

**Description of a great sepulchral mound at Aylesbury-road, near Donnybrook, in the county of Dublin, containing human and animal remains, as well as some objects of antiquarian interest, referable to the tenth or eleventh centuries / by William Frazer.**

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XL.—DESCRIPTION OF A GREAT SEPULCHRAL MOUND  
AND, THIS DOWNSIDE, IN THE COUNTY OF DUBLIN,  
HOLLY AND ASTRAL REMAINS, AS WELL AS SO  
ANTHROPOLOGICAL REMAINS, REFERRED TO THE TEXT  
CONTAINED. By WILLIAM FRANKS, F.R.C.S.I., M.  
Woolwich.

(Read November 10th, 1879.)

In placing upon record the strange and unexpected  
quantity of human remains obtained at Downy  
side of Dublin, I intend to give a simple relation of the  
manner in which they were found, and to describe in as  
far as possible all the attendant features of importance  
concerning the cause of their accumulation  
regarding the special period in Irish history when it  
was of secondary consideration, open to discussion  
subjects on which differences of opinion might be entertained.  
The purpose to treat of the special ethnology of this find  
is, as it would deserve a distinct investigation—con-  
sidering more sketches of the leading points that were as  
the characters of the skulls and other bones.

The first intimation that reached me of this vast col-  
lection was on the 1st day of October, 1879, but no idea was then  
of the great quantities of bones that were afterwards  
discovered, but they were all found lying on the  
original soil, covered with a more superficial layer of  
loam in grass, pits, or excavated earth. I owe  
to my friend Mr. Thomas Waring, for which I feel a  
debt, as also for the liberal access he gave me to the localities  
during his workmen at my disposal when I required  
circumstances by excavations. Mr. Waring had purchased  
at Keshmure and to erect some houses, and he stated  
that he had the use of his new houses, his workmen  
had found the mark of a sword-cut upon its forehead  
and with them a spear-head of iron and an iron sword  
which had been used for me, and he invited me to examine  
them when they were put. I visited the locality that evening  
and made inquiry into every circumstance connected  
with the bones, and got possession of the skull; of  
course, being recognized as belonging to the Scandina-  
vian, being broad and double-edged, with iron hill  
and I also obtained the iron spear-head, which was  
of Scandinavian origin.

The workmen, during that day had unearthed and

16

XI.—DESCRIPTION OF A GREAT SEPULCHRAL MOUND AT AYLESBURY-ROAD, NEAR DONNYBROOK, IN THE COUNTY OF DUBLIN, CONTAINING HUMAN AND ANIMAL REMAINS, AS WELL AS SOME OBJECTS OF ANTIQUARIAN INTEREST, REFERABLE TO THE TENTH OR ELEVENTH CENTURIES. By WILLIAM FRAZER, F.R.C.S.I., M.R.I.A. (With Woodcuts.)

[Read, November 10th, 1879.]

IN placing upon record the strange and unexpected discovery of a great quantity of human remains obtained at Donnybrook, near the city of Dublin, I intend to give a simple relation of the circumstances under which they were found, and to describe in as full a manner as I am able all the attendant features of importance, and to leave conjectures about the cause of their accumulation, and theories regarding the special period in Irish history when it took place, for matters of secondary consideration, open to discussion hereafter, as subjects on which differences of opinion might be entertained. Nor do I purpose to treat of the special ethnology of this find, except in brief detail, as it would deserve a distinct investigation—contenting myself with mere sketches of the leading points that were ascertained about the characters of the skulls and other bones.

The first intimation that reached me of this vast charnel heap was on the 3rd day of October, 1879, but no idea was then entertained of the great quantities of bones that were afterwards disinterred, or rather unearthed, for they were all found lying on the surface of the original soil, covered with a mere superficial layer of clay, not contained in graves, pits, or excavated cavities. I owe the information to my friend Mr. Thomas Wardrop, for which I feel much his debtor, as also for the liberal access he gave me to the locality itself, and for placing his workmen at my disposal when I required them to assist my researches by excavations. Mr. Wardrop had purchased the ground at Aylesbury-road to erect some houses, and he stated that, in digging up the field at the rear of his new houses, his workmen had procured several human bones; amongst them was a perfect skull of large size, that had the mark of a sword-cut upon its forehead, and they had found with them a spear-head of iron and an iron sword, all of which he had laid aside for me, and he invited me to examine the place where these were got. I visited the locality that evening, made a searching inquiry into every circumstance connected with the discovery of the bones, and got possession of the skull; of a sword, which was at once recognised as belonging to the Scandinavian type of weapon, being broad and double-edged, with iron hilt and pommel; and I also obtained the iron spear-head, which was likewise of undoubted Scandinavian origin.

The workmen during that day had unearthed additional human

bones lying to the south of the first-obtained skeleton; and it appearing probable that the discovery would prove of antiquarian interest, I made arrangements to follow up the subsequent stages of the diggings, and watch the excavations as they advanced. Professor Macalister, of Dublin University, at two subsequent periods was kind enough to superintend the unearthing of a quantity of these bones himself, and these excavations added a great deal to our knowledge of the manner in which the bodies were arranged, and their position in the mound, and we were able to confirm each other's observations. On one of these occasions Mr. Baily, Palæontologist to the Royal Geological Survey, aided me and assisted in identifying the shells and other animal remains that were exhumed. Mr. G. H. Kinahan also obliged me by inspecting the excavations, and his geological knowledge enabled us to secure from the rubbish plates of sandstone that had been used for fire-hearths; some pieces of sandstone which had served to sharpen instruments, such as knives, &c.; and a stone hammer, probably employed for opening oysters, such as is still used in the west of Ireland for that purpose.

The exact locality upon which the mound was situated is marked on maps of the city of Dublin and its suburbs, published a few years ago, as "Mount Erroll." It lies to the south of the recently-formed Aylesbury-road, and, of course, to the south of the River Dodder, on the opposite bank to the famed classic locality of Donnybrook Fairgreen—a fair of which we possess authentic records reaching so far back as the reign of King John, who granted it under charter to the citizens of Dublin. The field is situated to the east of the new chapel, which is at the corner of the Stillorgan-road. To describe it with greater exactness, it is on the plot of ground that immediately adjoins the row of houses on Seafeld-terrace, from which it extends in an easterly direction; and an old road, now disused and closed up, but formerly known as Seaview-avenue, bounded its northern side. Many will recollect a favourite pathway along the fields, which led from this road to Sandymount, and was probably the remains of an ancient public path or road, long since disused, save for foot-passengers. This rather minute description of the locality is given, for houses are intended to be erected in the field and on the site of the mound, all traces of which must soon be removed; and an exact record of the situation had, therefore, better be preserved.

The surface of the ground on this portion of the field presented no traces of having been under tillage or broken up for cultivation, except in the vicinity of its southern boundary, where, outside the limits of the tumulus or burial mound, in a sunken part of the enclosure, some potato ridges were noticed. The field consisted of compact green sward, and had scattered over it a few trees, principally elm. Beyond the north-west edge of the mound grew an elm tree of under twenty years' growth; as the excavations advanced, its roots were uncovered, extending horizontally southwards into the mound, and through the human bones for upwards of fifty feet, the

small fibres of the roots marking some of the skulls and other bones by absorption of their bony tissue. At a distance of at least fifty feet from the trunk of the tree I measured one of its leading roots, and found it to be upwards of two inches in diameter.

