

# Giraldus Cambrensis The Conquest of Ireland

translated by

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## The Author's First Preface.

Forasmuch as in my Topography of Ireland I have described at large the site of the island, its singularities, and those of sundry things contained in it, the marvels in which nature has there indulged out of her ordinary course, and the origin of the various races settled in it from the earliest ages until these our own days, I have now undertaken, at the earnest request of many persons of high rank, to set forth in a separate volume the annals of events which have occurred in our own days relating to the last and recent conquest of Ireland. For if I have been able to give a tolerably clear account of times long past, and of things which happened in ages so far preceding our own, how much more exact will be my narrative of transactions which have taken place under my own observation, of the greatest part of which I have been an eye-witness, and which are so fresh in my memory that I cannot have any doubt about them. The Topography treats of localities and events connected with ancient times, the History deals with the present.

But methinks I see some one turn up his nose, and, disgusted with my book, hand it to another, or throw it aside, because the reader will find all things in it plain, clear, and easy of apprehension. But let him know that I have written chiefly for the use of the laity, and of princes who have but little learning, and desire things to be related in so simple and easy a style, that all may understand them. For we may be permitted to use popular language when the acts of the people, as well as of their superiors, are to be reduced to writing. Besides, it has been my endeavour to compose all my works in a popular style, easy of apprehension, however I may have added to it some ornament from my own stores; and I have therefore entirely rejected the old and dry method of writing used by some authors. And, inasmuch as new times require new fashions, and the philosopher bids us follow the examples of the old men in our lives, and of the younger men in our words, I have earnestly aimed to adopt the mode of speech which is now in use, and the modern style of eloquence. For since words only give expression to what is in the mind, and man is endowed with the gift of speech for the purpose of uttering his thoughts, what can be a greater folly than to lock up and conceal things we wish to be clearly understood, in a tissue of unintelligible phrases and intricate sentences? To shew ourselves sciolists in a knowledge of our own, shall we take pains so to write, that others may see without comprehending, and hear without understanding? Is it not better, as Seneca says, to be dumb, than to speak so as not to be understood? The more, then, language is suited to the understanding, though framed with a certain elegance of style, the more useful it will be, as well as more suited to the tastes of men of letters. Wherefore the poet says,

Dixeris egregie notum si callida verbum  
Reddiderit junctura novum.

Inasmuch also as some malevolent person has made slanderous attacks on my Topography, a work not to be despised, I have thought it worth my while to introduce here a few words in its defence.<sup>1</sup> The elegance of its scholastic Style has obtained uniform praise from all quarters; and though it is contrary to my detractor's nature to commend anything, he is ashamed and afraid to cavil at my First and Third Distinctions. But it is no easy matter to act a counterfeit part, and my critic, not being able quite to change his natural disposition, that he might at least do some mischief, and vent the malignity with which he was

<sup>1</sup> This book against Giraldus's Topography of Ireland appears to be lost, and even the author's name is unknown.

bursting, he boldly cavils at the Second Distinction, hoping that by convicting me of falsehood in that he shall discredit the whole. His objections are of this sort:—the author, he says, “introduces a wolf talking with a priest; he draws a picture of a creature with the body of a man, and the extremities of an ox; he tells us of a bearded woman; and of a goat and a lion which had intercourse with women.” Let him, however, if he is so shocked at these stories, read in the Book of Numbers how Baalam’s ass spoke, and the prophet chid the ass. Let him read the lives of the Fathers, and he will find Anthony conversing with a satyr; and that Paul the hermit was fed in the desert by a raven. Let him also read the other voluminous works of Jerome, the Hexameron of Ambrose, and the Dialogues of Gregory. He will find Augustine’s volume “*De Civitate Dei*,” and especially Books 16 and 21, full of prodigies. Let him also read the eleventh Book of Isidore’s Etymologies, concerning marvels; his twelfth Book, respecting beasts; and his sixteenth, respecting precious stones and their virtues. Let him also examine the works of Valerius Maximus, Trogius Pompeius, Pliny, and Solinus; and in all these he will find ninny things at which he may cavil in the same manner. After reading these, I say, will he condemn the whole works of these great writers on account of some extraordinary accounts which they have inserted in them? But let him be better advised, and consider well the remark of St. Jerome, that there are many things contained in the Scriptures which, though they seem to be incredible, are nevertheless true. For nature cannot prevail against the God of nature; and every creature ought not to abhor, but to admire and hold in reverence, the works of the Creator. To adopt also the words of Augustine on this subject: “How can anything be against nature which exists by the will of the great Creator?” A prodigy therefore is not contrary to nature, but contrary to the common course of nature; and therefore, as it is not impossible for God to ordain and create whatsoever things he listeth, no more is it impossible for him to alter and change into what forms he listeth the things he has already created.

Still I do not desire that every thing I have stated should be blindly received as an undoubted truth; for I myself do not so firmly believe in all of them that I have no sort of doubt in my own mind concerning them, those only excepted of which I have myself had proof by personal experience, or which may easily be made the subject of experiment by any man. For the rest, I so account of them, as neither affirming nor denying their truth. Those who possess and know the value of precious stones from India, do not wonder at them so much as those who never saw them before; and if they had never seen them, they probably would not believe that such things existed, or if they did believe it, would marvel at that of which they had no experience. But repeated observation removes the incentives to wonder; for things of which we have ocular proofs every day come by use to be lightly esteemed, although in themselves they are as wonderful as ever. Thus the Indians set little value on their commodities, which when brought here are objects of admiration. Hence Augustine, when speaking of the gospel, where water was changed into wine, saith: “Marvellous is the power of God in the creation and government of the heaven and the earth, and in the daily conversion of the water, which the vines imbibe from rain, into wine, and in the growth of corn and trees from a grain of seed; and yet, because these are natural occurrences, we make no account of them. Wherefore God hath reserved to himself some things out of the common course of nature, though they be of less importance, in order to bring to the memory the power which he exercises on a larger scale.”

Let, then, my detractor see and acknowledge that the Lord of nature Hath purposely done many things before the eyes of man contrary to the common course of nature, in order that it may be very evident that God’s power far exceedeth man’s knowledge, and His divinity surpasseth man’s understanding. Cassiodorus therefore saith: “It is a great point of knowledge in man to understand that God can and does perform such great and wonderful things as far transcend the capacity of the human intellect to comprehend. For nature doth always, and as it were purposely, interlard her regular operations with some new forms, in order that although her ordinary works may be in some measure within man’s comprehension, nevertheless he may be unable to comprehend the whole of her powers. If, then, these old writers have so carefully inserted in their works accounts of the wonders which occurred in their days, setting us the example of using the same freedom in recording what is strange and contrary to the usual course of nature in our time and in our country, why should I, unless the whole world is given up to

wickedness, be censured and maligned? And if any new and strange thing be brought to light through my work, let not the malicious forthwith cavil at and condemn it; but excusing some things, and approving others, suffer us to proceed with our undertaking. For, as the poet says:

Si patribus nostris novitas invita fuisset,  
Ut nobis, quid nunc esset vetus? Aut quid haberet,  
Quod legeret, tereretque viritim publicus usus?<sup>2</sup>

Let them, therefore, cease to condemn anything because it is new, because in the lapse of time the novelty ends, and it becomes old. In such matters, the present age may find things it cannot explain, and which yet posterity may glory in. The one may be offended by what the other will read; the one may find reason to condemn what the other will esteem; the one may reject what the other will accept.

#### The Second Preface of Silvester Giraldus Cambrensis.

Having been often requested, and that by many persons, to write the history of such of the memorable acts performed in my own times as I have either heard reported by credible witnesses, or seen with my own eyes, I was wont to allege in excuse the wickedness of the age. For, certainly, luxury and wantonness have so much increased, and become so riotous and absorbing, that men are only careful to pamper their bodies, and the mind is held in total thralldom. Nevertheless, reflecting and carefully considering how very useful the knowledge of these matters will be to posterity, and that nothing is more pernicious and hurtful to a laudable genius and studious mind than the idleness contracted by a slothful disposition, I at length persuaded myself, though not without much difficulty, to yield to these requests, and take my pen in hand. Yet what can be more presumptuous than to write when leisure is wanting; to publish books which are to be in everyone's hands, when we have no time to read them over ourselves; to submit them to the criticism of a crowd of envious and malignant judges, without having ourselves revised them? Tully, that wellspring of eloquence, being on some occasion asked to make an oration, excused himself on the ground that he had not prepared himself by reading the day before. If so great a master of language is found requiring the advantages of study, what must be the case with others? And truly, the powers of the human mind are apt to decay, unless they are refreshed by continual exercise; for reading is, as it were, the daily food and aliment by which eloquence is fed and nourished. As the stock gathered in the barns is soon exhausted if it be not kept up by fresh supplies, and stores of wealth are soon spent, if they are not renewed; so man's imperfect knowledge is speedily exhausted, unless it have recourse to foreign aids. We are constituted of two natures—one temporal, the other eternal; and, having respect to both, must devote the earthly and transitory part of our existence to things trifling and temporal, while, as to that within us which is permanent, we aspire to glory that fadeth not away. The cares attending a place at court may for a time engage the bodily powers, but those of the mind are free, and cannot be stifled or enthralled; and though sometimes acting under our own impulse, and sometimes under the influence of others, should always take their own course, and glory in their freedom. As for the outward man, let it wander abroad and be troubled about many things, and amuse itself with vain and trifling toys, following the variable dictates of the wills, and subject to the wretched and humiliating laws of the flesh; but let the treasure within, like the kernel in the shell, enjoy the innate privilege which God has bestowed upon it, and be so fenced round, that in a crowd it be not bewildered, in trouble it be not disturbed, in solitude it be not lonesome.

God and the king have each their several rights of power and authority over us. The king can only exercise dominion over the body, but He alone possesses the subtle and incomprehensible part within us, who only can search and know it. For the soul is a most noble and excellent thing, surpassing all the other gifts of God under heaven. Incomprehensible itself, it comprehends all things, and exhibits its divinity by

<sup>2</sup> Hor. Epist. ii. 1, 90.

its marvellous powers embracing in the glance of a moment the four quarters of the globe. Penetrating with wonderful acuteness as well as rapidity into all that the world contains, its structures, its arts and sciences, it is only known to Him who is unknown, seen of Him who is unseen, and measured by Him who is infinite. God forbid, therefore, that the continual exercises of this soul should be hindered by vain and worldly cares, so that they fail by omission, or become languid from interruption. For what is the body to the soul, but a burthen and a punishment; a prison which though it cannot enthrall, yet fetters. What the shell is to the kernel, the name is the flesh to the spirit; each of them encumbers what it invests.

Wherefore, right noble count of Poitiers,<sup>3</sup> the future duke of Normandy and king of England, relying on its gifts and influences, I have determined to compile a History of the Conquest of Ireland, and the subjugation of the fierce and barbarous Irish nation, in these our days, and to dedicate my work to your highness; in order that the record of the glorious achievements performed by your father may augment your own glory; and as you are the heir to your father's territories, so you may be his successor both in lawful right and commendable rivalry of his triumphs and virtue, I have therefore employed myself on this theme, though the scene of events is narrow, barren, rough, and unprofitable; hoping, perhaps, to grace it by my style, and making it a sort of exercise for my unpractised pen, as a prelude to another work. For I have planned, though from a distance and with much diffidence, to write hereafter a history of your noble achievements, which, great in their first beginnings, have already shed the brightest lustre on your ripper years, and of the future increase, of which it shall be more fully and adequately related.

The Author's Preface to the Second and Revised Edition of his History,  
Dedicated to John, King of England.

*To his most revered lord, and beloved in Christ, John, the noble and illustrious king of England, lord of Ireland, duke of Normandy and Aquitaine, and count of Anjou: Giraldus dedicates his work, wishing him all health in body and soul, and the prosperous issue of all his worldly affairs.*

It pleased your excellent and noble father, king Henry, some time ago, when I was in attendance on himself, to send me over to Ireland in your company. Having noted while I was there sundry notable things which were strange and unknown in other countries, I made a collection of materials with great industry, from which, on my return to England, after three years' labour, I published a Topography of Ireland, describing the country and the wonders of it; not forgetting the honour your father had gained from that land. The work so pleased him—for, a rare thing in our times, he was a prince of great literary attainments—that at his instance, I afterwards renewed or rather continued my labours, and composed the present work on the recent conquest of that kingdom, made by him and those under him. But, as worth is more commended than rewarded, I received no remuneration for either of these books.

But since, through neglect or rather your many occupations, the recollection of that land, not the least among the islands of the West, which you visited long since, seems to have faded from your mind, I have undertaken to refresh it, by dedicating to your highness a corrected and fuller edition of my work. The history commences from the time when prince Dermotus, driven into exile by his subjects, took refuge with your father in Normandy, and obtained aid from him, and is continued until your first arrival in the island, when I attended you; and I have honestly related all that was done, whether for good or evil, by the several leaders of expeditions and nobles who went over to Ireland, in regular order from the first to the last.

<sup>3</sup> Giraldus, having dedicated his Topography to Henry II., takes this opportunity of complimenting his son Richard, who at that time held the county of Poitiers, his mother's inheritance, by addressing this History to him. This was in 1187, about two years before Henry's death. Soon after king John's accession to the throne, Giraldus published a revised edition of his History, which, as we shall presently find, he dedicated to that king.

Here then, as in a bright mirror, and far more clearly, and certainly by the light of historical truth, it may be ascertained, seen, and reflected to whom the greatest share of glory of this conquest ought justly to be attributed; whether to the men of the diocese of St. David's, my own kinsmen, who were the first adventurers, or to those of Llandaff, men truly of better descent than enterprise, for they went over on the invitation of the first conquerors, and tempted by the example of their success to embark in a similar adventure<sup>4</sup>—or lastly, whether it be due to the third expedition, which consisted of a large force, amply supplied with arms, provisions, and everything necessary.

Much was assuredly done by him who made the beginning, much by him who went over with additional forces and added strength to the first enterprise; but far more by him who gave his whole authority to the two former expeditions, and sanctioned them by his license, and at last, by going over himself, reduced the whole country to submission, and resolutely completed the whole undertaking, though his too hasty return from the island, caused by the unnatural conspiracy of his sons, prevented order being fully settled on a firm foundation.

Do not undervalue then, noble king, what cost your father and yourself so much toil, and do not part with so much glory and honour to strangers who are both unworthy and ungrateful; nor for the sake of an island of silver hazard the loss of one of gold; for the one does not exclude the other, but both together become doubly valuable. The gold of Arabia and the silver of Achaia enrich the same treasury, though in different heaps. Besides, other considerations may induce you not to be unmindful of your dominion of Ireland. It has pleased God and your good fortune to send you several sons, both natural and legitimate, and you may have more hereafter. Two of these you may raise to the thrones of two kingdoms, and under them you amply provide for numbers of your followers by new grants of lands, especially in Ireland, a country which is still in a wild and unsettled state, a very small part of it being yet occupied and inhabited by our people.

But if neither the desire of augmenting your own glory, nor of royally endowing and elevating one of your sons, will induce you to extend your fostering care to your dominions of Ireland, you ought at least to protect and reinstate in their rights those veteran warriors who have served your father and yourself with so much devoted fidelity, by whose enterprise that land was first taken possession of, and by whose valour it is still retained, but who are constantly supplanted by new-comers, reaping the fruits of other men's labours, and advanced more by their good luck than by their valour. It should be your care to abate the pride and humble the insolence of such men as these; for, if report speaks true, their folly is risen to such a pitch of arrogance and presumption, that they even aspire to usurp in their own persons all the rights of dominion belonging to the princes of that kingdom.

Wherefore you should take the greatest care that when you have any designs of extending your conquests in the interior of the country, you should keep a close watch on what is passing in the Eastern districts, and use your utmost efforts to recover, by God's grace, what has been alienated there; for you have nothing to fear in the West if you leave no danger in your rear. It would doubtless be a sign not only of great negligence, but of idle folly, and a great reproach, were you to harbour in your own towns and castles, and on your own lands, which although they may be in the West, would lie close on your rear, domestic enemies, who are for ever plotting treason, and only wait for time and opportunity to break into open revolt. It would be like wrapping snakes in the folds of your robe, or nourishing fire in your bosom which was ready to burst into flame. It is unsafe for princes to foster any hydra-heads in their dominions. It is especially unsafe for island princes to have in their territories any other frontier marches than the sea itself.

Moreover, if for these reasons, or any of them, you should be induced to pity and relieve your land so often mentioned, which is now desolate and in a manner deserted, and to reduce it to a state of order, not

<sup>4</sup> It need scarcely be remarked, that the "men of St David's," Giraldus's own kinsmen, were the Fitzgeralds, Fitzstephens, and De Barris, the first adventurers in the conquest of Ireland, who figure so conspicuously in the following History. The men of Llandaff were Richard, earl Strongbow, whose castles of Strigul and Chepstow stood in that diocese, and his followers.

unprofitable to you and yours, permit me to offer your royal majesty some advice, though it may savour of the freedom of speech which is natural to Welshmen like myself, and which we can neither alter or get rid of. I refer to the two pledges which your father gave to pope Adrian, when he obtained his permission to invade and conquer Ireland, and acted most prudently and discreetly for his own interest, and those of his family and people, when he secured the sanction of the highest earthly authority to an enterprise of so much magnitude, and which involved the shedding of Christian blood. One was, that he would raise up the church of God in that country, and cause a penny to be paid to St. Peter for every house in Ireland, as it is done in England; according to the tenor of the bull of privilege granted by the said Pope, and obtained from him by your father's prudence and policy, and now laid up in the archives at Winchester, as is hereafter clearly set forth in the present History. But Solomon says in the Proverbs, "Nothing less becomes a prince than lying lips;"<sup>5</sup> and it is especially dangerous to lie to God, and for a creature to take upon himself to set at nought his Creator. In order, therefore, to deliver the soul of your father who made these promises, and your own soul and those of your children, it is highly fitting that you, having no other shield of defence against the anger of the righteous judge for so much Christian blood already shed, and perhaps still to be shed, should be very careful to fulfil your father's vows. And if by so doing God be honoured in this conquest, as is becoming and right, you may expect that the earthly prosperity of you and yours will be augmented, and above all, that eternal happiness will be your portion at last.

These promises not having hitherto been performed, the divine justice has therefore, we may well believe, suffered calamities of two kinds to happen by way of punishment. The one is that the completion of this conquest, and the profit to be drawn from it, have been deferred; the other that the first and principal invaders of Ireland, namely, Robert Fitzstephen,<sup>6</sup> who was the first of our countrymen who landed there, and as it were opened and shewed the way to others, as also Hervey de Mont-Maurise, Raymonde, John de Courcy, and Meyler, never had any lawful issue of their bodies begotten. Nor is it any marvel. The poor clergy in the island are reduced to beggary. The cathedral churches, which were richly endowed with broad lands, by the piety of the faithful in old times, now echo with lamentations for the loss of their possessions, of which they have been robbed by these men and others who came over with them, or after them; so that to uphold the church is turned into spoiling and robbing it.

It is the part of a good prince to redress these evils; for it concerns his honour, to say nothing of his duty to God, that the clergy throughout his dominions, whose place it is to assist him faithfully in his counsels, and in all the more weighty affairs and principal acts of his government, should be relieved of their grievances, and enjoy the honours and privileges which are their due. Moreover, in order that some acknowledgment and propitiation may be made to God for this bloody conquest and the profits of it, the promised tax of the Peter-pence should be paid in future. It is but small, and this moderate payment frees all, while it is not a burthen to any.

I would further add, with your permission, that in memory of this conquest of Ireland made by the English, and because, in the course of years, there are great changes in the succession of lords, so that in process of time the right of inheritance often devolves on heirs by descent in remote degrees, and even on utter strangers in blood, a fixed annual tribute in gold or birds,<sup>7</sup> or perhaps in timber, should be reserved by some written instrument, in order to show to all future times that the realm of Ireland is subject to the crown of England by an indissoluble bond.

Considering also that annals of events, heard through an interpreter, are not so well understood, and do not fix themselves in the mind so firmly as when they are published in the vernacular tongue, it would be well, if such be your pleasure, that some man of learning, who is also skilled in the French language, be

<sup>5</sup> Prov. xvii. 7.

<sup>6</sup> Giraldus mentions in his History, on several occasions, a son of Robert Fitz-Stephen's, named Ralph; but perhaps he was illegitimate.

<sup>7</sup> By the birds may be intended some of the nobler breeds of hawks for sporting. We shall find, in the course of the History, that the tribute of Roderic O'Connor, king of Connaught, was reserved to be paid in skins.

employed to translate the work of mine, which has cost me much labour, into French;<sup>8</sup> and then, as it would be better understood, I might reap the fruits of my toil, which hitherto, under illiterate princes, have been lost because there were few who could understand my works. Hence a man of great eloquence, Walter Mapes, archdeacon of Oxford,<sup>9</sup> has often said to me in conversation, with his usual facetiousness, and that urbanity for which he was remarkable: "You have written a great deal, Master Giraldus, and you will write much more; and I have discoursed much: you have employed writing; I speech. But though your writings are far better, and much more likely to be handed down to future ages than my discourses, yet, as all the world could understand what I said, speaking as I did in the vulgar tongue, while your works, being written in Latin, are understood by only a very few persons, I have reaped some advantage from my sermons; but you, addressing yourself to princes, who were, doubtless, both learned and liberal, but are now out of date, and have passed from the world, have not been able to secure any sort of reward for your excellent works, which so richly merited it." It is true, indeed, that my best years, and the prime of my life, have been spent without any remuneration or advancement arising out of my literary labours, and I am now growing old, and standing, as it were, on the threshold of death; but I neither ask, nor expect, worldly recompense from any one. My only desire is, and it is all I ought to desire, that, first, and above all, I may partake of the divine mercy vouchsafed to me by Him who giveth all things freely, through good works; his grace co-operating, nay, being the sole efficient cause; and next, that through my poor literary works I may obtain favour with the world, if ever the pursuits of learning should again be held in esteem, and recover their former eminence; although my reward may be deferred till further times, when posterity is sure to award honour to every man, according to his just deserts.

<sup>8</sup> French or Norman was the language commonly used by the higher classes in England at this period; Latin, in which all the chronicles were composed, being confined to the ecclesiastics, the only men of learning; and the good old Anglo-Saxon tongue, in which the first of chronicles is written, being out of vogue, the language only of the vulgar, who could not read, or for whose instruction Giraldus, with all his love of popularity, felt no concern. It need not be added that, as far as we know, Giraldus did not succeed in his petition to have his History translated.

<sup>9</sup> Walter Mapes, a name celebrated in our literary history of the latter half of the twelfth century, was the intimate friend of Giraldus Cambrensis. He possessed much pungent humour, which he employed in inveighing bitterly against the profligacy of the monks.

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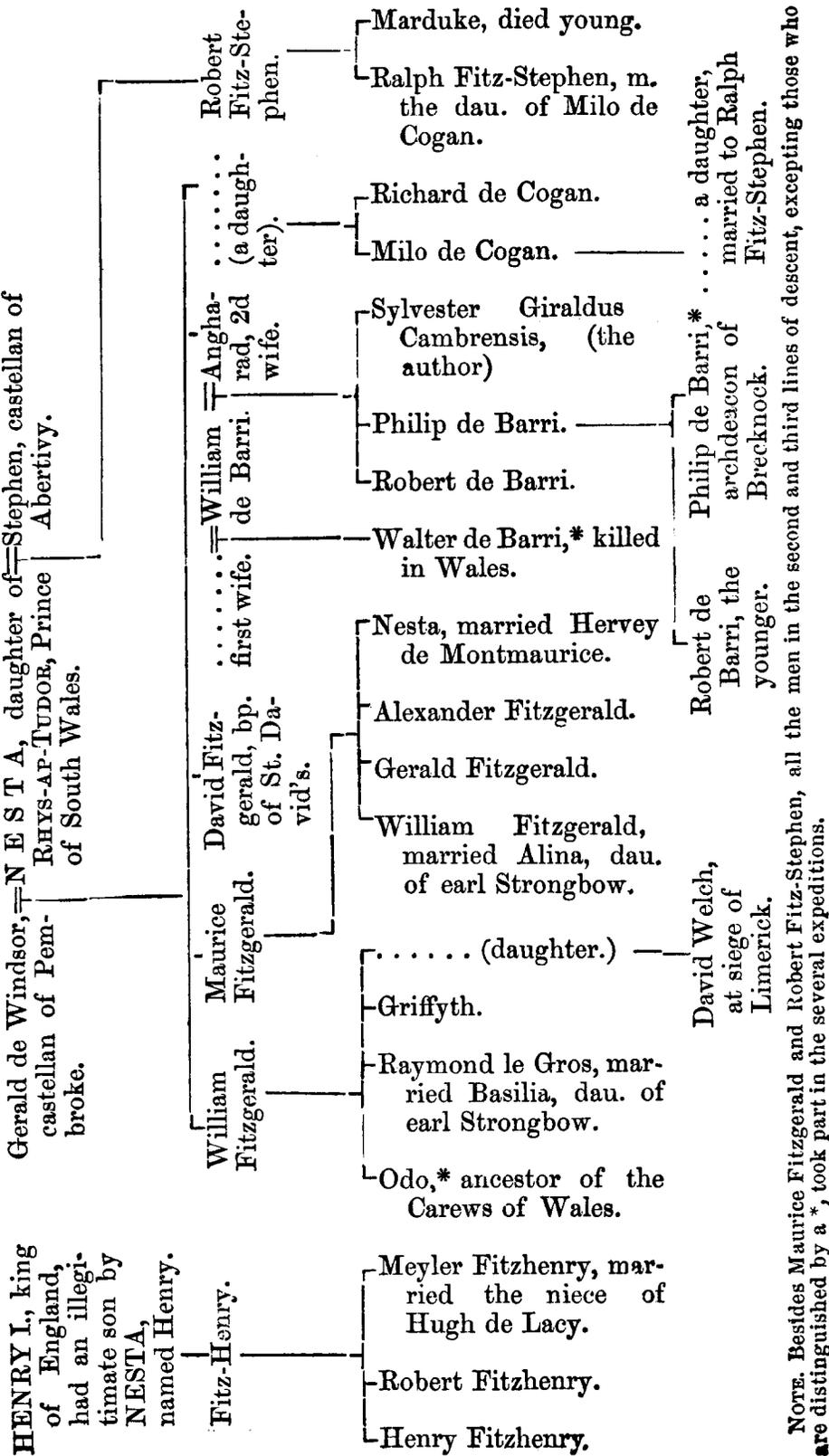
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PEDIGREE OF THE DESCENDANTS OF NESTA.

PEDIGREE

*Of the descendants of Nesta, daughter of Rhys, prince of S. Wales, the family who were the first adventurers in the Conquest of Ireland in the time of Henry II., compiled from the History of Giraldus Cambrensis.*



NOTE. Besides Maurice Fitzgerald and Robert Fitz-Stephen, all the men in the second and third lines of descent, excepting those who are distinguished by a \*, took part in the several expeditions.

## Book I.

Chapter I: How Dermotius, Prince of Leinster, took refuge in England, and was restored to his dominions by the king of England.

Dermotius, the son of Murchard,<sup>10</sup> and prince of Leinster, who ruled over that fifth part of Ireland, possessed in our times the maritime districts in the east of the island, separated only from Great Britain by the sea which flowed between. His youth and inexperience in government led him to become the oppressor of the nobility, and to impose a cruel and intolerable tyranny on the chiefs of the land. This brought him into trouble, and it was not the only one; for O'Roric,<sup>11</sup> prince of Meath, having gone on an expedition into a distant quarter, left his wife, the daughter of Omachlacherlin,<sup>12</sup> in a certain island of Meath during his absence; and she, who had long entertained a passion for Dermotius, took advantage of the absence of her husband, and allowed herself to be ravished, not against her will. As the nature of women is fickle and given to change, she thus became the prey of the spoiler by her own contrivance. For as Mark Anthony and Troy are witnesses, almost all the greatest evils in the world have arisen from women. King O'Roric being moved by this to great wrath, but more for the shame than the loss he suffered, was fully bent on revenge, and forthwith gathered the whole force of his own people and the neighbouring tribes, calling besides to his aid Roderic, prince of Connaught, then monarch of all Ireland. The people of Leinster, considering in what a strait their prince was, and seeing him beset on every side by bands of enemies, began to call to mind their own long-smothered grievances, and their chiefs leagued themselves with the foes of Mac Murchard, and deserted him in his desperate fortunes.

Dermotius, seeing himself thus forsaken and left destitute, fortune frowning upon him, and his affairs being now desperate, after many fierce conflicts with the enemy, in which he was always worsted, at length resolved, as his last refuge, to take ship and flee beyond sea. It is therefore apparent from many occurrences, that it is safer to govern willing subjects than those who are disobedient. Nero learnt this, and Domitian also, while in our times, Henry, duke of Saxony and Bavaria,<sup>13</sup> was made sensible of it. It is better for a prince to be loved than to be feared; but it is expedient that he should be feared also, so that the fear proceeds rather from good-will than from coercion. For whatever is outwardly loved, it necessarily follows that the same must be also feared. Wherefore fear must be so tempered with love, that neither a lax freedom degenerate into coldness, nor terror extorted by a rash insolence be turned into tyranny. Love lengthened the reign of Augustus, but fear cut short the life and rule of the emperor Julius.

Meanwhile, Mac Murchard, submitting to his change of fortune, and confidently hoping for some favourable turn, crossed the sea with a favourable wind, and came to Henry II., king of England, for the purpose of earnestly imploring his succour. Although the king was at that time beyond sea, far away in Aquitaine, in France, and much engaged in business, he received Murchard with great kindness, and the liberality and courtesy which was natural to him; and having heard the causes of his exile and coming over, and received his bond of allegiance and oath of fealty, granted him letters patent to the effect

<sup>10</sup> Dermot mac Murchard, or, more correctly, Mac Murrough, prince or king of Leinster.

<sup>11</sup> Called in Irish, Tiernan O'Ruarc.

<sup>12</sup> Murtough O'Melaghlin, king of Meath. The name of his daughter, the heroine of this story, was Dervorgilla.

<sup>13</sup> Henry the Lion, duke of Bavaria and Saxony, who reigned from 1180 to 1195, and was deposed for his turbulence and violence.

following: “Henry, king of England, duke of Normandy and Aquitaine, and count of Anjou, to all his liegemen, English, Normans, Welsh, and Scots, and to all other nations subject to his dominion, sendeth greeting. Whensoever these our letters shall come unto you, know ye that we have received Dermotus, prince of Leinster, into our grace and favour,—Wherefore, whosoever within the bounds of our territories shall be willing to give him aid, as our vassal and liegeman, in recovering his territories, let him be assured of our favour and licence on that behalf.”

Chapter II: The return of Dermotus through Great Britain.

Dermotus, returning through Great Britain, loaded with honourable gifts by the royal munificence, but encouraged more by hope for the future than any aid he had yet obtained, reached at last the noble town of Bristol. Here he sojourned for some time, making a liberal expenditure, as on account of the ships which made frequent voyages from Ireland to that port, he had opportunities of hearing the state of affairs in his own country and among his people. During his stay he caused the royal letters patent to be read several times in public, and made liberal offers of pay and lands to many persons, but in vain. At length, however, Richard, surnamed Strongbow,<sup>14</sup> earl of Strigul, the son of earl Gilbert, came and had a conference with him; and after a prolonged treaty it was agreed between them that in the ensuing spring the earl should lend him aid in recovering his territories, Dermotus solemnly promising to give him his eldest daughter for wife, with the succession to his kingdom. This treaty having been duly concluded, Dermotus, inflamed with the natural desire, which is so universal, of seeing his native land, lost no time in journeying to St. David’s, in South Wales. The passage from hence to Leinster, by sea, may be accomplished in one day’s sailing, and the distance is so short that one coast may be seen from the other. At that time, Rhys-ap-Gryffith was prince of that country, under fealty to the king, and David the second was bishop of St. David’s; both of whom treated the unfortunate exile with great kindness.

Thus snuffing from the Welsh coast the air of Ireland wafted on the western breezes, and, as it were, inhaling the scent of his beloved country,<sup>15</sup> Dermotus had the no small consolation of sometimes feasting his eyes with the sight of his own land, though the distance was such that it was difficult to distinguish between mountains and clouds. At that time Robert Fitz-Stephen, who had been made prisoner through the treachery of his followers at Aberteivy, the chief place in the district of Cardigan, of which he was castellan,<sup>16</sup> and delivered up to Rhys, having been kept in close confinement for three years, was released

<sup>14</sup> Richard Strongbow was the representative of the great family of Clare, whose ancestors, descended from Godfrey, a natural son of Richard I., duke of Normandy, were counts of Brionne, which fief was exchanged for the castle of Tunbridge, in England. Gilbert de Clare, earl of Strigul, Strongbow’s father, made extensive conquests in South Wales, with licence from Henry I., and was created earl of Pembroke in the third year of Stephen, 1138. Richard Strongbow, his son and heir, succeeded to his father’s titles, but was stripped of his inheritance by Henry II., who, as some compensation, reluctantly permitted him to improve his fortunes in Ireland. Striguil, or Strigul, has been considered synonymous with Chepstow, but it was a small castle, built by earl Gilbert, and stood on the brow of the forest of Wentwood, about four miles from Chepstow, commanding a pass in the road over the hills from Abergavenny to Chepstow, which was still used by public vehicles in our younger days. Some ruins of it are still to be seen. It is probable, however, that both castles bore the name of Strigulia, being the common property of the Clares.

<sup>15</sup> We may almost suppose that Giraldus had in view the beautiful lines in which another princely exile is described as eagerly scanning the intervening space of waters for any indications of his native land.

ἴεμενος καὶ καπνὸν ἀποθρώσκοντα νοήσαι

ἦς γαίης

Odyss. a. 58.

Ulysses, happy might he but behold

The smoke ascending from his native land.—Cowper.

