

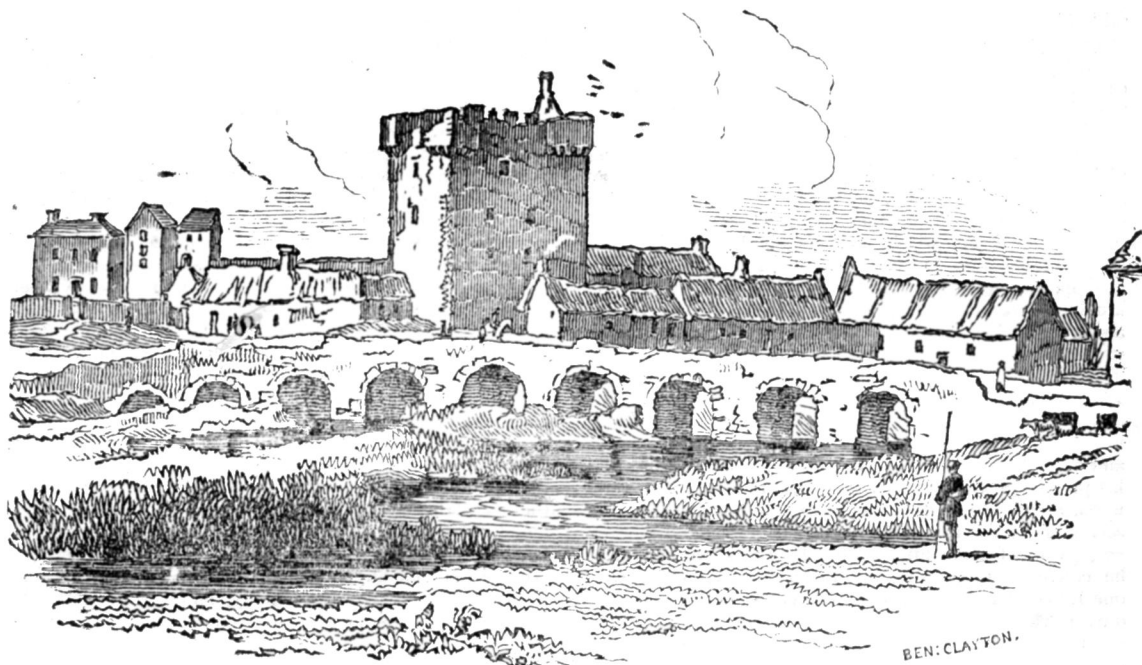
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Bridge and Castle of Shruel, County of Mayo.

BRIDGE AND CASTLE OF SHRUEL,
COUNTY OF MAYO.

The subject of our prefixed illustration, which is a small town in the barony of Kilmaine, in the county of Mayo, immediately bordering on the county of Galway, possesses in its ancient bridge, and proud baronial castle, much picturesque attraction,—but unhappily it derives a deeper interest from being the scene of one of those disgraceful deeds of atrocity but too common in all periods of our history, and more particularly in the long and disastrous civil war of the 17th century. In the beginning of that calamitous era, this bridge was the scene of a frightful massacre—and this castle, now gloomy and untenanted,—a chief residence of the supposed instigator of the bloody deed!

We are aware that in this unhappy country, where even yet the events of remote times are regarded by society with all the prejudices of partizanship, it may be dangerous to our own immediate interests, to lay open the pages of history with an impartial hand, and that with the ultras of all parties, our love of truth and desire for peace, will obtain us but little favour. But we aim at higher objects, and shall take our chance for success, animated by the conviction, that even if we fail, we shall sow the seeds of future national improvement, and have, in addition to the approbation of our own conscience, the applause of good and wise men. Hitherto our literature, as regards the multitude, has only lived in connexion with, and been made subservient to the purposes of party. History has been distorted, and the madness and the crimes of past ages have not been held up impartially as warnings to the present. Man, unimproved by judicious mental cultivation, is the same slave of passion and prejudice in all ages and under every appellation, and acting under their influences, the virtues of his nature remain undeveloped, and his vices rise predominant. We, in our humble sphere, shall endeavour to give our countrymen juster views, and more benevolent feelings towards each other, and as the ancient Greeks were accustomed to inspire a detestation

of drunkenness in the minds of their children, by shewing them their slaves in all the disgusting deformity of intoxication, so we hope to excite in our countrymen a horror of religious feuds and civil strife, by exhibiting to them their frightful consequences.