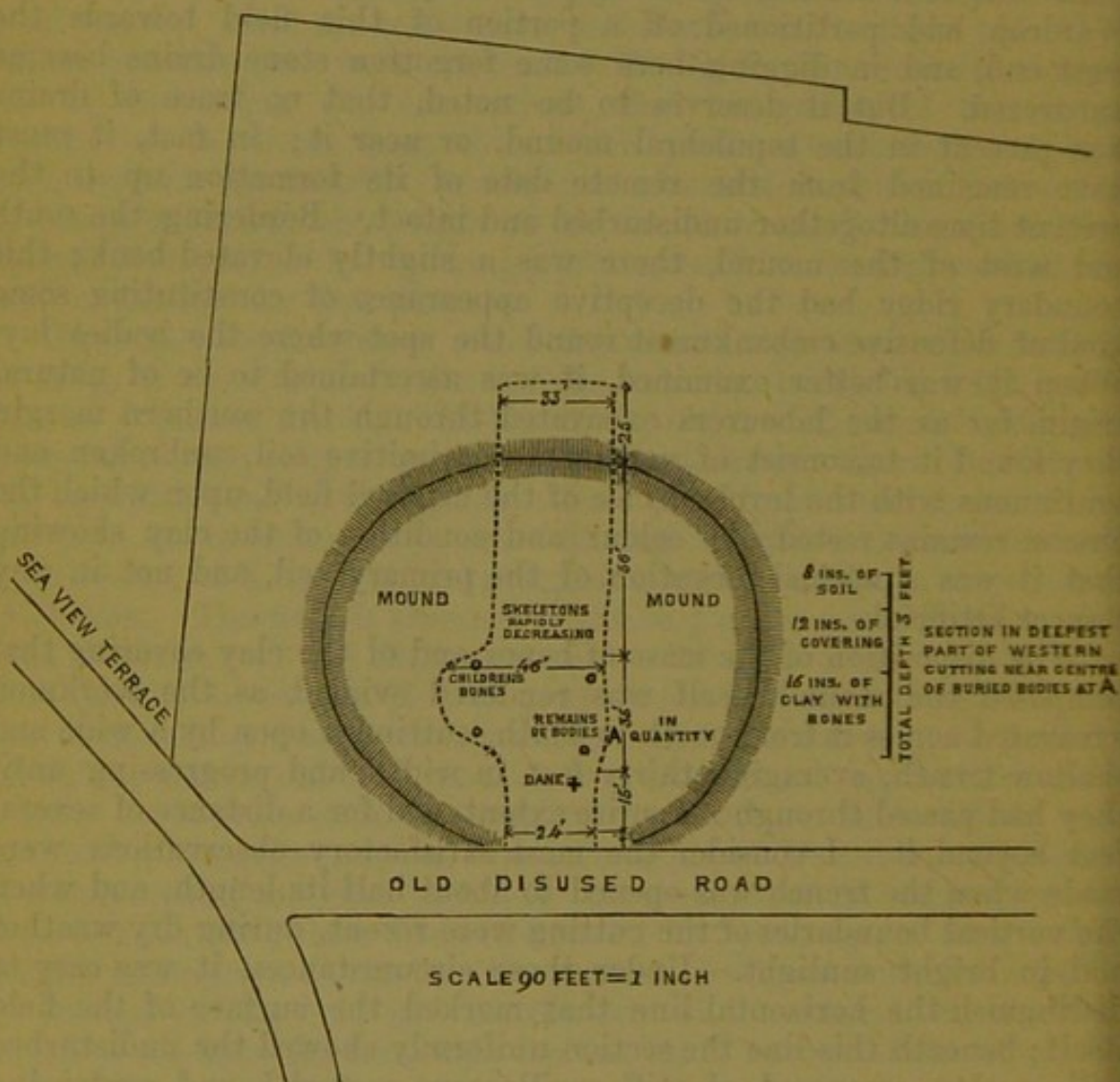
When the site was first inspected it was possible to trace out a distinct wide-spread flattened elevation, or mound, of clay, that extended inwards from the border of the ancient obliterated highway into the field for about one hundred feet, of a circular form, measuring from east to west almost as much; its eastern limit was less defined, as the ground sloped gradually away. Mr. Wardrop had partitioned off a portion of this field towards the west end, and in digging here some forgotten stone drains became uncovered. But it deserves to be noted, that no trace of drains was present in the sepulchral mound, or near it; in fact, it must have remained from the remote date of its formation up to the present time altogether undisturbed and intact. Bordering the south and west of the mound, there was a slightly elevated bank; this boundary ridge had the deceptive appearance of constituting some kind of defensive embankment round the spot where the bodies lay. When it was better examined, it was ascertained to be of natural origin, for as the labourers excavated through the southern margin they found it to consist of undisturbed primitive soil, unbroken and continuous with the level surface of the original field, upon which the human remains rested, the colour and condition of the clay showing that it was a normal elevation of the primary soil, and not in any respect artificial.

The disposition of the mass of bones and of the clay covering that composed the mound itself was rendered evident as the workmen excavated across it from north to south, cutting it open by a wide and shallow trench, averaging thirty feet in width, and progressing until they had passed through its entire extent, and for a distance of several feet beyond it. I consider the most satisfactory observations were made when the trench was opened to about half its length, and when the vertical boundaries of the cutting were recent, during dry weather and in bright sunlight. Under those circumstances, it was easy to distinguish the horizontal line that marked the surface of the field itself; beneath this line the section uniformly showed the undisturbed yellow clay, composed of stiff argillaceous material, and containing rounded and angular stones of ordinary argillaceous limestone, such as are common throughout the district; and in this there were no traces of graves or interments, nor any imbedded human remains, save where, through the lapse of time, the bones of a few of the lower stratum of skeletons resting on this surface had sunk down slightly into it.

This clay underlying the mound is similar in all respects to the ordinary soil of the district, and its comparative imperviousness to water would account for the remarkable state of preservation in which the majority of the skulls and other bones were found. This

had been assisted by the gentle fall of the surface of the field towards the east, and by the presence of the slight elevation or bank already noticed, which bounded the south and west sides, and must have diverted a quantity of the surface drainage.

