

JUNIOR GRADE

IRISH HISTORY

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PREFACE.

THE object of this little work is to give to Junior Grade Students a complete and systematic outline of the period of Irish History, assigned to them in the Intermediate programme.

Possessing perfect freedom from religious and political prejudices, and treating fully of those portions of Irish History upon which questions are most frequently set at the Intermediate Examinations, the compiler trusts the book will supply a long-felt want.

The absolute necessity for such a work has been proved by the Report of the Intermediate Examiners in English for the year 1895, from which the following extracts are taken :—"But by far the least satisfactory part of the examination is the Irish History; very many make no attempt to answer the questions, whilst of those who do make an attempt, the majority score nothing, or practically nothing, and comparatively few get full, or even half marks."—(Junior Grade Boys, page 22.) "A great number of even the best Students in other respects failed to secure a single mark in Irish History, and in too many cases the attempt to answer these questions showed the hasty and imperfect manner in which Irish History is taught in many of our Schools."—(Junior Grade Girls, page 23.)

The compiler must acknowledge her indebtedness to Miss M. F. Cusack and Doctor J. T. Gilbert for their kind permission to incorporate into her history several extracts from their valuable works.

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CHAPTER I.

Henry IV. (Bolingbroke).

[Began to reign 1399. Died 1413.]

Irish Policy.—The usurpation of Henry IV., which gave rise to the sanguinary contests between the Houses of York and Lancaster, drew the attention of English statesmen from Ireland. Having obtained the throne by intrigue and violence, it required every exertion of that able monarch to maintain his position, and obliged him to leave the Government of Ireland almost entirely in the hands of his Deputies.*

Chief Governors.—1. Thomas, Duke of Lancaster, second son of Henry IV., was made Lord Lieutenant. As he was but twelve years of age, a Council was appointed to assist him. Soon after his arrival (1402), John Drake, then Mayor of Dublin, marched against the O'Byrnes of Wicklow, whom he routed near Bray. In return for this service the King granted to the city of Dublin the privilege of having a gilt sword carried before the Mayor.

In 1408 the Duke again assumed the government of

* The compiler, for the sake of perspicuity, has recorded the important events connected with each Chief Governor, under one heading, regardless of chronological order.

Ireland, having stipulated that one or two families from every parish in England should be transplanted into Ireland at the King's expense, and that the laws against absenteeism be enforced. His administration was signalized by an engagement with Macmurrough at KILMAINHAM, in 1408. The English were led by the Duke of Lancaster, Sir Edward Perrers, and Butler, Prior of Kilmainham. The battle, which was violently contested, was fought at a ford on the banks of the River Liffey, thus obtaining for it the appellation of *Athcro*, signifying the bloody ford. The English were totally routed, and the Duke dangerously wounded. He returned to England without being able to subdue the insurgents.

2. In 1401, the post of Deputy to the youthful Viceroy, Prince Thomas, was entrusted to Sir Stephen Scrope, an experienced soldier. "He was commissioned to maintain a peaceful policy, to preserve the safety of the liege people, and to recover the King's rights. He was empowered also to march against, destroy, or pardon, as he should deem fit, the **Irish enemies** and English rebels." Aided by the Earls of Ormond and Desmond and the Prior of Kilmainham, Scrope led an army against Macmurrough, who had again risen in revolt, and defeated him, in 1407, near CALLAN, in Kilkenny. Immediately after the victors marched into the territory of Teige O'Connor, Lord of Ely, and slew him and many of his followers.

3. Sir Thomas Butler, Prior of Kilmainham.—A warlike churchman, appointed Deputy in 1408; made an unsuccessful incursion into O'Byrne's country with a large force of **kerns**. The Prior held a Parliament at Dublin, when the law against **Coigne and Livery** was further confirmed.

