

THE NORMANS IN THOMOND.—PART III., 1313-1318.

(Continued from page 387, No. 5, Vol. I., Fifth Series.)

By THOMAS JOHNSON WESTROPP, M.A.

Arren Dermot's death, Mortough rallied his forces and allies (Taige O'Kelly, Amiaff O'Madagan, De Burgho, and Butler), and met Donohed and Brian, the sons of Donall, son of Brian Roe (with the Hyblويد, O'Grady, O'Deas, and Mahon O'Brien) camped on a steep hill at Dyserkoben. The King made a stirring, but deceptive speech, assuring his army that numbers would desert to him. Then a herald recited the King's pedigrees and claims, while Mortough stood by in his white fur cassock, trimmed with red and striped blue and gold mail:—

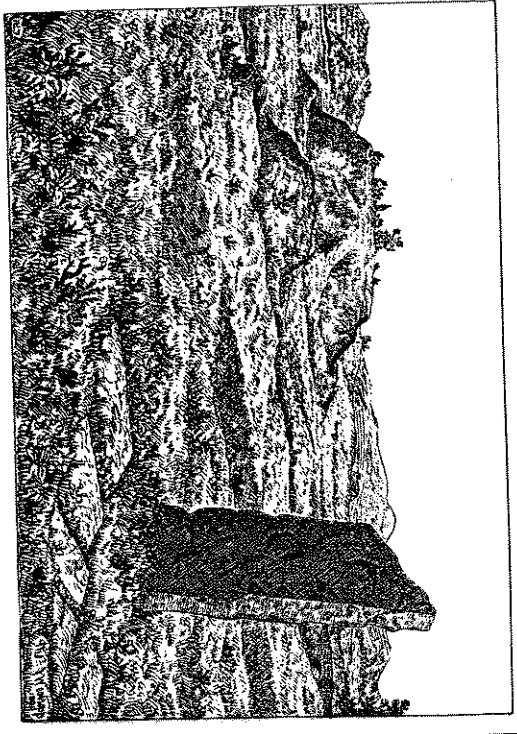
"Mortough is the Trojan Hector of Munster . . .
What is due to the grandson of Teige to Mortough of the dark brows.
Eriú—comprised in the land of Thomond."

Mortough, with his great red shield, led the Clan Torlough across the bogs and up the steep hill in two divisions, namely, the O'Kellys and Madagans in one, and his clansmen and the English in the other; then the Clan Brian raised their wolf-dog ensigns. Mahon and Murchad Maichean led them; they, at first, repelled the Clan Torlough, but the latter gained the top of the ridge, where their foes were too crowded together to use their weapons effectively. Murchad fell fighting the O'Kellys, and the Clan Brian fled, covered by the night. Mahon (whom his men had kept out of the battle) rode "swift as a march hare" to Inchiquin (it was a stone building on an island now joined to the mainland by marshy fields), and thence to Bunratty, obtaining hostages from the M'Namars (the two sons of Lochlain, the eldest son of Macon, and Mahon, son of Coveha).

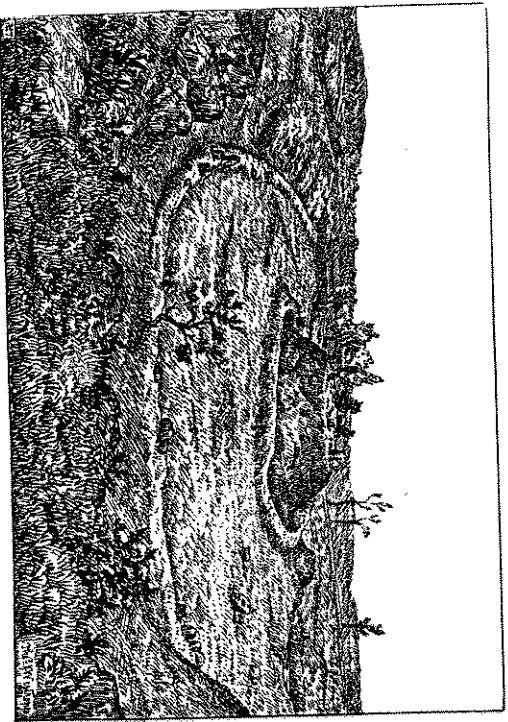
The Clan Cuilen remained neutral till King Mortough, after reducing Corcovaskin, arrived amongst them, and then, with an effusive burst of affection, joined him against the Hyblويد, who pursued and nearly cut off the King, who was in the rear, so the Clan Cuilen pretended to fall on each other, and the Hyblويد, being deceived, joined the pursuers and were completely routed; then, aided by the De Burghos and Comyns, the King plundered Coonagh, Uathiné,² and the eastern bank of the Shannon. Richard de Clare rose to the occasion; he mustered all the cavalry he could collect, fomented a quarrel among the King's supporters, and hanged his hostages, except O'Brien and Mahon, the son of Coveha, who were saved by Lady de Clare and the priests, and ransomed; then he drove the Clan Torlough out of Thomond; some dying to Maunmigh and Uathiné, and falling in with a plundering party of the M'Namars led by Aodh and Rory, sons of Lochlain, the son of Stoda, captured and beheaded them all. A squadron, under Dermot, Mortough's brother, and Macon crossed the Shannon into Ormond, among the O'Hogins, and thence to Uathiné, but as they returned home invaded the Hyblويد

¹ "Cath.," p. 280.

