

St. Patrick's Purgatory, having learned them, of course, in the Irish language. All those Irish visions, beautiful, poetic, and sublime as they are, as well as those of other countries on the same supernatural theme were, doubtless, well known to Dante from his childhood. What his genius had to do was to build up a perfect and splendid arch, which should span all time, out of the exquisite rainbow fragments that were floating round his head."

"What strikes me as very remarkable," said Honeywood, "is the difference in matters relating to the spiritual world between you Irish and all other nations. No one thought of believing that Dante had really seen the visions he relates so precisely, but your people made a reality of the legend of St. Patrick, and staked their faith and devotion on its circumstantial truth. Nay, they do so still, as you have told me you yourself, when a child, performed devotions at this spot."

"It is true that with us Irish faith in the unseen is a passion which is as strong as it is indescribable. Neither sin, pleasure, sorrow, nor affliction can root it out of us. We have been called 'a poetic nation, to whom credulity is easy,' and long may religion hold its sway over our souls. But remember that St. Patrick was a saint of God. Dante, a mighty poet, was no saint. The legend of what St. Patrick saw was of an earlier age, and had been accepted as truth by simple and unquestioning Christians. At this present day God alone could tell us how much foundation of truth was at the bottom of the tale, or from what mysterious source came the first of those poetic rumors which later went to build up our Dante's fame."

"What sort of place is St. Patrick's Purgatory now?"

"At present a few bare white-washed buildings stand on an island, one of which is a humble church, the rest are lodgings, the most barren species of lodgings, for visitors. The pilgrims 'bring their fast with them,' as the poor say, and a very scanty measure of bread and water is all they taste while they stay. Their sleeping-place is the bare rock, but some keep vigil all the time. A very few pence will defray the expenses of the pilgrimage. No one lives on the island, except during the period of the pilgrimage, which is performed once a year."

"This island in its lonely lake, is it surrounded with beautiful scenery?" asked Honeywood.

"The lake is set in the midst of a wilderness of heather, locked among dreary, moorland hills. The rugged, forlorn landscape, such as it is, seems to me to suit the strange history that hangs around it."

"And the people go, you yourself have gone, a child, to fast and pray in this desert region, painfully, because your saint may have seen visions on the spot?"

"Because they feel themselves there in the track of holy feet, and think they breathe an atmosphere that draws them nearer to God."

(To be continued.)

#### OAK AND IVY.

Ground-ivy crawled upon her native earth

With discontent: aloft she fain would rise—

But how?—then looking up she near espies

The Regal Oak, and hastens with glad mirth

Unto his feet!—and he, her humble worth

Disdaining not, makes stronger the frail ties

Wherewith she mounting clings! . . . I deem her wise

That such a lover wins for leaving dearth.

Dear God!—more kind to us than kind Oak-tree

To Ivy! Discontented here below

We climb that would: for Thou rejectest never

The arms of little ones that cling to Thee!—

Thou wouldst us draw, till highest height we go:

And Oak and Ivy wedded be for ever!

—EDWARD BADGER, in *Studies*.

## THE STORY OF IRELAND

(By A. M. SULLIVAN.)

### CHAPTER XXVII.—Continued.

From the first sentence in the concluding passage of the foregoing extract it will be gathered that it was at this juncture the vainglorious Richard made his first visit to Ireland. He had just recently been a candidate for the Imperial Throne of the Germanic Empire, and had been rejected in a manner most wounding to his pride. So he formed the project of visiting Ireland with a display of pomp, power, and Royal splendor, such as had not been seen in Europe for a long time, and would, he was firmly persuaded, enable him to accomplish the complete subjugation of the Irish kingdom after the manner of that Roman general who came and saw and conquered. Early in October he landed at Waterford with a force of 30,000 bowmen and 4000 men-at-arms; a force in those days deemed ample to overrun and conquer the strongest kingdom, and far exceeding many that sufficed to change the fate of empires previously and subsequently in Europe. This vast army was transported across channel in a fleet of some 300 ships or galleys. Great pains were taken to provide the expedition with all the appliances and features of impressive pageantry; and in the king's train, as usual, came the chief nobles of England—his uncle, the Duke of Gloster, the young Earl of March (heir-apparent), and of earls and lords a goodly attendance, besides several prelates, abbots, and other ecclesiastical dignitaries. But with this vast expedition King Richard accomplished in Ireland just as much as that king in a ballad, who "marched up the hill, and then marched down again." He rehearsed King Henry and King John on Irish soil. The Irish princes were invited to visit their "friend" the mighty and puissant King of England. They did visit him, and were subjected, as of old, to the "dazzling" process. They were patronisingly fondled; made to understand that their magnanimous suzerain was a most powerful, and most grand, and most gorgeous potentate, own brother of the Sun and Moon. They accepted his flattering attentions; but they did not altogether so clearly understand or accept a proposition he made them as to surrendering their lands and chieftaincies to him, and receiving, instead, royal pensions and English titles from his most gracious hand. Many of the Irish princes yielded, from one motive or another, to this insidious proposition. But foremost amongst those who could not be persuaded to see the excellence of this arrangement was the young Prince of Leinster, whose fame had already filled the land, and whose victories had made the English King feel ill at ease. Art would not come to "court" to reason over the matter with the bland and puissant king. He was obdurate. He resisted all "dazzling." He mocked at the Royal pageants, and snapped his fingers at the brother of the Sun and Moon. All this was keenly mortifying to the vainglorious Richard. There was nothing for it but to send a Royal commissioner to treat with Art. He accordingly dispatched the Earl Marshal (Mowbray) to meet and treat with the Prince of Leinster. On the plain of Balligory, near Carlow, the conference took place, Art being accompanied by his uncle Malachi. The Earl Marshal soon found that he had in Art a statesman as well as a soldier to treat with. Art proudly refused to treat with an *inferior*. If he was to treat at all, it should be with the king himself! Mowbray had to bend to this humiliating rebuff and try to palaver the stern McMurrough. In vain! Art's final answer was, that "so far from yielding his own lands, his wife's patrimony in Kildare should instantly be restored to him; or——." Of course, this broke up the conference. The Earl Marshal returned with the unwelcome news to the king, who flew into a rage. What! He, the great, the courtly, the puissant, and gorgeous King Richard of England, thus haughtily treated by a mere Irish prince! By the toe-nails of William the Conqueror, this astounding conduct should