<sup>16</sup> Robert Fitz-Stephen was the son of Stephen, castellan of Aberteivy, or Cardigan, by Nesta daughter of Rhys-ap-Tudor, prince of South Wales, and sister of Griffyth-ap-Rhys. This extraordinary woman, of whom we shall learn more in the Itinerary of Giraldus, after being a concubine of Henry II., had for her first husband Gerald de Windsor, castellan of Pembroke, by whom she had three sons, the Fitzgeralds, whose names frequently occur in the following History, and a daughter named Angharad, who married William de Barri, the father of Sylvester Giraldus, our historian, and several of whose other sons and grandsons

from prison on condition of his joining Rhys in taking arms against the king of England. But Robert, considering that, on the father's side, he was naturally bound in fealty to the king his lord, although by his mother, Nesta, a lady of high birth, the daughter of Rhys the Great, he was cousin-german to Rhys-ap-Griffyth, preferred committing himself to the chances of fortune and fate, at the hazard of his life, in a foreign country, than to undergo the charge of disloyalty, to the no small stain on his honour and reputation and those of his adherents and posterity. Through the mediation, therefore, of David, bishop of St. David's, and Maurice Fitzgerald,<sup>17</sup> his half-brothers, who negotiated between him and Dermitius, after licence obtained from Rhys, a contract was entered into that Dermitius should grant to Robert and Maurice the town of Wexford, with two adjoining cantreds of land, to be held in fee; in consideration whereof the said Robert and Maurice engaged to succour him in recovering his territories, as soon as spring should come and the winds be favourable.

Meanwhile, Dermitius, being impatient of the sufferings of his continued exile, resolved on endeavouring to restore his fortunes in his own country, which he had vainly sought to mend in a foreign land. He therefore went about the calends of August (1st August) to St. David's, the ancient and rightful metropolitan church of Wales,<sup>18</sup> proposing to embark from that neighbourhood. The weather being fair, and the wind favourable, it blowing from the east, he set sail, and encountering the dangers of the passage, and the landing, disembarked on a hostile coast, and, in his impatience, passed unattended through the quarters of his numerous enemies. Arriving at Ferns,<sup>19</sup> he was honourably received by the clergy of that place, who entertained him to the best of their ability; and for a time laying aside his princely dignity, he spent the winter there in privacy.

### Chapter III: The coming over of Robert Fitz-Stephen, and the taking of Wexford.

In the meantime, Robert Fitz-stephen, mindful of his engagement and true to his plighted faith, had mustered thirty men-at-arms,<sup>20</sup> of his own kindred and retainers, together with sixty men in half-armor, and about three hundred archers and foot-soldiers, the flower of the youth of Wales, and embarking them in three ships, landed at the Banne, about the calends of May, [A.D. 1170]. Then was the old prophecy of Merlin the Wild<sup>21</sup> fulfilled: "A knight, bipartite,<sup>22</sup> shall first break the bonds of Ireland." If you wish to understand this mysterious prediction, you must have respect to the descent of Robert Fitz-Stephen by both his parents. On the father's side he was an Anglo-Norman, on the mother's a Cambro-Briton, being the son of the noble lady Nesta.

distinguished themselves in the Conquest of Ireland. The Fitzgeralds were, therefore, as they are here represented, half-brothers of Robert Fitz-Stephen. See the Pedigree at the beginning of this Book.

<sup>17</sup> David II., bishop of St. David's, 1149-1176, under whose care our author was educated and first advanced in the church, and Maurice Fitzgerald were his uncles. The first conquerors of Ireland were nearly all descendants of Nesta, either by her two husbands, or through a son she had by Henry II., and their degrees of relationship are so constantly referred to by their kinsman, Giraldus, that it has been thought advisable to subjoin a Pedigree of the family to make it clear. This is inserted at the beginning of this History.

<sup>18</sup> Giraldus was a stout supporter of the metropolitan rights of the see of St. David's against the pretensions of the archbishops of Canterbury. Further reference to St. David's will be found in B. ii. c. 1 of our author's Itinerary of Wales.

<sup>19</sup> Dermot landed at Glass-Carrig, a small creek and promontory on the open coast of Wexford, about twelve miles south of Arklow Head, and the same distance from Ferns, the see of a bishop, with his chapter, by whom he was hospitably entertained. This city appears to have been also the principal seat of the native princes of Leinster; Dublin being in the hands of the Ostmen or Norwegians, under kings, so called, of their own race, who exercised an independent jurisdiction.

<sup>20</sup> *Milites*. See a note to c. xi. on the rank and class of persons included in this term.

<sup>21</sup> *Merlini Sylvestris*. See on this personage B ii. c. 8 of the Itinerary.

<sup>22</sup> Not only was the blood of two races mingled in Fitz-Stephen, but his armorial ensigns were, in the language of heraldry, bipartite; parti per pale, gules and ermine, with a saltier countercharged of the same.

In his company there also came over a man of fallen fortunes, Hervey de Montmaurice, who, having neither armour nor money, was a spy<sup>23</sup> rather than a soldier, and as such acting for earl Richard, whose uncle he was. On the following day, Maurice de Prendergast,<sup>24</sup> a stout and brave soldier, from the district of Ros, in South Wales, following Fitz-Stephen, and having embarked at the port of Milford, with ten men-at-arms, and a large body of archers, in two ships, landed also at the Banne.<sup>25</sup> All these forces having disembarked on the island of the Banne, and finding themselves in a position far from secure, the news of their landing having been spread abroad, they sent messengers to Dermotus, apprizing him of their arrival. Meanwhile, some of the people who dwelt on the coast, although they had deserted Dermotus when fortune frowned upon him, when she changed her aspect flocked together to support him; according to the words of the poet:

Sic cum fortuna statque caditque fides.  
Thus loyalty, with fortune, ebbs and flows.

Mac Murchard, as soon as he heard of their coming, sent forward his natural son, Duvenald, who, though not legitimate, was a man of consequence in his country, to join the English expedition, and followed himself, without loss of time, and in great joy, at the head of five hundred men. Having renewed their former engagements and confirmed them by many oaths mutually exchanged for security on both sides, they joined their forces, and the combined troops of the different races being united in one common object, marched to the attack of the town of Wexford, distant about twelve miles from the Banne. The people of the town, when they heard of this, were so confident in their wonted good fortune, having been hitherto independent, that they sallied forth, to the number of about two thousand men, and meeting the enemy near their camp, resolved on giving them battle. But when they perceived the troops to which they were opposed, arrayed in a manner they had never before witnessed, and a body of horsemen, with their bright armour, helmets, and shields, they adopted new plans with a new state of affairs, and having set fire to, and burnt the suburbs, forthwith retired within their walls.

Fitz-Stephen lost no time in preparing for the attack; and lining the trenches with those of his troops who wore armour, while the archers were posted so as to command the advanced towers, an assault was made on the walls with loud cries and desperate vigour. But the townsmen were ready to stand on their defence, and casting down from the battlements large stones and beams, repulsed the attack for a while,

<sup>23</sup> *Explorer*. Though the word is translated spy, it is not meant to convey that he was to act as such on his countrymen. Hervey's business was to enquire into the resources of the country, and its capabilities, in order to report to the earl, while making preparations for his invasion. It does not appear from the genealogy of the Clares, in Duquesne, nor in any other we have seen, how this Hervey was related to earl Richard Strongbow.

<sup>24</sup> The family of Prendergast took their name from a vill, formerly belonging to them, which is now a suburb of Haverfordwest. This town was the chief place in the district of Ros, in which a colony of Flemings was planted in the time of Henry I. See afterwards, in the "Itinerary of Wales," B i. c. 11.

<sup>25</sup> "It is by no means a question devoid of interest to identify the spot where these first Anglo-Norman invaders set foot on the soil of Ireland. There is a tradition which places it at a small peninsula or promontory on the coast of Wexford, now called Bagabun, which, consisting of about thirty acres, forms a bold projection towards the Welsh coast. On one side of the greater headland is a lesser promontory stretching out to the east, about two hundred yards long, and seventy broad, accessible only at its extreme point; behind which rises a lofty insulated rock, forming a breakwater to the surf on the point, and imperfectly joined to the mainland by several smaller rocks which are just seen above water, and are described as forming a kind of causeway to the point of the promontory itself. Here it is pretended that Robert Fitz-Stephen ran in his ships, mooring them under the protection of the larger rock, and landing his men by means of the low ridge. The cut between the last of these rocks, across which he is said to have jumped, is called popularly 'Fitz-Stephen's Stride.' The invaders are supposed to have first occupied the esplanade of the smaller peninsula, where there are still traces of hasty fortifications, which command the approaches and overlook the ground in the vicinity. In the middle of the rude encampment is a space like the foundations of a house, which is called 'Fitz-Stephen's Tent.' Others, however, have been inclined to disbelieve the tradition which made the Anglo-Normans land on the promontory of Bagabun, and they think, from the identity of the name, and its position with regard to Wexford, that the place now called Bannow, which may, from the known encroachments of the sea on this coast, have formerly been a peninsula, is the Banne of the ancient writers.—*Wright's History of Ireland*, vol. i, p. 71.

and caused numerous losses. Among the wounded was Robert de Barri,<sup>26</sup> a young soldier, who, inflamed with ardent valour, and dauntless in the face of death, was among the first who scaled the walls; but being struck upon his helmet by a great stone, and falling headlong into the ditch below, narrowly escaped with his life, his comrades with some difficulty drawing him out. Sixteen years afterwards all his jaw-teeth fell out from the effects of this stroke, and, what is more strange, new teeth grew in their places. Upon this repulse, withdrawing from the walls, they gathered in haste on the neighbouring strand, and forthwith set fire to all the ships they found lying there. Among these, a merchant-ship, lately arrived from the coast of Britain with a cargo of corn and wine, was moored in the harbour; and a band of the boldest youths rowing out in boats, got on board the vessel, but were carried out to sea, the sailors having cut the hawsers from the anchors, and the wind blowing from the west; so that it was not without great risk, and hard rowing after taking to their boats again, that they regained the land.

Thus fortune, constant only in her instability, almost deserted not only Mac Murchard, but Fitz-Stephen also. However, on the following morning, after mass had been celebrated throughout the army, they proceeded to renew the assault with more circumspection and order, relying on their skill as well as their courage; and when they drew near to the walls, the townsmen, despairing of being able to defend them, and reflecting that they were disloyally resisting their prince, sent envoys to Dermotius commissioned to treat of the terms of peace. At length, by the mediation of two bishops, who chanced to be in the town at that time, and other worthy and peaceable men, peace was restored. The townsmen submitting to Dermotius, and delivering four of their chief men as hostages for their fealty to him. And the more to animate the courage of his adherents, and reward their chiefs for their first success, he forthwith granted the town, with the whole territory appertaining to it, to Fitz-Stephen and Maurice, according to the stipulations in their original treaty. He also conferred on Hervey de Montmaurice two cantreds lying between the towns of Wexford and Waterford, to hold to him and his heirs in fee.

#### Chapter IV: The conquest of Ossory.

These things having been accomplished according to their desires, and their troops having been reinforced by the townsmen of Wexford, they directed their march towards Ossory,<sup>27</sup> with an army numbering about three thousand men. Duvenald, the prince of Ossory, was the most implacable of all the enemies of Dermotius; and some time before, when the son of Dermotius was his prisoner, having become jealous of him, he carried his vengeance to such a pitch, that he put out his eyes. When, therefore, the combined forces first entered Ossory, they did not penetrate far into the province; for it being intricate and full of difficult passes, woods, and bogs, they found that the people were able to make a stout resistance in defence of their country. Whereupon, elated by their frequent successes, they pursued their enemies even as far as the open plains. There, however, the horsemen of Fitz-Stephen turned upon them, and charging them fiercely, defeated them with great slaughter, and scattering the fugitives over the country, slew them with their lances, and those who were dashed to the ground by the charge of horse had their heads quickly cut off by the broad-axes of the Irish foot soldiers. The victory being thus gained, about two hundred of the enemies' heads were collected and laid at the feet of Dermotius, who, turning them over one by one, in order to recognize them, thrice lifted his hands to heaven in the excess of his joy, and with a loud voice returned thanks to God most High. Among them was the head of one he mortally hated above all the rest, and taking it up by the ears and hair, he tore the nostrils and lips with his teeth in a most savage and inhuman manner.

<sup>26</sup> Robert de Barri was an elder brother of Giraldus, being the son of William do Barri, who married Angharad, daughter of Nesta, by Gerald de Windsor. See the Pedigree at the beginning of this history.

<sup>27</sup> The progress of their enterprise for reinstating Dermot mac Murrugh in his principality of Leinster, would naturally lead his foreign allies, uniting their forces with his, to march northwards from Wexford, following the course of the Nore or the Barrow, into the districts of Ossory, one of which lay in the diocese of Leighlin, and the other in that of Kilkenny. These were probably the two bishops who assisted in negotiating the treaty.

After this, they made several inroads through the farthest parts of the country, which they ravaged and devastated with fire and sword, until at length the prince of Ossory, by the advice of his counsellors, sued for peace, which was granted, although it was false on both sides, and, giving hostages and taking solemn oaths, he did fealty to Dermotus.

In these encounters, as in all others, Robert de Barri and Meyler<sup>28</sup> distinguished themselves above the rest by their eminent courage. Both these young men were nephews of Fitz-Stephen, the one being his brother's son, the other his sister's. They differed in their tempers and dispositions, and agreed only in their valour. Meyler being ambitious of honour and glory, all his acts had especial reference to that end, and he lost no opportunity of doing anything which could add to his fame; but he was more desirous of appearing brave than of being so. The other was naturally a person of distinguished courage, who neither coveted praise nor affected popularity, and strove rather to be always among the first than to appear so. Such was his natural disposition, that with a modesty becoming a maiden, he neither boasted of or proclaimed his own doings, nor would he suffer others to sound his praises. Hence it happened, that the less he coveted honour, the more it clung to him; for honour follows virtue, like a shadow the substance; but it deserts those who are most ambitious of it, and clings to those who despise it, often more than they would wish, and many men are more liked because they take no pains to please; praise being gained in an extraordinary manner when it is avoided.

It happened, while the army was in Ossory, that they encamped one night in a certain old fortification, and these two young men lying, as they were wont, in the same tent, suddenly there was a great noise, as it were, of many thousand men rushing in upon them from all sides, with a great rattling of their arms and clashing of their battle-axes. Such spectral appearances frequently occur in Ireland to those who are engaged in hostile excursions. The alarm was so general that the greatest part of the army took to flight and hid themselves in the woods and marshes; but the two cousins, snatching up their arms, ran to the tents of Fitz-Stephen, loudly calling on their scattered comrades to rally for the defence of the camp. Amidst the general confusion, Robert de Barri exerted himself actively, to the admiration as well as the envy of many, for the safety of any of his retainers who might happen to be there. For among his various excellent qualities, this one was especially noted, that in no attack, however unexpected, in no sudden surprise, was he ever known to fear or despair, or to flee shamefully, or to exhibit any consternation of mind. He was always himself, always prepared to stand on his guard, always ready to fly to arms. He truly is the bravest man,

Qui promptus metuenda pati, si cominus instent;  
Et deferre potens.

Who to the rescue springs, when dangers press,  
And stoutly wards them off.

This Robert de Barri was the first man-at arms who was struck down and wounded in this invasion of Ireland.

<sup>28</sup> Of these two cousins, Robert de Barri has been already noticed. Meyler, sometimes called, though not by our author, Meyler Fitz-Henry, was the younger of the three sons of Henry, an illegitimate son of Henry I., by Nesta. Meyler is a prominent character in this History; but though Giraldus dwells with satisfaction on the renown of his kinsman, and describes him as the nephew of Robert Fitz-Stephen and Maurice Fitzgerald, and consequently cousin-german of the De Barris, he does not, for obvious reasons, as a churchman, trace his lineage through his own grandmother Nesta, to her royal paramour. See the pedigree.

## Chapter V: The whole of Ireland in league against Dermotius and Fitz-Stephen.

In the mean time, the wheel of fortune turns, and those who were at the top are threatened with a sudden fall. For as soon as the late successes of Dermotius, and the arrival of a formidable band of foreign troops, were known through out the island, Roderic, prince of Connaught, and monarch of all Ireland,<sup>29</sup> considering how great things arise from small beginnings, and foreseeing the evils which threatened himself and his country from the coming in of strangers, sent round messengers, and convoked an assembly of the chief men from all parts of the island. These having taken counsel with him, it was unanimously resolved to make war against Dermotius, and several bodies of troops, with a vast multitude of the people, were gathered together at Kenteleia in Leinster.

Meanwhile Dermotius, in the time of his utmost need, found that he had very few firm supporters, except Fitz-Stephen and his followers; some of his other reed-like friends abandoning his cause, and withdrawing privately from his standard, and the rest openly joining his enemies, and so breaking their oaths of fealty to him. He therefore retreated with his remaining force to a position not far from Ferns, which was surrounded by thick woods and steep mountains, with waters and bogs, which made it naturally very inaccessible. Here, under Fitz-Stephen's direction, they felled trees, plashed the underwood, broke up the surface of the level ground by digging deep holes and trenches, and cut secret and narrow passages through the thickets in several places for the purpose of egress and ingress in case of attack, so that having thus added to the natural strength of the position by these defences, on which they bestowed great industry, they succeeded in completely shutting out the enemy, while means of access were open to themselves and their friends.

## Chapter VI: The description of Dermotius, son of Murchard.

Dermotius was tall in stature, and of large proportions, and, being a great warrior and valiant in his nation, his voice had become hoarse by constantly shouting and raising his war-cry in battle. Bent more on inspiring fear than love, he oppressed his nobles, though he advanced the lowly. A tyrant to his own people, he was hated by strangers; his hand was against every man, and the hands of every man against him. Meanwhile, Roderic<sup>30</sup> sent messengers to Fitz-Stephen, with great presents and offers, to endeavour to persuade him to depart in peace and amity, from a country in which he could challenge no sort of right; but the message was fruitless. The envoys then applied to Mac Murchard, exhorting him to unite his forces with theirs in exterminating the foreigners, and promising that on his so doing the whole of Leinster should be peaceably restored to him, and that Roderic would enter into a treaty of close alliance with him; they alleged many reasons concerning their common country and nation, and used much speech to induce him to take this course; but all to no purpose.

## Chapter VII: Roderic's speech.

Roderic, perceiving that these proposals were of no avail, and being convinced that he must have recourse to arms as his last refuge, assembled his forces, and thus addressed them:—

“Right noble and valiant defenders of your country and liberty, let us consider with what nations and for what causes we are now about to wage battle. That enemy of his country, that tyrant of his people, and

<sup>29</sup> Roderic O'Connor, prince or king of Connaught, was also “monarch” or paramount lord of all Ireland. This high dignity, corresponding with that of the Bretwalda in the Saxon Heptarchy, was conferred by election, in a national assembly of the Irish, on one of the four kings or princes of the provinces into which the island was divided; the fifth, Meath, being assigned for the support of the household of the paramount king for the time being. The other princes did homage to him, and were bound to submit to his commands in peace and war. The supremacy was usually conferred on one or other of the reigning princes of the Mac Carthies of Munster, the Mac Murrroughs of Leinster, or the O'Connors of Connaught.

<sup>30</sup> Roderic O'Connor, prince of Connaught.

foe of all men, who was formerly driven out of the land, is now returned with the support of foreign troops, and bent on the general ruin of the state. Envious of his country's welfare, he has brought in a foreign race, that, by the aid of a fierce and detested nation, he may be able to inflict upon us the mischief to which his own strength was unequal. Himself an enemy, he has called in our greatest national enemy; a people who have long aimed at being lords over him as well as over all of us, and give out that the dominion of our land justly belongs to them, and is even destined to them by ancient prophecies. Nay, he has so universally diffused his venom that, while all are contaminated with it, he has not even spared himself. O cruel, and far more. cruel than ever beast was! For to satisfy his insatiable malice in the blood of his own people, he spares neither himself nor his country, nor sex, nor age. This is he who formerly was a most cruel tyrant over his own subjects; this is he who, supported by bands of armed foreigners, is preparing to revel in the blood of us all. He deserves therefore to be treated as a public enemy, who proves himself to be the enemy of all. Mark, my countrymen, mark well, how most states have been overthrown in this way; I mean by civil discord. Julius Cæsar, after having twice shewn his back to the Britons, returned the third time, and subdued the country on the invitation of Androgius, who was a victim to his own thirst for revenge.<sup>31</sup> This same Julius, after having, at length, conquered the western parts of the world, ambitious of supreme power, did not hesitate to bring foreign nations to shed the blood of the Roman people, in a worse than civil war. To come to examples nearer home and our own times, we find Gurmund the terror of the isles, bringing in the Saxons for the subjugation of the Britons, though it turned out to his own ruin and humiliation. Soon afterwards, Isembard, the king of the Franks, but the enemy of his people, called in the aid of Gurmund to conquer France, but without success. Let us then, following the example of the Franks, and fighting bravely for our country, rush against our enemies; and, as these foreigners have come over few in numbers, let us crush them by a general attack. Fire, while it only sparkles, may be speedily quenched; but when it has burst into a flame, being fed with fresh materials, its power increases with their bulk, and it cannot be easily extinguished. It is always best to meet difficulties half-way, and check the first approaches of disease; for,

---sero medicina paratur,  
Cum mala per longas invaluere moras.

Too late is medicine, after long delay,  
To stop the lingering course of slow decay.

Wherefore, defending our country and liberty, and acquiring for ourselves eternal renown, let us by a resolute attack and the extermination of our enemies, though they are but few in number, strike terror into many, and by their fate for ever deter foreign nations from such nefarious attempts."

Chapter VIII: The speech of Dermitius.

Mac Murchard, perceiving that his troops were disheartened, and apparently in a state of consternation, reanimated them in the best manner he could. "Ye men of Leinster," he said, "my tried comrades, whose faithful allegiance and resolute spirit have been my support under all changes of fortune, now is the time for us to stand boldly on our defence. That bold contriver of wicked devices and ambitious prince, Roderic, who is aiming to subject all of us to a universal tyranny, threatens now to drive us again from our country, or even, which God, forbid, to massacre us in it, and the danger is imminent. Arrogant in his numbers, he measures his ambition by the strength of his arm; but a small and well-armed band, if brave, have often discomfited an unarmed and ill-organized rabble. Does he lay claim to Leinster, because some of its princes have been occasionally subject to the kings of Connaught? By the same reason, I may

<sup>31</sup> All this "British" history is of course taken from Geoffrey of Monmouth.

challenge a right to Connaught, because it has been sometimes held under my ancestors when they were monarchs of all Ireland. But he does not merely seem to rule as a monarch, but to condemn, to destroy, to drive us out of the country, and, succeeding in his own person to all our rights and inheritance, to become sole master of all. Many there are who boast of their great numbers and trust therein, but let them be well assured that the men of Leinster never shrunk from engaging a host of men; for victory is not won by numbers, but by valour and resolution. We, on our side, have humility against pride, right and equity against injustice, moderation against arrogance; men gain the victory by numerous virtues, not by innumerable forces. Law and right allows us to repel force and injury by force. It is a favourable cause to contend at once for our country and our inheritance. They fight for gain, we to avoid loss. Moreover, we occupy ground which is strongly fortified both by nature and art, where excessive numbers would be inconvenient, and a small force, full of courage and acting in concert, may suffice to secure success.”

Chapter IX: The speech of Robert Fitz-Stephen.

When Dermotus had ended his speech, Fitz-Stephen thus addressed his followers: “Ye brave youths, my comrades in war, who have gone through so many perils with me, and been ever courageous and indomitable, if we now consider what we are, under what leader, and for what purpose we encounter our present dangers, our wonted valour will still be in the ascendant, and the good fortune of our former wars will not desert us. We derive our descent, originally, in part from the blood of the Trojans, and partly we are of the French race.<sup>32</sup> From the one we have our native courage, from the other the use of armour. Since, then, inheriting such generous blood on both sides, we are not only brave, but well armed, can it be supposed that an unarmed multitude and mere rabble are able to resist us?

“Recollect, besides, that we have left behind in our native land ample patrimonies which we lost through domestic frauds and intestine mischiefs. Wherefore, we are come hither, not for the sake of pay or plunder, but induced by the promise of towns and lands, to be granted to us and our heirs for ever. We are not come as pirates or freebooters, but to reinstate this illustrious, generous, and liberal prince in his own territories, of which he has been despoiled by the treason of his followers. We have compassion on the distressed, we succour the oppressed, we restore the destitute to his country and his inheritance. He loves our nation, he it is who hath invited us here, and proposed to plant our race, and for ever settle it, in this island. It may be the consequence of this enterprise that the five portions into which it is divided may be reduced into one, and the dominion of the whole kingdom devolve on our posterity. If the victory be won by our prowess, and Mac Murchard be restored, and the realm of Ireland be secured by our enterprise for us and our heirs for ever, how great will be our glory, how worthy of being achieved even by the loss of life and the contempt of death.

“For what is death, but a momentary interval of time, a brief delay, and, as it were, a short sleep between this fleeting life and that which is enduring? What is death, but a short passage from things transitory to things eternal? We must all die, because that is the inevitable and common fate of mankind; and though no splendid or glorious actions may have made us illustrious during life, by our deaths, at least, we may make our names memorable in future ages. Death is only to be feared by those who when they die appear as though all had perished with them; but it has no terror for such as have gained honour which can never fall into oblivion. Wherefore, ye valiant men, whose renown is already known to fame, let us strive to shew this day that our race has not degenerated, but in this conflict, either by victory or death, gain immortal fame as the reward of your valour.”

<sup>32</sup> Alluding to the tradition or fable, of the Trojans, under Brute, the grandson of Dardanus, having established themselves in Britain. The admixture of Norman blood in these Cambrian adventurers is less questionable.

## Chapter X: How peace was restored.

Roderic well knowing the uncertainty of events in war, and that, as it is justly said, “A wise man should try every means before he has recourse to arms,” and also greatly dreading to join battle with foreigners who were completely armed, he sent envoys to endeavour by all manner of means to obtain terms of peace. Wherefore, by the mediation of good men, with the assistance of the Divine mercy, peace was at length agreed to upon the following conditions: that all Leinster should be left under the dominion of Dermotus, and that he should acknowledge Roderic to be the paramount king and monarch of Ireland, and yield him due submission. For the performance of this, Dermotus delivered his son Cnuth as an hostage, and Roderic promised that if in the course of time the peace should continue firmly established, he would give his daughter in marriage to this young prince. These conditions were publicly proclaimed, and confirmed by oaths sworn by both parties; but there was also a secret agreement between them that Dermotus should not bring any more foreigners into the island; and should even send away those he had called in, as soon as he had reduced Leinster to a state of order.

## Chapter XI: The coming over of Maurice Fitzgerald, and the conquest of Dublin.

These matters being settled, and fortune appearing again to smile upon them with a more favourable aspect, behold, Maurice Fitzgerald, of whom I have already spoken in the Second Chapter, and who was half-brother by the mother’s side to Robert Fitz-Stephen, landed at Wexford with ten men-at-arms,<sup>33</sup> thirty mounted retainers, and about one hundred archers and foot-soldiers, who came over in two ships. This Maurice was a man much distinguished for his honour and courage, of an almost maidenish modesty, true to his word, and firm in his resolution. Mac Murchard was much delighted and encouraged by the tidings of this new arrival, and calling to mind, with the desire of vengeance, the deep injuries which the people of Dublin had done both to his father and himself, he assembled an army and prepared to march towards Dublin.

<sup>33</sup> There being no equivalent terms in Latin for describing the different classes of military men in the middle ages, the chroniclers often applied the word *milites* to soldiers of all ranks, and especially to those of the higher classes. This has led to some confusion, the word having been often indiscriminately translated knights. The order of knighthood was, however, a very high distinction, and conferred with much ceremony in chivalrous times, and it is plain that the number of “milites” described by Giraldus as going over in the several expeditions to Ireland is much too great to be of this high rank. But the term included not only knights, but all who were armed, cap-à-pied, or in complete armour, and who of course served on horseback. Grose (*Mil. Antiq.* vol. i. c. 5) says that this force was chiefly composed of the tenants in capite. Now every tenant by knight-service was required to find a certain number of horsemen in complete armour, in proportion to the fees he held, and the number was made up of his kinsmen and his mesne-tenants owing him feudal service. In the case of these Welsh levies for the invasion of Ireland, the service was voluntary; personal attachment to a tried and brave leader, the ties of kindred, so strong and extensive in Wales, the love of adventure, and the prospect of carving out an inheritance by the sword, drew numbers to the standard. Generally, then, this class of military men represented what we should now call the landed gentry of the country; a class below barons and knights, but of sufficient substance to provide themselves with a war horse and complete armour, a very costly equipment in those days. We have usually adopted the phrase “man-at-arms” to describe this class of combatants, the *milites* of our author. Hooker, his old translator, whose version is not only quaint, but often very incorrect, calls them “gentlemen of service;” but the phrase here adopted is, we think, preferable, it being understood to what class in society the “man-at-arms” belonged. The immediate body-guard of the sovereign in the present day, composed of men of a certain birth and standing, are called “gentlemen at arms,” as distinguished from the “yeomen of the guard;” but, although that designation would very nearly convey the idea intended, it is scarcely suited to a translation of a work of the age of Giraldus.

The men-at-arms were attended by their servants and retainers, who wore half-armour, and formed an additional body of cavalry, in the proportion, we find, of two or three to each man-at-arms. The infantry consisted of spear and bill-men, cross-bowmen, and archers, in the proportion of ten or more, according to the nature of the service.

In the mean time, Fitz-Stephen was building a fort upon a steep rock, commonly called the Karrec, situated about two miles from Wexford, a place strong by nature, but which art made still stronger.<sup>34</sup> Maurice Fitzgerald, however, with the English troops, joined the army under Dermotus, who took the command and acted as guide. In a short time, the whole territory belonging to Dublin, with the adjacent districts, were almost laid waste, and reduced to the last extremity, by the ravages of the enemy, and by fire and sword; so that at length the townsmen sued for peace, and gave security for keeping their allegiance to their prince in time to come, and paying him due homage and service.

Meanwhile, quarrels having broken out between Roderic of Connaught and Duvenald of Limerick, as soon as Roderic with his troops made an irruption on the borders of Limerick, Dermotus despatched Fitz-Stephen and his followers to the relief of Duvenald, who was his son-in-law. Duvenald thus supported, after several battles, in all of which he was victorious, compelled Roderic to retreat with disgrace into his own territories, and freed himself altogether from any acknowledgment of his supremacy. In this expedition, as in all others, Meyler and Robert de Barri distinguished themselves by their extraordinary valour. It was at this time that the woman was seen who had a beard, and a mane upon her back, like a horse, of whom I have already spoken in *Distinct. ii. c. 20* of my *Topography*.

#### Chapter XII: The preparations of earl Richard.

Mac Murchard, elated with his late successes, raised his hopes still higher, and having now recovered all his patrimonial territories, became ambitious of regaining the rights of his ancestors in old times, and formed the design of seizing by force Connaught and the monarchy of all Ireland. With a view to this, he sought a private conference with Fitz-Stephen and Maurice, and having opened to them all that was passing in his mind, received for answer that what he proposed could be easily accomplished if he could procure strong reinforcements of English troops to support his pretensions. Thereupon Dermotus used all manner of entreaties to induce them to invite over more numerous bands of their kindred and countrymen into the island, and take measures for carrying his project into execution; and at last, the better to persuade them, he offered to either of them his eldest daughter in marriage, with the right of succession to his kingdom. But as it chanced that both were already in the bonds of lawful wedlock, they came at last, after much deliberation, to the conclusion that Dermotus should forthwith despatch messengers to earl Richard, who has been mentioned before in chapter 2, and to whom he had formerly promised to give this daughter when he was in Bristol; the messengers being the bearer of a letter to the following effect.

*“Dermotus, son of Murchard, prince of Leinster, to Richard, earl of Strigul, son of earl Gilbert, sends greeting.*

Tempora si numeres bene quæ numeramus egentes,  
Non venit ante suum nostra querela, diem.

Were you, like those who wait your aid, to count the weary days,  
You would not wonder that I chide these lingering delays.

We have watched the storks and swallows; the summer birds have come, and are gone again with the southerly wind; but neither winds from the east nor the west have brought us your much desired and long expected presence.

Let your present activity make up for this delay, and prove by your deeds that you have not forgotten your engagements, but only deferred their performance. The whole of Leinster has been already

<sup>34</sup> Fitz-Stephen's party threw up a slight rampart of sods and stakes to fortify their camp on the Carrig, an elevated position, washed on two sides by the harbour of Wexford, and about two miles from the town. A strong fort was afterwards erected on the spot.

recovered, and if you come in time with a strong force, the other four parts of the kingdom will be easily united to the fifth. You will add to the favour of your coming if it be speedy; it will turn out famous if it be not delayed, and the sooner, the better welcome. The wound in our regards which has been partly caused by neglect will be healed by your presence; for friendship is secured by good offices, and grows by benefits to greater strength.”

Earl Richard having heard these tidings, and, after taking much counsel, being encouraged by Fitz-Stephen’s success, of which he had been at first doubtful, resolved on pursuing the same course as the others had done; and, bending every effort towards one object, on which his most earnest desire was set, he made all kinds of preparations for the conquest of Ireland. This earl was descended from a very noble stock,<sup>35</sup> being of the famous race of the Clares: but his name was greater than his means, his descent than his talents, his rights of inheritance than his property in possession. He addressed himself, therefore, to Henry II., king of England, and earnestly prayed and entreated him that he would either put him in possession of the lands which justly belonged to him by right of inheritance, or grant him licence to seek his fortune, trusting to fate, in foreign countries.

#### Chapter XIII: The coming over of Raymond, and defeat of the men of Waterford at Dundunolf.

Having obtained the king’s licence, although it was given in jest rather than in earnest, earl Richard, suffering the winter to elapse, sent forward to Ireland about the calends (the first) of May, a young man of his own household, whose name was Raymond,<sup>36</sup> with ten men-at-arms and seventy archers. He was a brave and stout soldier, expert in the practice of arms, and nephew both of Fitz-Stephen and Maurice, being the son of their elder brother. Landing at the rock of Dundunolf,<sup>37</sup> which lies on the sea-coast, about four miles from Waterford, and to the south of Wexford, they threw up a rather slight fortification, made of turf and boughs of trees. The townsmen of Waterford, and with them Mac Lacheline of Ophelan (Offaly), quickly received intelligence of their arrival, and suspecting mischief from the neighbourhood of such strangers, they held a council, and thinking it best to nip the evil in the bud, resolved on marching out in a body against them. Mustering, therefore, about three thousand men, they crossed the river Suir, which runs under the walls of the town on the east side, dividing Desmonia [Munster] from Leinster, and being formed into three bodies, boldly marched up to the intrenchments, prepared to make the assault.<sup>38</sup>

But it is scarcely possible that courage will not shew itself, or the ardour of valour be extinguished or daunted; and therefore, Raymond and his followers, inferior as they were in numbers, with surpassing gallantry sallied forth to meet their assailants and engaged in the too unequal conflict. Their small band of soldiers was, however, unable to resist the attack of the multitudes to which they were opposed; and retreating to their camp, they were so hotly pursued by the enemy, that some of them entered pell-mell with the fugitives before the barricade could be closed.