² *Ibid.*, p. 302.



MAHON ADHAR, NEAR QUIN, CO. CLARE, FROM THE WEST.
Place of inauguration of the Kings of Thomond



MAHON ADHAR FROM NORTH-EAST.

territory. They took a vast spoil of cattle, although many got loose in the thickets, and were drowned in the streams; at least a huge army of the Hyblóid hemmed them in on the river-bank, and nearly all the boats had been destroyed. "I like not this fence of princes," said Maccon, looking towards the foe; but he encouraged his troops, and they swore to fight till heaven and hell changed places and the solid earth was overturned. The Hyblóid pressed them back with sling stones and javelins, and they were thrown into dreadful confusion by the maddened herds of cattle they had plundered. The men compelled Dermot and Maccon to escape in two of their remaining canoes, the latter wounded, and with his horse swimming beside him; they reached the royal army who, in impatient anger, watched the strife from the further bank, and fled away to Uairné.

The deserted troops fought with savage despair; those too weak to fight cut off the heads of the slain Hyblóid and threw them into the Shannon, in revenge for Loughlin Macnamara; six of their commanders fell in quick succession, and they were slain almost to a man, or driven into the river. After this decisive "breach of the river-bank" the estates met at Moy Adhar,¹ and inaugurated Donchad King in opposition to Mortough.²

1314. Mortough's soldiers wintered among the Butlers, but quarrelled with them at Troopford (Ath na Cuir), and were with difficulty collected and led into Connacht; wearied of their raids King Donchad gave Clonrod and Hy Cainsu to his rival. De Clare went to England to look after his estates,³ and, in his absence, the Kings skirmished with little result, save that the Cian Cúilen burned Dangan Uí Ghnada, the O'Grady's chief castle, and, coming on a forest camp of that tribe, made a horrible massacre of the women and children; slew the cattle, and drove the Cinel Donghailé to seek refuge with King Donchad in Rockforest; they

¹ Magh Adhar.—Thanks to the kindness of Rev. J. B. Greer, of Tuila, I have, since writing this Paper, been able to inspect and sketch this most interesting site, which ought surely to be reared as a national monument. It closely resembles Cairn Fiesh in Roscommon, where the O'Conors were inaugurated. See *R. H. A. J. Journal*, 1870 (vol. i., series 4, pp. 246, 250). In November, 1839, it retained the name of "Moy Ar Park," and large meetings were held there; it is now, May, 1891, considered a chief's grave. As will be seen from the illustrations, it consists of a large flat topped mound, 20 feet high, surrounded by a low fosse across which, to the west, leads an inclined way 8 paces long; to the north-side of the platform is a grave-like hollow lying east and west, while near the centre is a rough and weather-worn stone nearly level with the ground. To the west side is a smaller cairn of earth and stones (with a sloping way to the south) on the bank of the Hell River; these mounds stand in a small artificially levelled plain, fenced in by a low semicircular enclosure, marked at intervals by boundary stones; and north of the great mound of inauguration is a huge block of pink conglomerate with pebbles of brilliant scarlet porphyry; it is between 3 and 4 feet high, with an oval basin ground into it, and another hollow beside it. Across the stream, about 141 feet to the west is a large pillar 6' 3" x 8' to 10' thick, tapering from 3' 0" at foot to 2' 6" at top, and its axis lying N.-E. and S.-W. Nearer the stream is a shattered and weathered stone, apparently the base of a second and older pillar. The hills and crags behind the levelled plain form a natural amphitheatre, practically the same height as the mound. Magh Ar. is about 4 miles S.-W. of Tuila, which is the only striking feature visible from it. (See also *supra*, p. 285. The pillar is only named in one translation, and is not in the R. I. A. text).

² *Uath.*, p. 322.

³ Next year we find that the king has recently granted him estates in Somerset ("Abbey Charter," vol. i., p. 208). He was also granted the castles and lands held in captie by Gilbert, Earl of Gloucester ("Exchequer Rolls," Dublin, 9 Edw. II., No. 495, Feb. 29, 1315).

then returned to Mortough, bearing numbers of human heads aloft before their army. De Clare, however, returned and rallied the Clan Brian, and Mortough, though he burned Bunnatry and the O'Grady's houses in Kinnasoola, was deserted by O'Seanchain of Hy Ronghaile, on the eve of a battle, and so was only able to hold his own along Iorrbhan¹ and the ford of Seariff (Sgarbh).²