These explanatory observations are due to our own character, for we have been assailed by ultras of each side as having a leaning to the other—the motto of all being that—he that is not with us—out and out—is against us. But we utterly deny a leaning to any side, or a purpose of any kind, but the cause of truth and the improvement of our country, and we confidently refer to the pages of our little journal for the evidences of our sincerity. We now proceed with our subject.

On Sunday the 13th of February 1641, a great number of English protestants, who had surrendered to the Lord Mayo at Castlebar, on condition that they should march away with their arms, and be safely conveyed to Galway, were inhumanly attacked on the bridge of Shruel by their convoy, who butchered men, women and children, to the number of sixty-five individuals. That this statement is however somewhat exaggerated, as well as many of the circumstances of the massacre, we have little doubt; and though we have no wish to palliate the motives or lessen the disgust that such an act of atrocity should excite, it gives us pleasure to believe from facts we shall presently relate, that the amount of guilt was not so great as the prejudice of party has assigned to it, and that even in those dark times of general bigotry and barbarism, there were many of all sects and classes, in whom the divine principles of benevolence and humanity still shone triumphantly conspicuous.

The circumstances of this massacre will be best understood from the quaint, but circumstantial details, in the depositions taken immediately after before the privy council and commission appointed for that purpose, and to be found in Archdall's Peerage vol. iv. From the deposition of Mr. John Gouldsmith, incumbent of Brashowle, County of Mayo, it appears that

“ Sir Henry Bingham's castle of Castlebar being be

leaguer'd by the rebel Edmond Bourke, Sir Henry desired the Lord Mayo to take that castle from him, and to keep it for his use, for that he himself could hold it no longer; whereupon he went thither with his forces, but the rest of the castle not assenting to part with it, he returned home. About which time, the Bishop of Killala [Dr. John Maxwell] having formerly lost his castle and goods, contracted with Bourke of Castleleak to give him a safe convoy; but he most perfidiously brought him into the hands of the said Edmond Bourke (as he was besieging Castlebar) who proposed to have put him upon the engine or *Sow*, which he had prepared for undermining and breaking down the castle, purposely that if the besieged should shoot against the *Sow*, they might hit the Bishop their friend: whereof the Lord Mayo having notice, wrote a letter to Bourke the convoy, blaming his perfidiousness, and signifying plainly unto him, that if he did not deal with the Bishop according to his promise, he would deal with him as an enemy, wheresoever he met him; whereupon, Bourke brought the Bishop within sight of his Lordship's house, and there left him. His Lordship then went to meet the Bishop, and took him and his family home, where he kindly entertained them, and gave him a band to put about his neck, and a shirt which he wanted, and kept him, with his wife, three children, servants, and five or six of his ministers, for 8 or 10 days. At that time Sir Henry Bingham again desired his Lordship to come and take his castle, which he could no longer keep; whereupon, he marched thither with an army, drove away Edmond Bourke, and entered and possessed the castle, upon quarter, and his promise to convoy the garrison safe to Galway. Whereupon, Sir Henry, with his company, the Bishop of Killala, and many of the neighbouring English, above 60 in number, (whereof some fifteen were Ministers) were taken to be conveyed to Galway, his Lordship covenanting with one Edmond Bourke for their safe convoy upon a certain day, in whose custody he left them at Shrule; but was not gone far, when Bourke drew out his sword, directing the rest what they should do, and began to massacre these Protestants: some whereof were shot; some stabb'd with skeins; some run through with pikes; some cast into the water and drowned; and the women, that were stripped naked, lying upon their husbands to save them, were run through with pikes; so that very few escaped; among whom was the Bishop of Killala, but was wounded in the head; and Mr. Crowd, a clergyman, was so beaten with cudgels on his feet, that he died thereof shortly after, the other Ministers being slain.

