

## Irish Names in Continental Europe

Ireland (says that well-informed writer, 'Ex-attache,' in the Boston 'Transcript') is largely represented on the Continent, and the aristocracies of Austria, Spain, France, and Italy are imbued with a strongly-developed strain of the best Hibernian blood. Until the beginning of the 19th century the oppression of Roman Catholics in Ireland was such that they emigrated by tens of thousands to those parts of Europe where their religious faith constituted no civic and social handicap, and inasmuch as Catholics were barred from holding Commissions in the British army all those youths of gentle birth whose tastes were of a military character sought service abroad, entire regiments in Austria and France being manned and officered by Irishmen. That is why one finds so many characteristically

### Irish Names among the Nobility

of the countries in question. Thus in Austria there are Counts Nugent, de la Poer and O'Donnell, one of the latter having, indeed, while aide-de-camp of Emperor Francis Joseph, saved the latter from death at the hands of an assassin a few years after his accession to the throne. In France, we have seen a Duke and a Field Marshal with an Irish patronymic and proud of his Irish origin—namely that chivalrous and honest old soldier MacMahon—figuring as one of the presidents of the Third Republic, whilst the names of O'Connor, Tier-

ney, Dillon, O'Shea, etc., are quite as frequent in the great world at Paris, and among the old provincial aristocracy of France as they are among the Irish gentry. It is the same in Italy, in Portugal, and especially in Spain, where the late Duke of Tetuan, who was Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time of the war between this country and Spain, and who represented the King Alfonso XII. on the occasion of the latter's marriage by proxy at Vienna to Queen Christine, and used often to recall the fact that his patronymic was O'Donnell, and that his ancestors were Kings of Donegal in the good old Milesian times. Indeed, once during the course of a speech at Madrid, when presenting the prizes at the Military Academy, he called attention to the number of O'Neills, O'Connells, Mahars etc., among the cadets, remarking: 'We Irish, in setting in the Spanish plains and in offering our swords to Spain, are merely returning to the ancient home of our forbears. The Milesians went from Spain to Ireland, and we have merely come back to live among our cousins.'

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