1315. De Clare prepared to invade Leinster³ (where the hill tribes were troublesome), and being evidently anxious to leave no foes behind, formed an entrenched camp on a hill in Hy Ronghaile, on the one easy passage between Seariff and Tulla. Tradition speaks of an attack on him in which he drove many of the Irish into the marshes near Lougballinooon lake, but he evidently had to retire, as his ally Donohad was defeated at Seariff by Mortough in person. Now, the previous winter the Clan Cuilen, worn out by famine and intense cold in Eadachy, had submitted to Donohad, and Maccon hospitably entertained him, gave him hostages, and got De Clare to ratify the truce, and grant the Clan Cuilen a charter of Hy Caism. O'Seanchain dreaded lest Donohad should turn against him by the influence of Maccon, and aroused the king's suspicions to such a degree that Maccon, finding it out, had him a courteous but formal farewell. O'Seanchain went to De Clare under protection of Richard de Burgho, and failing to bring hostages remained at Bunnatry. De Clare then exchanged Maccon, son of Donnall M'Namara, for Brian, son of Malhon O'Brien; the former hostage, attributed his release to the O'Deas, who had asked aid from the Clan Cuilen; these, in a state of wild gratitude, joined King Mortough (who was, strange to say, supported by De Clare), and marched through Kinnasoola to assist them. Here Malhon O'Brien deserted to the O'Grady's, and told King Donohad of the intended revolt of Kinel Fermanic, so Donohad fell on the O'Deas (who were, of course, unprepared), defeated them and took all their cattle. Hearing this, Mortough's army, who had been idling in Tredree, crossed the Fergin without their leaders, and routed the Clan Brian, taking much armour, and bringing heaps of heads to Mortough at Drom Deargh, truly called "the red ridge," from these gory trophies. Donohad fled to the hills of Iorrbhan in Corcovasquin, and his enemies ravaged that place to Knockan-

¹ Forbairt, evidently (from its proximity to Seariff) is not the place of that name (on pp. 289, 290, *ante*), where Tormough sought refuge, and which lies along the Furror river west of Ennisk.

² "Gabh," p. 380.

³ He received 100 marks from the Exchequer for assisting Edmond le Battler against the Irish of Leinster ("Roll," 1315, No. 543).

⁴ De Clare "remained stationed in the centre of the country (Hy Ronghaile) to confer kinghood on the English," "Gabh," p. 362. In this district a little north of Ballynahinch House is a hill (a splendid strategic position, with apparently triple entrenchments, and a long bank across the neck of land between the lakes) named "Kilconnell," where graves covered with rude slabs were found. In 1839 it retained the name "Clach na Gail," and the tradition that an English army camped here, and was defeated by an Irish army from Tomgrane (O'Donovan's and O'Curry's "Letters"). This corresponds well with the defeat of De Clare's ally near Seariff, and no such event is recorded in later times. Another tradition states that the English repelled the Irish driving numbers to destruction in the marshes and lake. This was told by Captain C. G. O'Callaghan of Ballynahinch, and Mr. Whelan, of Kilconnell, who heard it from the older inhabitants many years ago. The summit commands a view from the "plain of Fermanic" to the woods above Tomgrane, and along all the hills of the Hyrbid and Eadachy.

Locha, east of Kilmash; then he fled to his old foe, Teige O'Kelly, and was well received, his brother Brian O'Brien retired to Corcomroe, and thence raided along the border to Slieve Eadachy, where the enemy came in sight "as far off as one could see from the hill." So his army scattered and fled over the ford of Killaloe, while he and his friends escaped with difficulty, and got sanctuary at Holy Island (Innisceathra).¹

1316. King Donohad (having been weakened by his support of Felim O'Conor, whose defeat he shared at Atherry, Aug. 10th) went northward to get aid from the Scotch.² "then invading Ireland, under Edhward (Bruce), "brother of the King of Alban." They had landed at Carrickfergus, May, 1315. Richard de Burgho, the mighty Earl of Ulster, opposed them, and under his standard fought Sir Richard de Clare. Barbour, in his famous poem on Bruce, exaggerated De Clare's position greatly. "That was first Seir Richard of Clare, that in all Ireland Buffemard was off the King of England," but De Clare was defeated at Dundalk, and fell back on Dublin. King Robert Bruce joined his brother in the spring of 1316, and ravaging all before them, they

¹ South till Linnik held their way, that is the southmost town petty, that in Ireland any fandan be—their laye they dayes twa or thre.

The nobility of Leath Moga, who had mustered to repel the Scotch, put King Mortough over the Celtic contingent, for he had gone to Connacht to meet Richard de Burgho, when the latter fled from the Scotch at Coleraine,³ and the English said that justice fought on their side for the true King of Erin led them.⁴ On Holy Thursday (March 30, 1317), Edmond Butler, the justiciary, De Clare, the Cantons, and others, with a great army (Grace says 30,000), lay near Loddry in the neighbourhood of Limerick, opposite the Scotch, who had taken Castleconnell. Aoith M'Namara was wounded in a slight skirmish, and the Scotch marched to Saingeal (Shingal) before the walls of Limerick. They soon retreated to the north, where their power and Edward Bruce's life ended next year at Dundalk, but they had dragged to destruction the Norman power in Ireland—it had got its deathblow—and it withered and died.

¹ "Gabh," p. 386. In 1316 Edmond le Battler gets £25 for his expense in driving Brien O'Brien out of Monmouth ("Patent Rolls," 10 Ed. II.).

² Ireland names O'Brien of Thomond among Bruce's supporters. Donough and many of his chiefs had assisted Felim O'Conor at Atherry, Aug. 10, 1316, where William de Burgho and Bermingham were victors ("Ann. Clonmacnois," T.C.D.).

³ It would seem from the same authority that Donough had previously defeated and expelled Mortough, see p. 210, *ibid.*

⁴ "Written in 1375. See Book xiv," lines 136, and Book xvi., 264. It differs in many points from the actual history, whereas the "Cathrenn" is confirmed even in details by the Annals and Rolls.

⁵ "Ann. Clonmacnois," 1316, p. 210.

⁶ "Gabh," p. 388.