"This bloody affair is more distinctly specified in the deposition of Henry Bringham, of Kileian in the county of Mayo, Esq. who deposes, that his Lordship, with his son Sir Tibbot Bourke, did personally accompany the said unhappy people from Castlebar, Kinturk, and Bellearrow, with five companies of soldiers, for their better security, to the town of Shrule, where two companies were to receive them over the bridge, being in the county of Galway, and for their more safe convoy, the titular Archbishop of Tuam faithfully promised his Lordship to accompany them with his letter, and several Priests and Friars, to see them safely delivered at the fort of Galway; And being all come to Shrule on Saturday night, 12 February 1641, the Lord Mayo provided for them at the house of Serjeant Robert Lambert and others, and the next day for their dinner, lying that night in one bed with the Bishop of Killala, whose wife and children, according to his desire, lay in the next chamber. The next day being Sunday, (that bloody day) the gentlemen of the barony of Kilmaine, finding themselves much burthened by the soldiers (having lain upon them four nights) entreated to be eased of them, by sending them to their homes, for that they had brought them to the end of the county of Mayo, where they were to be received by the companies of Murrughna-Doe O'Flaherty, and Ulick Bourke of Castlehacket, who lay that night within two miles of Shrule, and appointed to meet the company at Kilmemanagh, about a mile from Shrule, on Sunday morning. Upon which earnest request of the gentry, the Lord Mayo dismissed his companies (except one under the command of Captain Walter Bourke, who lived within a mile of Shrule, or little more) which company being then commanded by his bro-

ther Edmond, was appointed to convoy the company to Kilmemanagh, to the two companies there ready to receive them; and it being almost twelve o'clock, and the march long (14 miles) and having no place nearer for the poor travellers to lodge at that night than Clare, which was ten miles, the said Edmond Bourke having, with his wicked company, been at Mass, and the titular Bishop having failed to send either Priests, Friars, or letter, and the town not being able to provide for the company another night, they desired to be going, undertook for their safe delivery at Kilmemanagh, and the company being desirous to get to Galway, the Lord Mayo furnished them with his own and his son's horses, so that his son had not a horse left to go with him; and having seen the Bishop, with his wife and children, and the rest that had horses, mounted, he took leave with them; and accompanied by two or three horsemen, rode away towards Conge, Sir Tibbot Bourke's house, 6 miles from Shrule; who (notwithstanding that he rode a good round pace, for the weather was very cold) intending to stay for his son at the house of one Andrew Lynch, 2 miles short of Conge, a messenger, as he was ready to dismount, came and told him, that presently after he was out of sight, the said Edmond Bourke and his men fell upon the Bishop and his company, had wounded and stripped him, with his wife and children and all the rest, had murdered some, and were about to murder the remainder. Whereupon his Lordship went instantly into a chamber, and there wept bitterly; pulling off his hair, and refusing to hear any manner of persuasion or comfort, or to be patient, having no means at that time left him to be revenged of that inhuman bloody massacre; fearing besides the loss of his son, and that now they were entered into blood, they would fall upon himself, being then a Protestant, with the few English he had under his protection. And within half an hour after came Sir Tibbot, his son, who with tears related the tragedy, but could not certainly tell who was killed, or who escaped: But being demanded by his father, why he would ever come away, but either have preserved their lives, or have died with them? Answered, that when they began the slaughter, they charged him, (having his sword drawn against them) both with their pikes and musquets, and would have killed him, but that John Garvy, the Sheriff of the county of Mayo, (who was brother-in-law to Edmond Bourke, the principal murderer) came in betwixt him and them, took him in his arms, and by the assistance of others, forcibly carried him over the bridge, brought him a horse, and caused him to be gone after his father, for that there he could do no good, but would be killed or endangered, if he opposed them, whereupon he came away."