Rising above the surface of this yellow soil was noticed a layer of darker-coloured clay, which acquired a deeper tint where the imbedded skeletons lay piled in great numbers. There were no traces whatever of human remains uncovered by the workmen until they had opened up the trench for about fifteen feet from the edge of the old roadway, com-



mencing at the northern side, and working to the south. They then uncovered the bones of the first human being, the head placed towards the north, and the limbs pointing southwards. This man's bones were described to me as large-sized, and they appeared from the description to have belonged to some person of unusually powerful frame. At his sides were placed the iron sword and spear already mentioned, and his head was that which I first obtained, and which bore the mark of a fatal sword-cut, perforating the frontal bone. At a short distance away, and lying on either side of his feet, the workmen

next uncovered two human skeletons, each a separate interment; these bodies they described as belonging to persons of much smaller size, and it is probable they were the remains of females. I regret that these bones got removed and mixed up with numerous other human remains that were soon after unearthed, as the excavations advanced, the bones themselves being broken during removal. Three iron arrowheads were subsequently found in the clay close to where the first discovery took place; and from the iron spear and sword buried by the side of the skeleton, and the wound on his head, we may conjecture that he was, in all probability, some leader or chief; at all events, he was the only individual found buried with weapons at his side in the entire heap; and apart from the rest of the slain he lay stretched at full length, interred north and south—a position that would indicate pagan, or at least non-Christian burial. The iron sword-hilt, which I will describe in more detail hereafter, when subjected to minute examination, was ascertained to have a rich ornamentation of inlaid gold and silver-work, such as we find figured decorating the swords of Norse Viking chieftains. In the great ethnological work, the *Crania Britannica*, of J. B. Davis, M.D., and J. Thurnam, M.D., we have recorded a good account, illustrated by engravings, of an ancient Norse skull that was found interred on the shores of Lough Larne, about three-quarters of a mile from the town, on the 7th November, 1840. It lay about seventy yards from the seashore, and five feet above the level of high water. "The skeleton lay not more than two feet below the surface, in a sandy soil, the head pointed to the N. W. Across the breast lay an iron double-edged sword, its hilt deposited towards the right hand; on the right side, and below the sword, was an iron lance-head; a small bronze pin, covered with ærugo, and a few fragments of bone, were found near the body.

A description of the discovery of this Larne body was laid before the Royal Irish Academy by Mr. J. Huband Smith, and was published in the *Proceedings*, vol. ii., p. 40, but the engravings of the skull and of the different objects obtained with it are to be found in the *Crania Britannica*. Worsaae would refer the date of the Larne interment to the eleventh century, and he mentions that the Icelandic historian Snorre Sturleson relates that in the beginning of the century "a desperate naval battle was fought between the Orkney Jarl Einar and the Irish king Konofögr in Ulfrics fiord on the coast of Ireland. The situation of this fiord remained unrecognised until it was discovered in a document issued by King John in the year 1210, at which time Lough Larne was still called "Wulsriche fiord." Worsaae's very probable inference, founded upon the relation of the historian, is that the Larne grave contained one of the Ostmen slain in the battle. The Rev. Dr. Reeves informs me that this identification of Ulfrics fiord was made originally in his work on the *Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Down, Connor, and Dromore*, and that Worsaae obtained the information from him.

The striking points of similarity between the circumstances of the Larne interment and that of the skeleton first obtained at Donnybrook would range them in a close relationship as to the time of their occurrence; and the class of warrior thus buried, the absence of coffin, stone cyst or other covering, the superficial interment of the skeletons—both lying in a northerly position on the soil, and having clay thrown over them, the burying with the bodies of their iron double-edged swords and iron lance-heads, are all of them so identical in character that one description would serve for both; nor was a bronze ring pin wanting at Donnybrook, though it was found at some distance in the mound subsequently. They differ principally in this, that the sword now obtained, from the rich gold and silver ornamentation of its hilt, would appear to have belonged to some chieftain of elevated rank; and we may believe that the female remains found buried at his feet are additional witnesses to the esteem in which his followers held him, and the penalty exacted for his loss. At all events this interment, though to some extent kept separate from the rest, and distinguished by the presence of arms, was in intimate connexion with the others in the mound. The bones lay on the same level upon the soil, and one common clay covering was over all. As the exhuming advanced, the great abundance of human bones that became exposed showed what a number of slain individuals composed the one great heap. Calculating roughly, it may be asserted that upwards of 600 beings must have been buried together, and this calculation is certainly under the real total. Towards the eastern side of the mound, which was the last part excavated, it was ascertained that the lowermost layer of human bodies had been there arranged with tolerable uniformity. Dr. Macalister and I uncovered at least two such rows placed one behind the other, with their heads pointing westward and their feet to the east; the skeletons lay in close apposition side by side; above these was a second layer of dead thrown down in every possible direction, and then there was a stratum of young bones, which formed the upper division or third superimposed layer of the mass, appearing as if they were pitched in upon the top of the others. These young skeletons were found in considerable numbers towards the eastern side of the mound; indeed it was not until more than half of it was excavated that the remains of children became conspicuous and attracted attention from their frequent recurrence. The parts of the mound first opened disclosed principally adult remains, which seemed heaped together regardless of order and lay in all possible positions. With rare exceptions, the entire of the skeletons were gathered within a circular space of 34 to 40 feet in circumference; still for about 15 feet further towards the south as the trench advanced, a few skeletons, either isolated or where they had fallen in small groups, continued to turn up, but beyond this no more were obtained; thus human remains were lying about until the excavations reached upwards of 60 feet through the mound, after which none were seen, though the trenching was continued for a total length of 130 feet. The

lower layer of skeletons which, as already stated, were found disposed at full length on the surface of the original clay soil of the field, had many of them their skulls still remaining in close proximity to their bodies, but there were also uncovered skulls separated from the remainder of the skeleton for an appreciable distance, and again, lower jaws separated from the skulls. These observations would appear to show that some time must have elapsed after death before they became interred or covered with clay, during which decomposition had set in, and the skulls become detached; other facts which were carefully ascertained led to the same conclusion: thus several crania had rolled with their base upwards, so that a quantity of clay had passed through the foramen magnum, and all such heads were as a rule in a far better state of preservation than those which lay with their bases downwards, when they continued empty and were more liable to become crushed and broken from external pressure. In washing out this clay that filled up the interior of the skulls, a miscellaneous collection of objects was obtained: broken pieces of human bones, decayed and loose teeth, a detached fragment of the angle of a jaw-bone, so large that it passed with difficulty through the foramen magnum, portions of the shells of cockles and periwinkles, and a few shells of snails of small size, and of the ordinary species found in the inside of old skulls. Several of these separated heads must have been decapitated, as they were discovered lying at considerable distances from the rest of the bodies. Of this we obtained more satisfactory evidence upon the eastern side of the mound, where Dr. Macalister also from his investigations arrived at a similar conclusion; for he detected there two different heaps each consisting of four heads collected together into groups; and on November 5, 1879, I obtained eight skulls, all of which were injured and in a broken condition lying gathered into one pile, of course, altogether separated from the rest of their bodies; they had undergone rough usage and broke into fragments when I endeavoured to remove them. The opinion I arrived at from examining them *in situ* was that, after being cut off they were rolled or kicked about, and the bones broken with extreme violence previous to gathering them into a heap. Again, at a later date, on November 28, the workmen who were searching for additional skulls for me discovered, close to the place where the other skull heaps had been procured and at a short distance from them, but more towards the N.E. of the excavations, another definite group consisting of eight skulls, also accumulated into a distinct heap and placed resting on the level of the original soil. These skulls I examined with special interest; and though they were damaged to a less degree than those obtained in the preceding groups, yet they all showed evidences of having sustained unusual injuries by being kicked about, tossed on the ground, or otherwise maltreated, for the bones of the face were smashed into fragments, and so detached that it was useless to attempt procuring a perfect specimen. One of the lower jaws belonging to this group had sustained a fracture of the body of the bone extending