⁷ O'Donovan identifies it with Rath Iathin (Rahine), but "Lodry," or "Ledin" appears to have been near Castleconnell. In 1291 the "Plea Rolls" (19 E. I. 67) mention the manors of Leithin, Clare, and Bunnatry. Still I question the identity, none the less that O'Donovan wrongly states that the master of the English, March 30, is Dermot's master of Aug. 15. Glyn says at Basser there was a great master of the nobility against the Scotch in Castle Conyher. "Sir Richard de Clare kept a strong force at Derrah" (? Bunnatry). This is confirmed by the *Plea Rolls* Cal. (vol. v., p. 27), which state that Sir Richard ordered his bailiffs "to seize eight cows as Amy for the support of his army near Lodry, resisting the Scotch felons" (Edmond le Battler at Lodry, gardens Feber Hugelot and others ("Pat. Rolls," 11 E. II.).

Butler was still at Loddyn on April 10th, and about this time Lord Mortimer came to Ireland and summoned a Parliament at Kilmashnam for the following May. Donchad meanwhile invaded Kinel Donaghille, found that Brúna had gone, and while retiring to Corcomroe, made a raid to Quin, and was driven out by Felmy. "The hospitable" (Feidhlimidh an chingh), son of Donnell O'Connor. Richard de Clare patched up another peace, and went to attend the Parliament. Fearing his misrepresentations, Mortough also went thither under protection of Butler, for the king was an accomplished statesman, and spoke the languages of England.

He left his brother Dermot in command, who, on the Feast of the Assumption (Aug. 15, 1317) assembled the chiefs at Rathliffa (Lath and Lathin), and after mass stood up (showing to advantage his golden locks, and towering height) and, his blue eyes sparkling with excitement, addressed each chief by name, asking their support against Brian; they joyfully promised it, and a few days later nine thousand swordsmen, mustered at Ruan. Maccon said: "I am a true prophet; you will have a fierce battle, and slay their princes Donchad and Mortough Garbh, and I will recover my favorite corslet which O'Brien holds." They slept the first night at the veils of Mae Amburion (which give their name to Corohn), then up the road of Bohernamoyrigh. "The Prince's road" (which then deserved its name), past the bluff wooded hills and lake and Mahon's Castle, at Inchiquin, over the white crags of Mullaighfall, and the wooded Cryghwell, and up into Dubh Gleam on the old track of Conor na Suidhne, giving some of the spoil to Aherm (Eachtegen), Dermot's foster-brother, and they reached "the stable hand of the Abbey" of Corcomroe, driving their cattle into its enclosure, whose dried fragments and night in the polished cells of the grand purple marbled abbey, and the smooth, grave-fagged sanctuary. When a scout told Donchad that the Torlough held the abbey he cried "this battle will ruin the Gael, and the like granting written charters to the English," and he sent and gathered the Clan Brian, Clan Teige, Clan Mahon, O'Flaherty, and O'Deas at Kihil Leire and Meol Oghraim. "The birds of prey," sang his bard, "will thank us; they want human flesh." They marched down to Lough Rask, a little farm between the mountains and the sea at Ballyvaughan, and there stopped in wonder: for on its bank sat a hag, hideous and

Rathliffa
is deep
with
M. Hervey
was told

deformed, with a heap of human heads, limbs and helmets, washing them diligently, the whole lake being defiled with hair, blood and brains. The king asked the crone who she was: "I am Bronnach (the mournful one) of Burren, of the race of the Danasars and all your heads are in this slaughter heap." "Heed her not," said Donchad, "she is a friendly spirit to Clan Torlough." Dermot's forces were resting in the White Abbey when Thomas M'Uthale O'Griffy saw the host approaching, and gave notice; the prince put on his purple-flowered "gothon," edged with fur, over his mail; his stein handle was adorned with pearls, and his sword with gilt figures; his body-guard was marshalled by Cléva M'Gorman, a veteran who had fought for Forlough, and marched out of the abbey precinct in good order. Maccon was in high spirits, having put on his corslet wrong side before, which was counted lucky. He swore he would wear no armour till he won it from the foe. The Clan Brian appeared in sight with roystan crows, ravens and hawks fluttering above them, an ominous sign. The forest met on the plain of Drom Lurgan; they discharged a shower of arrows, darts, and stones at each other; the hills re-echoed with their shouts, clouds covered the sun, and the sea roared behind them; soon their green, white, and purple tunics were red with gore, and the armies were mixed in the wilderness of the fight. The Clan Teige made a circuit and fell on the enemy. Brian, the King's brother, was wounded on the head. Felmy and the Kinel Fernach broke the enemy's ranks, and the Hyblid were almost cut to pieces. Seeing the battle turning against him, King Donchad attacked Felmy, and wounded him with his spear, but he received so severe a blow on the chin from O'Connor's axe, that it crushed in his side without breaking his chain armour, and staggering back he was slain with darts by Dermot's guards. When Brian saw his brother killed, and his cousin and uncle, M'Ortoigh Garbh and Brian Bearra mortally wounded, he fled with his army to the hills. The Clan Torlough did not attempt a long pursuit; though victors, they had lost more men than the foe, so they held the battlefield where the wounded still feebly fought, or bit and gnawed each other's heads and faces like Dante's "Ugolino."