Sixty-five persons are said to have been killed at Shrule among whom were two women great with child, and were all tumbled into two pits close by the highway, without any ceremony or order. But we have already expressed our belief that this number is exaggerated, and according to the Roman Catholic authorities of the time, it did not exceed above thirty persons. The survivors were rescued by the Catholic gentry of the neighbourhood, who hastened to their assistance, and carried them to their houses and treated them with hospitality and kindness, and we have great pleasure in adding that one of the persons who most distinguished himself in this christian work of charity was Bryan Kilkenny the guardian of the neighbouring abbey of Ross, who though an aged man was of the first that made haste to the rescue, and brought the Bishop's wife and children, and many others to his Monastery, where they were hospitably entertained to the best of the friars' ability for several nights, when they were removed to the house of Mr. Bourke of Castle Hacket.

That the Lord Mayo and his son Sir Theobald had no real participation in this massacre appears to us certain from the depositions given above. Yet by Cromwell's act of parliament for the settlement of Ireland, passed the 12th of August, 1652, they were both excepted from pardon, (though the former had died in 1649,) and the latter, having been tried by the High Court of Justice, as it was called, on the 30th of December in the same year, was found guilty, and condemned to be shot by a majority of the Commissioners—seven voting for his condemnation, and four dissenting. The sentence was carried into effect

in Galway, where he was buried. The soldiers appointed to shoot him missed fire three times, and strange to say, the individual by whom he was finally shot was, as Lodge familiarly tells us—a corporal blind of an eye!

The son of Sir Tibbot was restored to his estates, consisting of 50,000 acres, in the county of Mayo, in 1666,—but the property was sold by his brother Miles, who succeeded him in the title. Since the death of the last viscount, which occurred in 1767, the title has lain dormant.

Shrnel is remarkable for its handsome modern Roman Catholic chapel, and the ruins of a very ancient church, called after one of the numerous Saints Colman. The town is now the property of Patrick Kirwan, of Dalgin, Esq., whose house is one of the finest in the county.

P.

VITAL HEAT AND PHOSPHORESCENCE.

THERE are few natural phenomena, that excite more general, daily, and ever varying remarks, than the temperature of the atmosphere, as affects our sense of feeling either of heat or cold. And yet how few observe, that Providence has empowered the animal system to resist to a great extent, the injurious influence of either. Heat and cold are considerable agents in the operations of nature. Brute or inert matter submits freely to the absorption and radiation of heat, not having it in any quantity as peculiar to itself. Not so the organized bodies of man, animals and plants, which have a temperature so regulated, that they are enabled to resist the vicissitudes of climate, within certain, though extended limits. Food, respiration, and the action of the nervous system, are the requisites for this wonderful property in the animal economy. By respiration—the blood, while traversing the lungs, receives warmth from the air inhaled, which is submitted to decomposition, and having acquired a portion of heat, carries it through the body to the extremities, which, being farther from the centre of heat, consequently receive less from any one blood vessel; but as their surface is considerable relative to their mass, a greater proportional quantity of blood vessels in these parts preserves their temperature more equal than might be imagined. Heat is a vivifying principle, maintaining the vital powers necessary for the support of animal life, and the energy of the brain. Ninety-eight degrees of Fahrenheit is the ordinary temperature of our bodies; sixty-two is the mean temperature of this climate; hence any body lower than ninety-eight degrees gives a momentary sensation of cold, which does not last, as the generating power is more than adequate to supply the deficiency. Active exercise, by promoting a more rapid circulation, carries the blood from the lungs, the centre of heat, in a shorter time, and imparts a greater proportion of warmth to the system in a given space. Various coverings of wool or fur, by preventing the radiation of heat, preserve the inhabitants of Canada and Nova Zembla uncomplaining, through a temperature so low that when the sun sinks beneath the horizon, the white fox alone endures the cold. Man's activity is aroused by his wants; and while the hunter's moon illumines the dreary waste of snow, he kills or snares the animals, whose skins he either barter for some necessaries of life, supplied by the European trader, or uses as a shelter from the severity of the season. Thus, the supplying of his absolute wants administers to his comforts; and Providence has wisely ordained, that the acquiring what is requisite for him, tends to excite the energy of his frame. The heat of the body is more regular under the effects of cold; yet there is a point at which this generating power must yield—sense and mobility gradually become less—torpor is produced—then appears the collapse of sleep—the vital powers are extinguished—and death ensues. Animals not provided with means for guarding against severe cold are gifted by their Creator with instinct to flee from it, and seek a more genial and sunny climate. Some hibernating animals, in a season that would be injurious to them, become torpid, and experience a temporary death; the covering of others is increased and thickened—all different means tending to one point, the preservation of their life. The power of resisting heat though real is not so great. Men have died in the torrid zone when the thermometer reached one hundred and twenty-two degrees; however, a peculi-