from the first molar tooth through the osseous tissue. Another was broken across to the right of the symphysis menti between the canine and first premolar tooth; and further, with one solitary exception, all these skulls had the marks of perforating fractures such as would result from a large nail, a dagger-point, or the sharp spike of a battle-axe driven with force through the cranial bones: indeed a searching examination of the appearances thus produced impressed me with the conviction that they had been killed one after the other in utter wantonness of cruelty, in a similar manner, by fracturing their skulls with the point of a dagger; and judging from the close resemblance of the injuries they had all alike sustained, probably by the hands of one individual. The calvaria of this group, of which I retained six, all belonged to persons, male and female, of advanced years; and from the sutures being in progressive stages of obliteration, and the bones themselves of considerable hardness, it was obvious that they were the remains of persons far advanced towards the decline of life. To this circumstance I would ascribe their preservation, though the bones of the face had become broken and detached. Of these, one calvarium was pierced at the antero-superior part of the left parietal bone; another had sustained a perforating wound on the centre of the left parietal, and sword-cuts over the left orbit and forehead; a third skull had a perforating wound on the lower part of the left parietal bone; a fourth had a wound apparently caused by an arrow or spear-point that had also produced a perforating fracture on the lower and anterior portion of the left parietal; and a fifth was perforated in the angle of junction of the frontal, parietal, and temporal bones. All those fractures, as might be expected, were attended with removal of bone of the inner plate of cranium to a greater extent than the external wound. The practice of inflicting wounds of the scalp and skull of this nature is described as being an ordinary Danish custom in warfare; and the savage habit of decapitating the heads of their slain enemies is often recorded in the Celtic stories of battles in those early ages. In the *Book of the Dean of Lismore* containing translations of Gaelic ballads written down about A.D. 1530 in Argylshire, and published in Edinburgh in 1862, such a custom is described. In the poem of the *Heads*, p. 58, we have recorded several details of human heads hewn from the bodies of the slain in revenge for the death of Cuchullin. Again, the savage practice is recorded by our Irish annalists as one that was followed by the Danes, both those of Scandinavian origin and the more ferocious Danar or pirate invader: but it appears far stranger to learn that the native Irish Christians, when engaged in warfare against these Norsemen, thought themselves justified in adopting a similar course of procedure in retaliation for their outrages. Thus in A.D. 851, after the battle of Carlingford, "the Danes killed thrice their own number and they beheaded every one they killed;" see *Three Fragments of Irish Annals*, &c., p. 117, published by the Irish Archæological Society, 1860.

Again in A.D. 852, "A battle was given by Aedh, king of Ailech,

the most valiant king of his time, to the fleet of Gall-Gaedhil, *i.e.* they were Scoti and foster-children to the Northmen, and at one time they used to be called Northmen. They were defeated and slaughtered by Aedh, and many of their heads were carried off by Aedh, the son of Nial, with him, and the Irish were justified in committing this havoc, for these were accustomed to act like the Lochlanns" (see p. 129 last quoted work).

It is to these mixed races of Scoti and Danish northern invaders, who made constant raids on the Irish coasts during the ninth and tenth centuries, that I am inclined to ascribe this extensive massacre of persons of all ages, young and old, at Donnybrook, and the discovery of the different heaps of decapitated heads piled together in the mound is one of the reasons, amongst others, which induces me to form such an opinion. The piratical bands of Scoti are described by Irish historians as consisting of "persons who have renounced their baptism, and who had the customs of Northmen, and been fostered by them," and "though the original Northmen were bad to the Churches, these were far worse." The usual places of abode whence these wild Scottish catherans came were the outlying islands of Scotland, the Cantyre coasts, Aran, and the Isle of Man, whence they issued to join the predatory bands of Norse pirates in their invasions.

When uncovering such quantities of human remains, lying in close proximity to each other as they were examined into with attention, several striking results were noticed. Thus Dr. Macalister obtained two foetal femora resting undisturbed within the cavity of a female os innominatum; the unborn remains still being within the body of the parent. We also found where the hands of the dead had lain across their abdomen, that as decomposition advanced the bones of the hands fell down into the pelvic cavities, and lay upon the sacrum. In some the phalanges had even penetrated within the sacral foramina and lodged there. Again, on Nov. 24, 1879, I disinterred an infant's skull, which was crushed in, and within it were the separate bones of an adult's hand, probably its mother's. To give an illustration of the utter confusion in which many of the bodies were heaped together and intermingled, there was dug out one firm cohering mass bound with the adhesive argillaceous clay as it lay in the ground, which yielded two thigh bones placed horizontally in their natural position, a third thigh bone that was imbedded between them, and reversed, and two leg bones, also in reversed position. Thus it contained portions of three different adult human beings, and yet all were gathered lying like a bundle of sticks within a bulk so small that I could grasp it in my hands.

It would appear from the result of repeated testings made over different parts of the mound, that on the average three separate layers of human bodies could be recognised, piled above each other through the entire space, yet the vertical depth of the clay stratum within which, strictly considered, these bones were imbedded did not exceed eighteen inches to two feet. The clay in which they lay was the

common clay of the district, with rounded and angular calp fragments, but of dark colour, from its saturation with animal matter; and when the vertical sides of the trench were freshly exposed in dry weather, we could notice how this covering of clay had been thrown over the bodies in interring them, as it assumed an appearance of stratification different from the homogeneous structure of the undisturbed subjacent yellow till. As the excavation advanced towards the east side of the mound, we procured several squares of sandstone, or small flagstones, and a few composed of split calp, averaging each about a foot square, that still retained marks of having been employed for fire-stones; these were thrown in amongst the slain bodies, and some at least used as offensive weapons; thus I extracted one of these sandstone slabs from the place where it lay, pressing upon a skull belonging to the lowest layer of skeletons; it had driven the parietal bone inwards, breaking and depressing it. From the relative positions of this flagstone and of the head, it was impossible to mistake the appearances for an accidental occurrence: the fracture was distinct, and the injury must have been sustained during life, or immediately after the person dying. It presented all the characters observed in a recent fracture caused by extreme violence, and two layers of bodies lay covering it in the mound. Nor was this a solitary instance of finding these stones in contact with human heads, to all appearance hurled upon them with intent to cause injuries.

Mr. Kinahan selected for me other portions of sandstone that exhibited on their sides longitudinal groovings; these he ascribed to their having been employed for sharpening iron instruments, such as knives—an obvious explanation. Now sandstone is not found in or near the district of Donnybrook, therefore both the sharpening stones and the fire slabs must have been brought there; possibly they were obtained from the cottages of villagers residing close to the spot. Near some of the flagstones, and in contact with them, we got fragments of wood charcoal in tolerable abundance; and imbedded deep in the orbits of one of the most interesting and remarkable skulls that this excavation yielded—that of a microcephalic idiot—were numerous bits of this charcoal disseminated through the clay that filled its cavities. A good deal of charcoal was also scattered about where the flagstones lay, giving additional proof of wood fires having been kindled on the spot itself.

In a hammer-shaped nodule of calp limestone that I have, Mr. Kinahan also recognised a primitive oyster-opener, such as he has found still in daily use along the coasts of the west of Ireland, and which he informs me is employed with singular dexterity by the natives of these districts. At one end this hammer shows the marks of hard usage. The flint flake itself, which possibly was used for kindling a fire, was also picked up by a gentleman, and given to me on its discovery. It was the only fragment of flint obtained in the mound.