Raymond, perceiving the strait to which his party was reduced, and, in short, that the peril was imminent, faced about boldly, and cut down with his sword, on the very threshold, the foremost of the

<sup>35</sup> See before; note to chap. ii. The Clares, notwithstanding their high lineage and great alliances, had not been a prosperous family. For joining in the league of the disaffected nobles, king Stephen seized their castles in Kent and Sussex (*Gesta Stephani*, B. ii); and Henry I. stripped this earl Richard of his father’s inheritance, and refused him that of his nephews; so that he had great titles with small means.

<sup>36</sup> Other historians call him Raymond-le-Gros, which answers to our author’s description of his person in B. ii. c. 9. Throughout this history, in which he plays so distinguished a part, and perhaps shines the most, he is simply called Raymond. But he was a Fitzgerald, being the youngest son of William Fitzgerald, the elder brother of Maurice, and the bishop, and therefore nephew, by the half-blood, to Robert Fitz-Stephen. See the Pedigree.

<sup>37</sup> Dundunolf, or Dundrone, is a rocky promontory on the coast, about eight miles from Waterford and twelve from Wexford. A strong castle was afterwards erected on the spot where Raymond’s hastily fortified camp stood.

<sup>38</sup> It must be recollected that the townsmen of Waterford and other Irish sea-ports were Norwegian settlers, who not only inherited the old Northern blood, but were better armed and organized than the natives. Indeed, they appear to have opposed the only really formidable resistance to the invaders.

enemy who were forcing an entrance. Thus nobly retracing his steps, while he dealt a terrible blow, and shouted his war-cry, he encouraged his followers to stand on their defence, and struck terror into the enemies' ranks.

Thus, in the ever-doubtful fortune of war, those who to all appearance were conquered, became in a moment the victors; and the enemy took to flight, and, dispersing themselves over the country, were pursued and slaughtered in such numbers that upwards of five hundred quickly fell by the sword; and when the pursuers ceased striking from sheer weariness, they threw vast numbers from the edge of the cliffs into the sea underneath.

In this engagement a certain man-at-arms, whose name was William Ferrand, exhibited undaunted courage. His body was weak, but his spirit resolute; for being diseased with leprosy, which threatened his life, he sought to anticipate the effects of a disease by a premature, though glorious, death.

Thus fell the pride of Waterford, thus its power was lost; and from hence began the overthrow of the city, while the hopes of the English were raised and encouraged, and their enemies were struck with terror and despair. It was a thing unheard-of in those parts that so great a slaughter should be made by so small a band. But the English abused their good fortune by evil and detestable counsels and inhuman cruelty; for having gained the victory, they kept seventy of the principal townsmen prisoners in the camp, for whose ransom they might have obtained the city itself or an immense sum of money. Hervey de Montmaurice, who with three men-at arms had joined them on their first landing, and Raymond, took opposite sides of the question during the deliberations.

#### Chapter XIV: Raymond's speech.

Raymond, contending earnestly for the liberation of the prisoners, spoke thus:—"Brave comrades, to enhance whose glory their fortune and courage seem to be enormous, let us now consider what is to be done with our captives. For my part, I see no reason for showing any favour to our enemies; but we must look on these citizens now, not as foes, but as men: they are not resisting, but vanquished, who have suffered adverse fortune while defending their country. Their enterprise was honourable, and they are not to be treated as thieves, insurgents, traitors, or freebooters. They are now in such a position that mercy ought rather to be shown them for example's sake, than cruelty to torture them. It is, indeed, a difficult thing, as was practised in old time, to moderate prosperity, when spirits are apt to be extravagant and unruly, by submission to some disagreeable occurrences. Let our clemency, therefore, procure for us the noble distinction that we who have conquered others can conquer our own fury and wrath. It is the part of temperance and moderation to check precipitate resolutions, and soothe angry passions. How worthy is it of a great man, in the midst of his triumphs, to count it for sufficient revenge, that vengeance is in his power.

"Julius Cæsar, for whose victories the world was not large enough, when in the possession of unbounded power, caused only one man, Domitius, to be put to death, and him he had before pardoned, when his life was at stake. How inhuman, how brutal is that cruelty, when mercy does not follow victory! It is the part of a brave man to consider those as his enemies with whom he is contending for victory, but to consider the vanquished as fellow-men; that while courage brings war to an end, humanity may add to the blessings of peace. Mercy is, therefore, much more worthy of a noble man than victory; the one is a virtue, the other the effect of fortune. Had these men fallen by our swords in battle, doubtless that would have augmented our success and added to our glory; but as they were made prisoners, their lives were granted, and they have been readmitted from the rank of our enemies to the common fellowship of men, it would be a great stain on our honour, and bring us to great disgrace, if we were now to inflict on them the punishment of death. Since, therefore, their execution will not give us possession of the country, their ransom, which will at once augment the resources of the troops, and be an example of virtue, must be thought preferable to their death. It is, indeed, the duty of a soldier, fighting in battle, with the helmet on his head, to thirst for blood, to give no quarter, to think of nothing but cutting down his enemy, and with

more than brutal ferocity to be inexorable in all his acts; but when the tumult of battle is ended, and he has put off his armour, his fierceness should also be laid aside, humanity should then take its place, pity actuate a noble mind, and gentle feelings revive.”

Chapter XV: The speech of Hervey.

Raymond having concluded his discourse, which was received by a murmur of applause from the people, Hervey stood up, and addressing the chiefs, thus began:—“Raymond has discoursed to us very cleverly concerning mercy, and perhaps has shewn us what is passing in his mind in well-set phrases; as if a foreign land was to be subdued by merciful deeds rather than by fire and sword. Was that the way by which Julius Cæsar and Alexander of Macedon conquered the world? Did the nations voluntarily flock together from all parts to such spectacles of mercy, or were they not rather compelled to submit to the yoke by force of arms and the terrors of cruelty? While people are yet proud and rebellious, they must be subdued by all manner of means, without regard to feelings of pity; but when they have submitted, and are ready to obey, then they may be treated with all kindness, so that due order be taken for their government. In this case mercy may be shewn, in the other cruelty; in the one there is room for pity—the other only admits of severity. Raymond argues with wonderful mildness, as if we had already subjugated these nations, and we had only to do with treating them kindly, or as if our enemies were so few, that, with such valour as ours, it matters not that we augment their numbers, whereas the whole population of Ireland are leagued for our destruction, and not without reason. He seems to me to be inconsistent, and contradicts himself. He comes here to conquer and subdue the people, and he reasons in favour of sparing them. What a specimen of false pity he exhibits when he persuades us to neglect our own safety, and to be moved to tenderness at the calamities of our enemies. Besides, we have already more enemies than guards in our camp; we are surrounded with perils on every side; is it not enough that we are exposed to them from without, and must we also have them within? Outside our trenches the enemy’s host is innumerable, within there are numbers who plot our destruction.

What if it should happen that the prisoners should break their bonds, which are but weak, and suddenly seize our arms? The mouse is in the pouch, the fire in the home, the snake in the bosom; the foe in quarters where he is likely to shew small courtesy to his host. Tell me, I pray you, whether Raymond’s acts are not inconsistent with his words. Let him answer me whether, if the enemy should advance to storm our camp, and by any chance should succeed, they would deal mercifully with us? Would they allow the vanquished to purchase their lives? Would any ransom induce them to release the captives? But there is no need of multiplying words when the thing is plain. We must so employ our victory that the death of these men may strike terror into others, and that, taking warning from their example, a wild and rebellious people may beware of encountering us again. Of two things, we must make choice of one: we must either resolutely accomplish what we have undertaken, and stifling all emotions of pity, utterly subjugate this rebellious nation by the strong hand and the power of our arms, or yielding to indulging in deeds of mercy, as Raymond proposes, set sail homewards, and leave both the country and patrimony to this miserable people.”

Hervey’s opinion was approved by his comrades, and the wretched captives, as men condemned, had their limbs broken, and were cast headlong into the sea, and drowned.

## Chapter XVI: The arrival of the earl, and the capture of Waterford.

Meanwhile earl Richard, having prepared all things necessary for so great an enterprise, took his journey to St David's along the coast of South Wales,<sup>39</sup> adding to his numbers picked youths from the districts through which he passed. When all was ready for the important voyage, he betook himself to the port of Milford, and embarking there with about two hundred men-at-arms, and other troops to the number of a thousand, sailed over to Waterford with a fair wind, and landed there on the tenth of the calends of September [the 23rd of August], being the eve of the feast of St. Bartholomew. On the morrow of the feast, being Tuesday, they joined their forces to those of Raymond, whose banners were already displayed against the walls of the town, and advanced together to make the assault. But having been twice repulsed by the townsmen, and the rest; who had escaped the slaughter at Dundunolf, Raymond, discovering a little house of timber standing upon a post, outside the wall, to which it also hung, loudly called on the assailants from all quarters to renew the assault, and sent men in armour to hew down the post. As soon as it was done, the house fell, and carried with it a great piece of the wall, and the assailants entering manfully through the breach, rushed into the town, and slaughtering the citizens in heaps along the streets, gained a very bloody victory. The two Sytaracs being taken in the tower called Reginald's tower,<sup>40</sup> were put to the sword, but Reginald and Machlachelin of Ophelan, being also taken prisoners in the same place, their lives were spared through the intervention of Dermitius, who just then came up with Maurice and Fitz-Stephen, as well as Raymond. A garrison was placed in the town, and the daughter of Dermitius, called Eva, having been then given to the earl by her father, and their marriage solemnized, according to, and in confirmation of, the treaty before made,<sup>41</sup> the whole army marched towards Dublin, with banners displayed.

## Chapter XVII: Siege and surrender of the city of Dublin.

Dermitius having received intelligence that the citizens of Dublin had summoned the people from all parts of Ireland to succour them in defending the place, and that all the roads through the woods and other difficult passes were beset with armed men, was careful to avoid his father's mischance, and leading his army by the ridges of the mountains of Glyndelachan (Glendalough),<sup>42</sup> he conducted it in safety to the walls of the city. Dermitius had a mortal hatred for the citizens of Dublin, and not without reason; for they had murdered his father, while sitting in the hall of the house of one of the chief men, which he used for his court of justice; and they added insult to the foul deed by burying his corpse with a dog.

Now, however, on their sending envoys to Dermitius, and through the powerful mediation of Laurence, of blessed memory, who was at that time archbishop of Dublin,<sup>43</sup> a truce was agreed upon,

<sup>39</sup> The earl, proceeding from his castles of Chepstow and Strigul to Milford Haven, would naturally take the road through Cardiff, Swansea, and Carmarthen, subsequently described in the Itinerary of Giraldus. He constantly calls it "the coast-road through South Wales;" and it is still described as such, the other road being through Abergavenny and Brecon.

<sup>40</sup> Reginald's Tower stood at an angle of the old city walls of Waterford, where it is still to be seen, in good preservation. The tower is round, and of rude but massive construction, and a curious relic of the architecture of the Ostmen or Norwegians, by whom it was built to defend their mercantile colony at Waterford. Reginald (Regnald), who was taken prisoner in it, was the chief magistrate, ruler, or king of that people in Waterford. The two Sytaracs (Sihtricts or Sygtre) appear from their names to have belonged to that hardy and enterprising race. They seem to have held out to the last in the tower, their principal stronghold.

<sup>41</sup> It is scarcely necessary to remark that the marriage of the earl Strongbow with Eva forms one of the subjects, illustrative of the national history, selected for fresco paintings on the walls of the new palace at Westminster.

<sup>42</sup> See the Topography, Distinct. ii. c. 28. There appears to have been good strategical reasons for approaching Dublin through the mountainous districts of Wexford and Wicklow, debouching in the valley of Glendalough; as Dermot thereby not only kept within his own territories, but outflanked the hostile septs of Ossory and Meath, who, combined with the powerful tribes in the west of Ireland, might have disputed his passage through the country of woods and bogs which lay in his direct road.

<sup>43</sup> Laurence O'Toole, archbishop of Dublin, 1162-1180, was son of Maurice O'Toole, petty prince of Smaly. He was educated at Glendalough, which lay in his father's territories, and frequently in after-life retired to its sacred recesses. When Dublin was first threatened by foreign invaders, he interposed his mediation between the citizens and Dermot, considering him,

during which the terms of a treaty of peace might be settled. Notwithstanding this, Raymond on one side of the city, and on the other a brave soldier, whose name was Milo de Cogan, (of whom we shall speak further in the 21st chapter), rushed to the walls with bands of youths, eager for the fight, and greedy of plunder, and making a resolute assault, got possession of the place after a great slaughter of the citizens. The better part of them, however, under their king Hasculf,<sup>44</sup> embarked in ships and boats with their most valuable effects, and sailed to the northern islands.<sup>45</sup>

On the same day two great miracles occurred in the city. One was that the crucifix which the citizens struggled hard to carry away with them to the islands remained immovably fixed; the other, that of the penny offered before it having twice leapt back; both of which are related in my Topography.<sup>46</sup>

The earl then, having spent a few days in settling order in the city, left Milo de Cogan there as constable, and at the instigation of Mac Murchard, who had not forgotten an ancient feud with O'Roric, king of Meath, made a hostile irruption into the territories of that prince, and the whole of Meath was plundered and laid waste with fire and sword.

Roderic, king of Connaught, perceiving that he was in jeopardy, "when his neighbour's house was on fire," sent envoys to Dermotius, with this message: "Contrary to the conditions of our treaty of peace, you have invited a host of foreigners into this island, and yet, as long as you kept within the bounds of Leinster, we bore it patiently. But now, forasmuch as, regardless of your solemn oaths, and having no concern for the fate of the hostage you gave, you have broken the bounds agreed on, and insolently crossed the frontiers of your own territory; either restrain in future the irruptions of your foreign bands, or I will certainly have your son's head cut off, and send it to you." Dermotius, having received this message, made an arrogant reply, adding also that he would not desist from the enterprise he had undertaken, until he had reduced Connaught to subjection, which he claimed as his ancient inheritance, and obtained with it the monarchy of the whole of Ireland. Roderic was so indignant at this reply, that he caused the son of Dermotius, who had been delivered to him for an hostage (as mentioned before, chap. 10), to be put to death.

probably as their paramount prince, though the Ostmen of Dublin were in some degree independent. But his patriotic zeal afterwards induced him to join the league of the native princes against the rising power of the Anglo or Cambro-Normans, and even to head one body of the forces which laid siege to Dublin. Finding, however, that resistance to the English power was hopeless, and perhaps hoping that the reform and advancement of the church, to which Henry was pledged, would be carried into effect, he submitted to the English king. Notwithstanding this, we find in the sequel of the History (B. ii. c. 23), that his patriotic conduct at the council of Lateran, towards the close of his life, gave umbrage to Henry, and that in consequence he found a grave in a foreign land.

<sup>44</sup> Giraldus has informed us in his Topography (Distinct. iii. c. 43), that the Ostmen, who were Danes and Norwegians, but principally the latter, founded colonies in Dublin, Waterford, and other places, on the coast of Ireland, including Limerick and Cork, ostensibly for the purpose of trade, but that they soon surrounded their towns with strong fortifications, and became formidable to the native princes. We also find from various indications in our author, and from other sources, that their numbers were very considerable, and that they formed, as in England, separate communities under their own laws, and kings of their own race, of whom there are records of a succession during three centuries from Anlaf or Olaf, the first king of Dublin mentioned by Giraldus, to Ansculf or Asgal, whom we here find opposing the English, and in Waterford from Sihtric, who was contemporary with Anlaf, to Reginald or Regnald, who is referred to in a preceding chapter. These Scandinavian kings in Ireland, particularly those of Dublin, gradually extended their power, not only by their arms, taking advantage of the intestine divisions of the Irish princes, but by forming alliances and intermarriages with them.

<sup>45</sup> All the islands on the north and west of Scotland, and as far south as the Isle of Man, were at this time occupied by Norwegian colonies, with which their countrymen in Ireland had frequent communications, both political and commercial. It was therefore perfectly natural that Asgal and his people, when driven out by the united forces of Dermot and the English, should take refuge in the Isles, and obtaining reinforcements, return thence with the powerful armament by which they endeavoured to regain their ascendancy in Dublin; as we find in chap. 21.

<sup>46</sup> Distinct. ii. cc. 45, 46.

## Chapter XVIII: The synod of Armagh.

After these events, a synod of all the clergy of Ireland was convoked at Armagh, in which the arrival of the foreigners in the island was the subject of long debates and much deliberation. At length it was unanimously resolved, that, it appeared to the synod that the Divine vengeance had brought upon them this severe judgment for the sins of the people, and especially for this, that they had long been wont to purchase natives of England as well from traders as from robbers and pirates, and reduce them to slavery; and that now they also, by reciprocal justice, were reduced to servitude by that very nation.<sup>47</sup> For it was the common practice of the Anglo-Saxon people, while their kingdom was entire, to sell their children, and they used to send their own sons and kinsmen for sale in Ireland, at a time when they were not suffering from poverty or famine. Hence it might well be believed that by so enormous a sin the buyers had justly merited to undergo the yoke of servitude, as the sellers had done in former times. It was therefore decreed by the before-mentioned synod, and proclaimed publicly by universal accord, that all Englishmen throughout the island who were in a state of bondage should be restored to freedom.

## Chapter XIX: The proclamation of the king of England.

Reports having been spread abroad of these events, which were much exaggerated, and the earl having made himself master not only of Leinster, but of other territories to which he had no just claims in right of his wife, the king of England made a proclamation that in future no ship sailing from any part of his dominions should carry any thing to Ireland, and that all his subjects who had been at any time conveyed there should return before the ensuing Easter, on pain of forfeiting all their lands, and being banished from the kingdom for ever.

The earl finding himself in great straits, and that his followers were much cast down at the loss of reinforcements and the want of necessary supplies, after consulting his friends, dispatched Raymond to the king, who was then in the most distant parts of Aquitaine, with the following letter: "My lord and king, It was with your licence, as I understood, that I came over to Ireland for the purpose of aiding your faithful vassal Dermotus in the recovery of his territories. Whatever lands, therefore, I have had the good fortune to acquire in this country, either in right of his patrimony, or from any other person, I consider to be owing to your gracious favour, and I shall hold them at your free disposal."

## Chapter XX: The martyrdom of St. Thomas.

Raymond pursuing his journey and having arrived at court with the earl's letter, the king received him with great coldness, and being as usual much occupied with business, deferred his reply.

About that time, Thomas, archbishop of Canterbury, in England, perished by the hands of impious men, to the dismay of the great men of the realm, both lay and clerical; after having undergone the sufferings of banishment for nearly seven years in much grief, wearing sackcloth on every part of his body, and giving himself up to reading and prayer, besides, the most severe of all afflictions, a grievous proscription which spared no one, of whatever age or sex, his martyrdom at last filled up the measure of his sufferings and glory. He himself threw open the doors of the sanctuary to his furious enemies, and meeting boldly their drawn swords, bowed his consecrated head to their violence. This took place in the mother and metropolitan church, and before the altar. There he received four wounds on the crown of his head, the shaven crown which used to be regarded as a token of the protection due to the clergy, inflicted

<sup>47</sup> The existence of a considerable slave-trade among the Anglo-Saxons is a well-known fact. According to William of Malmesbury, book iii., c. 1, Bristol was a great mart for this trade, from whence, no doubt, the unfortunate victims were transported to Ireland; but the traffic was considerably diminished, if not suppressed, by the zealous exertions of Wulfstan, bishop of Worcester, who died A.D. 1095. Yet, according to this statement of Giraldus, it must have continued after that time.

by four brutal retainers of the court, with more than brutal rage.<sup>48</sup> The illustrious soldier and martyr of Christ was thus distinguished by intrepidly suffering in that part of the body which betokened Christ's sufferings during his passion, and exchanged a corruptible for an incorruptible crown. He also hallowed the holy week of Christmas, by then shedding his blood, and as the fifth day before Christmas is consecrated to the memory of the first Thomas, so the second Thomas shed glory on the fifth day after Christmas.<sup>49</sup> The one was the light of the East, the other of the West; one illuminated the infant church, the other the church of the latter days; and as the one cemented the foundations of the rising church with his blood, so the other, by shedding his blood, renewed the primitive virtues, and restored the edifice which in the lapse of so many ages had fallen to decay by the injuries of time, and the violence of the storms to which it had been exposed. The first Thomas was actuated by an ardent faith, the second was more than fervent when faith was now growing old. The one submitted to cruel torments while erecting the frame of the church, the other did not shrink from meeting death in order to preserve that frame uninjured. His triumphant claims to such glory are well summed up in the two following verses:

Pro Christi sponsa, Christi sub tempore, Christi  
In templo Christi verus amator obit.

In Christ church, and at Christmas tide,  
For Christ's spouse, Christ's true servant died.

Among his numerous miracles, there was one which was very memorable, and is well worthy of being mentioned; namely, the marvellous way in which he restored organs which had been actually lost; for by this novel kind of miracle it plainly appeared that he was a new martyr, Hence some one has said,

Miratur rediisse virum neutratus, ocelli  
Succedunt oculis, albus hic, ille niger.

In order that no caviller might object that they were the same eyes which the sufferer had before, and to shew that they were not merely injured but actually plucked out, the new organs of sight were smaller and of a different colour, and had the power of seeing not only in the light of day, but in the dark.

This grain of wheat falling on the ground produced an abundant harvest. St. Thomas was cut off in the forty-eighth year of his age, the eighth of his consecration, and the seventh of his exile; finishing his course happily towards the close of December, and thus ending his life. with the year, and entering on a new life in the year of our Lord 1171, when Alexander was pope of Rome, Frederick was emperor, and Louis, king of France. Hence some one says:

Annus millenus centenus septuagenus  
Primus erat, primas quo ruit ense Thomas.

"In the year one thousand one hundred and seventy-one, the primate Thomas fell by the sword."

Meanwhile, when the winter was passed, Dermotus mac Murchard died at Ferns, full of years, on the calends (the first) of May.

<sup>48</sup> *A quatuor aulicis canibus, rabie plusquam canina furentibus.*

<sup>49</sup> The feast of St. Thomas, the apostle, is held on the 21st December, and that of St. Thomas à Becket on the 29th December.

## Chapter XXI: The overthrow of the Danes at Dublin.

At this time, about the feast of Whitsuntide, Hasculf, who had been king of Dublin, sailed into the Liffy with sixty ships full of Norwegians and men of the isles,<sup>50</sup> and burning with revenge for his former discomfiture. Landing from their ships, in all haste, they sat down before the east gate of the city, prepared to assault it. They were under the command of John the Woode, or John the Mad, for such is the signification of the word, and were all warriors, armed in the Danish fashion, some having long breast-plates, and others shirts of mail; their shields were round, and coloured red,<sup>51</sup> and were bound about with iron. They were iron-hearted as well as iron-armed men.

Milo de Cogan,<sup>52</sup> who was then governor of the city, with his natural intrepidity boldly dared to march out to attack them, though his force was unequal to theirs. But not being able with inferior numbers to withstand the enemy's attack, he was compelled to retreat inside the gate, after losing some of his men, one of whom had his leg cut off by a single stroke of a battle axe, though it was eased in iron armour on both sides. At length, Richard de Cogan, Milo's brother, sallying unobserved from the east postern at the head of a small body of troops, fell on the enemy's rear with loud shouts; by which unexpected and sudden attack they were thrown into confusion, having to face their assailants both behind and before, and, such is the doubtful fortune of war, were quickly routed and took to flight.

They were nearly all put to the sword, and among them John the Mad, who was captured and slain by the aid of Walter de Ridenesford and some others. Hasculf fell into their hands while seeking to make his escape over the strand to his ships; and, to do more honour to the victory, he was brought back in triumph to the city of which he had been the ruler not long before. He was therefore reserved for ransom; but being brought before Milo de Cogan, was imprudent enough to vent his indignation before the crowded court in these words: "We are come now," he said, "with a small band, but this is only the commencement of our enterprise; and if life be spared me, it will soon be followed by much more formidable attempts." Upon hearing this, Milo ordered him to be beheaded: for on the tongue resteth life and death, and God humbleth the proud. It is an ill remedy for trouble to vent grief in such a manner as to aggravate it. Thus, Hasculf, whose life had been pardoned, lost it for an arrogant speech.

## Chapter XXII: The siege of Dublin by Roderic of Connaught and the men of the isles.

After this, the Irish finding that the resources of the earl were failing both by the loss of men and scarcity of victuals, with which the island had hitherto been plentifully supplied from England, the princes assembling their forces from all quarters, laid siege to Dublin, at the head of nearly all the people of Ireland. They were moved to this, as it is reported, by the patriotic zeal of Laurence, archbishop of Dublin, who joined with Roderic, king of Connaught, in sending letters to Gottred, prince of Man,<sup>53</sup> and to other

<sup>50</sup> See note 3, c. xvii.

<sup>51</sup> We find in Ordericus Vitalis (B. x. c. 7), that when the expedition of Magnus, king of Norway, appeared off the Welsh coast in the eleventh century, a red shield was hoisted at the mast-head of the admiral's ship. Red was not only the national colour of the Scandinavian nations, but of the kindred Anglo-Norman race, and so continues to the present day, both in Denmark and England.

<sup>52</sup> Milo de Cogan, who is afterwards (B. ii. c. 10) called Milo of St. David's, was one of the most distinguished men engaged in the conquest of Ireland, exhibiting great prudence as well as bravery, and filling important offices. We find that he married a daughter of Robert Fitz-Stephen, and there is no doubt of his having been a Welshman, and he was probably connected by blood with the other adventurers. Perhaps Cogan is the same name as Gwgan or Wogan, belonging to a family of high standing in Pembrokeshire, where they were lords of Wilton, and who also acquired great eminence in Ireland. The conjecture is confirmed by finding that Sir John Wogan, who was chief justice there in the time of Edward I., founded a chauntry in the cathedral of St. David's.

<sup>53</sup> In 1077, Godred (Gudrod), a Norwegian, conquered the Isle of Man, and the other Sudreyjar islands, which were tributary to the crown of Norway, as well as Dublin and great part of Leinster. This occasioned the expeditions of king Magnus Barfod and his son Sigurd, related in the Chronicles and Sagas. Godred was deposed, but afterwards regained the Manx throne, and his

lords of the isles, inviting them to blockade the city on the sea-side; for which good reasons were assigned, and ample pay was promised. These princes were more ready to engage in this enterprise, from the alarm they felt that the successes of the English were putting their own independence in danger, and they therefore lost no time in sailing with a favourable wind from the east, in about thirty ships full of men trained to war, and speedily entered the port of Avenliffy.<sup>54</sup>

The earl and his followers had now been confined within the walls of the city for nearly two months, and having received no supplies of food, either by land or sea, were in great want of provisions. And as evil seldom comes alone, and one misfortune is heaped upon another, just then, lo! Duvenald,<sup>55</sup> son of Dermotius, arrived from Kinsale, bringing intelligence that Fitz-Stephen, with a small force, was beleaguered in his camp at Carrig by the townsmen of Wexford, joined by the men of Kinsale, to the number of about three thousand; and that unless they were succoured by a strong body of troops within three days, they must surrender at discretion.

At that time there were with the earl, besieged within the walls of Dublin, Fitzgerald, Maurice, and Raymond, who was just returned from court, all of whom were greatly troubled at the position in which not only themselves, but their friends, were placed. Maurice, especially, much as he was concerned on his own account, was still more anxious for his excellent brother, Robert Fitz-Stephen and his wife and children, who, surrounded by the enemy, were in a very ill-fortified hold, constructed of only turf and stakes. He therefore rose and thus addressed the earl and the other chief commanders.

Chapter XXIII: The speech of Maurice Fitzgerald.

“We did not come into this remote part of the world for our pleasure, and to enjoy repose, but to try our fortunes and prove our valour at the risk of our lives. For awhile we were in the ascendant, but now the wheel is turned, and we are in a low estate. Such is the mutability of human affairs, that prosperity is always chequered by adverse circumstances. After the day comes night, and when the night is spent the day returns again. We, whose triumphs had gained us such abundance of everything that a successful fortune could bestow, are now beleaguered by the enemy on all sides, both by sea and land, and our provisions have failed. We get no supplies by sea, which is commanded by the enemy’s fleet. Fitz-Stephen, likewise, whose valour and noble enterprise opened to us the way into this island, is shut up in a sorry fortress, which is strictly watched by a hostile people. What then do we look for? Is it succour from our own country that we expect? Nay, such is our lot, that what the Irish are to the English, we too, being now considered as Irish, are the same. The one island does not hold us in greater detestation than the other. Away then with hesitation and cowardice, and let us boldly attack the enemy, while our short stock of provisions yet supplies us with sufficient strength. Fortune helps the brave, and a well-armed though scanty force, inured to war, and animated by the recollection of former triumphs, may yet crush this rude and disorderly rabble.”

Talia voce refert, curisque ingentibus æger,  
Spem simulat vultu, premit alto corde dolorem.

Maurice having finished his speech, Raymond, who shared his anxiety and distress, delivered his opinion to the same effect; and all joined in approving it. He also added that they ought first to attack the

successors reigned there till the time of Magnus, the last of his descendants, and the last Norwegian king of Man. The reigning king of this race, probably Godred Olavesön, very naturally came to the aid of his countrymen in Dublin on this occasion.

<sup>54</sup> The mouth of the Liffy—in fact, the Bay of Dublin.

<sup>55</sup> O’Donnell? A natural son of Dermot mac Morrough, as we may suppose, from his daughter Eva having conveyed the inheritance of his territories to earl Strongbow.

king of Connaught, as the chief and greatest of their enemies; for having defeated him, they would have little difficulty in dealing with the other armies.

Chapter XXIV: The defeat of Roderic at Dublin.

Thereupon the brave youths flew to arms, and their small force, having been divided into three troops, they immediately arranged themselves in separate divisions. In the first was Raymond, with twenty men-at-arms; in the centre, Milo, with thirty; in the third and last were the earl and Maurice with forty. Some horse-soldiers and a few citizens were joined to each division, and besides these a small number were left to guard the walls. After some contention whether the governor of the city or the commander of the troops was entitled to lead in the first battle, they issued forth from the gates about an hour after noon, and this small band fell boldly on the enemy's army of thirty thousand men, taking them by surprise, and off their guard, for they expected no attack at that time, in consequence of some skirmishes having taken place in the morning of the same day. Raymond, ever first among the foremost, threw himself on the enemy long before the rest came up, and pierced two of them through with his lance. Meyler also, and the two sons of Fitz-Maurice, Gerald and Alexander, although they were stationed in the last troop, suddenly rushed to the front, prompted by their innate valour, and being rapidly followed by others distinguished for their bravery and skill in arms, made great slaughter of the enemy. Numbers having been slain, and the whole army put to the rout, Roderic himself, who was bathing, having escaped with difficulty, they pursued the vanquished fugitives, putting them to the sword, until the evening. Then at length they returned in triumph to the city, driving before them cars full of provisions, and loaded with arms and other booty. The other troops immediately dispersed, as well those of the archbishop, who were posted on the south side of the city, as all the forces of Leinster, namely those of Machelonus (Mac Lachlin), Machaleny (Mac Elwyn), Gillemolmoc, and Othnethel, and others also who were equally dismayed, save only the men of Kinsale and Wexford. Likewise O'Roric of Meath, O'Carvel of Uriel, and Mac Saline of Ochadese, who were posted on the north side, with a vast multitude, broke up their camps. On the morrow, the English, leaving a garrison in the city, unfurled their standards, and, flushed with victory, marched by the upper road through Odrone towards Wexford.

Chapter XXV: Fitz-Stephen is treacherously taken prisoner.

Meanwhile, as fortune is continually changing, and success always attended by some adverse event, the men of Wexford and Kinsale, to the number of about three thousand, regardless of their oaths and the faith they had pledged, marched against Fitz-Stephen, and taking him unawares, when he apprehended nothing of the kind, and had only a few men-at-arms and archers to defend his fort, they harassed him with incessant attacks. But finding that all their efforts were fruitless, for his men, though few, were at all times ready to stand on their guard, and one particularly, whose name was William Not, much distinguished himself by his brilliant courage in this defence, they had recourse to their usual falsehood and cunning. Bringing with them to the entrenchments the bishops of Wexford and Kildare, and other ecclesiastics, in their sacred vestments, they took solemn oaths on the holy relics that Dublin was taken, and that the earl, with Maurice and Raymond, and all the English were slain; also, that the king of Connaught and his army, with the Leinster troops, were on their march, and drawing near to Wexford. They also asserted that what they proposed was for the advantage of Fitz-Stephen; for as he had treated them like a courteous and liberal prince, they wished to send him and his followers back to Wales in safety, before the arrival of the vast army which was incensed against him. At length, Fitz-Stephen gave credit to their assertions, and committed himself and his people to their pledged faith. Whereupon they suddenly fell upon the English, and killing some of them, and cruelly beating and wounding others, threw them into dungeons. A true report, however, being soon received that the siege of Dublin was raised, and that the earl was near at hand, the traitors set fire to the town with their own hands, and crossed in boats to

the island of Begeri, also called the Holy Isle, which lies at the mouth of the harbour, taking with them the captives and all their effects.

Chapter XXVI: Description of Fitz-Stephen.

O excellent man, the true pattern of singular courage, and unparalleled enterprise, whose lot it was to be obnoxious to fickle fortune, and suffer adversity with few intervals of prosperity! O, worthy man, who both in Ireland and in Wales experienced so many changes of fortune, and bore them all with equanimity.

Quæ pejor fortuna potest, atquæ omnibus usum,  
Quæ melior.---

O, Fitz-Stephen! Thou wert indeed another Marius; for if you consider his prosperity, no one was more fortunate; if you consider his misfortunes, he was of all men most miserable. Robert Fitz-Stephen was stout in person, with a handsome countenance, and in stature somewhat above the middle height; he was bountiful, generous, and pleasant, but too fond of wine and women.

Meanwhile, as the earl was on his march towards Wexford, the Leinster forces encountered him near Odrone,<sup>56</sup> at a spot which opposed natural obstacles to his passage, and which was besides strongly fortified by a number of trees being felled across it. Here then was a sharp engagement, but the earl forced his way through to the open country, with the loss of only one of his followers; Meyler distinguishing himself with his usual bravery.

