

THE YOUNG HUSSAR.

(LORD FITZGIBBON).

FROM THE STATUE BY P. MACDOWELL, R.A.

THIS is a statue of the late Lord Viscount Fitzgibbon, of the 8th Hussars (Royal Irish), "executed in bronze, for the city of Limerick, and erected to the memory of his lordship, and that of his brave companions in arms, natives of the county and city of Limerick, who fell at Balaklava." A model of the statue was exhibited at the Royal Academy during the season just closed.

Viscount Fitzgibbon was eldest son and heir of Richard Robert Fitzgibbon, Earl of Clare, Lord-Lieutenant and *Custos Rotularum* of the county of Limerick, by Diana, daughter of the late Charles Woodcock, Esq. : he was born in 1829, and had scarcely reached his twenty-fifth year at the time of his death. He entered the army at an early age, obtaining a cornetcy, we believe, in the 8th Hussars, with which, as lieutenant, he went out to the Crimea. In the memorable cavalry charge at Balaklava, on the 25th of October, 1854, he fell desperately wounded, and died shortly afterwards.

Events that have since occurred in our Eastern empire now cling so closely to our memory, that we seem almost to have forgotten those exploits which, during the Russian war, filled the heart of every Englishman with wonder and delight, and of England's foe—one worthy of him—with dismay :—

"Old men forget, yet shall not all forget
The deeds they did that day,"

when the light cavalry brigade—"the gallant six hundred," as Tennyson calls them—swept over the valley on the artillery of the Russians, and returned with their force diminished by two-thirds. Leonidas, at Thermopylae, old Dentatus, with his back against the rock, each fighting against overwhelming numbers, offers no brighter example of indomitable valour, and willing self-sacrifice, than every one of that gallant band who rushed forward to almost certain death at the sound of the trumpet's voice : it seems a miracle that a man lived to tell how the battle was "lost and won."

We had written thus far when a copy of the *Times*, of November 14, 1854, containing an account of the engagement, came into our hands : the leading article, in referring to it, contains the following eloquent passage :—"There is something in the pomp and solemnity of this fatal exploit which takes it out of ordinary war, and makes it a grand national sacrifice. The Roman citizen hardly rode more gallantly, more deliberately, than those devoted six hundred rushed to the place of their glorious doom. They went as fanatics seek the death that is to save them, and as heroes have sought death in the thick of the fight, when they could no longer hope to conquer. But this was something more than individual prowess or the enthusiasm of a crowd. There was organization and military skill, at least enough to enable the chiefs to know the terrible nature of the deed. They saw that in the execution of the order in their hands they would have to run the gauntlet of batteries, ambuscades, reserves, enough for the destruction of an army ; but they went with their eyes open, as if under a spell. It was a skilful, murderous, and powerful foe that prepared the path for their destruction, and yet at that challenge they went on and persevered to their doom. This was not war, as the French general said ; it was a spectacle, and one worthy of the 'cloud of witnesses' that encompassed the performers. When our first horror and admiration have subsided, one feels a species of mystery in the deed which interests us even more than the more important tidings that are now pouring in. What is the meaning of a spectacle so strange, so terrific, so disastrous, and yet so grand ?"

The mystery never has, and now never can be, satisfactorily cleared up ; it must suffice that the story is indelibly engraven on one of the most glorious pages of British history. "Peace to the souls of the heroes ! their deeds were great in war," says the son of Fingal : honour to those who survive.

Mr. MacDowell's statue has already been described in the *Art-Journal*—in the January part.



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