Certain marine shells were found, and require a notice. The

were obtained principally in the west and southern parts of the tumulus, and were scattered through the clay, and mixed up with it. These shells seemed like the emptyings of some old domestic refuse-heap or kitchen-midden, the rubbish of which, with its broken shells, was used on the spot to assist in covering over the bodies of the slain, and I found with them a fragment of early earthenware and a whorl of baked clay. Some broken pieces of these shells I have already said had even entered the interior of certain of the skulls, and were removed when washing out the clay that filled them. The following is a list of the mollusca that were noticed; they give us a clear idea of the then existing marine fauna of the district—a fauna that has undergone considerable modifications within recent times:—

<i>Buccinum undatum</i> ,	.	.	This shell is probably not obtainable at present nearer than Howth.
<i>Littorina communis</i> ,	.	.	Has now retired beyond Kingstown.
<i>Littorina rudis</i> ,	.	.	Do.
<i>Littorina neritoides</i> ,	.	.	A few specimens. Has now retired beyond Kingstown.
<i>Solen</i> (sp.),	.	.	A fragment.
<i>Ostrea edulis</i> (common),	.	.	This, which was a common inhabitant of our bay, has within the last ten years been almost completely exterminated.
<i>Mytilus edulis</i> (much decayed),	.	.	Do.
<i>Cardium edule</i> ,	.	.	Still common at Sandymount.
<i>Cardium echinatum</i> ,	.	.	Got at Portmarnock.

Mr. Baily, Palæontologist to the Royal Geological Survey, had found several of these shells, and gave me the specimens he obtained, to add to my own collection. There was no large accumulation of cockle or oyster shells discovered, such as we should expect to procure if they had been cooked and eaten on the spot; instead of this they were dispersed through particular portions of the excavations, and presented the appearance of being spread out with the waste soil to cover the dead. About a foot deep of *debris* lay above the bones, and this was all that separated them from the surface, save a dense layer of old grass sod, which averaged a thickness of eight inches additional, varying in different places an inch more or less.

Bones belonging to different domestic animals were identified; these included the bones of a small horse or ass, the cow, calf, sheep, pig, dog, and possibly wolf. The animal remains were not in sufficient quantity to have supplied the necessities of an invading force encamped on the spot for even a few weeks, and there were no arrangements discoverable for permanent cooking-places, and no special midden-heap containing the bones of the animals. They suggested the idea of being the *debris* of an impromptu feast held by savages in the midst of their prisoners, and when these were being slain the bones of the animals

were scattered promiscuously through the human bodies, together with the flaggings of sandstone on which the food was cooked, and the embers of the charcoal fires.

Of the broken and cut bones of the ox I preserved three jaw-bones, teeth, parts of ribs, the upper fragment of a thigh bone, and one of the vertebræ: this retains on it the marks of being divided by a sharp cutting or sawing instrument. The head of the femur, cut across as it lay within the acetabulum, and neatly sawn, was also picked up. The upper part of a thigh bone belonging to a young calf, and an incisor tooth were likewise gathered; they were portions of a very young animal, which would appear to point to the spring or summer months as the season of the year when this massacre was perpetrated. Sheep remains were rather abundant. I kept portions of jaws belonging to three or four of them, large and small trotter bones, and vertebræ sawn across in an oblique direction. Of the pig, parts of the lower jaw were preserved, and separate teeth of the animal; among them were the tusks of two old boars and of a young one. Of the horse or ass, both teeth and bones were got. The left ramus of a lower jaw-bone of a large-sized dog was found by Mr. Moss, and a few days after I picked up the corresponding right bone. Dr. Macalister likewise found bones of this animal, and has decided that it was a dog of large size, possibly a wolf dog, not a wolf.

October, 1880, I got the upper jaws and snout of an animal that I believe may have been a wolf. It resembles the remains of that animal which I have examined in some English museums, but the identification is full of difficulty. It is worth directing attention to the fact that, common as we know the wolf once was in Ireland, the discovery of its bones is of exceptional rarity, for which it is difficult to offer any satisfactory explanation. The publications of the Irish Archaeological Society in 1860 afford an interesting illustration, taken from Irish history, of the habit of the dog or wolf to prey upon the bodies of the slain. A.D. 869, in a battle where the Norsemen were defeated, the writer says: "The son of Gaithin attacked them as the wolf attacks sheep, and they fled into a bog, and in that bog they were all killed, and dogs devoured their bodies."—See p. 167, *Three Fragments of Irish Annals*, &c.

It was difficult to conjecture why scattered remains of different domestic animals which had been cooked and eaten should become dispersed through a mound of slain human beings, and the difficulty was increased when later still we found the slabs of cooking stones and the charcoal used for firing also scattered about, and the stones themselves apparently used for offensive missiles: but in referring to published Irish annals that record the history of Danish invasions we obtain the following startling account of similar practices pursued by these people in one of their battle-fields fought in the North of Ireland.

A.D. 851, a battle took place between the Norsemen and Danes in the fifth year of the reign of Maelsechlainn. The Norse galleys

under their chieftains went to Carlingford Lough; and it is recorded that the Danes were defeated in a sea fight. A second battle followed, fought both on sea and land; in this the Danes were successful; then we have the following story: "Now at this time Maelsechlainn, king of Teamhir, sent ambassadors to the Danes, and on their arrival the Danes were cooking, and the supports of their cauldrons were heaps of the bodies of the Lochlanns, and one end of the spit on which the meat was hung was stuck into the bodies of the Lochlanns, and the fire was burning the bodies, &c., &c. . . . The ambassadors of Maelsechlainn beheld these in this condition, and they reproached the Danes with this, and the Danes replied 'This is the way they would like to have us.'"—See p. 125, *Three Fragments of Irish Annals*, &c.

If the remains of the horse or ass which were also found lying scattered about had been eaten by these people, it would afford strong additional evidence for concluding they were Danish and pagan, for at an early period the Anglo-Saxons relinquished the use of horse-flesh, and there are abundant proofs that the Irish Christians would not partake of a food so repugnant to all the received ideas of Eastern Christianity. I can only say that the horse remains lay scattered about in the same way as those of the cow, pig, and sheep, and presented similar appearance of having been used for food.

At an early stage of the investigation, it became evident that the human remains found included those of persons of each sex and of every age, from infancy to advanced life. I thought it, however, worth calculating the average proportions of males and females present: therefore, out of a heap of bones disinterred towards the centre of the mound, not selected, but taken as they lay on the surface of the ground after being dug up, I gathered all the sacral bones that remained unbroken and fit for measurement, rejecting about ten which were fragmentary and decayed, and retaining seventeen. These were measured with accuracy, and the result gave of undoubted female remains nine, and of males eight. For this purpose Dr. Macalister compiled for me a Table of measurements of male and females sacra; and as the importance of this bone is admitted in distinguishing between skeletons of males and females, especially for objects of medical jurisprudence, and as the usual works of reference give only loose generalities instead of exact data, the following important measurements are subjoined:—

#### MEASUREMENTS OF SACRAL BONES.

##### *Males.*

Length,  $4\frac{1}{2}$  to  $5\frac{1}{2}$  inches.

Breadth,  $4\frac{1}{4}$  to  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches.

Curve of the transverse diameter,  $\frac{7}{12}$  of inch.

The vertical curve begins at the second vertebra.

*Females.*

Length,  $4\frac{1}{2}$  to 5 inches. This is a point of secondary importance.

Breadth,  $4\frac{1}{2}$  to  $5\frac{1}{4}$  inches. Much more distinctive.

Curve of the transverse diameter,  $\frac{5}{12}$  of inch. A characteristic feature.