Chapter XXVII: The description of the earl.

As to the earl's portrait, his complexion was somewhat ruddy, and his skin freckled; he had grey eyes, feminine features, a weak voice, and short neck. Far the rest, he was tall in stature, and a man of great generosity, and of courteous manner. What he failed of accomplishing by force, he succeeded in by gentle words. In time of peace he was more disposed to be led by others than to command. Out of the camp he had more the air of an ordinary man-at-arms, than of a general-in chief; but in action the mere soldier was forgotten in the commander. With the advice of those about him he was ready to dare anything; but he never ordered any attack relying on his own judgment, or rashly presuming on his personal courage. The post he occupied in battle was a sure rallying point for his troops. His equanimity and firmness in all the vicissitudes of war were remarkable, being neither driven to despair in adversity nor puffed up by success.

Chapter XXVIII: How peace and amity were restored between the king and the earl in the neighbourhood of Gloucester.

The earl, continuing his march without loss of time, descended into the low country about Wexford, where he was met by envoys, who announced to him the calamity which had befallen Fitz-Stephen, and the burning of the town. They also conveyed to him a message from the traitors, that it was their firm resolution to cut off the prisoners' heads, and send them to him, if he should venture to advance against them. On receiving this intelligence, they wheeled to the right, in great bitterness of spirit, and took the road to Waterford, where they found Hervey just returned from executing his commission to the king of England, and bringing letters, inviting the earl to come over to England, which were seconded by a verbal message.

<sup>56</sup> Odrone is a barony in the neighbourhood of Leighlin, in the county of Carlow. It was the inheritance of the Carews, descended from the eldest son of Gerald and Nesta.

Accordingly the earl took shipping as soon as the wind was favourable, and, crossing the sea, met the king at Newnham, near Gloucester, where he was making preparations to pass over to Ireland, with a large army. While there, after much altercation, he succeeded at last, by the address and mediation of Hervey, in appeasing the royal displeasure, upon the terms that he should renew his oath of fealty to the king and surrender to him Dublin, the capital of the kingdom, and the adjacent cantreds, with the towns on the sea coast, and all the fortresses; holding the rest of his conquests to him and his heirs of the king and his heirs. This matter being thus settled, the king proceeded on his march towards St. David's, by the road along the coast, and coming to Pembroke, quickly assembled a splendid fleet in the port of Milford.

Chapter XXIX: The defeat of O'Roric at Dublin. King Henry at Pembroke.

In the meantime, O'Roric, the one-eyed king of Meath, taking advantage of the absence of the earl, and of Raymond, who remained at Waterford, advanced to Dublin about the calends (the 1st) of September, with a great host of men. Finding a very small garrison in the place, though they were brave soldiers, he instantly made an assault on the walls and trenches with great fury and loud shouts. But as valour breaks through all bounds, and stifled fire will burst into flame, Milo de Cogan and his troops, suddenly sallying forth, made such slaughter of the enemy that they were speedily routed, O'Roric's son, a gallant youth, with a vast number of others, being slain.

While the king of England lay at Pembroke, he threatened with his severest indignation the princes and lords of South Wales, for having allowed earl Richard to take his passage from thence to Ireland; but at last the storm subsided on their allowing him to place royal garrisons in all their castles; and though the mutterings of the thunder were loud, the deadly bolt did not fall. It occurred at this time that while the king was amusing himself in the country with the sport of hawking, he chanced to espy a noble falcon perched on a crag,<sup>57</sup> and making a circuit round the rocks, he let loose upon it a large high-bred Norway hawk, which he carried on his left wrist. The falcon, though its flight was at first slower than the other bird's, having at last mounted above it, became in turn the assailant, and pouncing from aloft with great fury on the hawk, and striking it on the breast with her talons, laid it dead at the king's feet. From that time the king used to send every year in the proper season for the young falcons which are bred in the cliffs on the coast of South Wales; for in all his land he could not find better or more noble hawks.

Chapter XXX: The arrival of the king of England.

The preparations for his great enterprise detaining the king for some time in the district of Menevia,<sup>58</sup> he went to the church of St. David's, and having paid his devotions with all due solemnity, when the weather was fair and wind favourable, embarked his troops,<sup>59</sup> consisting of as many as five hundred men-at-arms, and a large body of horsemen and archers; and crossing the sea, arrived at Waterford about the fifteenth of the calends of November (the 18th of October), being St. Luke's day. The valiant king landed in Ireland therefore in the seventeenth year of his reign, and the forty-first year of his age, being the year of our Lord 1172; when Alexander III. was pope, Frederic emperor, and Louis king of France.

<sup>57</sup> Fuller in his "Worthies," quoting this anecdote, says. "There is a very good breed in this county, of that kind of falcon they call peregrine, which name bespeaks them to be no indigenes, but foreigners, at first alighting here by some casualty;" and he says that the king's hawk was a Norway goss hawk. The cliffs on the Pembrokeshire coast and the neighbouring rocky islands still abound with eyesses of several species of hawk

<sup>58</sup> Menevia is the ancient name of the see of St. David's, and included all the western part of South Wales.

<sup>59</sup> Hoveden informs us that king Henry's fleet contained four hundred large ships laden with warriors, horses, arms, and provisions. He landed at the Carrig as he had done before.

Chapter XXXI: How Fitz-Stephen was released at Waterford, and the princes of the west of Ireland made their voluntary submission.

While the king was resting a few days at Waterford,<sup>60</sup> the men of Wexford, to court his favour, brought to him in fetters their prisoner Fitz-Stephen, excusing themselves because he had been the first to invade Ireland without the royal licence, and had set others a bad example. The king having loudly rated him, and threatened him with his indignation for his rash enterprise, at last sent him back loaded with fetters, and chained to another prisoner, to be kept in safe custody in Reginald's Tower.

Soon afterwards, Dermitius, king of Cork, came of his own free will and made his submission to the king of England, doing homage and swearing fealty to him as his lord, and giving hostages for the regular payment of a yearly tribute. The king of England then moved his army, and coming first to Lismore, halted there for two days; and thence he marched to Cashel, on the morrow. There Duvenald, king of Limerick, came to meet him at the water of Suir, and having asked for peace, which was granted, became also tributary to the king of England, and did him fealty, which he promised faithfully to observe. The king also appointed his own governors and officers in Cork and Limerick.

Even Duvenald, prince of Ossory, Mac Lachelin, prince of Ophelan, and others, in the south of Ireland, who, although not princes, were men of consequence in their respective nations, also made their voluntary submission;<sup>61</sup> and the king having sent them back into their own country with honour and liberal gifts, returned to Waterford, through Tybrach. While there, Fitz-Stephen was again brought before him, and being touched with compassion for a brave man who had been so often exposed to such great perils, and pitying his case, at the intercession of some persons of rank about his court, he heartily forgave and pardoned him, and freely restored him to his former state and liberty, reserving to himself only the town of Wexford with the lands adjoining.

Chapter XXXII: How the princes of the north of Ireland, and Roderic of Connaught, made voluntary submission at Dublin.

After these occurrences, the king, leaving Robert Fitz-Bernard with a garrison at Waterford, moved his army towards Dublin, through Ossory. Making some stay on the road, the chief men of those parts came and swore fealty and allegiance to him, obtaining from the merciful king assurance of peace and favour. Among these were Machelan of Ophelan, Mac Talewy, Othwetel, Gillemoholmoch, O'Eadhese, O'Carvel of Uriel, and O'Roric of Meath. But Roderic of Connaught only met the king's messengers, Hugh De Lacy and William Fitz-Aldelm, at the water of Shannon, which divides Meath from Connaught. He also sued for peace, and acknowledging the king of England as his supreme lord, became tributary to him, and bound himself by the most solemn oaths of alliance and fealty.<sup>62</sup> Thus did all the princes of Ireland, except those of Ulster, severally make their submission for themselves; and thus, also, in the person of Roderic, prince of Connaught, and the titular head of the Irish and monarch of the whole island,

<sup>60</sup> Hoveden states that the king stayed at Waterford fifteen days, and that he found there William, Fitz-Aldelm, his seneschal, and Robert Fitz-Bernard, with some other persons of his household, whom he had sent before him from England.

<sup>61</sup> Among these we may include, on the authority of Hoveden, Reginald (or Regnald), the chief of the Ostmen in Waterford, mentioned before in c. xvi.

<sup>62</sup> We find Roderic O'Connor, king of Connaught, again in arms against the English, taking advantage of the defeat of the Ostmen of Dublin, related in B. ii. c. 3. Roger de Hoveden has, however, preserved the record of a transaction unnoticed by Giraldus, which may be considered as a record of the ultimate submission of this powerful and turbulent Irish prince. It purports to be a treaty made between Henry II. and Roderic, king of Connaught, by his envoys, at Windsor, in 1175, whereby the king of England grants to Roderic the kingdom of Connaught, to hold under fealty and payment of an annual tribute of one skin for every ten animals slaughtered, "such as may be approved by dealers." This instrument reserves to king Henry all Meath, with Dublin, Waterford, and other places in Leinster, in which it does not appear that Roderic of Connaught could have possessed any interest, unless, on the death of Dermot Mac Morrrough, he had, as the paramount Irish king, in some way succeeded to Mac Morrrough's rights in Leinster. See Hoveden, vol. i. p. 402. *Antiq. Lib.*

they, all became vassals to the king of England. Indeed, there was scarcely any one of name or rank in the island, who did not, either in person or otherwise, pay to the king's majesty the homage due from a liegeman to his lord.

Then was fulfilled that ancient and well-known prophecy of Merlinus Ambrosius (I do not vouch for its authenticity):—"The sixth shall overthrow the walls of Ireland;" and another prediction of the same prophet. "The five portions shall be reduced to one."

The feast of Christmas drawing near, very many of the princes of the land repaired to Dublin to visit the king's court, and were much astonished at the sumptuousness of his entertainments and the splendour of his household; and having places assigned them at the tables in the hall,<sup>63</sup> by the king's command, they learnt to eat cranes which were served up, a food they before loathed. It was at this time that the archers laid violent hands on the trees planted by the hands of the saints in old times round the cemetery at Finglass, and were carried off by a new sort of pestilence, as I have related in my Topography.<sup>64</sup>

#### Chapter XXXIII: The synod of Cashel.

The king having now silenced all opposition by his presence, and the island enjoying peace and tranquillity, he was the more inflamed with zeal to advance the honour of the church of God and the christian religion in those parts, for which purpose he convoked a synod of the clergy of the whole of Ireland at Cashel. At this synod enquiry was publicly made into the enormous offences and foul lives of the people of that land; which having been recounted and carefully reduced to writing under the seal of the bishop of Lismore, who, as the Pope's legate, presided at the synod, many godly constitutions, which are yet extant, were made with regard to contracting marriages, the payment of tithes, the reverence due to churches, and the duty of frequenting them. These constitutions the king promulgated, being very desirous of bringing the church of Ireland in all respects into conformity with the English church; and I have considered it not out of place to insert them here, verbatim, as they were published.

#### Chapter XXXIV: The constitutions of the synod of Cashel.

In the year of our Lord 1172, being the first year in which the most illustrious Henry, king of England and conqueror of Ireland, obtained the dominion of that island; Christian, bishop of Lismore and legate of the apostolical see, Donatus, archbishop of Cashel, Laurence, archbishop of Dublin, and Catholicus, archbishop of Tuam, with their suffragans and fellow-bishops, together with the abbots, archdeacons, priors, and deans, and many other Irish prelates, assembled by the conqueror's command at the city of Cashel, and there held a synod concerning the well-being of the Church and the reformation thereof.

At this synod were present, on the king's behalf, the venerable Ralph, abbot of Buildewas, Ralph, archdeacon of Llandaff, Nicholas the chaplain, and other clerks, having the commission of our lord the king. The decrees of the synod were subscribed by the prelates, and confirmed by the royal authority; as follows.

*First.* It is decreed that all the faithful throughout Ireland shall eschew concubinage with their cousins and kinsfolk, and contract and adhere to lawful marriages.

*Second.* That children be catechised outside the church doors, and infants baptized at the consecrated fountains in the baptisteries of the churches.

*Third.* That all good Christians do pay the tithes of beasts, corn, and other produce, to the church of the parish in which they live

<sup>63</sup> It is said that the king received the homage of the Irish princes in a hall constructed of wicker work, after the fashion of the country. Hoveden says that it was a royal palace constructed for the occasion, with wonderful skill, of peeled osiers. Henry remained in Dublin from the feast of St. Martin, 11th November, to the beginning of Lent.

<sup>64</sup> See the Topog., D. ii. c. 54.

*Fourth.* That all the lands and possessions of the church be entirely free from all exactions of secular men; and especially, that neither the petty kings (*reguli*), nor earls, or other great men in Ireland, nor their sons, nor any of their household, shall exact provisions and lodgings on any ecclesiastical territories, as the custom is, nor under any pretence presume to extort them by violent means; and that the detestable practice of extorting a loaf four times a year from the villis belonging to the churches, by neighbouring lords, shall henceforth be utterly abolished.

*Fifth.* That in the case of a homicide committed by laics, when it is compounded for by the adverse parties, none of the clergy, though of kindred to the perpetrators of the crime, shall contribute anything; that, as they were free from the guilt of the homicide, so they shall be also exonerated from any payment in satisfaction for it.

*Sixth.* That every good Christian, being sick and weak, shall solemnly make his last will and testament in the presence of his confessor and neighbours, and that, if he have, any wife and children, all his moveable goods (his debts and servants' wages being first paid) shall be divided into three parts; one of which he shall bequeath to his children, another to his lawful wife, and the third to such uses as he shall declare. And if it shall happen that there be no lawful child or children, then his goods shall be equally divided between his wife and legatees. And if his wife die before him, then his goods shall be divided into two parts, of which the children shall take one, and his residuary legatees the other.

*Seventh.* That those who depart this life after a good confession shall be buried with masses and vigils and all due ceremonies.

*Finally.* That divine offices shall be henceforth celebrated in every part of Ireland according to the forms and usages of the church of England. For it is right and just that, as by divine Providence Ireland has received her lord and king from England, she should also submit to a reformation from the same source. Indeed both the realm and church of Ireland are indebted to this mighty king for whatever they enjoy of the blessings of peace and the growth of religion; as before his coming to Ireland all sorts of wickedness had prevailed among this people for a long series of years, which now, by his authority and care of the administration, are abolished.

The primate of Armagh was not present at this synod by reason of his infirmities and advanced age, but he afterwards came to Dublin and gave his assent to the royal will in all these matters. This holy man, as he was commonly esteemed, had a white cow, and took no other nourishment than this cow's milk, and therefore wherever he went she was taken with him.

#### Chapter XXXV: A tempestuous winter.

The winds raged so furiously, the sea was so rough, and storms succeeded each other with so much violence, that during the whole winter scarcely a single ship made her passage over to the island, and no intelligence could in any way be obtained from England. Wherefore all men began to think that the wrath of God was impending over them for the sins of which they were guilty.

About the same time the sands were washed away on the coast of South Wales by the extraordinary violence of the prevailing storms, and the surface of the dry land, which had been for many long years covered by the waves, was laid bare to view.<sup>65</sup> Trunks of trees also appeared from place to place standing

<sup>65</sup> There can be no doubt that, at some remote period, though beyond the reach of any records, a vast tract of low ground extended round the coast of Pembrokeshire and the adjoining counties, washed by the Severn sea. The great storms of the memorable winter of 1172 again laid bare some parts of the coast in Pembrokeshire, and disclosed objects which are here faithfully described by Giraldus. He repeats this account in his itinerary, B. i. c. 13, connecting it with his observations in crossing Newgill sands, near St. David's. But it equally applies to those of Ear-wear, near Tenby, which he must have known quite as well, as they lie within ten miles of Manorbear, the place of his birth. Here there was a great forest, called *Coed-Traeth*, the wood on the strand, or beach, some remains of which still clothe the valleys which open out on the shore, at the verge of the buried tract. In both instances the stools and roots of trees are seen in their natural position, the trunks having been broken short off, and imbedded with their branches and leaves. Many of them are of large girth; and we have discovered many sorts, such as oak, elm,

erect in the bed of the sea, and bearing on them the marks of the axe, as if they had been cut but yesterday. The soil was also very black, and the wood of the trees resembled ebony. Such are the wonderful revolutions in the natural world, that, where once ships sailed, they could no longer float, and what was a strand seemed now a grove of trees. Perhaps it was buried in the waters at the time of Noah's flood, or it may rather be supposed that it was gradually prostrated and absorbed long afterwards, but still in very ancient times, by the violence of the sea always overflowing its bounds and encroaching on the land.

Meanwhile, the king remained at Wexford, extremely anxious to bear news from his dominions beyond the sea. Under these circumstances he formed his household of the best men he found in these parts, such as Raymond, Milo de Cogan, William Mascarel, and some others whom he drew about him, in order to strengthen his own and weaken the earl's party.

Chapter XXXVI: A conspiracy against the king. Legates arrive from the court of Rome.

After the middle of Lent, the wind changing at last to the east, ships arrived both from England and the coast of Aquitaine, bringing ill news of deep importance. For two cardinals, by name Albert and Theotimus,<sup>66</sup> had arrived in Normandy, commissioned by the Pope, Alexander III., to make inquisitions respecting the murder of our martyred archbishop of Canterbury. These prelates were, it was supposed, just and good men, chosen for this mission on that account; but for all that they were Romans, and they threatened to lay the whole kingdom of England and the rest of the king's dominions under an interdict, unless he forthwith came over to meet them. And, as ill luck never comes alone, while fortune's favours are showered sparingly, intelligence was received of a still more serious and dangerous character. The king's sons, namely, the eldest, for whom he had such a regard that he caused him to be crowned king, and his two younger sons also, led by the folly of youth to follow their brother's bad example, had taken advantage of the king's absence to form a conspiracy against him, in which they were abetted by many of the nobles of England and of the king's foreign dominions.

On receiving this intelligence, disclosing such serious and unexpected evils, the king was overwhelmed with perplexities. First, it grieved him that he should be suspected of a crime of which he was guiltless. Next, he was apprehensive that his kingdom and other dominions would be thrown into a disturbed state by these wicked plots. And, moreover, he was much vexed at being compelled so inopportunately to leave his Irish kingdom; having intended during the ensuing summer to build castles for securing its submission, and to establish peace and good order throughout the country. His first care was, therefore, to send some of his trusty servants to England; and then he turned his thoughts and took deliberate counsel as to what was to be done for the security of Ireland.

Chapter XXXVII: Of the king's return, by way of St. David's, and the Lechlawar, or speaking-stone.

Before he left Ireland, the king appointed these following to be constables or governors of cities and strongholds; namely, in Dublin, Hugh de Lacy, to whom he had granted Meath, to be held in fee, and who had with him twenty men-at-arms; also Fitz-Stephen and Maurice Fitz-gerald, with twenty more; in

alder, and sallow, which, as Giraldus states, bear the marks of the axe. The wood is not only, as he says, black as ebony, but some of it is still so sound that it is converted into gate-posts. The strand is still below high-water mark; but when the tide is out, the black earth here mentioned, consisting of decomposed vegetable matter, is carted away by the farmers of the neighbourhood for manure.

Remote as the period of this catastrophe must have been, the circumstances are very different from those of the forest embedded on the Norfolk coast, near Cromer, presenting in some respects the same appearances. For there the forest lies buried under a mass of drift two hundred feet in thickness; and Lyell considers that its situation implies a subsidence of that depth since the commencement of the Post-Pliocene period, and a subsequent upheaval, as the forest bed of Norfolk is now again so high as to be exposed to view at many points at low water, like those in South Wales. See *Elements of Geology*, c. x.

<sup>66</sup> Roger de Hoveden calls this cardinal Theodimus. He gives full details, and has preserved a great number of documents relating to the quarrel between Henry II and Becket, the archbishop's murder, and the proceedings which arose out of it.

Waterford, Humphrey de Bohun, Robert Fitz-Bernard, and Hugh de Gundeville, with forty men-at-arms; in Wexford, William Fitz-Aldelm, Philip de Hastings, and Philip de Braose, with twenty. At length, on the Monday of Easter week, at sunrise, he took boat, and getting on board ship in the outer harbour of Wexford, reached St. David's bay about noon, after a quick voyage, a strong wind blowing from the westward. Having landed, the king proceeded to St. David's with great devotion, in the guise of a pilgrim, on foot, and staff in hand, and was met by the canons of the cathedral in solemn procession, who received him with due honour and reverence at the White Gate.

While the solemn procession was orderly passing onward, a Welsh woman suddenly threw herself at the king's feet, and made some complaint against the bishop of the diocese, which was explained to the king by an interpreter. Receiving, however, no redress, the woman became abusive, and raising her voice, and loudly clapping her hands, she repeatedly shouted, in the presence of all the company, "Avenge us this day, Lechlawar, avenge our race and nation on this man."<sup>67</sup> And, being stopped and thrust forth by the people of the country who understood British (Welsh), she still continued to vociferate the same words with increased violence, alluding to a certain prophecy of Merlin's, which, though current among the vulgar, was not authentic, to the purport that a king of England, returning through Menevia, after the conquest of Ireland, where he had been wounded by a man with a bloody hand, should die on Lechlawar. For this was the name given to a stone which was placed across the stream, dividing the cemetery of St. David's from the north side of the church, to form a bridge. The stone was of beautiful marble, and the surface was worn smooth by the feet of those who passed over it. Its length was ten feet, its breadth six, and it was one foot thick. In the British (Welsh) language the word Lechlawar means "the speaking-stone;" for there is an ancient tradition, that on some occasion, when a corpse was carried over it, the stone spoke at that very moment, but in the effort cracked in the middle, which crack is still to be seen. This gave rise to a barbarous superstition, which from that time to the present day forbids any dead bodies being carried to their burial over the bridge.

The king coming to the stone paused for a moment, having, perhaps, heard the prophecy mentioned; but having glanced keenly at it, he summoned up his resolution, and without further delay walked across. Then turning back, and looking at the stone, he said with some indignation, "Who now will have any faith in that liar, Merlin?" and so entering the church founded in honour of St. Andrew and St. David, having paid his devotions and heard a mass solemnly celebrated by a certain chaplain, the only one of all the numerous priests attached to the church who had fasted to that hour, and who seemed to have been reserved for the occasion by Divine Providence, the king, after he had supped, went on to the castle of Haverford, about twelve miles distant.

Chapter XXXVIII: Terms are speedily made with the pope's legates and the king of France.

The king, in returning to England out of Wales, took the road on the sea coast by which he had journeyed thither, and going on board ship in great haste, and crossing over to Normandy, showed his deference for the pope by losing no time in presenting himself to the Roman cardinals at Coutances. There, after much altercation, he cleared his innocence by a solemn oath; but a penance was enjoined him, because, although he was not privy to the murder, it was through him the martyr suffered. Having then honourably dismissed the legates, he hastened to Marche, to hold a conference with Louis, king of France; and by the mediation of some men of worth, and especially of Philip count of Flanders, just then returned from a pilgrimage to St. James [of Compostella], means were found of restoring amity between them, and allaying the resentment which the French king entertained for the murder of the archbishop of Canterbury before named, because the king of England had pledged himself to him on his own oath and the oaths of other great and powerful men for the archbishop's safety when he was about to return to England. By this

<sup>67</sup> This anecdote is repeated by Giraldus in his *Itinerary*. See B. ii. c. 1.

peace, so wonderfully brought about, the wicked and clandestine plot of the king's sons and their confederates was defeated until the year following.

Chapter XXXIX: Of the vision, or rather, the visitation, which the king had at Cardiff.

Before we proceed further, it may not be superfluous or unprofitable to relate in this place what happened to the king on his return from Ireland by the sea coast of South Wales. On the Saturday in Easter week he spent the night at the town of Cardiff, and on the morrow, being the day commonly called Low Sunday, he heard early mass in the chapel of St. Perian,<sup>68</sup> and after all had departed except the king, who continued his devotions longer than usual, when at length he came forth, as he was mounting his horse at the chapel door, a man stood before him, holding a stake in his hand, on which he supported himself. His hair was yellow, and it was cropped round; his face was emaciated; he was rather tall, appeared to be about forty years old, and wore a white tunic fitting close and girded about him, descending to his ankles; it was girded about him with a belt, and his feet were bare. This man addressed the king in the Teutonic tongue, as follows: "Got holde the, cuning"—"God keep thee! O king!" and afterwards added in the same language, "Christ and his Holy Mother, John the Baptist, and Peter the Apostle, salute thee, and do charge and command thee strictly to prohibit any kind of traffic, or markets, or fairs, to be held throughout thy dominions on the Lord's day, or any sort of work or labour to be done, save only in preparing necessary food, but that divine offices be duly and devoutly performed and heard on that day. If thou wilt do this, all that thou shalt take in hand shall prosper, and thou shalt have a happy life."

The king then said in French to one Philip de Mercros,<sup>69</sup> who was holding his horse's bridle, a person of good condition, born in those parts, and who gave me an exact account of this occurrence, "Ask the clown whether he dreamt this." Philip having interpreted this in English, the man replied: "Whether I dreamt this or not, mark well," he said, addressing himself to the king and not to the interpreter, "what day this is; for unless thou doest this, and shalt amend thy life before the end of the present year, thou shalt hear such tidings of those thou lovest best in the world, and shalt have from them so much trouble, that it shall last for all the rest of thy life." On hearing this, the king put spurs to his horse and went forward a little, as much as eight paces towards the town gate; but having reflected a moment on what was said, he reined in his horse, and said, "Call back that good man." Upon this, Philip de Mercros and a youth named William, the only two of the royal attendants who had remained in the town, called after him, and, on his not appearing, searched for him in the chapel, and afterwards in the court, and in all the inns of the town, but could not find him. The king waited alone for some time in the town while the others thus sought out the man in vain; and then sorrowing much, and in great dudgeon because he had not talked to him more at large, crossing the bridge at Rempni,<sup>70</sup> pursued his journey towards Newbury.

What this man predicted and threatened came to pass before the year was ended. The king's three sons, Henry, the eldest, and the other two, the earls of Poitou and Brittany, leagued against him in the Lent following, and went over to Louis, king of France; occasioning him so much disquietude as he had never experienced before, and which incessantly troubled him, from one or other of his sons, to the last day of his life. And it may be supposed to have been a just judgment of God, that as he had been a disobedient son to his spiritual father, his sons in the flesh should be disobedient to him. The king also received about the same period, and towards the close of his life, many other forewarnings, through the Divine mercy,

<sup>68</sup> See the Itinerary of Wales, B. i c. 6.

<sup>69</sup> Philip de Mercros, or Marcros, derived his name from a place on the coast of Glamorganshire, near St. Donat's castle. Giraldus repeats this anecdote in his Itinerary, lib. i. c. 6. It is the earliest notice we have met with of the movement against the desecration of the Lord's day, which became very general in the beginning of the reign of king John, about thirty year; after this period. Wendover, vol. ii. pp. 188-192 (*Antiq. Lib.*), and Hoveden, vol. ii. pp. 526-530, give some exceedingly curious details respecting it.

<sup>70</sup> The Rhumney river runs into the sea about four miles from Cardiff. In its course from the North it divides Monmouthshire from Glamorganshire, and it therefore forms the boundary between England and Wales.

which prefers the conversion and repentance of sinners, to their ruin. Would to God that his obstinate mind and hard heart had not despised these monitions, but that he had received them penitently, and corrected his misdeeds, to his endless happiness. On this subject I propose to enlarge, with God's permission, in the book I have so often promised to write concerning the "Instruction of a Prince."<sup>71</sup>

#### Chapter XL: The treason and death of O'Roric.

Meanwhile, Ireland enjoyed tranquillity and peace under the governors to whom the custody of the realm was committed. However, some dispute arising between Hugh de Lacy and O'Roric, the one-eyed king of Meath, a day and place was assigned for a parley respecting it. But in the night before the day appointed, one of the men-at-arms, whose name was Griffyth, a nephew of Maurice and Fitz-Stephen,<sup>72</sup> had a dream, in which he saw a herd of wild boars rush pell-mell on Hugh and Maurice, and one larger and more ferocious than the rest, the leader of the herd, would have rent them asunder with its tusks, unless he (Griffyth) had rescued them with the strong hand and killed the boar. On the morrow they proceeded towards the place appointed for the conference, which is called O'Roric's hill,<sup>73</sup> and having first, by the exchange of messages at a distance, and afterwards in person when they met, taken security on both sides by their solemn oaths, they came to the parley. It had been stipulated that only a very few should be present on each part, and those in equal numbers, and unarmed, except with their swords on the one side and their battle-axes on the other, while the rest of the people remained at some little distance. Meanwhile Griffyth, who had come to the parley in company with Maurice, and was full of anxiety in consequence of his dream, had selected seven of his kinsmen, in whose courage he had the strongest confidence, and drew them apart to one side of the hill, but as near as they were allowed to the place of conference. They then took their shields in hand, and putting their lances in rest, made show of being engaged in tilting according to the French fashion, in order that, however the parley ended, they might be ready in arms for any emergency, under the pretext of the sport in which they were amusing themselves.

In the meantime, O'Roric and Hugh de Lacy had much altercation on the questions in dispute between them; and so far from coming to an agreement, things tending to an open rupture, the one-eyed villain, meditating treachery, went aside for a short space under a ready pretence, and beckoned to his friends to come up with all speed. He was hastening with long strides, his face pale with revenge, and his axe raised, towards those who were engaged in the parley, when Maurice Fitzgerald, being on his guard, and having closely watched all that had taken place, in consequence of his having chanced to hear his nephew's dream mentioned, and during the parley had constantly kept his sword lying across his knees, with his hand on the hilt, now drew it, and rising up, warned Hugh de Lacy also to stand on his defence. The traitor then made a desperate stroke at Hugh, but it fell on the interpreter, who, faithful to his lord, thrust himself forward to shield him, and cut off his arm, giving him a mortal wound.

Maurice now called aloud to his friends to make a hasty retreat, while sword encountered battle-axe, and Hugh de Lacy, being twice felled to the ground, was saved by Fitzgerald's prowess. Meanwhile, the Irish rushed in great numbers from the valleys at the traitor's signal, armed with two-edged broad-axes, and there would soon have been an end of Maurice and Hugh, had not Griffyth and his small band rode up at full speed, when they heard Fitzgerald's cries calling them to aid. O'Roric, seeing them coming, thought that it was time to seek safety in flight, and was in the act of mounting a horse which was brought up for him, when Griffyth, putting spurs to his own, ran his spear both through O'Roric and the horse he was mounting. There were slain with him three of his followers, who at the risk of their lives had brought

<sup>71</sup> The book *De Instructione Principis*, here alluded to, is preserved, and has been printed.

<sup>72</sup> See the Pedigree inserted at the beginning of this History. We find in B. ii, c. xxi., that Griffyth was brother to Raymond le Gros, and therefore a son of William, the eldest of the Fitzgeralds.

<sup>73</sup> This is the celebrated hill of Tarah, in Meath, on which the national assemblies were held, and where once stood the *habheireg*, or stone of destiny, on which the Irish kings were inaugurated. They had afterwards a palace on this spot, in the courts of which the estates of the kingdom are said to have assembled till the time of Brian Boroimhe, 995.

the horse. His head was cut off, and afterwards sent to the king in England; and the rest of the Irish fled in confusion and scattered themselves over the open country, till they reached the far-distant woods; the English pursuing them without respite, and making great slaughter amongst them. Ralph, Fitz-Stephen's son, a young and valiant soldier, much distinguished himself in this skirmish.

Chapter XLI: Concerning visions.

As there are many different opinions concerning visions, it may not be amiss on this occasion to introduce some true and authentic accounts of them which have been handed down to us. Valerius Maximus relates that two Arcadians being on a journey together, when they came to a certain town, one of them lodged with a friend, and the other went to a common inn. The one who lodged in his friend's house dreamed that his fellow-traveller came to him and begged help against his host who was grievously assaulting him; wherewith he awoke, but fell asleep again, and dreamed that his companion appeared to him a second time, and implored him that although he would not come and help him while he was living, he would at least have him buried. He added that his host was then taking his corpse in a cart outside the town gate, to conceal it in a dunghill. The man's friend waking up, and having made search, found this account to be true, and causing the innkeeper to be apprehended, he was condemned and executed.

Arcerius Rufus dreamed that he was killed by a gladiator, which came to pass the day following. Simonides, the poet, having buried the corpse of a man which he found lying on the sea-shore, was warned by him in a dream the came night not to go to sea on the day following, and accordingly he remained on shore. The mariners, with whom he was to embark, set sail, and were buried in the waves before his eyes. Calphurnia, Julius Cæsar's wife, dreamed the night before he was assassinated, that he lay in her bosom covered with mortal wounds; at which she was so terrified that she awoke and entreated him not to go to the senate-house the next morning. But he, not liking to have it said that he put any faith in a woman's dream, put her off with excuses.

Not to go so far for examples, let us seek them at home, and in modern times. My brother, Walter de Barri,<sup>74</sup> a man of condition, and a gallant soldier, having made preparations for an expedition against the enemy, the night before he was to set forward, my own mother, who had died long before, appeared to him in a dream, and earnestly admonished him, as he valued his life, to find some means of not joining in the expedition intended on the morrow. I should mention that she was not his mother, but his step mother; but she loved him as much as if he were her own son.<sup>75</sup> He related what had occurred to his father, who was mine also, we being his sons by different mothers, and therefore half-brothers, and our father gave him the same advice. However, disregarding these admonitions, with the presumption natural to man, and being ashamed of appearing to be frightened by an idle dream, the next morning he went out on the expedition, and was slain by the enemy the same day. We find also an instance in which the event turned out otherwise. Valerius relates that on the eve of the battle between Augustus and Brutus, Minerva appeared in a dream to the emperor's physician Artorius, and enjoined him to prevent his engaging in the battle, because he was sick; but Augustus, notwithstanding he was informed of this, caused himself to be carried to the field in a litter, and gained the battle.

Again, shortly before our own times, it happened in the district called Kemmeis, in the province of Demetia, in Wales, that a certain wealthy man, whose mansion stood on the north side of the mountains, of Presseli,<sup>76</sup> had dreams for three successive nights, in which he was admonished that if he went to a fountain in the neighbourhood, called St. Bernac's well, and put his hand down to the stone which lay over

<sup>74</sup> It is probable that this Walter de Barri was the author's eldest brother, though by the half-blood; and that he met his untimely end before the expedition to Ireland.