Extent of the Pale.—The **Pale** was now limited to the counties of Louth, Meath, Kildare, and Dublin. Its condition was such that it was necessary to remove the prohibition of trading with the Irish of the Marches. Permission was granted to take Irish tenants on the border bounds, and licences were given to place English children with Irish nurses, and even to intermarry with the Irish. The English of Meath were obliged to purchase peace from the Irish by annual tributes or pensions called **Black-rent**.

Technical Terms.—The **Pale** (Latin, *Palus* = a stake). The term **Pale**, signifying a fence or enclosure, was that portion of Ireland in which English law and rule were acknowledged. It varied in extent according to the growth or decrease of English supremacy. Beyond the limited precincts of the **Pale**, the authority of the English King was disregarded. Campion describes it as the place "whereout the English durst not peep." Such of the natives as were suffered to remain within the **Pale** were reduced to the lowest state of servitude, and the natives outside the **Pale** were designated by the Irish settlers "Irish enemies." The lands along the borders of the **Pale** were called the **Marches**.

Kerns.—Lightly armed foot-soldiers, armed with darts, javelins, spears and swords, slings, and sometimes arrows. Gallowglasses were more heavily armed: their chief weapon was the battle-axe; they wore an iron head-piece, and a coat of defence studded with iron nails.

Coigne and Livery.—An exaction of money, food, and entertainment for the soldiers, and of forage for their horses. Under the name of livery the soldiers took,

without payment, victuals for themselves and provender for their horses, and exacted weekly payments, designated "coyngnes."—(*Gilbert.*)

CHRONOLOGY.

1402. The Mayor of Dublin having defeated the O'Byrnes of Wicklow, near Bray, won for that city the distinction of having the sword carried before the Mayor.
1404. O'Moore of Leix defeated the English at Ath-duv with great loss.
1407. Macmurrough defeated at Callan by Lord Deputy Scrope.
1408. Duke of Lancaster defeated by Macmurrough at Kilmainham.
1410. At a Parliament held at Dublin, the Prior of Kilmainham secured severe enactments against the exaction of coigne and livery.
1413. Macmurrough defeated the English at Wexford.

QUESTIONS.

1. Give the origin of the office of Sword Bearer.
2. Define the term English Pale. What was its extent in the reign of Henry IV.
3. Give an account of the Battle of Kilmainham.

CHAPTER II.

Henry V. (Monmouth).

[Began to reign 1413. Died 1422.]

Irish Policy.—Henry was so engrossed with France that he took little or no interest in Irish affairs, and the very existence of the English settlements seems to have been owing to the tributes (**black-rent**) paid to the Irish

chieftains for their protection, and to the disputes of those chieftains among themselves.

Chief Governors.—1. In 1414, Sir John Stanley was appointed Lord Deputy, and signalized himself by his exactions and cruelties. According to the Chroniclers, he plundered in a foray an Irish **bard** named O'Higgin, who in revenge lampooned him so severely that he only survived five weeks.

2. The condition of the country became so serious, that Sir John Talbot, the ablest of the English generals was sent over. He made a rigorous circuit of the borders of the Pale; invaded the territory of O'Moore of Leix ("one of the strongest Irish enemies of Leinster, and a great chieftain of his nation"), laid waste the whole of his lands, and obliged him to fight under the English standard against his fellow-chieftain, MacMahon of Ulster. He acted in like manner towards the O'Hanlons, O'Neills, O'Donnells, so that as it was said, Lord Talbot "obliged one Irish enemy to serve against the other." But the triumph was short-lived, for when the conqueror left the island, the Irish resumed their attacks, and the Palesmen had to purchase relief by the payment of black-rent.

Interim.—O'Connor Faly defeated and despoiled the English of Meath, and Macmurrough overran the English settlements in Wexford, taking 340 prisoners in one day. This was his last military exploit, as he died in 1417. (See Notable Irish Chieftain.)

3. Archbishop Talbot.—Imprisoned Donough, son of Macmurrough, in the Tower, where he remained for nine years.