The wounded were brought to the Abbey; "they are no longer foes but brothers," said the victors. The M'Mahons identified the slain M'Ortoigh, lavishes nearly ninety epithets on her, reaching his greatest redundancy in this episode, which gives the most "scientific" account of a Danesee extant. "1. 'Bodh.' Mr. W. M. Hennessy gave a most valuable article on the three ancient Irish war goddesses Bodbh, Macha, and Ana, or Morrigan (*Proceedings*, R. I. A., 1866-69, p. 422). Bodbh is a Tuatha de Danann, feeds on men's heads, and is called 'Bronnach,' like this 'Danse of the Burren,' feeds on men's heads, and is called 'Bronnach.' Hing of Black Head." Bodbh embosches herself as a royston crow (these birds immanently appear in the 'Cathraim'). The ancestral Danesee of the O'Briens was Athill, commemorated in Cragacrym on Craglea, near Killinloe. Brian Boin says ("Wars G. G."): "Albhall of Craglea came to me last night and told me I should be killed to day."

"Cath." p. 450.
The low ridge between is Galway Bay ("Ogygia," vol. ii., c. 3. 15), this is probably the north of the road from Lough Rask, and the battle, evidently, was in sight of the Abbey—however, vast quantities of bones have been found near Mortylogh. "Annals of the Four Masters." Donough O'Brien, King of Munster, was slain. Perhaps Grace's vague note, 1317, "Two Kings of Connaught fought, and 1000 Irish were slain," refers to this.

¹ Felmy was chief, 1310, and died 1365. He and his father are mentioned by the Annalists. He was eighth in descent from Conchobhar, Lord of Corcomroe, slain 1002. The Clan appear in history from Flathberthach, son of Dubhrich, Lord of Corcomroe, 871. They granted nearly all their lands to the O'Briens by a deed, January 2, 1862 (Hardiman). See also their pedigree, MSS. R. I. A., 14, C. 1, p. 12. Dublin, and "Patent Rolls." Furlon to Morter O'Brien at investigation of Edmund Butler. As Grace uses O'Brine and O'Briene for the Thomond family, 1278, 1306, 1318, and O'Brinos for O'Brine and O'Briene for the Thomond family, 1278, 1306, 1318, and O'Brinos for O'Brine and O'Briene for the Thomond family, 1278, 1306, 1318, He is well described in the war songs of 1317. His army included the Clan M'Eschmoe, Molony, M'Gormon, M'Mahon, some O'Leas, O'Habli, O'Griffy, O'Connor (who alone of his tribe supported Dermot), and the chief of Formoye, near Glenormer.

² "Cath." p. 422.
³ Probably Letter Conan (Lairich Conan), Formoye (For Mao), two adjoining hamlets in the hills of western Burren.
⁴ "Cath." p. 438.

princes, who were buried in separate graves, and the common soldiers of both armies in great trenches, each clan together. Rory M'Grath (ancestor of him who wrote the "Cathrein") conducted the burials and ordered carved slabs to be placed on the chiefs. The whole of the Abbey-yard and aisles were dug up for burial and soaked with blood. "This is the third bloody slaughter of the Dalgaiss since the Gael came from blue Spain to Erin," namely, "Clontarf, against the black Danes, Norwegians, and chilly Finlanders;" the attack of the men of Ossory on Donchad, son of Brian Boru, and this battle of the Abbey. Then the bards composed songs, of which these are fragments. Of these, as of the previously quoted songs, I only give selections:—

"Triumphant, oh! Clan Tail, is your march to the white hills of Burren!
Bravely ye brake the battle where fell a King and his heir.
As long as bards exist your warfare will be sung.

Be ye blessed, oh! Clan Tail, for you won in every fight.

More fell of Clan Cullen than fell of the foemen;
No man of your armies fell but a King's son fell in return.
In war, the Clan Cullen were bravest and best;
In fight, the most wounded and triumphant.

Our hosts fell, not unavenged, in the desolation of Burren;
Fortunate yet sorrowful our march, yet bravely we contended;
We paid our foes in blood, and bereft them of their leaders.

They had Donchadh, son of Donnall O'Brian of Dunaki, their King;
Yet more of their Princes we gave to death.
Now they lament Brian Bearra, but his death gives peace to our clansmen;
Mortogh Garbh, the merry, lives not to slay us; he was not our loyal friend.
Grievous the battle near the Abbey, in the highlands of white Burren."

Among the wounded of Clan Torlough were Feimny O'Connor, who recovered to slay the last of the De Clares; and O'Heim, who died thanking God for giving him his desire on his enemies; Aodh, son of Donchad M'Namara, "the true heir of Clan Cullen," was also mortally wounded by O'Seanohain, but slew the latter and after lingering for a fortnight, died at Clorrood; with him fell 21 of the Clan Cullen, and 280 were wounded. Macon himself composed and sang his cousin's dirge:—

"Ah me! that I have lost Aodh, the branching spray of my heart!
My understanding and my sensible soul!
Our great fowling hawk; our shepherd; the keeper of our people;
The towering tree; the green shaded arbour; the darling of heroes!
Grievous is our loneliness for Aodh of the golden armour!"¹

Then came a rumour that the foe had rallied, so the wounded of Clan Torlough, stopping their wounds with moss, joined the efficient force; it proved to be O'Dea, with insolent demands which the victors indignantly refused. Mahon O'Brien (who had not been in the battle), menaced their

march, but he saw their brave array and retired, sending flattering messages, so Dermot returned in safety to Clorrood.