<sup>75</sup> Giraldus' mother, of whom he records this excellent trait, was Angharad, daughter of Nesta, by Gerald de Windsor.

<sup>76</sup> The Prescelly Mountains, in Pembrokeshire. Giraldus repeats this anecdote in the Itinerary, B. ii. c. 2, where notes will be found on the localities.

the spring, he would draw out a collar of gold. On the third day the man did as he was bidden, and putting his hand into the hole, a viper bit his finger, and he died in consequence.

From these and various other examples, whatever others may think of dreams (*de somniis somnient*), my opinion is that, like rumours, they may be sometimes credited and sometimes ought to be treated as idle tales. But of visions, such as those which are wont to be revealed by angels to men gifted with prophecy, the case is very different, for we know the events following them prove their truth on undoubted authority.

#### Chapter XLII: A description of Maurice Fitzgerald.

This Maurice was a man of dignified aspect and modest bearing, of a ruddy complexion and good features. He was of the middle height, neither tall nor short. In him, both in person and temper, moderation was the rule; the one was well proportioned, the other equable. Maurice was naturally of an excellent disposition, but he was much more anxious to be good than to appear such. He so governed all his conduct that both in morals and courtesy he may be considered the pattern and model of his country and times.<sup>77</sup> He was a man of few words, but his language was polished and there was more sense than sound, more reason than eloquence, in what he said; and when the occasion demanded it, he gave his opinion, though deliberately, with great intelligence. In war he was intrepid, and second to no man in valour; but he did not run headlong into danger, and though prudent in making attacks was resolute in defence. He was sober, modest, chaste, constant, firm, and faithful; a man not altogether without fault, but not stained by any great and notorious crime.

#### Chapter XLIII: The first dissension between the king and his sons.

In the month of April following, the younger king of England, I mean Henry, son of king Henry,<sup>78</sup> being no longer able to conceal the wickedness he had long devised against his father through evil counsels, withdrew to the court of Louis, king of France, whose daughter he had married, taking with him his two brothers, the earls of Poitiers and Britany, and hoping, with his father-in-law's assistance, to supplant his father before his time. He had also many accomplices in his designs among the nobles of England and foreign dominions, as well as many more who were his secret abettors. The elder king, the father, was thrown into great perplexity by the unexpected difficulties with which he found himself surrounded; but assuming a cheerful countenance, he gave every sign of hope and comfort, and collected succours from all quarters. Among the rest, he recalled from Ireland, by special messengers, the veteran troops he had left there; and when he was at Rouen, committed the entire charge of that kingdom to earl Richard, joining Raymond with him in the commission, as the earl had refused to accept the government without his assistance. The king also, as a mark of his favour, granted the earl at that time the town of Wexford, with the castle of Ginkel.

<sup>77</sup> Maurice Fitzgerald, of whom his nephew Giraldus draws this high character, was, as already mentioned, the second son of Gerald de Windsor and Nesta, and ancestor of the earls of Kildare, afterwards dukes of Leinster, and of the earls of Desmond.

<sup>78</sup> Henry, "the younger king of England," as he was called, having been crowned in his father's life-time, married Margaret, daughter of Lewis, king of France, and in August, 1172, brought her to England, where she was crowned at Winchester. Early in the year following, the young Henry withdrew to his father-in-law's court, and, supported by him, commenced that unhappy series of revolts, which, with short intervals, embittered the remainder of the life of Henry II. See Hoveden, vol. i. pp. 367, &c. *Antiq. Lib.*

## Chapter XLIV: The victories of Henry II, king of England.

The king had to wage, during two years, worse than civil wars, both in England and Aquitaine,<sup>79</sup> at the cost of so many hurried expeditions, such watchings and careful labours, and he foiled the enterprises of his many powerful enemies with so much vigour, that it would seem he had more than human aid, divine Providence giving him success over the unnatural rebellion of his sons. But as a man's household are his worst adversaries, and of all plagues, internal enemies are the greatest, he was almost reduced to despair by the conduct of the gentlemen of his privy chamber, a chosen band, on whose fidelity his life or death depended, who would nearly every night disloyally go over to his sons, and when their services were wanted in the morning, could not be found. But although the war was almost hopeless in the outset, his better fortune prevailed, and victory crowning him in the end, he acquired such glory, and so augmented his power, that while at first all men thought that the divine indignation had suddenly marked him out for vengeance, so at last he seemed to be mercifully spared through that goodness which rejoiceth more in the conversion than in the destruction of a sinner. After deep grief at the capture of Dol,<sup>80</sup> St. Edmund having showered his favours on the kingdom, and the blessed martyr Thomas being appeased by the tears and supplications of the king, who went in pilgrimage to Canterbury,<sup>81</sup> and did penance in the night, peace and a long season of prosperity were restored to England, at the castle of Amboise,<sup>82</sup> of which Ranulf de Glanville was governor, an upright and prudent man, who had been faithful under all changes of fortune.

In these wars the king had taken prisoner the king of Scotland and the earls of Chester and Leicester, besides so many nobles, knights, and officers, on both sides of the French sea, that they could hardly find fetters and dungeons to hold them. But as the triumph of a prince over his enemies is little worth unless he triumphs over himself, the king, after the many victories with which fortune had favoured him, set the example of ruling himself, and subduing his own spirit and indignation, as he had triumphed over others, and restored their lives and honours to his vanquished enemies. And such was his rare equanimity, that in victory he did not forget clemency, nor moderation in adversity. Then, after all the trouble and weariness of this two years' war, endured to no purpose, his sons submitted and came back, having made professions of amity, which turned out to be false.

## Chapter XLV: A description of Henry II., king of England.

It were not amiss in this place to draw the portrait of the king, that so his person as well as his character may be familiar to posterity; and those who in future ages shall hear and read of his great achievements, may be able to picture him to themselves as he was. For the history on which I am employed must not suffer so noble an ornament of our times to pass away with only a slight notice. But herein we crave pardon for speaking the exact truth, for without it, history not only loses all authority, but does not even merit the name. It is the business of art to copy nature, and the painter is not to be trusted who exaggerates graces and conceals blemishes.

No man in deed is born without faults, but he is best who has the least; and the wise will think that nothing which concerns mankind is devoid of interest. There is no certainty in worldly matters, and no

<sup>79</sup> See full details of this campaign, both in France and England, in Hoveden's History, vol. i. pp. 368-390.

<sup>80</sup> Dol, a strong castle in Britany, was taken by stratagem, on the 20th September, 1173, but recovered by king Henry a few days afterwards.

<sup>81</sup> St. Edmund, king and martyr, was highly venerated at this period, and his shrine at Bury visited with great devotion. Florence of Worcester frequently mentions the pilgrimages made to it by Henry III. The famous pilgrimage to Canterbury here referred to by Giraldus, took place on the 13th June, 1174, and is described both by Hoveden and Wendover.

<sup>82</sup> The treaty which restored peace to Henry's foreign dominions, was made between Tours and Amboise, on the 30th September, 1174. It is preserved by Wendover, vol. i. p. 385. It is, perhaps, hardly necessary to state that Ranulf de Glanville was one of the most celebrated of king Henry's ministers.

perfect happiness; good is mixed with evil, and virtue with vice. Wherefore, if things spoken in commendation of a man's disposition or conduct are pleasant to the ear, it should not be taken amiss if his faults are told. It was the remark of a philosopher, that princes ought to be treated with deference, and not exasperated by severe things being said of them; and a comic writer tells us that smooth words make friends, but the language of truth makes enemies; so that it is a dangerous matter to say anything against one who has the power of revenging himself; and it is still more perilous, and more arduous than profitable, to describe freely and in many words a prince who, by a single word, can consign you to ruin. It would surely be a pleasing task, but I confess that it is one beyond my powers, to tell the truth respecting a prince in everything without in any way offending him. But to the purpose.

Henry II., king of England, had a reddish complexion, rather dark, and a large round head. His eyes were grey, bloodshot, and flashed in anger. He had a fiery countenance, his voice was tremulous, and his neck a little bent forward; but his chest was broad, and his arms were muscular. His body was fleshy, and he had an enormous paunch, rather by the fault of nature than from gross feeding. For his diet was temperate, and indeed in all things, considering he was a prince, he was moderate, and even parsimonious. In order to reduce and cure, as far as possible, this natural tendency and defect, he waged a continual war, so to speak, with his own belly by taking immoderate exercise. For in time of war, in which he was almost always engaged, he took little rest, even during the intervals of business and action. Times of peace were no seasons of repose and indulgence to him, for he was immoderately fond of the chase, and devoted himself to it with excessive ardour. At the first dawn of day he would mount a fleet horse, and indefatigably spend the day in riding through the woods, penetrating the depths of forests, and crossing the ridges of hills. On his return home in the evening he was seldom seen to sit down, either before he took his supper or after; for, notwithstanding his own great fatigue, he would weary all his court by being constantly on his legs. But it is one of the most useful rules in life, not to have too much of any one thing, and even medicine is not in itself perfect and always to be used; even so it befell this king. For he had frequent swellings in his legs and feet, increased much by his violent exercise on horseback, which added to his other complaints, and if they did not bring on serious disorders, at least hastened that which is the source of all, old age. In stature he may be reckoned among men of moderate height, which was not the case with either of his sons; the two eldest being somewhat above the middle height, and the two youngest somewhat below.

When his mind was undisturbed, and he was not in an angry mood, he spoke with great eloquence, and, what was remarkable in those days, he was well learned. He was also affable, flexible, and facetious, and, however he smothered his inward feelings, second to no one in courtesy. Withal, he was so clement a prince, that when he had subdued his enemies, he was overcome himself by his pity for them. Resolute in war, and provident in peace, he so much feared the doubtful fortune of the former, that, as the comic poet writes, he tried all courses before he resorted to arms. Those whom he lost in battle he lamented with more than a prince's sorrow, having a more humane feeling for the soldiers who had fallen than for the survivors; and bewailing the dead more than he cared for the living. In troublesome times no man was more courteous, and when all things were safe, no man more harsh. Severe to the unruly, but clement to the humble; hard towards his own household, but liberal to strangers; profuse abroad, but sparing at home; those whom he once hated, he would scarcely ever love, and from those he loved, he seldom withdrew his regard. He was inordinately fond of hawking and hunting, whether his falcons stooped on their prey, or his sagacious hounds, quick of scent and swift of foot, pursued the chase. Would to God he had been as zealous in his devotions as he was in his sports.

It is said that after the grievous dissensions between him and his sons, raised by their mother, he had no respect for the obligations of the most solemn treaties. True it is that from a certain natural inconstancy he often broke his word, preferring rather, when driven to straits, to forfeit his promise than depart from his purpose. In all his doings he was provident and circumspect, and on this account he was sometimes slack in the administration of justice, and, to his people's great cost, his decisions on all proceedings were

dilatory. Both God and right demand that justice should be administered gratuitously, yet all things were set to sale and brought great wealth both to the clergy and laity; but their end was like Gehazi's gains.

He was a great maker of peace, and kept it himself; a liberal alms-giver, and an especial benefactor to the Holy Land. He loved the humble, curbed the nobility, and trod down the proud; filling the hungry with good things, and sending the rich empty away; exalting the meek, and putting down the mighty from their seat. He ventured on many detestable usurpations in things belonging to God, and through a zeal for justice (but not according to knowledge), he joined the rights of the church to those of the crown, and therein confused them, in order to centre all in himself. Although he was the son of the church, and received his crown from her hands, he either dissembled or forgot the sacramental unction. He could scarcely spare an hour to hear mass, and then he was more occupied in counsels and conversation about affairs of state than in his devotions. The revenues of the churches during their avoidance, he drew into his own treasury, laying hands on that which belonged to Christ; and as he was always in fresh troubles and engaged in mighty wars, he expended all the money he could get, and lavished upon unrighteous soldiers what was due to the priests. In his great prudence he devised many plans, which, however, did not all turn out according to his expectations; but no great mishap ever occurred, which did not originate in some trifling circumstance.

He was the kindest of fathers to his legitimate children during their childhood and youth, but as they advanced in years looked on them with in evil eye, treating them worse than a step-father; and although he had such distinguished and illustrious sons, whether it was that he would not have them prosper too fast, or whether they were ill deserving, he could never bear to think of them as his successors. And as human prosperity can neither be permanent nor perfect, such was the exquisite malice of fortune against this king, that where he should have received comfort he met with opposition; where security, danger; where peace, turmoil; where support, ingratitude; where quiet and tranquillity, disquiet and disturbance. Whether it happened from unhappy marriages, or for the punishment of the father's sins, there was never any good agreement either of the father with his sons, or of the sons with their parent, or between themselves.

At length, all pretenders to the government and disturbers of the peace being put down, and the brothers, his sons, and all others, both at home and abroad, being reconciled, all things succeeded according to his will. Would to God that he had, even late, acknowledged this crowning proof of the divine mercy by works worthy of repentance. I had almost forgotten to mention that his memory was so good, that, notwithstanding the multitudes who continually surrounded him, he never failed of recognizing any one he had ever seen before, nor did he forget any thing important which he had ever heard. He was also master of nearly the whole course of history, and well versed in almost all matters of experience. To conclude in few words: if this king had been finally chosen of God, and had turned himself to obey his commands, such were his natural endowments that he would have been, beyond all comparison, the noblest of all the princes of the earth in his times. But enough: let what I have written, briefly and imperfectly indeed, but not altogether foreign to my subject, content the reader. Having somewhat cleared the way for other writers to follow out so noble a passage of history, we will now return to our Ireland, from which we have digressed.

## Book II.

Thus far I have continued my history in as perfect and full order as I could, omitting nothing worthy of memory which the series of events appeared to require. But being much occupied by the general business of the church belonging to my station, I have been unable to command much leisure for studious pursuits. Unwilling, however, to leave unfinished the work I have commenced, I am resolved to continue it in a cursory and brief way, and in a plain and unadorned style, as if I were furnishing posterity with materials for history rather than writing it. For now my leisure is changed into the distraction of business, my studies interrupted by animosities, my pleasure turned to grief, the tranquillity I possessed to grave disquietude.

The liberal arts have ceased to flourish, having given place to the duties of war; mental pursuits are no longer in vogue, but martial exercises; the muses are not cultivated, but skill in the use of weapons; men do not improve their minds, but burnish their arms. Wherefore let not the reader expect either order or ornament in this part of my work; for I am obliged to conform to present circumstances; and as the times are troublous, so must my narrative be disturbed by the unsettled state of affairs, as our inward griefs are often manifested by our countenances as well as by our words. I have, however, contrived to complete the present work in the midst of the preparations for a vast enterprise, though not without much thought and mature consideration, as if I were on a journey; and like the traveller who, setting out slowly, hurries forward to make up for the delay.

Chapter I: How earl Richard was sent back to Ireland as chief governor, and the command of the troops given to Raymond.

On his return to Ireland, the people there having heard of the great troubles in parts beyond the sea, and being a race constant only in inconstancy, to be reckoned upon for nothing but their instability, and true only in their disloyalty, earl Richard found most of the princes of the country in revolt against the king and himself. All the treasure he brought with him being soon spent, and there being no money to pay the soldiers, the earl's own troops, who were commanded by Hervey, Raymond's rival, who was still constable, not being able to subsist by plunder as they were wont, came in a body to the earl, and loudly declared that unless Raymond was appointed their commander they would at once quit his service, and either return to England, or, what was worse, desert to the enemy.

Chapter II: How Raymond was again appointed commander of the earl's own troops.

In this emergency, Raymond was appointed to the command, and the troops recovering their spirits, made an incursion into the district of Ophelan,<sup>83</sup> and carrying off an immense booty, obtained means of being fresh mounted and equipped. From thence they marched to Lismore, and having plundered both the city and province, conveyed their spoils by the coast road to Waterford. With these they freighted some small vessels which had lately arrived from Wexford, and some others which they found in the port of Waterford. While, however, they were waiting for a fair wind, thirty-two ships full of armed men came

<sup>83</sup> Offaly, the territory of a petty Irish prince, which lay on the upper course of the Barrow, in what is now called King's County.

from the city of Cork, distant about sixteen miles westward, for the purpose of attacking them. A naval engagement ensued, the Irish making a fierce attack, armed with slings and darts, and the English repelling it with arrows and iron bolts from their cross-bows, of which they had great store. In the end, the men of Cork were defeated, their leader, Gilbert mac Turger, being slain by Philip of Wales, a young soldier of great prowess. Then, Adam de Hereford, who commanded, having increased his fleet with the ships taken, loaded it with plunder and sailed in triumph to Waterford.

Meanwhile Raymond, who, hearing by chance of this engagement had hastened to that quarter along the coast road with twenty men-at-arms and sixty common soldiers, fell in with Dermotus, prince of Desmond, and defeated him at Lismore, as he was hastening to the aid of the men of Cork with a large force; Raymond thus took four thousand head of cattle, and brought them with him into Waterford. About the same time, the Irish of those parts, lurking at the entrance of the woods, drove off some few of the cattle from the level country about Waterford into the thickets at no great distance; but an alarm being raised in the town, the garrison sallied forth, and Meyler, conspicuous for his headlong valour, followed only by a single horseman, pursued the robbers into the outskirts of the wood. Then, however, he intended to retreat, but urged by the impetuosity of his follower, a rash youth, he dashed after the robbers into the deepest thickets; but the Irish rushed out of the wood, and severely wounding his companion, cut him to pieces with their broad-axes. Meyler, thus left alone, and surrounded by the enemy on every side, drew his sword, and charging the band, boldly cut his way through them, chopping here a hand and there an arm, besides hewing through heads and shoulders, and thus rejoined his friends on the plain unhurt, though he brought away three Irish spears stuck in his horse, and two in his shield.

### Chapter III: The slaughter of the men of Dublin at Ossory.

After these events, the troops being flushed with success both by sea and land, Raymond crossed the sea and returned to Wales in consequence of tidings he received of the death of his noble father, William Fitzgerald.<sup>84</sup> During his absence Hervey was again appointed constable, and wishing to do some memorable exploit, he brought the earl and his household troops to Cashel. The militia of Dublin<sup>85</sup> were also commanded to support them, and being quartered for the night at Ossory, Duvenald prince of Limerick, a man not wanting in ability for one of his nation, having learnt their arrival through his spies, fell on them at dawn of day, and taking them by surprise, slew four of their commanders, and four hundred of the Ostmen. On receiving intelligence of this disaster, the earl retreated in confusion to Waterford, and the consequence was that all the people of Ireland; with one consent, rose in arms against the English, so that the earl was like one besieged in Waterford, and could not move from it. Meanwhile, Roderic of Connaught crossed the river Shannon, and invaded Meath, at the head of a numerous force, and, finding all the strongholds evacuated as far as the confines of Dublin, he burnt and levelled them to the ground.

### Chapter IV: How Raymond was recalled to Ireland, and married Basilia.

The earl finding himself in great straits, after taking counsel, as his last refuge, despatched a letter to Raymond, in Wales, of the following purport: "As soon as you have read this letter, make all the haste you can to come over to us with all the force you can muster, and be assured that immediately on your arrival, I will give you my sister Basilia in marriage, according to your wishes." On receiving this letter, Raymond

<sup>84</sup> See the note to a chapter in the first book, on the family of Raymond-le-Gros; and the Pedigree at the beginning of this History.

<sup>85</sup> This force, as we shall presently find, was composed of the Ostmen, or independent Norwegian townsmen of Dublin, whose numbers and power have been mentioned in former notes, and appear from this narrative, although their present expedition terminated disastrously.

used all despatch in complying with it, both for love of the noble lady, to whom he had been long ardently attached, and from his desire of exhibiting his prowess and carrying succour to his lord in his time of need. Wherefore, in conjunction with his cousin Meyler and other men of condition who were his kinsmen, he hastily collected thirty men-at-arms, and one hundred horse-soldiers, with three hundred bowmen, the best in Wales, and as soon as the wind served, transported them to Waterford in fifteen ships.<sup>86</sup> At that very time the citizens of Waterford were in a state of insurrection, and raised to such a pitch of fury that they were ready to massacre all the English wherever they could lay hands on them; when, behold, they saw from the nearest hill the well-known ensigns of Raymond's fleet entering the bay. Their sudden arrival discomfited the rioters, and Raymond immediately landing, and marching to Waterford without loss of time, released the earl, and conducted him with a strong force to Wexford. Meanwhile, Tyrrell,<sup>87</sup> his governor of Waterford, hastening to follow him, and crossing the river Suir in a boat, was slain with some of his followers by the Ostmen who were conveying them over; and as soon as they had perpetrated this crime, they returned to the city, and butchered some of the English in the streets and houses, without respect to age or sex. The place was, however, held in submission by the garrison of Reginald's Tower, who drove out the assassins, and the other rebels were at last reduced to order, their treacherous enterprise being frustrated, with loss to themselves both in credit and estate.

Raymond, urging the fulfilment of the earl's promises, was not content to leave Wexford until messengers were sent to Dublin in great haste, to fetch Basilia, to whom he was contracted. The marriage having been solemnized, and the day and night spent in feasting and pleasure, news was brought in the midst of the revelry that Roderic of Connaught had made an irruption from the borders of Meath up to the very walls of Dublin. On the morrow Raymond, forgetting wine and love, mustered troops, and marched in haste to repel the enemy. Roderic, however, who had before experienced his valour, did not wait his coming, but retreated in alarm to his own territories. Having restored order in those parts, and the castles of Trim and Dunluce in Meath, which had been razed to the ground, and abandoned by Hugh Tyrrell, the governor thereof, having been repaired by Raymond, and put into a better condition, the island enjoyed peace for a time, in consequence of the terror struck by his successes.

#### Chapter V: Intermarriages among the families from Wales, and territorial grants.

Hervey, being envious of the increase of Raymond's glory and his continued prosperity, and unable to wreak his malice on him openly, sought how he might injure him in the dark. He therefore became a suitor to Raymond's cousin Nesta, the daughter of Maurice Fitzgerald, and succeeded in marrying her; his object being to have better opportunities of effecting Raymond's ruin, under cover of his connections with him by this marriage. Raymond also, to consolidate the union among the English, induced the earl to give his daughter Alina in marriage to William, the eldest son of Maurice Fitzgerald.<sup>88</sup> The earl also, having invited Maurice to leave Wales and come over again to Ireland, gave him the middle cantred of Offaly, which the king had granted to the earl, with the castle of Wicklow, to be held as a fief under him. Meyler, as the lord marcher, had the frontier cantred; and the one nearest to Dublin, which the king had formerly granted to the two Fitz-Stephens, was now given to the brothers from Hereford.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>86</sup> Raymond's elder brother Odo, the ancestor of the Carews, inherited the principal estates of their father, on whose demise Raymond returned to Wales; but he probably succeeded to possessions which enabled him to equip this powerful armament on a much more extensive scale than that with which he first went over to Ireland, and also made him a more suitable match for the earl's daughter.

<sup>87</sup> Fresellus, in the text, but corrected to Tyrellus in the margin, of the printed edition.

<sup>88</sup> For these intermarriages and family connexions, see the Pedigree at the beginning of this History.

<sup>89</sup> We find elsewhere the names of three brothers from Hereford, engaged in these transactions, Adam, John, and Richard. Adam commanded the fleet which defeated that of Cork, as related just before, in Chap. ii.

## Chapter VI: King Henry obtains a papal bull of rights.

Meanwhile, although the king was detained and much occupied by the wars, in the midst of all he was not forgetful of his dominions in Ireland, nor of the decrees made in the synod of Cashel, before mentioned,<sup>90</sup> for the reformation of manners. He therefore sent envoys to pope Adrian, a native of England, who then filled the Roman see, requesting him to grant a bull of privileges, by which, with the pope's authority and consent, he should be lord of Ireland, and have the power of reforming the Irish people, who were then very ignorant of the rudiments of the faith, by ecclesiastical rules and discipline, according to the usages of the English church. This bull of privileges was brought over to Ireland by Nicholas, then prior of Wallingford, but afterwards abbot of Malmesbury, and William Fitz-Aldelm, and a synod of the bishops being convoked at Waterford, the said bull of privileges was read at a public sitting, and with universal assent, by John of Salisbury,<sup>91</sup> afterwards bishop of Chartres, who was sent to Rome on this affair, and by whose hands the pope sent to the king a gold ring in token of the investiture; which ring and the pope's bull were immediately afterwards deposited among the archives at Winchester. The tenor of this instrument I have thought it not amiss to insert in this place. It was to the following effect:

*“Adrian the bishop, the servant of the servants of God, to his most dearly beloved son in Christ, the illustrious king of England, sendeth greeting, with the apostolical benediction.”*<sup>92</sup>

‘Your majesty (*tua magnificentia*) laudably and profitably considers how you may best promote your glory on earth, and lay up for yourself an eternal reward in heaven, when, as becomes a catholic prince, you labour to extend the borders of the church, to teach the truths of the christian faith to a rude and unlettered people, and to root out the weeds of wickedness from the field of the Lord; for this purpose you crave the advice and assistance of the apostolic see, and in so doing we are persuaded that the higher are your aims, and the more discreet your proceedings, the greater, under God, will be your success. For those who begin with zeal for the faith, and love for religion, may always have the best hopes of bringing their undertakings to a prosperous end. It is beyond all doubt, as your highness acknowledgeth, that Ireland and all the other islands on which the light of the gospel of Christ has dawned, and which have received the knowledge of the Christian faith, do of right belong and appertain to St. Peter and the holy Roman church. Wherefore we are the more desirous to sow in them the acceptable seed of God's word, because we know that it will be strictly required of us hereafter. You have signified to us, our well-beloved son in Christ, that you propose to enter the island of Ireland in order to subdue the people, and make them obedient to laws, and to root out from among them the weeds of sin; and that you are willing to yield and pay yearly from every house the pension of one penny to St. Peter, and to keep and preserve the rights of the churches in that land whole and inviolate. We therefore, regarding your pious and laudable design with due favour, and graciously assenting to your petition, do hereby declare our will and pleasure, that, for the purpose of enlarging the borders of the church, setting bounds to the progress of wickedness, reforming evil manners, planting virtue, and increasing the christian, religion, you do enter and take possession of that island, and execute therein whatsoever shall be for God's honour and the welfare of the same. And further, we do also strictly charge and require that the people of that land shall accept you with all honour, and dutifully obey you, as their liege lord, saving only the rights of the churches, which we will have

<sup>90</sup> B. i. c. 33.

<sup>91</sup> John of Salisbury, bishop of Chartres, one of the most learned scholars of the age.

<sup>92</sup> Adrian IV. held the papal see 1155-1159. A copy of the grant of Ireland made by this pope to Henry II. is also preserved by Roger de Wendover, who says that it was obtained in 1156; so that Henry's designs on Ireland, though early entertained, seem to have long slumbered. Even when the application for assistance made by Dermot mac Murrough in 1172, gave him a pretext for interfering in Irish affairs, he gave him only empty promises of relief, and the first expeditions to Ireland were undertaken by private adventurers, and if, with the king's tacit consent, he afterwards disavowed it. Henry procured a confirmation of pope Adrian's grant from his successor, Alexander III. There is a translation of it in Hooker's edition of the History of Giraldus. The grant appears to have been made in 1172.

inviolably preserved; and reserving to St. Peter and the holy Roman church the yearly pension of one penny from each house. If therefore you bring your purpose to good effect, let it be your study to improve the habits of that people, and take such orders by yourself, or by others whom you shall think fitting, for their lives, manners, and conversation, that the church there may be adorned by them, the christian faith be planted and increased, and all that concerns the honour of God and the salvation of souls be ordered by you in like manner; so that you may receive at God's hands the blessed reward of everlasting life, and may obtain on earth a glorious name in ages to come."

Chapter VII: How the king of England has a right to Ireland on five grounds.

Let, then, the envious and ignorant cease their cavillings that the kings of England have no right or title to Ireland; and let them learn that they can avouch and defend their right in five manner of ways, two old and three new, as is set forth in my Topography.<sup>93</sup>

First, we have the testimony of the British History, that Gurguntius, the son of Belinus, and king of Britain, on his return in triumph from Denmark, met the fleet of the Basclenses at the Orkney islands, and set them forward to Ireland, giving them pilots to direct their course thither.<sup>94</sup> The same history informs us also that Arthur, the renowned king of Britain, had kings of Ireland tributary to him, and that Gillomarus, king of Ireland, with other kings of the isles, came to his court at Caerleon.

Moreover, the city of Bayonne, which belongs at present to our Gascony, is the capital of Basclonia, from whence the Irish migrated. And besides this, as every one may renounce his rights of his own free will, although he has been up to that time under no subjection, all the princes of Ireland voluntarily submitted to Henry II., king of England, doing him fealty and taking oaths of allegiance to him. And although these men, from natural inconstancy, did not shrink from often breaking their fealty, they were not thereby absolved from its obligations; for contracts of this sort, though entered into of free will, are not free to be broken. Finally, we have the authority of the Pope, the prince and primate of all Christendom, who claims a sort of especial right in all islands whatsoever; and that is enough to complete the title and give it absolute confirmation.<sup>95</sup>

Chapter VIII: The noble assault and taking of Limerick.

In the meantime, Duvenald prince of Limerick, having waxed very insolent, and faithlessly withdrawn from his fealty to the king of England, Raymond assembled a strong force of one hundred and twenty men-at-arms, three hundred horse soldiers, and four hundred archers on foot, marched about the calends (the 1st) of October to attack Limerick. When they reached the water of Shannon, which runs round that famous city, they found the river so rapid and deep that they could not cross it; and the gallant troops, bent on both glory and plunder, were very impatient at the obstacle opposed to their approach to the place which they were so eager to attack. However, a young soldier, Raymond's nephew, whose name was David Welsh, taking his surname from his family, though he was also a Welshman born, a handsome youth, and tall above the rest, was so chafed at the delay, that, willing to risk his life to win honour, he put spurs to his horse and plunged into the river, although the bottom was full of rocks and stones. By crossing obliquely, he was able to stem the current; and his noble horse landing him safely on the opposite bank, he

<sup>93</sup> Distinct. iii. cc. 8, 9.

<sup>94</sup> Ib. c. 8.

<sup>95</sup> However it might be consistent in a writer of the age of Giraldus to gloss over the injustice of king Henry's pretensions to the dominion of Ireland by reference to antiquated claims or papal bulls, four-fifths of the grounds for them alleged in this chapter are too puerile to merit a single remark. The remaining one, the cession of their supremacy by the Irish princes, on which our author appears to place most reliance, resolves itself into the right of conquest; as the submission was extorted by force of arms, and that in all such cases forms an incontrovertible title.

shouted to his comrades that he had discovered a ford; but, notwithstanding this, no one would cross after him but a man-at-arms whose name was Geoffrey Judas.

Both then returned to guide the rest of the army over the ford, but in so doing Geoffrey was carried away by the stream and drowned. Meyler, who had come with Raymond in this expedition, perceiving this, and burning to share the honour of the bold enterprise with David, who was also his near kinsman, spurred his strong horse, and dashing furiously into the river, full of emulation, and nothing daunted by the terrible example he had just witnessed, resolutely crossed to the other side. There, however, he was met by some of the citizens of Limerick, who, with others stationed on the town walls, which commanded the river bank, showered stones and darts upon him, with the determination to drive him back or slay him on the spot. The brave soldier, finding himself placed in the midst of perils, before him the furious enemy, behind him the foaming stream, stood his ground stoutly, receiving the missiles on his helmet and shield.

The loud shouts on both sides called Raymond from the rear, where he was posted as commander of the troops, unconscious of what had happened. Whereupon, putting spurs to his horse, and galloping to the river bank, he saw his nephew's danger, thus exposed, unsupported, to the enemy's attacks, and in great agitation loudly called to his troops as follows:—

*Raymond's Speech.*

“My men—I know well your native valour, tried as it has been in so many hard encounters. Come, then, my men, the daring of our friends has discovered a ford by which we may pass the river. Let us follow the brave youth who has led the way so nobly for himself and so happily for us. We must not let him perish before our eyes.”

With these words, Raymond, putting himself at their head, plunged first into the river, committing himself to fortune, and all the troops followed his example, striving who should be foremost. The whole force passed the ford safely, except two horsemen and one foot-soldier, and driving the enemy within the walls, followed them up with great slaughter, and carried the place by storm. Enriched by the plunder of the city, and having gained great renown, their perils and losses were well compensated.<sup>96</sup>

Reader, which of the three men I have mentioned, thinkest thou the most valiant? Him, who first set the example by crossing the river and finding a passage for the rest; or him, who following the example, and having before his eyes the fearful spectacle of his comrade's death, crossed in the face of the enemy, and exposed himself, alone and unsupported, to their attack; or him, who, after all, so nobly jeopardized himself and his whole force to succour his friend? It is worthy of notice, that as Limerick was taken on a Tuesday, and also recovered on a Tuesday, so Waterford, Wexford, and Dublin, were all taken on Tuesdays. And this did not happen by design, but by mere chance; nor can it be wondered or thought unreasonable, that martial affairs should be brought to a point on the day of Mars [Tuesday].

Chapter IX: Description of Raymond.

Raymond was very stout,<sup>97</sup> and a little above the middle height; his hair was yellow and curly, and he had large, grey round eyes. His nose was rather prominent, his countenance high-coloured, cheerful, and pleasant; and, although he was somewhat corpulent, he was so lively and active, that the incumbrance was not a blemish or inconvenience. Such was his care of his troops that he passed whole nights without sleep, going the rounds of the guards himself, and challenging the sentinels to keep them on the alert. Through

<sup>96</sup> Limerick, as we have already remarked, was a Scandinavian colony, which accounts both for the great booty taken in a place enriched by commerce, and for the stout resistance the townsmen opposed to the invaders both on this and a subsequent occasion.

<sup>97</sup> Hence he is sometimes called, as we have before observed, Raymond le Gros.

this constant watchfulness he had the good fortune of never, or very seldom, having the troops he commanded taken by surprise, or getting into any difficulties.

He was prudent and temperate, not effeminate in either his food or dress. He bore heat and cold equally well. He was not given to anger, and was insensible to fatigue. Thinking more how he could promote the welfare of his men than of commanding them, he was their servant rather than their master. To sum up his excellencies in few words, he was a liberal, kind, and circumspect man; and although a daring soldier and consummate general, even in military affairs prudence was his highest quality.

