruises reced in my long navegation, and haveing obtain'd my desire, soon after my arri I broke unto him yt itt was time he should declare what carrier he was most inclined to serve in, to work for his establishment, I coud with difficulty, get out of him, by ye means of friends that when he left home he had an inclination to be of ye Church, out of Devotion rather than as a way to live by itt, which was deem'd by his welwishers to be a Silly answer, and yt now he has dropt all thoughts of yt way in ye consideration his first call, or Devotion was not well reflection'd—and declares he is not inclin'd to inter into ye land service, or rather his aversion to itt, & in conclusion says he woud chuse to be a merchant unhapily the most difficult to be obtain'd so well for his total ignorance of yt carrier, as of all others ye want of a friend who would receive one intirely useless to him, and wth out a fund to work upon, & what exposes his ignorance to ye hight is, yt he is ye first and onely one of our young country Gentlemen come abroad who do not chuse to enter as cadets in ye troops, and are thankful to be reced as such, upon proof of their good conduct, and merit until a vacansy offers to be made officers, to which if he conform'd I offered to allow him a regular monthly pention to live upon, not inferior to any of ye kind of our contry, to which he makes no answer but continues silent liveing with me, eating as I doe, wth out considering he looses his time, wch gives me mortal uneasines, & indisposes ye quietness of mind I expected to injoy in my retirem't, wch coud be spared me, if he had remain'd where ye expenses I have been for him, and must continue for honors sake would be a decent establishment for him. Your excess of love for him, and little knowledge of ye world byas'd you to indulge him more than is convenient, may [be] to his detrimt, by peting him too much, and giveing him his will as many mother's have don, marks of which I observe in this youth's conduct, such as his stif adherence to his own opinion (such as I expos'd), his carelesnes, & slovelynes of most things about his person, & no thought or reflection of futurity, att ye same time wth more selfe love, & aspiring views above his merit, for want of comprehension, or experience of ye world. And as for his virtues, & vices I have nothing to say for want of experience, but conjecture them to be on a balance like a chip in Porage : his comely face, and person recomend him, his inclination to reading of Books good, if govern'd with Judgemt in ye choice of those yt tend to ye forming of virtue, or to learn a trade, or vocation to earn his Bread, but to read as he does, for only inclination, or pleasure in mispending his time, sacraficeing yt pretious Jewel to vain, and inprofitable pleasure, wch I represented to him often, all wch I comunicat to you (wth an open heart) in order to satisfy yu that ye measures you took hitherto about him were not wel digested, and yt was agt yr own intrest, and mine to act so, for to imploy on him (as he expects) how is itt possible I coud continue to succor yr wants, or those of other relations in ye same case, with more reason, & necessity, than him and of consequence better imployed, as I am persuaded yt yr conduct hitherto proceed'd from yr want of experience I forget ye error, upon ye condition yt you do not do so any more, but yt you wil contribute that no other comit such, hereafter, & conclude with my cordial love for you, yr honest old husband, ye rest of yr family, and our comon relations, &c.,

Dear Sr

Your Brother who loves you

Wth all his soul

Mrs. Mary o'Donnel.

FINIS.

DANIEL HUONY.