Mortough had been well received in Parliament; he had helped the English; his rival had aided the Scotch. De Clare (whom many suspected of dealings with Bruce, though the King gave him money and cancelled his debt of £1000 to the Exchequer)² spent the winter in Cork; he returned to Thomond in the spring of 1318, and called on Mortough to restore certain lands to Mahon O'Brien, who held Inchiquin and the district westward to the ocean under a charter of De Clare. Mortough had long coveted Inchiquin (his father's palace), and, having been publicly insulted by Mahon "before the Irish and English," seized on some of his lands, which he not only refused to restore, but drove Mahon out of Thomond; for he dared not trust himself in Bunnatty lest De Clare would deal with him as his father, Sir Thomas, dealt with King Brian. Macon got a safe conduct from Lady De Clare and her son, and, refusing all offers for himself, tried to make terms for Mortough, but De Clare said "war is the only hope now." The chief Barons attempted to make peace between the foes at Limerick, but failed, so they escorted the Irish out of Thomond Gate. The clans retreated by moonlight through the Crailoe woods and the hazel thickets of Ballymucassel, past Cullane lake, with its flocks of wild fowl, "to the high, mass-celebrating, virtuous, sweet bell-ringing, tribes of Tulla-man-alspól," and, camping round its church, sent out a troop and plundered the outskirts of Bunnatty, to which Richard De Clare had returned with favourable moonlight and high tide down the river.

De Clare remained on the defensive till they left with their plunder for Feckry, and then sent to Sir William De Burgho asking him to convey the O'Grady's and Clan Mahon to Killingspola. De Burgho only marched to Ardrabin, and there delayed till it was too late. Sir Richard, without waiting for reinforcements, set out on his last expedition, camping for the night in Finghin's church at Gunn, where so many of his father's soldiers had perished in the fire. Next day he crossed the Fergans at Nutfield, and seeing a woman washing rich but blood-stained robes, sent one of his Irish soldiers to question her. "I am Bronagh," she replied, "and I often abide in the fairy hills of this land, but my residence is among the dwellers of Hell, whither I invite you." As at Lough Rask, the doomed man scoffed, and, fording the river, camped in the district of "Raan of the Entrenchments."

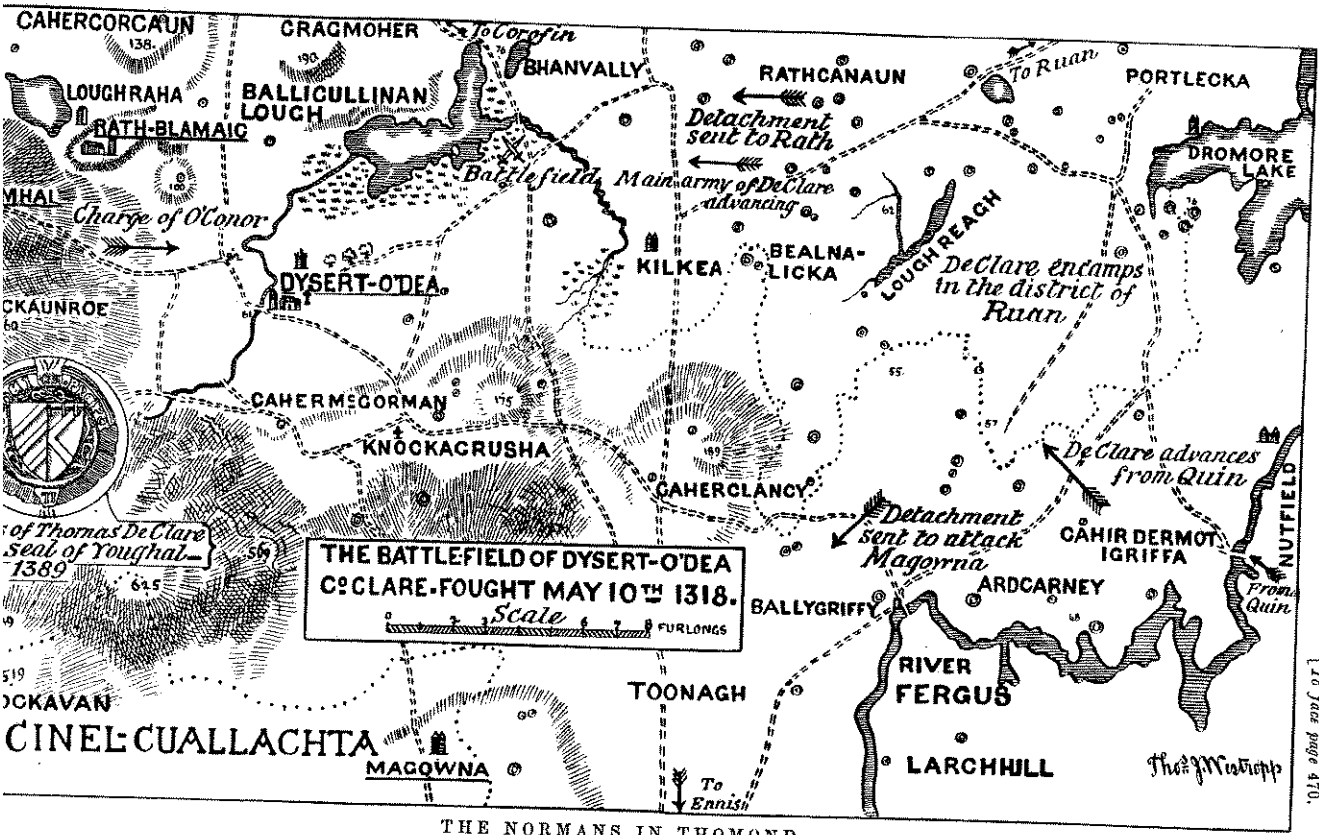
The watchmen of Conor O'Dea saw the English host, and that chief sent in hot haste for Loughlin O'Hehir and Feimny O'Connor, despatching Thomas O'Griffy to offer a great bribe to De Clare, but the latter refused it, saying he had no peace for his foes. Now, in the marshy meadows between the craggy district and the lake below Dysett O'Dea, were a causeway and ford; near this O'Dea planted an ambuscade of picked men in a grove.