#### Chapter X: Description of Meyler.

In person, Meyler was of a dark complexion, with black eyes, and a stern and piercing look. Below the middle height, for his size he was a man of great strength. Broad-chested and not corpulent, his arms and other limbs were bony and muscular, and not encumbered with fat. An intrepid and adventurous soldier, he never shrunk from any enterprise, whether singly or in company; and was the first in the onset, the last in retreat. In every engagement with the enemy he would either carry the day at all hazards, or die on the spot; knowing no medium between victory and death; for if he could not live with glory, he preferred to die. Both Raymond and Meyler would have deserved the highest praise, if they had been less ambitious of worldly honours, and had paid due reverence to the church of Christ, not only by preserving its ancient rights and privileges inviolate, but also by hallowing their new and sanguinary conquest, in which so much blood had been shed, and which was stained by the slaughter of a christian people, by liberally contributing some portion of their spoils for religious uses. But it is still strange, and more to be lamented, that this has been the common failing of all our countrymen engaged in these wars, from their first coming over to the present day.

#### *The Commendation of the rest of the Family.*

What shall we say of the merits of the sons of Robert Fitz-Stephen in these times? What of Maurice Fitzgerald? What of Robert de Barri, an honest and brave man, whose good deserts have been already mentioned? What shall be said of Milo de Cogan, the nephew of Fitz-Stephen and Maurice, who was the first to come over, and was the foremost among the brave? What of Robert Fitz-Henry, Meyler's brother, who, but for his premature death, would doubtless have not been inferior to his noble brother? What of Raymond of Kantitune, and of Robert de Barri the younger, both tall, handsome, and most excellent men? What of Raymond Fitz-Hugh, who was, indeed, short in stature, but for his bravery and prudence not to be passed over? These three young men, after distinguishing themselves by their gallant conduct in Desmond, were cut off in the prime of youth, much to the loss of their friends, led on by their impetuous valour? What shall we say of many others of the same kindred, whose chivalrous deeds will make their names memorable to the latest posterity.

Non mihi si linguæ centum sint, oraque centum,  
Ferrea vox, digne promere cuncta queam.”

Had I a hundred mouths, a hundred tongues,  
A voice of iron, to exact your praise, I yet should fail.”

O family! O race! indeed it is doubly noble; deriving their courage from the Trojans, and their skill in arms from the French. Such a kindred and race, remarkable not only for its numerous branches but for its innate valour, would of itself have been equal to the conquest of a kingdom, had not envy and malice succeeded in lowering its high estate.

Raymond spent a short time at Limerick in well-ordering the state of the city, and having stored it with provisions collected from all the country round, he placed there a garrison consisting of fifty men-at-arms, two hundred horsemen, and as many archers, under the command of Milo of St. David's<sup>98</sup> his cousin; and then returned triumphant into Leinster, without losing any of his troops. But as virtue is ever exposed to the shafts of envy, Hervey de Montmaurice, who, notwithstanding his new relationship, was still influenced by his former malice, sent messengers privately to the king of England, from time to time, with unfavourable representations of the state of affairs. He affirmed that Raymond, in derogation of the royal dignity, and contrary to his own fealty, evidently designed to secure to himself and his accomplices, not only the dominion of Limerick, but the sovereignty of all Ireland. And to give colour and credit to these statements, he asserted that Raymond had levied troops in the manner of the Bragmans, who were confederated with him to effect his purpose. Raymond had also made his whole army swear to bring all their plunder into a common stock, and divide it fairly among themselves, reserving the prince's share.

#### Chapter XI: Description of Hervey.

Hervey was a tall and handsome man, with grey and rather prominent eyes, a pleasant look, fine features, and a command of polished language. His neck was so long and slender that it seemed scarcely able to support his head; his shoulders were low, and both his arms and legs were somewhat long. He had rather a broad breast; but was small and genteel in the waist, which is generally apt to swell too much, and, lower down, his stomach was of the same moderate proportion. His thighs, legs, and feet, were well shaped for a soldier, and finely proportioned to the upper part of his body. In stature he was above the middle height. But although nature thus endowed him with many personal graces, she had given him a mind and disposition stained with many vices. From a boy he was addicted to lascivious habits, and lent himself to all kinds of pollution, which he practised on others, there being no sort of filthiness or adultery from which he abstained. Besides this, he was spiteful, a false accuser, double-faced, full of wiles, and smooth, but false. Under his tongue was honey and milk mingled with poison. A man of no principle, he was consistent only in being constantly wavering. In his fortunes he was for a time at the top of the wheel, but by a sudden turn he fell to the bottom, and was plunged into irreparable ruin. Formerly he was a very good soldier after the French school, but now he is more remarkable for his malice than his gallantry, more full of deceit than honour, more puffed up with pride than respected, more witty than sensible, more wordy than truthful.

The king, however, as it turned out, putting more trust in his false accusations than they merited, injurious reports are more readily believed, and make a longer impression, than accounts of services rendered, as soon as the winter was passed, sent over to Ireland four commissioners, namely, Robert Poer, Osbert de Herlotera, William de Bendenges, and Adam de Yarmouth, two of whom returned with Raymond, who was recalled to England, and the other two remained with the earl.

#### Chapter XII: Relief of the royal garrison in Limerick.

Raymond having made all preparations for his departure, while he was only waiting for a favourable wind, messengers arrived from the garrison in Limerick with the intelligence that Duvenald prince of Thomond had blockaded the town on all sides with a vast multitude of men; and that as all the stores of provisions which they had found in the place, or afterwards drawn in, were exhausted during the winter, they were in need of immediate succour. The earl being anxious to march to their relief, mustered his own troops and announced his intention, but he found them so dissatisfied and dispirited at Raymond's recall, that they all declared with one voice that they would not go on the expedition without him. Being in this strait, and after consulting the royal commissioners, Raymond at last consented, at the joint request of the

<sup>98</sup> Called generally by our author Milo de Cogan. See the note on a former chapter.

earl and the messengers from Limerick, to head the troops destined to the relief of the garrison. They consisted of eighty men-at-arms, two hundred horse-soldiers, and three hundred archers, besides a body of Irish under Murchard of Kinsale and Duvenald of Ossory; and while they were on their march towards Cashel, Raymond learnt that the prince of Thomond had raised the siege, and posted himself at the pass of Cashel, where he intended to attack them, having added to the natural strength of the position by felling trees and digging trenches, and by throwing a very strong rampart across the road.

Chapter XIII: The speech of Duvenald prince of Ossory.

Raymond had formed his army in three divisions, and, when they drew near the pass, Duvenald prince of Ossory, being a mortal enemy to the Thomond people, and observing how few in number were the English troops, though they were full of spirit and well arrayed in their bright armour, thus addressed them, still further to animate their courage. "Brave soldiers, and conquerors of this island, we must this day manfully attack the enemy; for if your wonted valour is victorious in the onset, the Irish battle axes will second your swords in following up their defeat with effect. But if we find your ranks give way, which God forbid, it may chance that, in conjunction with the enemy, they will be turned against you. Look well, therefore, men, to yourselves; there are no strongholds near us, we are far from any place of refuge. It is our custom to side with the winning party, and to fall on those who run away. Trust to us therefore; but only while you are conquerors."

Upon hearing this, Meyler, who led the van, rushed like a whirlwind, at the head of his men, into the pass, and tearing down the rampart, they thus cut their way through the enemy with great slaughter. The pass was forced on Easter Eve, and on the third day in Easter week, Tuesday, [the day of Mars], the victorious army entered Limerick, being the same day on which the place was taken before.

Raymond halted there a short time, while he restored order and repaired the damages occasioned by the siege, and soon afterwards had a conference with the two princes of Thomond and Connaught, on the same day, but not on the same spot. Roderic came in a boat to an island in the great lake,<sup>99</sup> from which the famous river Shannon rises and flows in two branches into the ocean. Duvenald took his station on the skirts of a wood not far from the same spot, while Raymond chose a place near Killaloe, about sixteen miles from Limerick. The conferences were prolonged, until at last both princes gave hostages for their good behaviour, and yielded their fealty to the king of England, renewing their allegiance, and promising for the future, on their corporal oaths, to preserve it inviolate.

After this was settled, and Raymond had returned to Limerick with the hostages, Dermotus Macarthy sent envoys to him, imploring aid against his eldest son, Cormac O'Lechan,<sup>100</sup> who had almost driven him out of his dominions, and offering, in return for his being restored, to become the liegeman of the king of England, acknowledging him as his lord, and doing fealty to him. He also promised Raymond large reward, and pay for his troops. Raymond, attracted by mingled prospects of lucre and glory, lost no time, after consulting his friends, in marching his victorious army to Cork. In this expedition he took much booty, and not only had abundant supplies for his own troops, so that they wanted nothing, but was able to send some herds of cattle and other provisions to Limerick. Thus, by Raymond's help, Dermotus Macarthy recovered the whole of his territories, at a time when his son Cormac had treacherously seized him and kept him in prison. His father, proving his equal in guile, did not hesitate to compass Cormac's death from the very dungeon in which his son immured him.

<sup>99</sup> Lough Dearg.

<sup>100</sup> O'Lochlan.

## Chapter XIV: The death of earl Strongbow is announced to Raymond.

While these things were doing in Desmond, there came a messenger in haste from Dublin, who brought Raymond a letter from his wife, Basilia, of the contents of which he was not apprized. It was therefore read to Raymond by a certain confidential clerk of his household, and the tenor was as follows:

“To Raymond, her well-beloved lord and husband, his Basilia wisheth health, as to herself. Be it known to your sincere love, that the great jaw tooth which used to give me so much uneasiness, has fallen out. Wherefore, if you have any care or regard for me, or even for yourself, return with all speed.”

On hearing the letter read, Raymond shrewdly conjectured that by the falling out of the tooth was meant the death of earl Strongbow; for he had fallen very sick before Raymond left Dublin. The earl died about the calends (the 1st) of June; but, through fear of the Irish, every possible means were used to keep his death secret until the return of Raymond and the troops under his command. Making all haste, therefore, to come back to Limerick, and hiding his grief under a cheerful countenance from all except a few faithful servants of his own household, to whom he disclosed the loss he had sustained, he took counsel with the most discreet men about him regarding this new and untoward event. After deliberating on the state of affairs, it was agreed amongst them, that the earl’s decease, and Raymond’s impending departure for England, rendered it necessary that they should for a time relinquish the possession of a city which lay so remote, and was surrounded on all sides by hosts of enemies, and withdraw the whole force in good order, to defend the towns on the coast, and the castles in Leinster. Raymond concurring in this decision though very unwillingly, and not being able to find any one of note who would undertake the government of the city after his own departure, voluntarily gave it in charge to Duvenald prince of Thomond, as baron of the lord the king of England, on his taking a solemn oath to preserve the place in good condition, restore it to the king when required, and keep the peace, for which he gave fresh hostages, and renewed in various forms the solemn oaths he had before sworn.

Scarcely, however, had the garrison been withdrawn and passed the further end of the bridge, when it was broken down behind them, and they beheld with grief that noble city, so well fortified, containing such fair buildings, and stored with all manner of provisions collected from all quarters, given to the flames, fire being set to it in four places. It was the work of the traitorous Duvenald, who thus openly showed by his new and disgraceful perfidy, what little reliance could be placed on Irish faith. When the king of England was informed afterwards of the results of this enterprise, he is reported to have said: “The attack of Limerick was a bold adventure, its relief a greater; but its evacuation was an act of pure wisdom.” As soon as the garrison returned to Dublin, the earl’s corpse, which, by his own command, had been kept unburied until Raymond’s arrival, was entombed in the church of the Holy Trinity, at Dublin, by the appointment of Laurence, the archbishop of that see, who performed the obsequies with great ceremony.<sup>101</sup>

## Chapter XV: How Fitz-Aldelm was sent over as governor of Ireland.

Upon the occurrence of these events, the change of circumstances requiring new plans, the royal commissioners hastened back to England with the first favourable wind, leaving Raymond to act as lieutenant-governor of Ireland until the royal pleasure was known. On their arrival they informed the king of the change of affairs in consequence of the earl’s death. Whereupon the king sent over to Ireland

<sup>101</sup> The cathedral of the Holy Trinity, or Christ Church, in Dublin, was built by Sigtryg, king of the Ostmen there, and Donald (Duncan) their bishop, about the year 1038. For we may add to our former notices of the Ostmen or Scandinavian colonists, who founded also the cathedral at Waterford, that they had their own bishops, who were consecrated in England, by the archbishop of Canterbury, independent of the see of Armagh, in which the primacy of the ancient Irish church was vested. Richard Strongbow had assisted archbishop Laurence in restoring and finishing the cathedral of Christ Church, in which he was buried. His tomb, which had been defaced by the fall of the roof, was repaired by Sir Henry Sydney, when he was lord deputy, and is still preserved. He died in 1176.

William Fitz-Aldelm, attended by ten men-at-arms of Fitz-Aldelm's own household, to fill the office of lieutenant governor. There were joined in commission with him John de Courcy, who had also ten men-at-arms, and Robert Fitz-Stephen and Milo de Cogan, who had distinguished themselves in the worse than civil two years' wars, under the banner of the king, both in England and France, and who now took with them twenty men-at-arms. Raymond, having heard of their landing, set forth from Dublin with a well-appointed body of troops, and meeting them on the confines of Wexford, after offering his congratulations, and embracing them in a friendly manner, proceeded forthwith to surrender and place in the charge of William Fitz-Aldelm, as the king's lieutenant, all the cities, towns, and castles of Ireland, and the several hostages which were in his custody.

Fitz-Aldelm seeing Raymond surrounded by so gallant a band, and beholding Meyler and his other nephews and kinsmen to the number of thirty mounted on noble steeds, in bright armour, and all having the same device on their shields, engaged in martial exercises on the plains, he turned to his friends, and said in a low voice: "I will speedily put an end to all this bravery; those shields shall soon be scattered." From that hour Fitz-Aldelm and all the other governors of Ireland, as it were by a common understanding, were so moved with envy towards Raymond, Meyler, the Fitzmaurices, and the Fitz-Stephens, that they took every opportunity of injuring them. For this seems to have been the fate of the whole of this race. In all services of war they were highly valued; always in the van, they were eminent for their valour and daring in every noble enterprise: but, as soon as the occasion for their services had ended, they were neglected and treated with the utmost contempt. But malice itself could not succeed in extirpating this generous race, so that even to this day the family, putting forth new branches, possesses no small share of wealth and power in this island. Who first penetrated into the heart of the enemy's country? The Geraldines. Who have kept it in submission? The Geraldines. Who strike most terror into the enemy? The Geraldines. Against whom are the shafts of malice chiefly directed? The Geraldines. Oh, that they had found a prince who could have justly appreciated their distinguished worth! How tranquil, how peaceful would have been the state of Ireland under their administration! But they were always held in groundless suspicion, while confidence has been placed in others in blind security, who had none of their virtues. But persevere, ye gallant kinsmen, in the course of honour ye have hitherto pursued, not holding your lives dear, if spent in the path of glory; and

"*Felices facti, si quid mea carmina possunt.*"

"Blest if my feeble lines their worth proclaim,  
And weave their guerdon of immortal fame."

For worth is imperishable, and will receive its reward either in present or future times; and although, either through the remissness of princes, or the envy of others, the great services of the Geraldines have been hitherto unrequited, at least they shall have all the credit that my pen can give them. Let, therefore, this noble progeny take heart, and still toil onward from day to day, animated by increasing love and desire of renown; for their memory shall never be lost and perish, but, more precious than land and wealth, shall flourish for ever in the annals of glory.

About this time, or shortly before, a human monster was seen in Wicklow, having the body of a man and the limbs of an ox. It was begotten by a man on a cow, an enormity too common in that nation. I have described the monster in my *Topography*.<sup>102</sup>

Meanwhile, Fitz-Aldelm employed himself in inspecting the towns and garrisons on the coast, but kept far enough from the mountainous districts of the interior. However, he did not forget to collect all the gold he could lay hands on, and in which the country abounds. About the calends of September [1st September] Maurice Fitzgerald died at Wexford, to the great grief of his friends; a man of great

<sup>102</sup> *Distinct*. ii. c. 21.

moderation, prudence, and courage, than whom no better for constancy, truth, and resolute valour was left in Ireland. After this, Fitz-Aldelm had a meeting with Maurice's sons at the castle of Ginkingelone (Ginkel), and so dealt with them that he never left them until, by some means or other, he craftily got the castle out of their hands. Soon afterwards, indeed, he gave them Ferns as a sort of exchange; where they forthwith built a strong fortress, and held it stoutly, though it was in the midst of the enemy's country. Walter the Almaine, so called, although he was not such either by birth or stature, a nephew of William Fitz-Aldelm's, was appointed by him constable of Wexford, and showed by his conduct that he was of the same stock. It is but too true that

“Asperius nihil est humili cum surgit in altum;  
Cuncta premit, dum cuncta timet, desævit in omnes,  
Ut se posse putent; nec bellua tetrior ulla est  
Quam servi rabies in libera colla furentis.”<sup>103</sup>

No greater despot than the base-born raised  
Above his rank; fear makes him a tyrant,  
Measuring his power by the terror it excites:  
Nothing so monstrous as a slave's oppression,  
When act to govern freemen.”

This Walter was corrupted by the bribes of Murchard, prince of Kinsale, to compass by crafty means the ruin of the family of the Fitz-Stephens; and William Fitz-Aldelm deprived Raymond of the lands he held in the valley of Dublin and about Wexford. He also, being well bribed, evaded carrying into effect the king's command for the restoration to the Fitz-Stephens of a cantred of land in Offaly, and at length left nothing to this noble family but remote and barren territories, constantly exposed to danger from the inroads of the enemy, on whose country they bordered.

#### Chapter XVI: Description of Fitz-Aldelm.

This Fitz-Aldelm<sup>104</sup> was large and corpulent both in stature and shape, but of a reasonable height. He was a pleasant and courtly man, but whatever honours he paid to any one were always mingled with guile. There was no end of his craftiness; there was poison in the honey, and a snake in the grass. To outward appearance he was liberal and courteous, but within there was more aloes than honey. He always

“Pelliculam veterem retinens, vir fronte politus,  
Astutam vapido portans sub pectore vulpem.”<sup>105</sup>

“Beneath the outward guise of gentle bearing,  
Concealed the fox's hateful guile within.”

Always,

“Impia sub dulci melle venena ferens.”

<sup>103</sup> Claudian. in Eutrop. i. 181-4.

<sup>104</sup> William, Fitz-Aldelm was son of Aldelm, or Adelm, and younger brother of Hubert de Burgh, earl of Kent, and justiciary in the time of Henry III., one of the most powerful subjects in England. The Clanricards are descended from William Fitz-Aldelm, the founder of the Irish branch of this family.

<sup>105</sup> Perseus, Sat. v. 116-18.

“Foul poison in the honeyed potion lurks.”

His words were smoother than oil, and yet were they very swords. Those he honoured one day, the next he plundered or calumniated. A braggart against the defenceless, a flatterer of the rebellious, he succumbed to the powerful and lorded over the humble; gentle to his enemies and severe to those who submitted, he neither struck terror into the one, nor kept faith with the other. He was a man full of guile, bland and deceitful, and much given to wine and women. Covetous of money and ambitious of court favour, he tried to advance himself both ways.

*The Invasion of Ulster.*

John de Courcy, perceiving that Fitz-Aldelm was covetous, crafty, and timid in all his dealings, and considering that he was neither feared by the enemy nor trusted by his subjects, drew around him some of the garrison of Dublin, who were much dispirited for want of their regular pay and allowances, and the supplies they were used to obtain in cattle and provisions by inroads on the enemy. The band selected by Courcy was small in numbers, but full of courage and spirit; and the brave knight, with only twenty-two men-at-arms and about three hundred others, boldly ventured on an expedition into Ulster, a part of the island where the English had not yet appeared in arms.

Then the prophecy attributed to the Calidonian Merlin (for I do not vouch its authenticity) seemed to receive its fulfilment:—“a white knight, sitting on a white horse, and having birds on his shield, shall be the first to enter the province of Ulster with force of arms.” For John de Courcy was of a fair complexion, and chanced at this time to ride a white horse, and he bore on his shield the blazon of three birds.<sup>106</sup> After three days’ march through the country of Uziele (Orgial), on the morning of the fourth day, being about the calends [the 1st] of February, he entered the city of Down without opposition, unexpected either as a guest or an enemy; and Dunlevus,<sup>107</sup> the king of that country, was so taken by surprise that he made a hasty flight. There Courcy’s troops, who had been before in great need and half starved, were refreshed with the plunder and booty they took.

It happened at this very time that Vivianus, a legate of the see of Rome, was staying in the city, having crossed the sea from Scotland. This prelate took much pains to effect a treaty between the king and John de Courcy, and so induce the English to leave those parts and return to their own territories, in consideration of a tribute to be yearly paid them; but although he exerted all his powers of persuasion, his mediation was of no effect. Dunlevus, finding that words were of no avail, assembled his forces from all quarters and within eight days, and boldly marched against his enemies within the city at the head of ten thousand warriors. For in this island, as in other countries, the inhabitants of the northern parts are more warlike and truculent than the rest. Thus the poet says:

“Omnis in arctois sanguis quicunque pruinis  
Nascitur, indomitus bellis, et mortis amator.”

“The blood that’s nurtured in the northern frosts,  
Despises death, and yields not in the fight.”

<sup>106</sup> The arms of the Courcys were: Argent, three griphs or geires gules, crowned or. The family took their name from a castle on the little river Dive in Normandy; and Richard de Courcy, who came in with William the Conqueror, received grants of lands in England. This John de Courcy, the first invader of the North of Ireland, was made earl of Ulster by Henry II., the first Irish earldom created.

<sup>107</sup> Roderic mac Dulevy, king of Ulster.

John de Courcy seeing the enemy's force approaching the city with great impetuosity, thought it far best to sally forth and meet them, as his own troops, though few in number, were full of courage, and thus try the fortune of battle, rather than be shut up in a weak fort which he had constructed of slight materials in one corner of the city. where he might be exposed to a long siege and be reduced by famine. Battle was therefore joined with great fury, arrows and darts being showered thickly from a distance at the first onset; then spears met spears, and swords and battle-axes crossed, and many fell on both sides. In this terrible conflict,

“Tam clypeo clypeus, umbone repellitur umbo,  
Ense minax ensis, pede pes, et cuspidē cuspis.”

He who had seen how John de Courcy wielded his sword, with one stroke lopping off heads, and with another arms, must needs have commended him for a most valiant soldier.

Many others distinguished themselves by their bravery in this battle, among whom was Roger le Poer,<sup>108</sup> a beardless youth, fair and tall, who was second in the glorious list of warriors here, and afterwards gained great honour in the country about Leighlin, and also in Ossory. The battle was severely fought, and the issue for a long time doubtful, the odds in numbers being so great; but at length John de Courcy's obstinate valour secured the victory, and great multitudes of the Irish were slain as they were making their escape by the sea-shore. Then was fulfilled, as they say, the prophecy of Columba, the Irishman, who in times long past foretold this battle: “So much Irish blood,” he said, “shall then be shed, that their enemies, in pursuing them, will wade up to their knees in blood.” For the fugitives sank with their own weight in the quicksands on the shore, so that their pursuers were easily plunged up to their knees in the blood which floated on the surface. It is also reported that a prediction was committed to writing by the same prophet, purporting that a needy and broken man, a stranger from far countries, should, with a small company, come to Down, and take possession of the city without the leave of the governor. He also foretold several battles and other events, all which were clearly fulfilled in the acts of John de Courcy; who is said to have had this book of prophecies, written in the Irish tongue, in his possession, and to have valued it much, considering it as the mirror of his own deeds. It is also written in the same book, that a young man, with a band of armed men, should assault and break down the walls of Waterford, and take the city with great slaughter of the inhabitants; and that he should then pass through Wexford, and at length enter Dublin, without any opposition. All this was evidently fulfilled in earl Richard. The saint also predicted that Limerick would be twice evacuated by the English, but the third time they would retain possession of it. Now, truly it has been twice given up, once, as we have before related, and the second time by Philip de Braose, who, having the city of Limerick granted to him, came as far as the river which washes its walls, for the purpose of taking possession, but no efforts or taunts could prevail with him not to relinquish his enterprise; as we shall more fully relate in the proper place. And as we find in the prophecy, that, when the attempt should be made for the third time, possession of the city should be retained, this happened long afterwards, when Hamon de Valaignes was justiciary; for then the place was treacherously laid in ruins, but was afterwards recovered and rebuilt by Meyler.

As to John de Courcy, he gained the victory in two great battles at Down, one of which was fought after the feast of the Purification (2nd February), and the other about the [eighth of the] calends of July, the feast of the Nativity of St. John, [24th June], when, with a very small force, he defeated fifteen thousand men, putting great numbers of them to the sword. He had a third engagement at Ferly, where he was overtaken in a narrow pass while, with a small party, he was carrying off a herd of cattle, but being beset by the enemy, his party were compelled to retire, after several desperate charges, and so many of them perished, or dispersed themselves in the woods, that only eleven of his men-at-arms were left to

<sup>108</sup> Giraldus does not inform us how this young man was related to Robert le Poer, the founder of this distinguished Irish family, who is noticed elsewhere in this History.

stand by him. However, with undaunted courage, he and his small band made good their retreat for thirty miles, having continually to defend themselves against the enemy who pursued them. They lost their horses, and after travelling on foot two days and two nights, encumbered with their armour, and without tasting food, at length, by wonderful efforts, reached his castle in safety. His fourth battle was fought at Uriel, where he lost many of his people, and the rest were put to flight. The fifth battle was fought at the bridge of Ivor, after his return from England; and in this he came off victorious. Thus he gained the victory in three engagements, and was unsuccessful in two skirmishes, in which, however, the enemy's losses were far greater than his own.

#### Chapter XVII: The description of John de Courcy.

In person John de Courcy was of a fair complexion, and tall, with bony and muscular limbs, of large size, and very strong made, being very powerful, of singular daring, and a bold and brave soldier from his very youth. Such was his ardour to mingle in the fight, that even when he had the command, he was apt to forget his duties as such, and exhibiting the virtues of a private soldier, instead of a general, and impetuously charge the enemy among the foremost ranks; so that if his troops wavered he might have lost the victory by being too eager to win it. But although he was thus impetuous in war, and was more a soldier than a general, in times of peace he was sober and modest, and, paying due reverence to the church of Christ, was exemplary in his devotions and in attending holy worship; nor did he forget in his successes to offer thanksgivings, and ascribe all to the Divine mercy, giving God all the glory as often as he had achieved anything glorious. But, as Tully says, "Nature never made anything absolutely perfect in all points," so we find in him an excessive parsimony and inconstancy, which cast a shade over his other virtues.

He married the daughter of Godred king of Man; and after the many conflicts of a long war, and severe struggles on every side, being raised by his victories to the summit of power, he erected castles throughout Ulster in suitable places, and settled the whole country in peace and good order, the fruits of his many toils, privations, and perils. One thing, however, is very remarkable, and I cannot forbear mentioning it, that four of the main pillars of the English power in the conquest of Ireland, namely, Fitz-Stephen, Hervey, Raymond, and John de Courcy, by some mysterious, though doubtless just, dispensation of Providence, had no lawful issue by their wives. I might add to these a fifth, Meyler, who, although he be married, has yet no child by his wife. Having said thus much briefly, and by way of episode, concerning John de Courcy, I leave his great deeds to be more fully related by future historians, and now return to Dublin.

#### *The Synod of Dublin under the presidency of Vivianus.*

While Vivianus performed the functions of papal legate in Ireland, a synod of the bishops was convoked and held in Dublin, at which he made a public declaration of the right of the king of England to Ireland, and the confirmation of the pope; and strictly commanded and enjoined both the clergy and people, under pain of excommunication, on no rash pretence to presume to forfeit their allegiance. And moreover, forasmuch as it was the custom in Ireland for stores of provisions to be carried to the churches in times of trouble for safe keeping, the legate allowed the English troops engaged in any expedition to take what they found in those churches, when they could not procure food elsewhere, paying what was justly due for the care thereof to those who had the charge of the churches.

After this, Milo de Cogan, who under Fitz-Aldelm was constable of the garrison of Dublin, and also for the second time governor of the city, crossed the river Shannon and invaded Connaught, into which the English had not yet penetrated, at the head of forty men-at-arms, (twenty of whom were under the command of Fitz-Stephen's son, Ralph, a noble youth), with two hundred horse soldiers and three hundred bowmen. Thereupon the men of Connaught set fire to their own towns and villages, and burnt all the corn

which they could not conceal in their underground granaries, not even sparing the churches from the flames, and taking down the crucifixes and images of the saints, they strewed them on the plains, in order to bring scandal on our people and draw down on them the vengeance of Almighty God. The English army, however, marched forward till they came to Thomond; but after halting there for eight days in the heart of the enemy's territory, finding that no provisions could be obtained in the country, they retired towards the river Shannon. On this march they fell in with the forces of Roderic prince of Connaught, posted in three bodies in a wood near the river. A severe engagement ensued, unintentionally on both sides; but Milo de Cogan forced his way through, and brought his troops safe to Dublin, having lost only three men, though the loss of the enemy was much greater.

Chapter XVIII: How Fitz-Aldelm was recalled, and Hugh de Lacy appointed governor.

Fitz-Aldelm was recalled to England, as well as Milo de Cogan and Robert Fitz-Stephen, having done nothing worthy of mention during his government, except procuring the miraculous staff called the staff of Jesus, to be transferred from Armagh to Dublin. King Henry then appointed Hugh de Lacy governor-general of Ireland, joining in commission with him Robert Poer<sup>109</sup> with the constableness both of Waterford and Wexford. The king also granted to Robert Fitz-Stephen and Milo de Cogan all the southern part of Munster, namely, the kingdom of Cork from the west of Lismore, and the adjoining cantred, except the city of Cork, the said territories to be equally divided between them, and held of him by knight service. The king also gave to Philip de Braose the northern division of Munster, namely, the whole kingdom of Limerick, except the city itself and the cantred belonging to it. These three having thus received their grants and done fealty at the same time, formed a strict alliance, and crossed over to Ireland in company, in the month of November, each with his own armed retainers; and travelling along the coast-road southward, passed first through Waterford and then Lismore, arriving safely at Cork, where they were received with due honour by the citizens, and a knight named Richard de Londres,<sup>110</sup> who had acted as governor thereof, under Fitz-Aldelm.

Having speedily established peace with Dermotus prince of Desmond, and with the other powerful men of those parts, Fitz-Stephen and Milo divided between them seven cantreds of land lying near the city, of which they had already obtained possession. The three eastern cantreds in this partition fell to the lot of Fitz-Stephen, and the four western to Milo, which was made equal by the smaller lots comprising the best land, whereas much of the other was barren. The city was left in their joint charge, and the tribute reserved for the remaining twenty-four cantreds was to be equally divided between the two lords, as it was received. It has been already mentioned in the Topography, that a cantred, both in English and Irish, signifies a tract of lands containing one hundred vills.

After this, his two confederates conducted Philip de Braose to Limerick; Fitz-Stephen taking with him thirty men-at arms and forty horse soldiers; Milo de Cogan, twenty men at-arms and fifty horse-soldiers; and Philip de Braose, twenty men-at-arms and sixty horse soldiers; besides the bowmen attached to each body of troops. On reaching the bank of the Shannon, over against Limerick, distant about forty miles from Cork, Fitz-Stephen and Milo de Cogan offered immediately to ford the river and storm the town, although it was then in flames before their eyes, having been set on fire by the citizens themselves; or otherwise they proposed, if Philip de Braose preferred it, to make a fortified camp for him on the opposite side of the river. Philip, however, listening to the pusillanimous counsels of his friends, though he was not wanting in courage himself, determined to return home safe, rather than to run the risk of the

<sup>109</sup> The honours and estates of the Le Poer family in Ireland, of which this Robert was the founder, passed by marriage to the Beresfords, of whom the marquis of Waterford is now the head and representative.

<sup>110</sup> William de Londres held the castle and lands of Ogmoo, in Glamorganshire, under Robert Fitz-Hamon. Among his descendants we find this Richard, Fitz-Aldelm's deputy at Waterford, and Henry de Londres, who succeeded John Comyn in the archbishopric of Dublin in 1212.

perils to which he would be exposed in a country so hostile and so remote from all succour. It is no wonder that this expedition turned out so unfortunately, considering the number of cut-throats, and murderers, and lewd fellows, whom Philip de Braose had, by his own special choice, got together, from South Wales and its marches, to accompany him to Ireland.<sup>111</sup>

Soon afterwards, Mereduc, Fitz-Stephen's son, a youth of great gallantry and much promise, died at Cork, in the month of March, to the great grief of his friends, he being truly a disciple of Mars. About this time also, the cow mentioned in my Topography<sup>112</sup> was found at Waterford, to the great astonishment of the Irish people.

Meanwhile, the famous council of Lateran,<sup>113</sup> under pope Alexander III., sat at Rome, by which the German church was restored to unity, and the schism occasioned by three antipopes, which had lasted for twenty years, was, by the aid of Divine Providence, extinguished. Also, within the space of three years, about the same period, there were three eclipses of the sun; but they were not general, the sun being only partly eclipsed.

After Robert Fitz-Stephen and Milo do Cogan had jointly governed the kingdom of Desmond in peace for five years, restraining by their prudence and moderation the unruly spirits of their young men on both sides, Milo, together with Ralph, a son of Robert Fitz-Stephen, a young man of great merit, who had lately married Milo's daughter, went towards Lismore to have a parley with the men of Waterford; and as they were sitting in the fields waiting for their coming, one Mac Tyre, with whom they were to have lodged that night, with five men-of-arms, stealing upon them unawares, treacherously slew both, by strokes of broadaxes dealt from behind. This calamity threw the whole country into insurrection, and Dermotus Macarthy, and almost all the Irish in those parts, joined with Mac Tyre in throwing off their allegiance to the English, and rising in arms to try their strength and fortune against Fitz-Stephen. Nor could he ever afterwards recover the ascendancy, until Raymond succeeding to the inheritance of his uncle, Robert Fitz-Stephen, obtained the sole constablership of the city; nor even then was the country restored to its former state of tranquillity. We find that the people of the North of Ireland were always warlike, while those of the South were subtle and crafty; the one coveted glory, the other was steeped in falsehood; the one trusted to their arms, the other to their arts; the one was full of courage, the other of deceit. As the poet says:

“Omnis in Arctois sanguis quicunque pruinis  
Nascitur, indomitus bellis, et Martis amator.”

As quoted above; and again immediately after:

“Quicquid ad Eoos tractus cœlique teporem  
Jungitur, emollit mores clementia cœli.”