arity of constitution and atmosphere might have great effect. *Franklin, to whom science is so much indebted, found that resistance to elevated temperature proceeds from a more rapid evaporation from the lungs and skin, just as the Alcarrazes, porous vessels, used in India, for preserving liquids cool, maintain their efficacy while the surface is moist and evaporation ensues rapidly.* Delaroche ascertained, that such was the fact, with respect to living beings: he placed animals in an elevated temperature, saturated with moisture to such an extent, that no evaporation from their bodies could take place, they immediately evinced serious distress, and would have died in a short time. Boerhaave and others denied that man and the warm-blooded animals were capable of enduring external warmth, greater than the internal heat of their bodies; but this has been refuted so evidently, that the doctrine is now overthrown. Birds possess the greatest degree of internal heat—one hundred and eleven Fahrenheit; those animals in the class mammalia, particularly the smaller ones, approximate to birds, but with greater liability to change. Cold-blooded animals endure heat badly. Edwards found that frogs die in water at one hundred and seven degrees; yet a species of tape worm has been found alive in the body of a boiled carp, which however will live in water so hot as human blood. It has been already shown, that the germs of many insects will undergo great change of temperature, and that vegetables have a heat peculiar to themselves. When the sheath of the arum maculatum bursts, and the cylindrical part appears; twelve of them placed round the bulb of the thermometer evolve warmth sufficient to raise the mercury from seventy-nine to one hundred and forty-three degrees. Insects, beside their heat, present luminous and phosphorescent appearances; the ocean, when at night exhibiting in warm climates a phenomenon that attracts the eye of the mariner, from its beauty and novelty, is found to owe its brilliancy to animalculæ floating on its surface. The Eleta Noctilucus, or fire fly, a species of beetle, is so vividly bright, that Dr. Smith tells us the beaux of Italy exhibit their gallantry by adorning the hair of their mistresses with this artificial ornament. The light emitted from the cucuij is so bright, that the smallest print may be read by moving one of these insects along the page. In the Spanish West India Isles the females conduct their household occupations by this living lamp; the men, while travelling, fishing, or hunting, attach one in each great toe and require no other torch; and previous to a public festival held in June, these insects are collected in great numbers and fastened to the garments of the young men and the trappings of their horses. Thus adorned, they present to the eye of the spectator on a dark evening, an effect similar to a large moving body of light, and the uncivilized Indian, as much pleased as the polished Italian with the beauty of the fire fly, testifies also his homage to his dark beauty, by decking her hair and person with these living gems—these stars of the earth, and diamonds of the night.

PHILANTHROPY.

"PHILANTHROPY, my friends, is of *no particular sect*; it is confined by no paltry form of rule; it *knows no distinction, but that of the happy or unhappy*; it is older than the gospel, eternal as that great source from whence it springs, and often beats higher in the heathen's heart, than in those of many who are called Christians; who, though under the influence of the most benevolent of all possible systems, yet not unfrequently refuse both relief and compassion to the petitioners of the wretched, and the entreaty of the unhappy. God forbid that the genuine feelings of humanity were confined to this or that mode of faith! God forbid that any ridiculous prejudice should hinder me from reverencing the man, (however we may differ in speculative notions,) whose gentle spirit flies out to sooth the mourner; whose ear is attentive to the voice of sorrow; whose pittance is shared with those who are not the world's friends; whose bountiful hand scatters food to the hungry, and raiment to the naked; and whose peaceful steps, as he journeyeth on his way, are blessed, and blessed again by the uplifted eye of thankful indigence, and the sounds of honest gratitude from the lips of wretchedness."

DEAN KIRWAN.