¹ "Scotch Exchequer Roll."

² Margerth is confirmed by the "Plea Rolls" of Michaelmas, 1317, and spring.

At early dawn of that beautiful spring morning (Thursday, May 10th, 1318),¹ De Clare sent battalions through Cinel Cuallachta, down the Fergus, to Magowna and past Dyseret to "the prospect-pleasing Rath," to take on O'Deas in the rear, while with the flower of his troops he advanced more than a mile westward. He soon saw a number of Irish driving cattle across the stream and attacked them, killing many. This, however, was only a snare of O'Deas's to draw him off the direct route into the broken and marshy ground, so the survivors having crossed the ford turned and defended the causeway so well that he himself with his bravest knights rode to the front. The O'Deas slowly retreated fighting till De Clare and his men were near the wood, and then the ambushade, taking them on the flank, seized the ford. Cut off from the main army, De Clare, Sir Thomas de Lese, Sir Henry Capel, Sir James and Sir John Cantleton, Adam Ap-
¹ Too late to save their leaders the main body of the English forced their way with difficulty across the stream and beset the survivors of the O'Deas in the wood; just then O'Connor and his troops appeared on the hill of Scamhall (where a steep road still leads above Rath to Dyseret on an extensive view over the battle-field). They charged down the slope and stood their ground bravely, slaying numbers of their foes who, having joined the O'Deas, and finding themselves attacked, closed in their ranks "like a strong fortress." It was a death-struggle on both sides, for hemmed in by the stream and marshes neither dared to retreat from the other. De Clare's son Thomas fought Felim hard to hand, receiving three wounds. Despite his despairing courage, worthy of such a race of warriors, the brave lad was slain.

² "5 Jan Mai (11th) die foris in mane," Gyn. "6 Idus Mai (10th)." "An-
 nist," T.C.D. "Die Gorman et Bepnabhi," (May 10th), Pembroke. When I last
 visited the battlefield, April 28th, 1891, the marshes were in many parts quite impass-
 able, despite the dryness of the spring. The Hills of Berran and Shive Berran are
 clearly visible from it; also Inchiquin Hill, towards which De Clare was marching.
³ At the time of the Ordnance Survey, 1839 (vol. i., "Letters on Clare," p. 139),
 this legend prevailed at Dyseret: Conor Lyons (probably Conor Imbur, who fought for
 Dermot at Corcomroe), laid an ambushade and put hurdles on two cross heathes over the
 stream, so that one beam could be easily removed; this he pushed out (having hidden
 off his head, while the O'Deas killed all the English). The great battle with Clarengh-
 more is still remembered, and the court near Kihahoy is called "De Clare's House."
⁴ Sir Thomas de Lese was probably a relative of Sir Maurice (Thomas de Clare's
 retainer, 1287). In 1319 the King orders William de Hampton to hold Garthbyboys
 in Limerick, held by Thomas Lees from Richard de Clare, both deceased ("Aubrey
 Chart," vol. i., p. 247). Another Thomas, son of Hugh de Lese, was Governor of
 Limerick Castle, August, 1325 (Patent). Glyn, alone of the Annals, gives the
 correct name (not De Nasc). Sir Henry Capel claimed lands at Inchydrum, county
 Limerick, 1290 ("Plea Rolls"). He witnessed a charter of Thomas de Clare to St.
 Mary's Limerick ("Liber Neger," MSS. T.C.D. k. 4. 16 pp. 18-95). Sir John Can-
 tleton, son of William, was in a lawsuit, 1302 ("Exchequer Rolls"), and again, 1312,
 with Richard de Clare (*Ibid.*, vol. vii., p. 40). He got protection on going to Scotland,
 county Limerick, January, 1318 ("Pat. Rolls," 81, E. 1). Sir James was appointed Sheriff of
 against the Scotch (Kynner's "Pat. Rolls," 11, E. 2). The Ardizards served
 as holding lands in Cork.
⁵ New Scotland, the very name in the "Annals of the Four Masters," 1562,
 "Scimhal over Rath Blathmac."



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Mortough had already heard of De Clare's raid, and started after him from Eachty, past Spaul Hill (Knock Urhally) and over the Fergus-burned houses and wasted lands showed him the Norman's march—he hurried on, the men throwing off their tunics to be less impeded; then appeared groups of fugitives, who scattered as he approached; then the vague rumour of a great slaughter; at last he came in sight of the battle raging in the greatest confusion—all order being at an end.