In eastern climes, the torrid heat we find  
Exhaust the strength, and enervate the mind."

<sup>111</sup> We imagine that this Philip de Braose is identical with the person who is elsewhere called Philip of Worcester by Giraldus. The family of Braose obtained large grants of lands in Sussex, part of which, with the ancient barony of that name, are now vested in the duke of Norfolk. Giraldus frequently mentions in his Itinerary another of this family, William de Braose, who was lord of Brecknock at this time, and had great power in that part of Wales, which he exercised in a manner quite consistent with the description of his retainers here given. See the Itin., Book i. c. 2.

<sup>112</sup> Distinct ii. c. 22.

<sup>113</sup> This famous council was opened in the third week of Lent, 29th March, 1179. The Irish church was represented in it by Laurence, archbishop of Dublin, Catholicus of Tuam, and five or six other bishops; only four went from England. See Hoveden's Hist. vol. i, pp. 494, &c. (*Antiq. Lib.*) where the decrees of this council are given.

*Raymond returns to Ireland.*

Raymond having received intelligence that Robert Fitz-Stephen was desperately afflicted by this reverse of fortune, and beset on all sides by hosts of enemies, who blockaded him in the town of Cork, he set sail from the port of Wexford with twenty men-at-arms, and one hundred horse-soldiers and bowmen, and, sailing along the coast, quickly brought relief to his countrymen, and struck terror into the enemy. In various encounters with the Irish, some of them were slain, others driven from that part of the country, but the greater part were reduced to submission, and peace being restored, this violent storm soon blew over.

Very shortly afterwards, Richard de Cogan, Milo's brother, a worthy scion of the same stock, was sent to Ireland by the King of England with a picked body of troops, to supply his brother's place. Also, towards the close of winter, at the end of the month of November, Philip de Barri,<sup>114</sup> FitzStephen's nephew, a man of prudence and courage, arrived with a strong force both to succour his uncle and defend his own lands in Olean, which had been granted him by Fitz Stephen, and afterwards unjustly taken from him by his son Ralph. There came over at the same time in the same ship another nephew of Fitz-Stephen's, and a brother of Philip de Barri, who rendered his uncle and brother important assistance by his good advice, and also made diligent inquiries respecting the situation and natural history of the island, as well as the origin of the nation. This person was already versed in literary pursuits, and his name appears as the author of the present work.<sup>115</sup>

About this time Hervey de Montmaurice retired to Canterbury, and became a monk in the abbey of the Holy Trinity there, to which he gave in frank-almoyn all the churches on his lands lying between Waterford and Wexford. Would to God that with the monastic garb his mind had become pious, and he had laid aside his malicious temper as well as his military habits.

## Chapter XIX: How Hugh de Lacy built castles in Ireland.

While these events were happening in Desmond, Hugh de Lacy, like a wise and prudent man, was building strong castles<sup>116</sup> throughout Leinster and Meath. Among others, he erected a castle at Leighlin, on the banks of the noble river Barrow, on the side of Ossory, towards Odrone, selecting for its site a spot naturally of great strength.<sup>117</sup> Before this, Robert Poer had the custody of the place, but he gave it up by the king's command. This Robert Poer and Fitz-Aldelm were pretty men to be made lords-marchers, and sent into a country where men of mark were needed.

“Quales ex humili magna ad fastigia rerum  
Extollit, quoties voluit fortuna jocari.”

“’Tis fortune's freak, when men of low estate

<sup>114</sup> Robert de Barri, a brother of this Philip de Barri and of our Giraldus, came over to Ireland with the first expedition under Fitz-Stephen. (See B. i. c. 3) Hooker, however, represents this Philip de Barri as the founder of the Irish family of that name. Perhaps Robert died without issue, or returned to Wales. Philip had a son named Robert, as we are informed in c. 20 of this book. He had also a younger son named Philip, who was brought up to the church by his uncle Giraldus, and succeeded him in his archdeaconry and prebend, resigned in his favour.

<sup>115</sup> This was our author, Giraldus, who appears to have spent about a year in this, his first, visit to Ireland. He very seldom furnishes any dates; but his History is written in a regular sequence, and by a calculation made from other occurrences, it would appear that he went over with his brother Philip in 1182 or 1183. In 1181 he was at the court of Henry I. in Normandy, and returned to Ireland in attendance on prince John in 1185.

<sup>116</sup> Every one knows that this castellation was the usual policy of the Normans in all their conquests. Thus, their own Normandy, England, Wales, and Ireland were successively bridled; not to speak of Apulia, Sicily, and their other acquisitions in the South of Europe.

<sup>117</sup> The castle of Leighlin, or the Black Castle, stood upon the bank of the river Barrow, at Leighlin Bridge, about a mile from the cathedral town of the same name.

She raises from the dust, and ranks them with the great."

The two were soldiers who delighted rather

“---jacuisse thoro, tenuisse puellam,  
Threiciam digitis increpuisse lyram,  
Quam clypeos humeris, et acutæ cuspidis hastam,  
Et galeam pressa sustinuisse coma.”<sup>118</sup>

It is indeed to be wondered that so sagacious a prince should have sent such paltry cowards to take the charge of these far-distant marches, merely because they were hangers-on about his court. Hugh de Lacy, a very different sort of person, made it his first care to restore peace and order, reinstating the peasants who, after they had submitted to the conquerors, were violently expelled from their districts, in the deserted lands, which from barren wastes now became cultivated and stocked with herds of cattle. Having thus restored confidence by his mild administration and firm adherence to treaties, his next care was to enforce submission and obedience to the laws on the inhabitants of corporate towns, thus gradually bringing them into subordination. By these means, where his predecessors had spread ruin and confusion, he restored order; and where they had sown toil and trouble, he reaped the happiest fruits.

In short, he had in a little time restored tranquillity over so vast an extent of country, so munificently provided for his own partisans out of the possessions of his fallen enemies, and such was the liberality and courtesy with which he won the hearts of the Irish people and drew around him their natural leaders, that a deep suspicion arose that his policy was to usurp all power and dominion, and, throwing off his allegiance, to be crowned as king of Ireland.

Chapter XX: A description of Hugh de Lacy.

If you wish to have a portrait of this great man, know that he had a dark complexion, with black, sunken eyes, and rather flat nostrils, and that he had a burn on the face from some accident which much disfigured him, the scar reaching down his right cheek to his chin. His neck was short, his body hairy and very muscular. He was short in stature, and ill-proportioned in shape. If you ask what were his habits and disposition, he was firm and steadfast, as temperate as a Frenchman, very attentive to his own private affairs, and indefatigable in public business and the administration of the government committed to his charge. Although he had great experience in military affairs, as a commander he had no great success in the expeditions which he undertook. After he lost his wife he abandoned himself to loose habits, and not being contented with one mistress, his amours were promiscuous. He was very covetous and ambitious, and immoderately greedy of honour and reputation.

At this time flourished in Leinster, where he much distinguished himself, Robert Fitz-Henry,<sup>119</sup> brother to Meyler; but this flourishing flower was early nipped by the cold blasts of winter. There also flourished at the same time the two sons of Maurice Fitz-Stephen, Alexander and Giraldus, the latter of whom, though short in stature, was a man of great prudence and worth. Robert le Poer, who commanded the garrison of Leighlin under Hugh de Lacy, was also a man of note at this time. At Waterford there was William le Poer; and Robert de Barri, the younger son of Philip, flourished both on the borders of Leinster and in Desmond; and there were the two Raymonds, both Raymond of Kantitune and Raymond Fitz-Hugh. About this time the two wonderful miracles described in my Topography occurred at Foure, in

<sup>118</sup> Ovid. Epist. ii. 117-121.

<sup>119</sup> He was the second son of Henry, the king's illegitimate son by Nesta. See the Pedigree.

Meath, one which ensued on a woman's being violated in St. Fechin's mill, the other in consequence of the oats which were stolen and secreted.<sup>120</sup>

Chapter XXI: The arrival of John the constable and Richard de Pec.

Such being the state of affairs, and the suspicions already mentioned gaining strength continually from fresh reports, Hugh de Lacy was recalled, and John, the constable of Chester, and Richard de Pec arrived, about the calends (the first) of May, to take the government, to which they were jointly commissioned by the king of England. But before Hugh left the country, they all consulted together and built several strongholds in different parts of Leinster; for hitherto there were more castles in Meath than in Leinster. First, therefore, they now built two castles in Fortheret and Onolan, the one for Raymond, the other for his brother Griffyth. The third was at Tristerdermot, in Omurethi (O'Morough's country), for Walter do Ridenesford. The fourth was for John do Clahull, on the water of Barrow, not far from Leighlin. The fifth at Zyllacht, for John do Hereford. They also took from Meyler Kildare, with the adjacent territory, which had been granted to him by earl Richard, giving him in exchange on the king's part, the province of Lex,<sup>121</sup> a rough and woody country, exposed to the enemy's inroads and far from succour; expressly selecting so brave a champion and marcher to defend this border.

Chapter XXII: How Hugh de Lacy was again sent over as governor.

John the Constable and Richard de Pec having been thus employed in the island during the summer, they were recalled to England during the ensuing winter, and Hugh de Lacy, being restored to the king's confidence, had the government of Ireland entrusted to him for the second time; but a certain ecclesiastic, named Robert of Salisbury, was joined in commission with him, as his coadjutor and councillor, and, on the king's behalf, to be privy to all his doings. On Hugh de Lacy's arrival, he set about building several more castles, among which was one at Tahmel, in Lex, for Meyler, to whom he also then gave his niece in marriage. He also built a castle near to it, at Obowry, for Robert de Bigarz; another, for Thomas de Flandres, not far distant, in Omurethy, on the other side of the river Barrow; and one for Robert Fitz-Richard at Norrach. In Meath he built the castles of Clunart and Killeen; a castle for Adam de Riceport; one for Gilbert de Nugent; and many others which it would be tedious to enumerate.

About this time that strange meeting and talk between the priest and the wolf, which is fully described in my Topography,<sup>122</sup> occurred in a wood in Meath. St. Jerom says that you will find many things in the Scriptures which appear incredible, and yet are true. For nature can do nothing against the Lord of nature; and it is man's duty to admire and reverence the Creator's works, whatever they may be.

Soon after this, Henry the younger, king of England, the son of king Henry, led astray, alas! by evil counsels, again revolted against his father; and in this rebellion he was aided and abetted by the powerful nobles of Poitou and the flower of the youth of France, besides his brother Geoffrey, earl of Britany, who was the mainspring of the wicked enterprise. But before long, about the calends (the first) of June, the young king, notwithstanding his invincible valour, became the victim of death, dying at Marseilles,<sup>123</sup> to the mutual grief of both armies, though it was thought a just judgment of God for his ungrateful conduct to his father. A few years afterwards, Geoffrey, earl of Britany, a brave soldier and eloquent speaker, a

<sup>120</sup> Chapters 50 and 52.

<sup>121</sup> The district of Lex lay on the extreme west of Leinster. It was a boggy and woody country, extending to the river Shannon. By stat. 3 & 4 of Philip and Mary, it was made a county, called the Queen's county.

<sup>122</sup> *Distinct*. ii., c. 19.

<sup>123</sup> The text is corrupt. The young king Henry breathed his last at Martel, a village near Limoges, which city his father was then besieging. He died of a sudden attack of dysentery, on the 11th June, 1183, in deep penitence for his unnatural conduct.

worthy peer to Ulysses as well as Achilles, who had now rebelled for the third time against his father, met his fate. He died at Paris about the calends (the first) of August.<sup>124</sup>

Chapter XXIII: Laurence, archbishop of Dublin, dies at Chateau d'Eu, and is succeeded by John Comyn.

In the meantime, Laurence, archbishop of Dublin, died at the castle of Eu,<sup>125</sup> in Normandy, on the eighteenth of the calends of December [14th November]. He was a worthy and just man, but incurred the king of England's displeasure by the privileges he asserted and maintained in the Lateran council, at which he was present, against the king's dignity and honour, led, as is reported, by zeal for his nation; and for this cause he was long detained in Normandy and England.<sup>126</sup> A happy end at last terminated his long course of travels and toils. Among many miracles which God has wrought through this his aint, manifesting his wonders even in the present day, this remarkable one occurred while he was in parts beyond the sea. Being seized with mortal sickness at Abbeville,<sup>127</sup> the holy man, in spite of the remonstrances of his attendants, refused to rest there, saying that his place of rest was not there; and having passed onwards on the road to the castle of Eu, as soon as he came in sight of the church of St. Mary, and was informed that it was dedicated to the blessed Virgin, he quoted that verse from the Psalms in the spirit of prophecy: "This shall be my rest for ever: here will I dwell, for I have a delight therein."<sup>128</sup> He died a few days afterwards in that place, and was buried with due ceremony in the mother church there,<sup>129</sup> the Lord, who did not suffer his light to be hid, working many signs and wonders at his tomb.

He was succeeded by John Comyn, an Englishman and a monk of Evesham, who having through the king's influence been duly elected, without much opposition, by the clergy of Dublin, was consecrated by pope Lucius at Velletri, who also appointed him a cardinal priest.<sup>130</sup> He was a man of learning and eloquence, whose zeal in the cause of justice, and for the dignity of the office to which he was promoted, would have highly profited the Irish church, had not the spiritual sword been opposed by the temporal, the rights of the priesthood by the royal power, virtue by jealous malice. For as the flesh lusteth against the spirit, so carnal men oppose those who are spiritual; and the servants of Cæsar never cease to maintain a warfare with the soldiers of Christ.

<sup>124</sup> Geoffrey, earl of Britany, died at Paris, in 1186, from bruises which he received in a tournament. He was buried in Notre Dame.

<sup>125</sup> Eu stands on the Breste, just above its embouchure in the English channel at Treport, in Normandy. This ancient chateau of the counts D'Eu was restored with great magnificence by the late king Louis Philippe.

<sup>126</sup> See previous notices of archbishop Laurence, particularly in a note to chap. 17, B. i. The language of Giraldus in this place appears to intimate that the archbishop was not permitted to return to Ireland after the conclusion of the Lateran council, but was detained in Normandy until his death. There is, however, a passage in Hoveden which presents a different view of the circumstances. That historian states that Laurence came from Ireland to Normandy, bringing with him the son of Roderic of Connaught, whom he delivered to the king of England as a hostage for the performance of the treaty made between him and the king of Connaught for payment of tribute; shortly after which he died at Eu, and was buried there.—Vol ii. p. 1. (*Antiq. Lib.*)

<sup>127</sup> Abbeville is a large town on the Somme, about eight leagues from Eu.

<sup>128</sup> Psalm cxxxii. 15.

<sup>129</sup> Among the side-chapels in the church of Notre Dame at Eu, which is built in the early pointed style, there is one dedicated to St. Laurence, who was buried there. The screen before this chapel is worthy of notice; and the monumental effigies of the archbishop, which had been mutilated and thrown into a vault, filled with rubbish, at the time of the revolution in France, were restored by Louis Philippe, and with those of the counts d'Eu, which had shared the same fate, deposited in a crypt under the church.

<sup>130</sup> John Comyn, archbishop of Dublin, 1181-1212, was of Scotch extraction, though born in England. This bishop built and endowed the cathedral of St. Patrick's in Dublin, about the year 1190.-Lucius III. succeeded pope Alexander III. in 1181. Our author's statement that he made John Comyn a cardinal at the time of his consecration, is not confirmed by any other authority.

## Chapter XXIV: The arrival in Ireland of John, archbishop of Dublin.

The king of England had long formed the design of transferring to his youngest son, John, all his dominion over Ireland, and, having made the people of that country do him homage accordingly, now determined to carry his design into effect. He therefore sent over to Ireland John, the new archbishop of Dublin, about the calends (the first) of August, as his son's precursor. Soon afterwards, Hugh de Lacy<sup>131</sup> having been recalled, Philip de Worcester, a brave soldier, who lived sumptuously and spent freely, was appointed lieutenant-governor, and took his passage to Ireland about the calends of September, with a body of forty men-at-arms. One of his first acts was to revoke the grants of certain lands, and among others those of Ocathesi, which Hugh de Lacy had alienated, although they were appropriated to the maintenance of the king's table, to which use they were now carefully restored.

As soon as the winter was over, he assembled a large body of troops, and coming to Armagh about the calends of March, exacted, or rather extorted, from the sacred clergy a monstrous sum of money by way of tribute, and then withdrew his troops and returned safe with his treasure, by way of Down, to Dublin. During this expedition two miracles were wrought, one at Armagh, when he was suddenly smitten with sickness as he left the city; the other at Down, in reference to the fire there and the cauldron which Hugh Tyrrell had carried off from the clergy at Armagh; both of which are related in the Topography, *Distinct ii. c. 50.*

## Chapter XXV: Arrival of the patriarch Heraclius in England.

While these events were occurring in Ireland, Heraclius, the venerable patriarch of Jerusalem, came to England about the calends (the first) of February, after a long journey from the East to the West. He brought with him the keys of the holy city and of the sepulchre of our Lord, together with the royal standard, and a military badge, on behalf as well of the barons of the Holy Land, as of the brethren of the orders of the Temple and Hospital. He also, in the name, and by the unanimous consent, of the whole clergy and people of Palestine, made humble supplication to Henry II., king of England, and falling on his feet, with tears implored him that he would take pity on the Holy Land, Jesus Christ's own patrimony, now desperately afflicted by the infidels, and render it aid.<sup>132</sup> With a sort of prophetic view of coming evils, he moreover affirmed that, before long, the whole kingdom would fall into the hands of the Saracens under Saladin, who was then prince both of Egypt and Damascus; which came to pass within two years afterwards.

What glory it was to this king and realm that, passing by so many emperors, kings, and princes of other lands, as if there were no remedy to be found in so great an emergency in the centre of Europe, recourse should be had for succour to this furthest corner of the earth, another world as it were, cut off from the rest in the recesses of the ocean! How great, how incomparable, would have been the glory of the king, not in this world only, but in that which is to come, if, immediately setting aside all other business, he had, at the call of Christ, taken his cross and followed him as his disciple, from whom he had received his kingdom upon earth, and, what is more, the grace to rule it with so much glory! Verily, he should have received a kingdom above for upholding the rights of Christ's earthly kingdom in this its time of need.

<sup>131</sup> Hugh de Lacy did not return to England, but was slain, on the 25th of July of this same year; while superintending the erection of one of his castles, an Irish workman came behind him while he was stooping, and struck off his head with an axe.

<sup>132</sup> The patriarch of Jerusalem was accompanied by Roger Desmoulins, grand-master of the Hospital, and they brought a letter from pope Lucius urging their suit. Neither Giraldus nor Hoveden expressly affirm that the envoys tendered the kingdom of Jerusalem for Henry's acceptance, though the insignia, of which they were the bearers, appear to intimate it. But Roger of Wendover distinctly says that the ambassadors, commissioned by the estates of the Holy Land, did offer Henry the throne of Jerusalem, to which he had some pretensions through his father, Geoffrey, earl of Anjou, the brother of Fulk. Baldwin, the son of Baldwin the Leper, a boy five years old, had just succeeded to the throne; but in the present emergency, the policy of the deputies would not allow them to shrink from sacrificing the rights of the boy king to Henry's ambition.

Oh! if he would have applied himself diligently, according to the best of his power, to defend the patrimony of the Almighty King in this day of distress, in this trial of devotion, how securely might he have relied on the guardianship of so great a patron and protector, when his own time of need came.

Chapter XXVI: The king's reply, and the prophetic threats of the patriarch.

The king having appointed a day for giving his answer at London,<sup>133</sup> many knights and persons of the lower order took the cross, being moved thereto by the admonitions of the patriarch, and his sermons in public, together with those of that holy and venerable man, Baldwin, archbishop of Canterbury, addressed to the people in persuasive language. At last the patriarch received this reply from the king: that it was not safe to leave his kingdom without defence and government, and expose at the present juncture his dominions beyond sea to the rapacity of the French, his mortal enemies; but as to money, he would freely contribute both out of what he had already sent into those parts, placing it at the patriarch's disposal, and also other monies which should be forthwith delivered to him for the defence of the Holy Land.

To this the patriarch replied as follows: "You do nothing, O king, if this be your determination, and you persist in it. In this way you will neither save yourself nor preserve Christ's patrimony. We come to seek a prince, not money; nearly every part of the world sends us money, but none sends a prince. Therefore we desire to have a man that may want money, and not money that may want a man." The patriarch, finding, however, that he could get no other answer from the king, changed his plan of proceeding, and entreated that he would send one of his sons to succour them, and become their prince, the youngest of them, John, at least, if no other; that one sprung from the royal blood of the race of Anjou might shoot up among them as a fresh branch, and renew their strength. John himself, although he was then ready to cross over to Ireland, at the head of a powerful force, to assume the dominion of it, conferred on him by his father, threw himself at the king's feet, and, as it is said, much to his credit, implored to be sent to Jerusalem instead of to Ireland; but his prayer was not granted.

Then the patriarch, failing in all his efforts, and perceiving that it was in vain to think of drawing honey from the rock, or oil from the flint stone, addressed the king as follows, at a public audience, in words which were both admonitory and seemingly uttered in the spirit of prophecy: "Great king, you have hitherto reigned gloriously above all the princes of the earth, and your honours continually augmenting, have raised you to the highest pitch of royal dignity. But you were evidently reserved for this trial, in which you have been found wanting; and for this, the Lord whom you have forsaken, will desert you, and leave you destitute of heavenly grace. From henceforth your glory shall be turned into sorrow, and your honour to reproach, to the end of your days." Would to God that the king following the example of the king of Nineveh, had, by his repentance, made the threatening prediction of no effect, and caused his sentence to be reversed! The holy man, after uttering this warning, first at London, repeated it, without omitting a word, for the second time at Dover, and for the third, at the castle of Chinon, beyond sea.

Would to God that the patriarch had not been gifted with the spirit of prophecy, and had spoken falsely; or, that the sentence had been rather a commination, which money might have afterwards redeemed, than a disposition of Providence! But the better to prove the genuineness of the prophecy, we will briefly recount a few of the events which occurred afterwards, according to the prediction of the herald of truth, which we shall thus find to have been speedily accomplished in the order of Divine Providence. Of the five and thirty years during which the king reigned, thirty were granted him for worldly glory, in order that time might be allowed for his conversion, and trial made of his devotion to God; but for the last five years he was given up to punishment, sorrow, and disgrace, as an ungrateful servant, an outcast, and a reprobate. For in the thirty-second year of his reign, the very year of the prophet's arrival, as the spirit is lifted up before a fall, his first enterprise of sending his son John into

<sup>133</sup> Henry received the envoys from the Holy Land at Reading, and made his reply at a solemn assembly of the lords spiritual and temporal at Clerkenwell, on the 18th of March, 1185.

Ireland, which had cost him so much fruitless toil and expense, failed, and came to nothing. In the thirty-third year of his reign, the king, who had never lost any part of his dominions before, but was continually adding to them, ceded nearly all Auvergne to Philip king of France, who, although of tender years, manfully took up arms against him, and obtained amends for his father's losses. In the thirty-fourth year he lost the castle of Chateauroux,<sup>134</sup> and nearly all Berri. In the thirty-fifth year of his reign, being the fourth after the coming of the patriarch, not only Philip king of France, but also his own son, the earl of Poitiers, taking arms against him, he lost the cities of Mans and Tours, with many castles, and finally, his own life. So true is what the Psalmist says: "Because of thine indignation and wrath, thou hast taken me up and cast me down."<sup>135</sup> And Gregory says: "Those whom the Lord hath long spared for their conversion, if they be not converted, he condemneth more grievously."

The Princes take the cross.

Perchance, however, the king is reserved by Divine Providence to receive the palm as the reward of more earnest love. How much better is it to restore what is utterly destroyed than to prop up things in a ruinous condition, to lift the fallen than to support the falling. A sounder cure is made by using the knife than by patching up a sore. And since

"Hectora quis nosset, felix si Troja fuisset?  
Ardua per præceps gloria stravit iter."

"Who would have heard of Hector, but for ruined Troy!  
A rugged path they tread who glory's meed enjoy."

The deeper a man is plunged in adversity, and the more the clouds of trouble thicken around him, the brighter shines forth his worth when the sky is again clear. For two years had scarcely past, when by the occult but righteous judgment of God, the Pagans and Parthians were allowed to gain the victory over the Christians, either in punishment of the languid zeal of the Eastern church, or to try the faith and steadfast obedience of the Western nations. No sooner had Richard, the illustrious earl of Poitiers, heard this calamitous intelligence, than even before the report was confirmed, he took the cross with earnest devotion at the city of Tours, setting an example of noble enterprise to the other princes on this side the Alps. Moreover, the earl's father, the king of England, together with Philip, king of France, burying their previous animosities, took the cross, with laudable emulation, at the same place and at the same hour, in a conference at Gisors, at the instance of the archbishop of Tyre, who came there for the purpose, and under the influence of divine grace; and their example was followed on the spot by great numbers, both of the clergy and laity, who were of one heart. And as kings followed the earl's example, so after the example of the kings, and by the persuasions of the venerable bishop of Albano, a cardinal of the Roman church, (by His inspiration, from whom all holy desires, good thoughts, and just works are derived), the emperor Frederick took the cross, with great ceremony, at Lætare Hierusalem (the fourth Sunday of Lent), at the famous city of Mentz, with the princes and great men of Germany, both ecclesiastical and temporal, in the large court there which the bishop called God's court. Wherefore the king of England, having been reserved, as it was thought, above the rest, for the restoration of the Holy Land from its calamitous condition, if he had crowned his long course of prosperity with this final success, he would doubtless have

<sup>134</sup> Giraldus calls it "castrum Rad." Châteauroux is now the chief town of the department of the Indre; it took its name from Raoul or Ralph de Déols, its founder, in the tenth century. Issoudun, another fortress in the neighbourhood, fell into the hands of Philip at the same time.

<sup>135</sup> Psalm cii. v. 10.

fulfilled that famous prophecy of Merlin Ambrosius: "In the beginning he shall yield to unruly passions, but in the end he shall mount to heaven."

Chapter XXVII: Sudden discord between the kings.

Notwithstanding, however, this wonderful unanimity, a sudden and unlooked-for discord broke out between the kings, and, what was worse, between the earl and his father, through the devices of the old enemy of mankind, and by the permission of the Ruler of the universe for the punishment of their sins; so that their noble enterprise was exposed to detriment and delay. It seemed as if they were unworthy of the honour of redeeming Jerusalem, and that Divine Providence reserved it for others; or, perhaps, as Gregory observes: "Adversity, when it stands in the way of good designs, is rather a trial of virtue than a mark of reprobation." Who is ignorant for how blessed a purpose Paul was urged to sail for Italy, and yet he suffered shipwreck; but violent as was the tempest, his heart was firm in the midst of the waves. Thus, as virtue is perfected through weakness, and gold is tried in the fire, the constancy of faith, which cannot be shaken, only grows the more, like the grain of mustard-seed; and the strong mind resists, with greater courage, adverse occurrences and severe assaults.

Would that our princes had engaged in this expedition, supported by popular opinion and cheered by general applause, with only money enough for their expenses on the way, and that obtained by fair means, not extorted from their subjects, freely and not niggardly given; and with a pure and clear conscience. How much rather had I that these princes had set forth on this toilsome but glorious journey, thus pure in heart, and with a much smaller company of men acceptable to God, than, wanting these, that they should in this great trial boast in the multitude of their riches collected from all quarters, and in the numbers of their host gathered from many nations and not agreeing together. Look through the whole Bible, examine the history of later times, especially as it relates to those countries, and you will always find that victories have been gained not by numbers but by valour, by the virtues of those who won them, and by Divine grace, rather than by human power. Cassiodorus says, "A people in arms, without the Lord, is unarmed;" and Seneca, "It is not the number of the people, but the valour of a few, which secures the victory."

Chapter XXVIII: Of the emperor Frederick.

Of the four just mentioned, the emperor Frederick, although he was the last of the Cisalpine princes who took the cross, yet, with commendable expedition, he was the first in the execution of the undertaking. I count him the more worthy of the palm of victory in heaven and of glory upon earth, because he forsook larger dominions and states than the rest, and, unrestrained by the care of his vast empire, was resolute in keeping the time appointed for setting out.

Chapter XXIX: A vision, and the explanation thereof.

I think it not irrelevant that I should relate here a vision, which, during the misery of these times and the insults paid to the cross of Christ, He who sometimes maketh known to the simple what he concealeth from the wise, revealed to me, the vilest and least of his servants, whom yet the Lord vouchsafed to visit in this vision. In that civil and most detestable discord which broke out about this time between the king of England and the earl of Poitou, I was in attendance upon the king at the castle of Chinon,<sup>136</sup> when, on the night of the sixth of the ides of May [10th May], being asleep, about the first cock-crowing, methought I saw a great crowd of people looking up into heaven and wondering at some new appearance. So, lifting up my eyes to see what it was, I beheld flashes of brilliant light breaking through the thick canopy of the

<sup>136</sup> Chinon was the favourite residence of Henry II, and our other Plantagenet kings, as well as of the earlier French kings. Its vast ruins are still seen on a nearly insulated rock on the bank of the river Vienne, just above its junction with the Loire.

clouds, which suddenly parted, and the lower heaven being as it were thus opened, and my eyesight penetrating through that window, even into the empyreum, or heaven of heavens, the celestial courts, thronged with multitudes, were exposed to view. There appeared armed hosts around, engaged in the work of destruction, and, as it were, arrayed for the slaughter of their enemies. You might see there a head struck off from one, an arm from another; some were pierced with arrows lanced from afar, others with spears close at hand, and others thrust through with swords. Many of the beholders, dazzled by the excessive brightness, or moved to terror or devotion by the awful scene, fell on their faces to the earth; but methought that I, wishing to see the end of the matter, continued to observe what was passing much longer and more closely than the rest.

And now the murderous crew, having quickly triumphed over all the rest, united their forces to assault the Prince of the heavenly host sitting in the midst, on the throne of his majesty, as he is wont to be painted, and dragging him from his throne on the right hand, and having laid bare his breast, they thrust a spear into his right side. Thereupon, a terrible voice was immediately heard, crying "Woch, Woch, O Father and Son! Woch, Woch, O Holy Ghost!" But whether it came from above, or was uttered by the people who were round me, I cannot tell; and then the terror of the voice and the vision woke me from my sleep.

I call Him here to witness, to whom all things are naked and open, that as I sat on my bed and reflected on what I had seen, I was in such horror, both of mind and body, for more than half-an-hour, that I feared that I was beside myself and was become demented. But having recourse without delay to that best source of human safety, I repeatedly making the sign of the cross on my forehead and breast with great devotion; and thus fortified, I passed the rest of the night till the dawn of day without sleep, and so, by God's grace, recovering my senses, I was at length restored to a full sense of security. But never to this day can I recall to mind that vision, but with the utmost horror. For what can be more terrible than for a creature to behold his Creator pierced with the sword? Who can bear to see the citizens of heaven, the servants of God, and the patrons of mankind, dragged to slaughter, without being overwhelmed with grief? Who can see the Lord of nature and Maker of the universe suffer, and not suffer with him?

What the vision meant, and what it portended, I will now briefly shew without any prejudice. He who once suffered in his own person on behalf of his people, shews us that he suffers now again, but in his servants; and having triumphed by the cross, and, ascending to the right hand of his Father, taken possession of his victorious kingdom, his enemies now strive to drag from his throne, dim his majesty, and subvert his church, which he hath purchased to himself by shedding his blood. Wherefore, as I suppose, this vision did not represent his passion on the cross, but in his majesty above; as though the cross being now taken away, his enemies attempted to deprive him of the glory of that majesty which he gained by the cross. Or rather, it may be supposed, that as his servants are now suffering in that Holy Land, which he, after so many miraculous signs of his corporal presence, consecrated by his own blood; sufferings, indeed, not on the cross, but in arms and the conflicts of war; so he willed that the passion which he now in some sort suffers in the persons of his servants should be set forth where he reigns above in co-equal majesty with the Father, and not on the cross. For he himself testified that he should suffer with Peter the same sort of punishment which he was about to undergo at Rome, when he said, "I am come to Rome to be crucified again."

As concerning the words uttered by the voice beginning in a barbarous language and ending in Latin, I will mention what I think. *Woch, Woch*, in the German tongue, is a sort of interjection repeated, and signifying woe; it means the same as if it were said, Alas! alas! Father and Son! alas! alas! Holy Ghost! And by that woeful moan, beginning in German, and ended in Latin, it may signify that the nations who use those tongues are the only people who with their princes take this affliction of our Saviour seriously to heart, as is evident from their being the most forward in their preparations to avenge it. God forbid that the passion or lamentation should be understood as referring to any slaughter of the faithful which may hereafter happen, and more especially to the nations engaged in this expedition.

## Chapter XXX: Of the remarkable events of our times in England.

I think it not irrelevant to introduce, by way of episode, occasion offering, some account of certain occurrences and remarkable events which have happened in England within my own memory.<sup>137</sup> First, we have the sudden deaths of those who withheld the kingdom of England from the right heir, Henry, who was grandson to king Henry I., by his daughter Matilda; namely, the sudden deaths of the illustrious knight, Eustace, king Stephen's son, and the son-in law of Louis, king of France, and that of his mother, Matilda, queen of England and countess of Bologne. Next we have the treaty of adoption made between Stephen, king of England, and Henry, duke of Normandy; the death of king Stephen; the marriage of queen Elianor, and the translation from crown to crown. Then the duke's elevation to the throne, and coronation as Henry II.; the siege of the famous castle of Bridgnorth on the river Severn; and the compulsory surrender of the brave knight, Hugh de Mortimer, a terrible example to all the world. What need is there of many words? To make what was rough, smooth, and to confound that which was strong, his success ended in the ruin not only of the usurpers of the kingdom, but of those who disturbed the peace of the realm, first of the brothers and then afterwards of the sons.