The vertical curve begins at the third vertebra, also a distinctive point.

In addition to the thigh bones of the unborn child, found by Dr. Macalister, I got other similar remains, and have preserved the lower jaw and half the frontal bone of an infant aged about the seventh month of foetal life, and also the jaw-bone of a recently born child.

So numerous were the remains of young children, that a selection of their lower jaws afforded examples of every stage of infantile dentition, and I gathered a large and complete series of them, and from this onward to youth and perfect maturity, until the last permanent molars became completely developed. The teeth as a rule were found to be unusually strong and healthy, but toothache was not altogether unknown, and sufficient examples of diseased fangs and even a perforation of the jaw-bone from abscess at the root of a tooth could be identified.

The worn down condition of the grinding surfaces of these teeth was most remarkable; they show an amount of attrition altogether unknown at present in the British Isles; of course this is best seen in mature jaws, and during advancing life. Excessive attrition is common to all races that use food requiring a considerable degree of mastication; thus it occurs both in those who employ corn ground in hand querns, in which it becomes mixed with more or less of the sand from the mill; and it has likewise been noticed in tribes that live upon fish diet almost exclusively, as in the neighbourhood of Vancouver's Island. There were, further, several jaw bones that had belonged to persons of considerably advanced age, where the teeth had almost or altogether fallen out, and in which the bony alveolar tissue was absorbed, and had disappeared both in lower and upper jaws.

Amongst the bones which I obtained there are a number that appear worth describing, either for their size, or because they present evidences of diseased conditions. The vertebræ and some of the bones of a man were dug up who must have, when living, been of exceptional size. The vertebræ are wider—not thicker—than those preserved in the Anatomical Museum of the Dublin University, belonging to the famous Irish giant, O'Brien, so their possessor was probably a person of great bulk.

Platycnemic tibiæ were also found to be very numerous. Tibiæ

of this character are ascertained to be of frequent occurrence in French and English graveyards, referrible to dates from the fourth to the tenth century. Their presence and frequency in the Donnybrook find affords us strong additional corroboration as to the early date to which they must be ascribed. Platynemic tibiae were first observed in the cave-dwellers buried at Cro-Magnon in Perigord, belonging to the ancient Stone Period, or that when the reindeer roamed over the forests of Southern Europe. From this time they are noticed extending through the ages when polished stone weapons were employed; and out of 200 tibiae collected near Paris, at St. Marcel and St. Germain des Pres, in cemeteries belonging to dates anterior to the tenth century, 5.25 per cent. were of this platynemic form.

With the platynemic tibiae were found "channelled fibulae" having inordinately large longitudinal grooves for the insertion of muscles. Another osseous peculiarity of primitive type, the femur "a colonne" was of rather common occurrence: this primitive modification of the human thigh bone is recognised by the great development of those two posterior ridges that form the linea aspera, their prominence and separation from each other leaving an intermediate space and producing a pilaster-like appearance that extends along the middle two-fifths of the posterior aspect of the bone. Such femurs are also found in the Cro-Magnon cave-dwellers; and in the cemeteries near Paris already mentioned, it was ascertained that out of 200 femurs; in 6.5 per cent. the column was very obvious, and in 36 per cent. was slightly seen. M. Topinard says, "It seems that these peculiarities of the tibiae, femora and fibulae belonged to one and the same race in Western Europe. The 30 subjects from the cave at Sordes in the Basque Territory all exhibit them."

Several of the jaw bones were distinguished by their massive form and depth, square-shaped angles, and the unusual development of the osseous ridges for muscular attachments. Their glossal spines were developed to an extent that I believe is never seen at the present day, at least in Irish jaws, forming sharp projecting bony spines in some instances measuring fully a quarter inch in length.

There were some good specimens obtained of bones affected with chronic rheumatic arthritis. The polished eburnation of the head of a femur, its peculiar shape and osseous growths, afford unmistakeable proof that its former possessor suffered from this painful affection, so well described and illustrated by the late Dr. Robert Adams. The number of bones thus affected showed that this disease was not uncommon.

There is also a remarkable specimen of depression observed upon the upper portion of the outer surface of a frontal bone. This appears to have resulted from long-continued pressure caused by the growth of some external tumour, most probably a congenital wen of considerable size, or at least one that must have become developed early in the individual's life.

The results noticed of an old fracture of both the tibia and fibula

at the upper third are worth describing. The oblique direction of the fracture is seen, and an enormous mass of callus has united the fractured bones into one, obliterating the interosseous space. The upper end of the tibia is expanded and hollow, and was, it is probable, the seat of a local necrosis.

Two sacral bones of females were picked up, both of which are very crooked, one-half being less developed than the opposite, and the coccygeal termination, instead of being in the medial line, is at the side. These appear due to some injury sustained in early life.

Portions of the skull of an idiot were likewise obtained; they possess an unusual amount of interest. The frontal bone shows the cranium to have been that of a young person. The orbital openings are placed on a different level, the right orbit being considerably more elevated than the left. The bone itself is imperfectly developed, the entire right half being smaller than the left, and a similar condition is recognisable in the occipital bone. A face such as this individual must have possessed is delineated in Dr. Robert Smith's work on "Fractures and Dislocations." It is described as an example of the rare congenital dislocation of the lower jaw; and on looking at his plate, and comparing it with the frontal bone now found, it is impossible not to be struck with their identity of aspect. The subject is so fully worked out by Dr. Smith that it is unnecessary to do more than to refer to his accurate description. He considered this malformation so rare that in addition to his own case he records only one other example briefly noticed by M. Guerin. The case which Dr. Smith published was that of an idiot who died in the lunatic asylum at Island-bridge; the details are consequently most perfect. I regret to say that neither the lower jaw nor any bones of the face are forthcoming of my specimen, which I picked out of a mixed heap of bones thrown together; so that although there is every probability of its being an example of the very rare congenital luxation of the lower jaw, we have only the frontal and occipital bones preserved, and a portion of the parietal.

Another idiotic skull, that of a microcephalus, is in perfect preservation. It has a fairly elevated forehead, is of neat rounded shape, but the upper jaw is decidedly prognathous, the lower jaw being small and of moderate development; it resembles in miniature in every respect the class of skull which I consider of Celtic or Irish type, and of which I possess several fully developed examples from this find, but it measures in circumference only 438 millimetres. The arrest of its development has not been caused by synostosis, for the sutures are unclosed and perfect, and the age of its possessor is easily calculated, as the third molars are still in process of becoming developed. M. Broca refers to this class of demi-microcephales "all non-deformed skulls of males that possess a horizontal circumference of less than 480 millimetres, and of females those under 475 millimetres. If belonging to Europeans, they should possess an internal capacity below 1150 cubic centimetres." This condition of general or partial arrest of cerebral development will commence during the stage of intra-uterine exist-

ence, and it therefore constitutes an important anatomical variety of idiocy. The well-known Hottentot Venus, of whom I possess a portrait drawn to scale, who was exhibited as a show in different parts of Europe several years ago, and whose skeleton is preserved in a Parisian museum, was an example of this idiotic demi-microcephale. Similar skulls are occasionally to be noticed in all our large asylums for the insane and for idiots; and the Aztec children, so-called, who were shown in Dublin lately, are specimens of microcephalic idiots with dwarfed bodies.