Felmy, fancying the King's army were English, made one strong effort and swept aside the relics of De Clare's force to find himself face to face with his friends. They gave three great shouts and, reinforced by O'Hehir (who arrived just as the King came in sight), united against the English; these—not knowing they were defeated, even then a characteristic of their armies—rallied and fell where they stood, save a few whom Mortough pursued to Bunnatty, but as he came in sight the castle and town burst into a sheet of flame, for Lady Johan de Clare's hearing of the death of her husband and son, had in an agony of terror placed her treasures and all the English in barges and fled over the Shannon, leaving only charred ruins to the victors. The body of Richard de Clare was found among the slain and heven into small pieces by some of his enemies (probably the Cian Cullen, whose chief Molechann had been thus treated by De Clare's allies); but the mangled fragments and the body of young Thomas de Clare were brought to Limerick and laid in the Franciscans' Church, thus in one morning the whole Norman power in Thomond was annihilated for ever.¹ Brian, the last prince of Cian Brian, escaped from Dyseret to Ormond, and having defeated Mortough in 1329, was left in possession: he was ancestor of the O'Briens Arra. The English, who hated De Clare for his haughtiness and cruelty, left Mortough in peace, and he reigned in Clonroad two and thirty years, and died 1343, being succeeded by his brave and loyal brother Dermot. The English Government assigned Bunnatty to

¹ "Cath.," p. 611.

² See "Annals of the Four Masters," 837, 1569.

³ "Cath.," p. 618.

⁴ I collect some of the oldest notices of this great battle: "Annals of Lough Ce," "Richard a Clare mortuus est;" "Annals of Innisfallen, T.C.D.," "6^{to} 14^{to} Maii occiditur D. Ric de Clare cum iv. milibus et multis aliis per Mauntram Iberin Tokomonia;" "O'ryn," "5^{to} 14^{to} Maii occiditur D. Ric de Clare per suos Hibernicos de Tokomonia cum iv. milibus D. Thoma de Leese D. Henrico de Capella D. Jacobo et T.C.D.," "Et Dns Ricus de Clare occisus erat et iv. milibus D. Henrico de Capella D. Thoma de Leese D. Jaco de Canston et D. John de Camis et Adam Aplegard cum aliis 80^{to} hominibus p. obitu sciddebat et reliquis eius sepulta in Iymetoch in free minore;" "Annals of the Four Masters" omit all account of the battle. Note that M'Grath gives no songs relating to Dyseret, as no man of note fell on the Irish side, which favours the genuineness of his other quotations. The earliest mention of Richard de Clare's death will be found in the "Exchequer Rolls," July 16th, 1318; also his "Inquisitio post mortem."—Vol. x., p. 112, order dated 16th October, 1319.

⁵ Heroes of Galbhrain:—"Annals Nenagh, T.C.D., MSS. F. 1. 16," "Mortuaria O'Brien f. Theodori princeps Mononie obiit nocte Janti sepult. e. fibus minoris de Chonnamade 1343;" "Dermitus O'Brien quond princeps Tokomonia obiit prope Ardathin in Connacia vigilia convors S. Pauli et sepult nocte in hoc canobio 1364;" "Annals of the Four Masters" say that Mortough was succeeded by Dermot, 1343, and the latter was deposed by his nephew, Mahon Maonmairgh 1360. Brian rallied, and defeated the English, 1352, and Mortogh, the Cian Cullen, and Torlough, King of Connemagh, 1359. He was assassinated, 1361. Mahon was dispossessed and slain, 1319. Felmy died in high repute, 1365.

Matilda, wife of Robert de Wells, and Margaret, wife of Bartholomew de Bathsmere; for they were sisters of Richard de Clare,¹ and appointed Robert Sutton to hold the castle as a safeguard to the traders of Limerick till 1332, eleven years before Motough died, when it was taken by him and the Macnamaras,² so the old chief lived to see his power absolute in Thomond from the gates of Limerick to the Cliffs of Moher.³

¹ The "Abbey Chart," vol. i., p. 266. The King gives Matilda de Wells 488 lvs. 9d., Bonnet and "Conyers" (Conry-Quin) Castles and Cortemoyrd, sub-*ibid.*, vol. ii., p. 6. Justiciary divides the lands of Thomas, son of Richard de Clare, and p. 13, is to hold the Castle of Bomeath and land of Tochemond for the King, 1327. Finally, 1344 ("Patent Rolle, England"). Margaret de Badlesmere, Thomas, son of Ric. de Clare, and Robert, son of Matilda de Clifford, as next heirs hold the seigniorship of the Essex forests at one penny per annum.

² "Clv," "Castrum de Bonnet (quod multorum iudicio inextinguibile videbatur) per O'Breine et M'Nemare destruitur."
³ The leading sites of the war can be thus visited:—Cradoe, Ballygallen, Bunnetty, Kahlaine, Quin, Clare Abbey, Ennis, Rath, Dysert, and Inchiquin, are easily reached from the railways; Coromroe, Glanmanagh and Suddaine (as well as Dysert), by car from Kilmaloe; and Innesalva by boat from Scariff. There are fine views across the battle grounds of Trillick, Clare Abbey, Quin, and Dysert, from the train between Limerick and Corófn.