In North Wales, the fortune of war changing, prince Owen was overcome, though not without the loss of many of our soldiers, in a woody pass near Coleshylle, that is the Hill of Coals. A useless but sumptuous and noble expedition to Thoulouse. Frequent hostilities between Louis king of France, and Henry king of England, through the cabals on both sides. In South Wales, the surrender of prince Rhys, by the intervention of his uncle Owen, at Pencader,<sup>138</sup> that is, the head of the chair, when the king of England thundered against him. The acceptance of the Constitutions made at Clarendon, both in word and writing, by Thomas, archbishop of Canterbury, and his suffragans; not voluntary, but said to be extorted from them. Then appeared to be fulfilled the prophecy of Merlinus Ambrosius: "And the tongues of the bulls shall be cut out." At Northampton, the insulting cries raised by the whole court against the holy father, defending his right of having the cross carried before him, and his privately withdrawing the same night, and going into exile. The embassy of Reginald, archbishop of Cologne and chancellor of the emperor, to the king of England, from the emperor Frederick, who succeeded in negotiating a treaty of marriage between the emperor's eldest son, Henry, duke of Saxony and Bavaria, and the king's eldest daughter, Matilda. His efforts, however, to propagate the schism of the German church failed. Notwithstanding, the king soon afterwards made a proclamation against the rights of the chair of St. Peter, and the archbishop of Canterbury. Soon afterwards, count Guncelinus, and other great Saxon nobles, came to England, as envoys on the duke's behalf, to escort the king's daughter.

The coronation of Henry III., son of king Henry, celebrated at London by the archbishop of York, to the prejudice of the rights of the church of Canterbury. Ambassadors came from Spain and obtained the king's consent to the marriage of his daughter Elianor with Alphonso king of Toledo and Castile. Dermotus being driven into exile, resorts to the king of England; and Fitz-Stephen, first, and afterwards earl Richard, sail over to Ireland. The noble expedition from Album Monasterium into Powis, and its safe return, notwithstanding the floods from heavy rains, after the beheading of the hostages and destruction of many of his enemies. The martyrdom of St. Thomas. Glorious miracles at his tomb. The happy death of that right noble man, distinguished alike for his talents and high descent, being of the royal blood of England, Henry, bishop of Winchester,<sup>139</sup> who died there. The king's expedition to Ireland. The

<sup>137</sup> It would be out of place to offer any illustrations in detail of the series of events and occurrences in the reign of Henry II., which Giraldus briefly recounts in this chapter; especially as our author throws no fresh light on contemporary or other authentic annals, which are now generally accessible by means of the *Antiquarian Library*.

<sup>138</sup> See the Itinerary of Wales, lib. i. c. 2.

<sup>139</sup> Henry de Blois, brother of king Stephen, who took so active a part in the politics of that turbulent reign, but after the accession of Henry II. appears to have lived in retirement at Winchester. Wendover informs us that Henry visited him on his death-bed, and that the bishop, reproaching him for the death of the martyr Becket, foretold many of the evils which would come upon him on account of it. The bishop died full of years, the next day, the 8th of August, 1171.

conspiracy of nobles against their prince, and of sons against their father. The cardinals come to Normandy to investigate the murder of the martyr Thomas. The king's sudden return from Ireland into Wales, from Wales to England, and thence to Normandy; and his speedy pacification with both the cardinals, and with the king of France. The first withdrawal of the young king with his two brothers from his father's court to France. The king's unexpected success in the unnatural two year's war, and his clemency to the vanquished, which I have shortly mentioned, noticing the capture of the earls of Chester and Leicester and the king of Scotland, at the end of the last Book. Huguntio Peter Leo, cardinal of St. Angelo, being sent as the pope's legate to England, convokes a synod of all the clergy of England at London; which was abruptly terminated by reason of the contention between Richard, archbishop of Canterbury, and Roger, archbishop of York, respecting the primacy and the precedence of their churches; the controversy leading to a broil, in which the partisans on both sides fought with their fists, sticks, and staves. The bishop of Capua, and Diaferus, bishop-elect of Troga,<sup>140</sup> with count Fleuri, came as ambassadors from William, king of Sicily, to negotiate a marriage between their prince and the king's youngest daughter, Joanna.

Ambassadors from the Spanish kings of Castile and Navarre arrived in England to submit the claims of those kings to certain territories and castles, about which they had grave disputes, to the arbitration of the king of England, their masters having pledged themselves to abide by it. Wherefore the king having assembled at London the wisest and most learned men in the kingdom, of both orders, that the merits of the case might be impartially investigated, the allegations on both sides were heard before them from the mouths of most famous advocates, among whom Peter of Cordova, who came on the part of the king of Navarre, was most distinguished for his extraordinary eloquence. The king having the advantage of wise counsel, and resolving to adopt a middle course, and remove all grounds for future quarrels, gave part to one, and took away part from the other, so that neither of them should suffer serious loss; for having been appointed umpire between the two, he was anxious to promote, as far as he could, the security of each. The proceedings having been put in shape and reduced to writing, the king, for greater caution, caused a formal judgment to be signed, in order that if either party should refuse to stand by the proceedings, all controversy might be quashed by his definitive sentence.<sup>141</sup>

Louis king of France came to England, and went on a pilgrimage to Canterbury, for the purpose of devoutly imploring the patronage of the blessed martyr, on whom he had heaped favours during his exile. The king having made an offering of a cup of gold of great value and exquisitely wrought, at the spot where the sacred remains were laid, prostrated himself for a while at the martyr's tomb, laying his bare head at the opening on the right side of the marble slab; and then rising from his devotions, that the remembrance of his pilgrimage might be preserved by some perpetual benefaction, he gave to the abbey at Canterbury a hundred tuns of wine, annually for ever; and this he did in the presence of the king of England, the count of Flanders, the archbishop of the see, and the prior of the convent, and other great men. The second quarrel between king Henry III. and earl Geoffrey, and the untimely death of the younger king at Marseilles. Godfrey, archbishop of Cologne, and Philip, count of Flanders, came to England on a pilgrimage to Canterbury. The death of earl Geoffrey. The coming of the patriarch Heraclius, and the first expedition of John, the king's son, across the sea, to Ireland.

Almost all these events happened in my own time, in the order in which they are here placed, at no long intervals, and in about the period of thirty-three years.

O how happy should I have been to admit the great prosperity he enjoyed, to whose glory nearly all these occurrences tended, and who was favoured by fortune (if there be such a thing as fortune) in so many instances, had he only wound up the drama of his life by a good end, and doubling, nay,

<sup>140</sup> In Naples.

<sup>141</sup> Our author is more diffuse in his account of this transaction, than in his records of other occurrences of greater importance. Hoveden gives full details, and has preserved all the documents, relating to the arbitration. See pp. 459-465, vol. ii. in *Antiq. Lib.*

immeasurably augmenting, the favours graciously conferred upon him, passed from his terrestrial glory to that which is eternal. This, as far as I can conjecture, he would doubtless have done, if, in return, as it were, for the many mercies bestowed on him here, he had sought his reward even on earth, by giving himself up with devotion and promptitude to that noble vocation, to which Christ invited him, and obeying the call without hindrance or delay. Having reigned gloriously, so far as this world is concerned, for thirty years, he might well have devoted the last five years of his life, that short space of time, or even, if his life were spared, the whole of his remaining days, to the service of God, and thus would have reigned with Christ, filled the whole of Christendom with the renown of his arms, and gained eternal as well as earthly glory. Until this point the king's prosperity was always on the increase, and advancing to the highest pitch; thenceforth his fortunes somewhat declined, and he sustained many disasters to which he was before a stranger. Every wise man must remark the instability of fortune, and those changes which very few escape, even in the prime of life, and scarcely any who live to be old. What was it that brought to an end the glory of Pompey the Great? He had triumphed in all parts of the world, and had raised himself to such an ascendancy at Rome, that, as often happened in ancient times, having ascended the steps which lead to the summit of power, he could neither mount higher, nor make good his footing, and so he fell from the top to the bottom. Wherefore, after having filled the high office of dictator, as the first man in the state, after gaining so many victories over various nations, fortune at last seemed to grow tired of him, and deserted him, and having lost the empire, both of the West and the East, this once victorious man died ignominiously. So that the poet Lucan says:

“O faciles dare summa deos, eademque tueri  
Difficiles.”

What was it, on the contrary, that secured to Julius Cæsar or to Alexander of Macedon such imperishable renown but this, that when they had reached the summit of their fortunes, sudden death came, in each case, from a reverse. Princes should also constantly bear in mind that although the Maker and Ruler of the world is long-patient, desiring the conversion of a sinner rather than his destruction, and is merciful to those who are converted and amend their lives; he pours forth his wrath on the reprobate and impenitent, and often begins their punishment in this life.

Chapter XXXI: The first expedition of John, the king's son, to Ireland.<sup>142</sup>

All things necessary for this great expedition having been prepared and made ready by the royal commands, John, the king of England's youngest son, on whom the dominion of Ireland had been lately conferred, took his journey by the coast road of South Wales towards Menevia, and arrived at Pembroke. He was accompanied by a person of the highest station, Ranulf de Glanville, the king's chief privy counsellor and justiciary of all England, who conducted him on board ship. On Wednesday in Easter week, the breeze blowing favourably from the eastward, he embarked in the noble fleet which lay at anchor in Milford harbour, and on account of the sudden change of wind was prevented visiting the

<sup>142</sup> Giraldus now returns to his History of the Conquest of Ireland, and that part of it with which he was personally conversant; but we cannot help feeling some disappointment at his supplying us with very meagre details of the results of an expedition so pompously commenced, and for which such vast preparations had been made. The truth is, that he had little to relate; for, as he acknowledges in a subsequent chapter, it was a complete failure. The levity, and other worse traits, of king John's character were early developed; and all he did in Ireland, where he only remained a few months, was to amass money and squander it on his pleasures. Cotemporary historians barely notice the expedition. Hoveden, after mentioning John's crossing over to Ireland, which is all that Wendover says about it, adds:—“However, as he thought fit to shut up everything in his own purse, and was unwilling to pay his soldiers their wages, he lost the greatest part of his army in several conflicts with the Irish, and being at last reduced to want, after appointing lords-justices and distributing his knights in various places for the defence of the country, he returned to England.”

venerable church of St. David's, an unpropitious omen. Setting sail the same evening, the fleet accomplished its passage and reached the port of Waterford about noon on the day following, having on board about three hundred men-at-arms, and a large force of horse soldiers and archers.

Several ecclesiastics were sent over in company with the prince, and in the same ship, one of whom was specially appointed by the king to attend his son. Being a diligent investigator of natural history, and having spent two years in the island, in this expedition and on a former occasion,<sup>143</sup> he brought back with him, as the profit and reward of his labours, materials for composing his Vatical History and Topography. These he afterwards digested and arranged, during intervals of leisure, while attending the court in Britany employing the labour of three years on the Topography and of two years on the Vatical History; works which will be read by posterity, although they offend men of the present generation; and though carped at now, will be acceptable then; and though detested now, will be profitable in future times.

Chapter XXXII: The commendation of Fitz-Stephen and earl Strongbow; and their defence.

Robert Fitz-Stephen first showed and led the way to the earl, the earl to the king, and the king to his son John. Much praise is due to him, who by his bold enterprise made the beginning; much to him who, as the connecting link, carried forward the undertaking so auspiciously commenced; most of all is due to those who lent their authority to complete the whole project. I may remark here, that both Fitz-Stephen and the earl, having restored Dermotus to his territories, which they were justified in doing, acquired rights under him, the one by fealty, the other by marrying his daughter, which, as far as Leinster was concerned, precludes their being considered as spoliators or robbers. But as to Waterford, and parts of Desmond and Meath, into which the earl intruded, I do not excuse him in that matter. The earl, however, yielded up the dominion of the fifth part of the island, which he had in right of his wife, to the king of England, and did fealty to him for it. The princes of the rest of Ireland, making voluntary submission without delay, did homage to the king, and indisputably confirmed his right. Wherefore, omitting at present the other grounds, both new and old, which have been stated in a former chapter, it is plain, even from those just mentioned, that the English nation and king did not enter upon this island so unjustly, from lack of title, as some unlearned persons dream.

Chapter XXXIII: Of the delay and impediments to the full and complete conquest of Ireland.

Fortunate would this island have been, and it would long since have been firmly and completely subjugated from one end to the other, and brought without difficulty under order and good government, with towns and castles built on all sides, in fitting places from sea to sea, had not the succours which should have followed the first adventurers been cut off by a royal proclamation;<sup>144</sup> or, rather, if the king himself had not been prematurely recalled from his bold adventure by an intestine conspiracy which prevented his turning his enterprise to good account. Happy indeed would it have been if, the first conquerors being men of worth and valour, their merits had been duly weighed, and the government and administration of affairs had been placed in their hands. For the Irish people, who were so astounded and thrown into such consternation at the arrival of the first adventurers,<sup>145</sup> by the novelty of the thing, and so

<sup>143</sup> Giraldus refers to his former visit to Ireland, in company with his brother Philip. He now came over as secretary to the young prince, and probably was selected by the sagacity of the king for his political adviser, for we find no other man of talent and experience about the person of the young prince.

<sup>144</sup> See B. i. c. 19.

<sup>145</sup> It is surprising with how small a number of troops the capture of several important places, the reduction of at least all Leinster, and the general submission of the native princes, was effected. Giraldus has stated very exactly the numbers embarked in the several expeditions, and on counting them up we find that the Fitzgeralds and other adventurers from Wales took over at different times 1030 men, in the proportions of 80 men-at-arms, 180 other horsemen, and 770 archers and foot soldiers, all levied amongst their own kinsmen and retainers. Earl Strongbow's expedition mustered 1200 men, of whom 200 were men-at-arms.

terrified by flights of arrows shot by the English archers, and the might of the men-at-arms, soon took heart, through delays, which are always dangerous, the slow and feeble progress of the work of conquest, and the ignorance and cowardice of the governors and others in command. And becoming gradually expert in the use of arrows and other weapons, as well as being practised in stratagems and ambuscades by their frequent conflicts with our troops, and taught by their successes, although they might at first have been easily subjugated, they became in process of time able to make a stout resistance.

Read the Books of Kings, read the Prophets, examine the whole series of the Old Testament, and even consider familiar examples furnished by our own times and our own country, and you will find that no nation was ever conquered which did not bring down punishment on themselves for their sins and wickedness. But although the Irish people did well deserve, for their grievous offences and filthy lives, to be brought into trouble by the incursions of strangers, they had not so utterly offended God that it was his will they should be entirely subjugated; nor were the deserts of the English such as to entitle them to the full sovereignty over, and the peaceable obedience of, the people they had partly conquered and reduced to submission. Therefore, perhaps, it was the will of God that both nations should be long engaged in mutual conflicts, neither of them having merited or altogether forfeited his favour, so that the one did not gain the prize of triumphant success, nor was the other so vanquished as to submit their necks generally to the yoke of servitude,

The Irish may be said to have four prophets, Molingus, Braccanus, Patrick, and Columkill, whose books, written in Irish, are still extant; and all these, speaking of this conquest, agree in affirming that it will be attended with frequent conflicts, with long wars continued for several generations, and much shedding of blood. Indeed they scarcely promise complete victory to the English, and that the whole island shall be subdued, and castles built from sea to sea, much before doomsday. And Braccanus affirms that, although the English in the island, experiencing the fortune of war, shall often be defeated, and their power weakened, it will only happen when a certain king, descending from the desert mountains of Patrick, shall on a Sunday night storm a castle built in the woody parts of Ophelan, that nearly all the English shall be driven out of Ireland. These prophecies, however, declare that the whole territory lying on the east coast of the island shall for ever remain in the possession of the English.

Chapter XXXIV: A brief recapitulation of certain events.

Three castles were built immediately after prince John's first arrival; one at Tibrach, another at Archfinan, and the third at Lismore. Likewise, three noble youths were unfortunately killed; Robert de Barri at Lismore, Raymond Fitz-Hugh at Olechan, and Raymond of Kantitune at Odrone. Part of the garrison of Archfinan were set on and routed by the prince of Limerick, in the wood of Archfinan, on St. John the Baptist's day (24th June), and four men-at-arms were slain. The garrison of Archfinan. were again attacked when plundering towards Limerick, and nineteen men-at-arms slain. Dermotus Macarthy, prince of Desmond, and many others, fell by the hands of the men of Cork, and the troops of Theobald Fitz-Walter, in a parley near Cork. The men of Keneleone (Kilkenny), under their prince, having made a too daring irruption into the borders of Meath, the men of Meath, under the command of William the Little (*Gulielmus Modicus*), put one hundred of the invaders to the sword, and sent their heads to Dublin. John de Courcy having discovered a precious treasure, the bodies of three Saints, Patrick, Bridget, and Columba, at Down, these relics were by his care translated. Hugh de Lacy was treacherously slain and decapitated by the axes of the Irish under his dominion at Dernach. Thirteen of John de Courcy's noble

Giraldus states the number of men-at-arms who went over with king Henry to have been 500, but he does not furnish any account of the rest of his forces. This is, however, immaterial to our present purpose; as, though the presence of a numerous royal army may have awed the native princes into a more perfect submission, all the fighting seems to have been done before; the heart of the people was broken, the country had been traversed from east to west, and all the strong places had been reduced, and that with a force little exceeding 2000 men.

men-at-arms were slain as they were returning with him from Connaught. Roger le Poer, a young man of great bravery, and much lamented, was killed at Ossory, with many of his people; whereupon, a secret conspiracy against the English was formed throughout Ireland, many castles were destroyed, and the whole island thrown into confusion; occurrences well worthy of a separate notice. The dominion of Ireland having now been transferred to the king's son, I leave his acts to be described by those who relate his history,<sup>146</sup> and hasten on to close my own work with what is more profitable. I think it, therefore, not amiss that I should briefly state why, and from what causes, this first enterprise of the king's son did not fulfil his expectations; the success not being equal to the vast preparations for it. And this sequel to my work, though it cannot remedy what is past, may yet supply some warnings for the future.

Chapter XXXV: The causes of the disasters. Of the coming to Ireland of John, the king's son.

I should say, then, that the first and principal cause of these mischances, was the king's not having listened to the solemn call of the patriarch Heraclius, before mentioned, and either gone himself, or at least sent one of his sons on his behalf, with ready devotion, in obedience to the commands of Christ. But instead of this, at the moment of this memorable summons, and in the very presence of the venerable envoy charged with it, he sent this son of his, with a retinue and outfit more sumptuous than profitable, not to the East, but to the West; not against the Saracens, but against Christians; for his own aggrandisement, not for the cause of Jesus Christ.

Another cause was this; as soon as the king's son landed in Ireland, there met him at Waterford a great many of the Irish of the better class in those parts; men who, having been hitherto loyal to the English and disposed to be peaceable, came to congratulate him as their new lord, and receive him with the kiss of peace. But our new-comers and Normans not only treated them with contempt and derision, but even rudely pulled them by their beards, which the Irishmen wore full and long, according to the custom of their country. No sooner, however, had they made their escape, than they withdrew from the neighbourhood with all their households, and, betaking themselves to the king of Limerick, the prince of Cork, and Roderick king of Connaught, gave full particulars of all that they had observed during their visit to the king's son. They said that they found him to be a mere boy,<sup>147</sup> surrounded by others almost as young as himself; and that the young prince abandoned himself to juvenile pursuits; and they further declared, that what they saw promised no mature or stable counsels, no security for the peace of Ireland.

On hearing this, the princes of Limerick, Connaught, and Cork, who were at that time the main stay of Ireland, although they were preparing to wait upon the young king's son and offer him their homage and submission with the usual forms, began to consider among themselves to what greater evils these small beginnings might lead, and what course would be taken with the proud and independent, when good and peaceable subjects were thus treated. They then resolved unanimously to resist the English, and defend with their lives their ancient liberties; and the better to carry this resolution into effect, a new league was generally entered into, and those who were before enemies were now reconciled, and became friends. We speak what we know, and testify what we have seen. And forasmuch as we insulted and drove

<sup>146</sup> There appears to be a touch of irony in the language by which Giraldus devolves on future historians the task of writing the annals of the disgraceful manner in which John's inauguration in his new dominion of Ireland was conducted. He does not, however, hesitate in the following chapters, which we think will be considered, for the most part, very ably written, to indicate his opinion of the mal-administration, which he failed to prevent, and at the same time points out its causes, and suggests remedies for the evil, and rules for the good government of Ireland.

<sup>147</sup> Holingshed states in his *Chronicles of Ireland*, on what authority we are unable to discover, that John was only twelve years old when he was sent over to assume the government; but it would seem preposterous that so politic a prince as Henry II., with all his fondness for his youngest son should have committed so great a trust to him at so tender an age. Florence of Worcester, a very exact chronicler, records John's birth in 1166. We believe that it was in 1166, a year memorable for his father's great victory at Tinchibrai. John must therefore have been nineteen years old when he went to Ireland. We take this opportunity of remarking that Giraldus never mentions him but as "John the king's son." Florence, in noting his birth, calls him John *Sans-terre*, or Lack-land; and he had the title of earl of Mortaigne, by which other chroniclers usually designate him.

from us those who came first to pay their respects, as God humbles the proud, by this example we deterred all the chief men of the country from making their submission. For this people, like other barbarous nations, although they do not understand what appertains to honour, covet above measure to be honoured themselves; and although they are not ashamed to be convicted of falsehood, they despise liars and commend truth; loving that in others which they do not blush at wanting themselves. What great evils may arise from insolent behaviour, a prudent man may learn from the example of Rehoboam, Solomon's son, and by the calamities which have happened to another, will avoid them in his own case. For he, being led away by the young men's counsels, said to his people: "My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins, and if he chastened you with whips, I will scourge you with scorpions." Wherefore the ten tribes forsook him, and adhered to Jeroboam, and a schism was made among the people, and he lost them for ever.<sup>148</sup>

Another cause is this: We took away their lands from our own Irishmen, who had faithfully stood by us from the first coming over of Fitz-Stephen and the earl, and have given them to our new-comers. These Irish, therefore, betaking themselves to our enemies, became spies upon us, and guides to shew them the way to us, having the more power to do us injury from their former familiarity with us. Besides, the care and custody of all the towns and castles on the sea-coast, with the lands, revenues, and tributes appertaining to them, which ought to have been administered for the public good and for defence against the enemy, were assigned to persons who thought only of hunting-out money; and, keeping themselves carefully within the town walls, they spent their time and all that they had in drunkenness and surfeiting, to the loss and damage of the good citizens, instead of the annoyance of the enemy.

Among many other misfortunes, this may be added: that at the very first entry of the king's son on this hostile land, among a warlike, rebellious, and savage people, as yet impatient of submission, men were appointed to command the troops, who had more of Mercury than of Mars about them, who liked their gowns better than their armour, and were more intent on pillaging the good subjects than attacking the enemy; such men, I mean, and marchers as Fitz-Aldelm, and the like, under whose rule both Wales and Ireland were well-nigh ruined and lost. Such men are neither confided in by their subjects, nor feared by the enemy; and know nothing of that principle which is innate in a noble spirit, "To spare the humbled, subjugate the proud." They rather act the contrary way, and leaving the enemy uninjured, are always plundering the vanquished. Hence, it comes to pass that nothing has been done to strengthen our position in the island; there are no inroads into the enemy's country, no great number of fortresses erected, no felling of trees, and clearing and widening the roads through the woods, commonly called "bad passes," for the greater ease and security of convoys. The soldiers and serving-men in the garrisons also, imitating their captains and masters, lead the same sort of life as their betters, spending their whole time in drinking and wantonness, and taking good care not to leave the towns on the coast; so that the interior parts of the country, on the borders of the enemy, called the marches, were left undefended; and such as there were amongst them, having no support, were plundered and burnt, and the garrisons put to the sword.

Meanwhile, the new-comers growing daily more insolent, the old tried and veteran soldiers were out of favour and kept themselves close, waiting patiently what would be the end of all this rioting and disturbance. In the meantime this was the state of the island; all the roads were impracticable, all communications cut off; no security anywhere from the broad axes of the Irish; new reports daily of fresh losses by the English. Such was the condition of the country outside the towns. Within the walls, there was some semblance of order and tranquillity; and with plenty of wine and money, delinquencies in all quarters were easily atoned. Besides, when the storm was gathering in the enemy's quarters, it was time for the troops to look to their arms, instead of being immersed in civil affairs. But instead of this, there was so much vexations litigation, that the veteran soldiers were more harassed by their adversaries within, than by the enemy without the walls. While, therefore, our forces were enfeebled, the enemy became more daring in their resistance. Thus was the land misgoverned, and affairs ill administered, until the king,

<sup>148</sup> Kings, 12-14.

discarding the newcomers, as totally incapable, if not cowardly, and resolving to employ men who from the first had acquired experience in the conquest of the island, sent over John de Courcy to take the supreme command. Under his rule the kingdom speedily began to enjoy more tranquillity, the effect of his superiority to those who were superseded both in courage and vigour. He soon led an expedition into the furthest parts of the island, namely, Cork and Connaught, and not suffering his troops to lie idle, was always trying the chances of war, uncertain as they are, frequently sustaining defeats, and often inflicting losses on the enemy. Would that he had been as skilful a general as he was a brave soldier, and had exercised as much discretion in commanding as he exhibited daring in the field.

I must add to my account of the mischiefs done by the new government, one that is the greatest of all. Not only do we neglect to make any offering to the church of Christ, not only are the honours and thanks due to God unacknowledged by any gift of the prince and his followers, but we even rob the church of its lands and possessions, and strive to abridge or annul its ancient rights and privileges. When I come to reflect on all that has happened to us, and especially on this dispute, done to our Lord himself, I am filled with the greatest anxiety, and painful thoughts frequently arise in my mind. Perhaps it was in consequence of these meditations that one night I had a vision in my sleep, which on the morrow I related to the venerable John, archbishop of Dublin, and it filled us both with wonder. Methought I beheld in my vision John, the king's son, in a certain green meadow, apparently laying the foundations of a church. And when he had marked out the ground on each side, and drawn lines on the face of the turf, as surveyors do, upon going round the spot with the model or plan of the work, to ascertain its dimensions by precise admeasurement, he discovered that the body of the church was sufficiently large, while the chancel appeared to be extremely confined and out of proportion, as if the nave were large enough to contain the laity, while the least possible space sufficed for the clergy. Methought I then contended earnestly, though in vain, that some additions should be made to the plan, so that the size of the building might be increased, and it might have a better shape; but I was so excited by my zeal for these improvements that I awoke from my dream.

The many outrages and disorders which have been the fruits of the new government of Ireland, are not to be imputed so much to the tender years of the king's son, as to evil counsels, although both had a large share in them; for the land, as yet rude and barbarous, required men of experience, whose minds were matured, to reduce it to order. Any nation, however excellent its condition may have been, is cursed when it is governed by a boy king. How much more must it be the case, when a country which is rude and uncivilized, is committed to the charge of one who is inexperienced and ill informed. But that these great disorders were more to be attributed to the advice of evil counsellors, was even whispered among the younger sort, and taken for certain by older and more discreet persons. For some who had procured large grants, as the first of the richest and most fertile lands in Ireland, either improvidently given them as lords of the fee, or for the most part in their actual possession, and who, perhaps, sometimes aspired to the sole government of the kingdom by means of the royal conquests and their own immense acquisitions of territory, when things did not turn out according to their expectations, seem to have easily found means of eluding the fealty due to the father, and their faith and oaths pledged to his son.

*How men of three different sorts were in the service of John.*

Our people consisted of men of three different sorts; Normans, English, and my own countrymen,<sup>149</sup> whom we found in Ireland. With the first we were most intimate, and we esteemed them best; the second had less regard, and the third none at all. The Normans could not do without wine, having been used to plenty of it from their youth, and so nothing could induce them to remain long in the marches, and in

<sup>149</sup> Normanni, Angli, *nostrî*. It may be supposed that Giraldus means by the last designation the Welshmen, who were the first to adventure on the conquest of Ireland, and still remained there.

remote castles built at a distance from the sea-coast. Their chief care was to be about the person of the king's son, and to be near the supplies, and far enough from any scarcity. They were talkers, boasters, enormous swearers, and held all others in supreme contempt. Ever on the look-out for pay and grants of land, and the foremost to get advancement and honours, they were the last to earn them by their services. As, therefore, the veteran soldiers by whose enterprise the way into the island was opened to us, were treated with suspicion and neglect, and our counsels were only communicated to the new-comers, who only were trusted and thought worthy of honour, it came to pass that as the veterans kept aloof, and rendered no assistance to those who did not ask for it, the others had little success in all their undertakings,

Chapter XXXVI: In what manner Ireland is to be completely conquered.

It is an old saying, that every man is most to be believed in respect of his own art; and so, as regards this expedition, their judgment may be best relied on, who have been longest conversant with the similar state of affairs in the country, and are most acquainted with the manners and customs of the people. And it much concerns them that this hostile race, whose implacable enmity they have drawn on themselves in the course of the continual conflicts of a long war, should by their aid either have their power reduced, or be altogether discomfited. I may also say of those parts of Wales which are inhabited by the English, that it would be happy for them if the king had long ago adopted a similar policy in dealing with the government, and protecting the country from the inroads of the native and hostile race. The Normans, who are newly come among us, may be very good soldiers in their own country, and expert in the use of arms and armour after the French fashion, but every one knows how much that differs from the mode of warfare in Ireland and Wales. In France it is carried on in a champaign country, here it is rough and mountainous; there you have open plains, here you find dense woods. In France it is counted an honour to wear armour, here it is found to be cumbersome; there victories are won by serried ranks and close fighting, here by the charges of light-armed troops; there, quarter is given, prisoners being taken and admitted to ransom, here their heads are chopped off as trophies, and no one escapes. Where armies engage in a plain country, that heavy and complex armour, whether shirts of mail, or coat armour of steel, is both a splendid ornament of the knights and men-at-arms, and also necessary for their protection. But where you have to fight in narrow passes, and in woods and bogs, in which foot-soldiers are more serviceable than horsemen, a far lighter kind of armour is preferable. In fighting against naked and unarmed men, whose only hope of success lies in the impetuosity of their first attack, men in light armour can pursue the fugitives, an agile race, with more activity, and cut them down in narrow passes and amongst crags and mountains. The Normans, with this complex armour and their deeply curved saddles, find great difficulty in getting on horseback and dismounting and still greater when occasion requires that they shall march on foot.

In all expeditions, therefore, either in Ireland or in Wales, the Welshmen bred in the marches, and accustomed to the continual wars in those parts, make the best troops. They are very brave, and, from their previous habits, bold and active; they are good horsemen and also light of foot, being equally suited to both services; and they are not nice in their appetites, and bear hunger and thirst well when provisions are not to be had. Such men and soldiers were they which took the lead in the conquest of Ireland, and by such men it must be finally and completely effected. Let each class of soldiers have its proper place. Against heavy-armed troops, depending upon their strength and complete armour, and fighting on a plain, you must oppose, I admit, men equal to them in the weight of their armour and strength of limb; but when you have to do with a race who are naturally agile and light of foot, and whose haunts are in steep and rocky places, you want light-armed troops, and especially such as have been trained by experience to fighting under such circumstances. And, in the Irish wars, particular care should be always used to mix bowmen with the other troops, in order to gall, by flights of arrows shot from a distance, the slingers who rush forward and heave stones on the heavy armed troops, and then retire with great agility, thus alternately advancing and retreating.

Moreover, the part of the country on this side, as far as the river Shannon, which forms the boundary between the three eastern parts of the island and the fourth or western part, should be protected by strongly fortified castles built in different places. And further, in the meantime, let all the country beyond the Shannon, including Connaught and part of Munster, be subjected to annual tributes [from the native princes], except the city of Limerick, which should by all means be recovered and occupied by the English. For it would be better, far better, to begin with building fortresses on suitable situations, proceeding by degrees to construct them, than to erect a great number at once, in a variety of places, at great distance from each other, where they would be entirely disconnected, and could afford no mutual aid in time of need,

Chapter XXXVII: How Ireland ought to be governed.

As this people are easily moved to rebel, and are as light-minded as they are light of foot, when they have been subjugated and reduced to submission, they will have to be ruled with great discretion. The government should be entrusted to men of firm and equitable minds, who in times of peace, when the people obey the laws and are content to be loyal subjects, will win their hearts by keeping good faith, and treating them with respect; but if, through their natural levity, they presume to break into revolt, the governor should then divest himself of all gentleness, and instantly bring the offenders to condign punishment. Peace being again restored, and due satisfaction made for their misdeeds, as it is a bad thing to keep in memory wrongs that are passed, as long as they behave well their misconduct should be buried in oblivion, and they enjoy the same security, and be treated with the same consideration, as before. Thus, obedience to the laws, and the beneficial pursuits of peace, would meet with reward, while the certainty of punishment would deter the rebellious from rash attempts at insurrection.

But governors who throw all things into confusion by being slow to punish the rebellious, while they oppress the humble, by fawning on insurgents while they plunder peaceable subjects, robbing the weak and truckling to the refractory, as we have seen many do; such governors in the end bring disgrace on themselves. Besides, as evils foreseen are less hurtful, a prudent governor will take measures in time of peace, by erecting fortresses and opening roads through the woods, to be in constant preparation to meet the dangers of war. For this people are always plotting hostilities under colour of peace. And as it is wise to take warning from the mishaps of others, and avoid their errors, and the blow falls less heavily when it is anticipated from past experience, the examples of such men as Milo de Cogan, Ralph Fitz-Stephen, that gallant youth, Hugh de Lacy, and I may add Roger Poer, may teach that there is never any security from the weapons of the Irish. For, as I have said in my Topography, the craft of this people is more to be feared than their prowess in arms, their show of peace than their fire-brands, their honey than their gall, their secret malice than their open warfare, their treachery than their attacks, their false friendship than their contemptible hostility.

As Evodius says, "Past ruin gives a lesson to future generations, and former mishaps are a caution ever afterwards;" and as in such matters over-caution can do no harm, and the utmost precaution is scarcely enough, this people, when finally subjected, should, by a public proclamation, like the Sicilians, be entirely prohibited from carrying arms under the severest penalties. In the meantime, they ought not be allowed in time of peace, on any pretence or in any place, to use that detestable instrument of destruction [the broad-axe], which, by an ancient but accursed custom, they constantly carry in their hands instead of a staff. Finally, forasmuch as the kings of Britain have on many grounds already set forth a just title to Ireland, and the people of that island cannot subsist without the benefits conferred by commercial intercourse, it seems reasonable that it should be subjected to some tribute to England, either in money, or in the birds with which it abounds, in order that all occasion of dispute or opposition may be obviated for the future. Thus, as time proceeds on its course, and the regular line of descent is perpetuated to the farthest degree, this annual tribute should be retained, as a lasting acknowledgment of this conquest, in the place of a written instrument, to the British nation and king.

I here bring my history to a close, having faithfully related what has come under my knowledge, and testified what I have actually witnessed; and I leave it to future historians, of sufficient talent, to describe subsequent events in a style fitting their importance.

End of the history of the conquest of Ireland.