Two portions of a skull of unusual thickness were obtained. In some parts it is almost one-third of an inch thick, measuring 15 millimetres exactly. This appears to be a natural and healthy bone, the thickening being caused by no disease whatever.

In considering the shapes of the skulls obtained that belonged to adults, for classing them, I have selected out of a large number three specimens which will illustrate the three great divisions of crania which are usually described. Of these No. 44 will represent a dolichocephalic skull, No. 21 an intermediate mesaticephalic form, and No. 22 is brachycephalic.

These classifications, which depend on the relation or ratio that the antero-posterior diameter will bear to the transverse measurement of the skull at its widest part, is calculated by the formula  $\frac{\text{Trans. diam} \times 100}{\text{an. post. diam.}}$ ; but such calculations are facilitated by the excellent Tables of Professor Flower, published in the last Catalogue of the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons of England. The index varies from

750 and under for dolichocephali,  
750 to 800 for mesaticephali,  
800 and upwards for brachycephali.

Now the cranium No. 44 affords us an index so low as 704. This is an exceptionally low result, for the skull of the average Australian savage reaches 71.49, and even the Hottentot amounts to 72.42. This cranium will agree in measurement and shape with those long and narrow skulls that are found in Long Barrows. It has lost the face and lower jaw.

No. 21, the mesaticephalic skull, is found to possess when measured an index of 754; this corresponds with the skulls of the Dolmen builders, and that of the Ancient Egyptians. It also corresponds exactly with the index ascribed by Messrs. Thurnam and Davis to the ancient Irish skull. From several considerations I am led to believe this is a typical Celtic or Irish cranium.

But on examining the skull which I first obtained, No. 22, and which, I believe, was that interred with the sword and spear, having the deep sword-cut in its frontal bone, the index rises to 833; this is,

therefore, a good specimen of a brachycephalic skull, and it corresponds in its measurements with the skulls belonging to the Croat, different German tribes, and the Finlander. I believe its original possessor was one of the mixed people who originally came from the shores of the Baltic, and whom we know in Irish history as Pirate or Black Danes.

So far as the general facies is concerned, I think we may safely recognise two different and distinct types. One of these is straight-faced or orthognathous; the other possesses a projecting upper jaw, which produces a prognathous appearance. There is no difficulty in distinguishing well-marked specimens of both forms, but some appear with intermediate features.

The skull marked 19 is an example of the orthognathous face, 22 is intermediate, 21 is prognathous.

The little microcephalic skull, as I have already stated, is likewise prognathous. The degree of forward projection of the upper jaw in any skull is ascertained by obtaining the alveolar index, the formula for which is  $\frac{\text{basivalveolar length} \times 100}{\text{basilar nasal measure}}$ . Whenever the ascertained index ranges below 980, the face must be classed as orthognathous. An index ranging from 980 to 1030 is mesognathous, and all above 1030 fall into the class of prognathous individuals.

When these typical skulls are arranged beside each other, it is easy to see the great and striking differences they present in form, and in the aspect of their faces.

I think we can amongst these skulls recognise some which fall under the Scandinavian type of Thurnam and Davis, and that, therefore, will correspond with numerous examples of people still existing in our land, in Scotland, and in the maritime districts of the east of England, where Danish settlers planted their numerous colonies. To quote the words of these accurate observers: "The skull is small and regular, has a long slender elevated aquiline nose, closely corresponding with such as prevails in the northern counties of England where Scandinavian blood predominates. A narrow, long, orthognathous face, an upright square forehead, yet neither decidedly broad nor high, having a frontal suture, a long oval outline in the vertical aspect, with distinct parietal tubers, a globose tumidness in the supra-occipital region, and a large foramen magnum."

The lower jaw belonging to this class of skull is distinguished by its massive structure, square outline, and strong everted angles. The lines for muscular attachment are always prominently developed; the chin square-shaped, projecting, and forming a predominating feature, whilst the glossal tubercles are unusually developed, becoming in some even long bony growths.

The second variety of skull is smaller, of mesaticephalic form, and of neat outline, but it presents a prominent prognathous upper jaw, which gives it a very peculiar and distinctive appearance. The nose

is short, wide, and often turned up, with depressed bridge. The lower jaw is softer in outline, less massive, rounded, and does not possess the harsh shape and strong markings of the Scandinavian type; the chin is little, if at all, prominent, and the appearance of the face is such as we have numerous examples of still in the south and west of Ireland, especially in inland districts, where the Celt has remained free from intermixture with Danish blood. I believe this form of skull represents a race that inhabited this country from a much earlier date than our Danish colonists.

The contributions to Irish ethnology have heretofore been few; but since writing the above account I have read over the Paper which was published by the late Sir William Wilde, and laid before the King and Queen's College of Physicians in the year 1844, upon the "Ethnology of the Ancient Irish Races." Sir William regarded the question from a considerably earlier period in our history, for his observations relate almost without exception to those forms of crania which were obtained from barrows, tumuli, and kistvaens, all primitive varieties of interment employed by races in Ireland in distant ages, far antecedent to the date at which the Donnybrook mound was formed. The conclusions at which he arrived may be compared, with much interest, along with those that appear justified by our examinations of the Donnybrook remains. Thus he has directed special notice to two different varieties of crania, both belonging to, and distinctive of, our early Irish races, whilst he further figured and described, as referrible to a much later period in time, the crania of Danish and Scandinavian origin, the latter being similar to those which I have obtained possessing Danish characteristics.

Now of the two primitive Irish races which he designates as Firbolg and Celt, he has given typical figures. One of these, the Firbolg cranium, will, in all probability, correspond with the remarkable dolichocephalic skull that I have described. These "long-headed, black-visaged, dark-haired, swarthy aborigines," possessed skulls that were principally characterised by "their extreme length from before backwards," or what is technically termed the "antero-posterior diameter" and the flatness of their sides. He says in addition, "Now we find similar conditions of head still existing among the modern inhabitants of this country, particularly beyond the Shannon, where the darker Firbolg race may still be traced as distinct from the more globular-headed, light-eyed, fair-haired Celtic people who live to the north-east of that river."

The earlier primitive interments of the Celtic race are to be found in kistvaens or sandstone chambers, and probably they were the race that used urn-burial also. Their origin, whence they came, and what countries they inhabited before arriving here, has proved a fertile field for speculation, but still remains an unsettled question. They may be, and probably are, the race termed in old Irish annals the "Tuatha de Danaan," who are said to have invaded and overcome the original Firbolg inhabitants, and they would seem to have intro-

duced, or at least known the use of, bronze weapons, just as at a much later period, and within historic times, the Scandinavian races were distinguished for their knowledge and free use of weapons made of iron. The crania of these Celts are "better proportioned, higher, more globular, and approach more to the better forms of Indo-European, or Caucasian skulls."

We notice, therefore, in Sir William Wilde's memoir, three separate and distinct classes of skull found in Ireland, the Firbolg, Celtic, and Dane; and it was with much surprise and interest that, after collecting all the crania I could secure from the Donnybrook mound, and submitting them to rigid examination and the most accurate of all modes of testing, namely, careful measurement and calculation, that from the group three different varieties of crania were evolved. One of these—the rarest of all—was a long-headed form of skull of low organization, that fairly corresponds with that of a Firbolg. Much more numerous were the class of Celtic skulls, properly so-called; and in addition we had types different from both, and ranging themselves with those of Scandinavian origin, and with British skulls derived from Scandinavian ancestry.

When studying the special osteological peculiarities of the human remains that were contained in this mound, I was led to consider they ought to afford "humeri with perforation of the olecranon cavity," a characteristic feature of less importance than the discovery of platy-enemic tibiae, but still one of much interest and value for corroboration of the primitive period to which these bones must be referred, as it is a condition of bony structure which dates back as an ordinary racial character to the Polished Stone Period, and to that of the Dolmen builders, and might reasonably be expected to be found in conjunction with the platy-enemic tibiae.

The workmen were accordingly directed to make special search for these missing perforated humeri, and they were at once found, as I expected they would be, and since that time I have obtained several of them; they afford us an additional point of much interest in the history of this discovery, and one deserving of being recorded.

The next subject to be considered is a description of the few objects of archæologic interest that were obtained in the course of the excavations; and limited as their number is, they are of service in enabling us to form at least an approximate idea as to the probable age of the interments.

The most important discovery was the Danish sword (Fig. 1): though broken across at the apex, and its pommel and hilt separated by the rusting of the middle portion of the handle, it still is in such a perfect condition that we can have no difficulty in recognising its distinctive characters. It is a broad-bladed straight double-edged weapon; twenty-one inches of the blade remain attached to the hilt, and it measures fifty-eight millimetres transversely near the hilt, tapering somewhat upwards. The iron hilt and pommel were found to be richly decorated with an inlaid pattern of gold and silver, and the

handle retained evident traces of having been bound round by some description of fine wire, possibly gold, but all remains of the metal here were lost. The King of Denmark some years since presented a specimen of this description of sword to the Museum of the Royal Irish Academy as an example of the Danish type of weapon, and they are found occasionally turning up in different parts of Ireland; thus others of similar shape which are in the Academy's collection were obtained in the fields near Kilmainham, and the sword which was discovered with the Danish interment at Larne, already mentioned, was identical in form with that now got at Donnybrook.

The peculiar interest attaching to this weapon is its rich inlaying of gold and silver both in hilt and pommel; it is unique in so far that no other similarly-ornamented sword has up to this time ever been found in Ireland, and it corresponds with the descriptions and drawings of decorated swords in the Danish Museum, such as we read of in old northern legends as being borne by Norse chiefs and commanders of high rank and distinction. The beautiful pattern of the inlaying will be best understood by the illustration on the next page (Fig. 3); its elegance and the mode in which the workman executed his task speak much for his talent and his taste. In an illustrated folio work of Professor Worsaae on Danish Antiquities, I find a drawing of an ornamental fibula or brooch which displays a similar pattern in every respect.

The iron spear-head (Fig. 2) that was found buried together with the sword also afforded us a recognised Danish form of this weapon; we find it figured in Worsaae's account of the Antiquities of Denmark, and it likewise corresponds in shape with the spear-top found in the Larne grave. This spear did good work in its master's hand; it still displays, adhering to its rusted surface, fragments of human bone.

Subsequent to the discovery of the sword and spear, a lady searching on the spot found three iron arrow-heads, one of which I obtained.

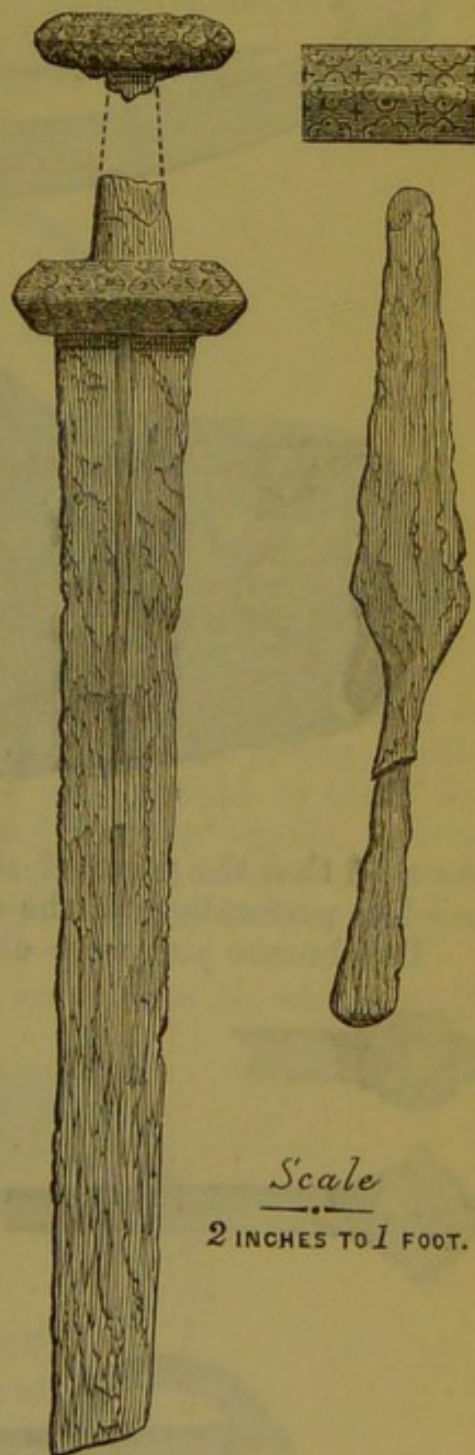


Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.

A rude dagger-blade of iron was also picked up close to the spot where the group of decapitated and perforated skulls lay, and it was

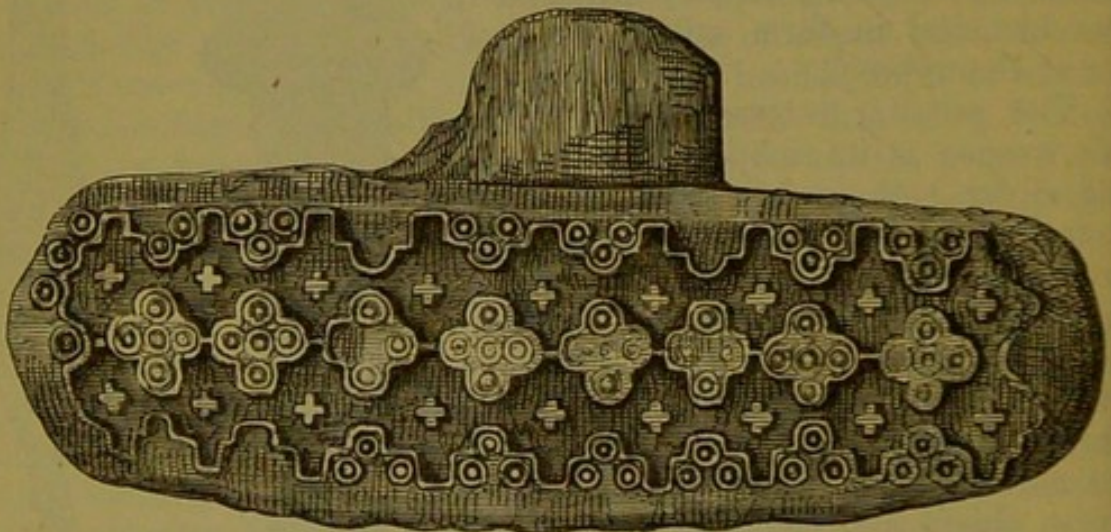
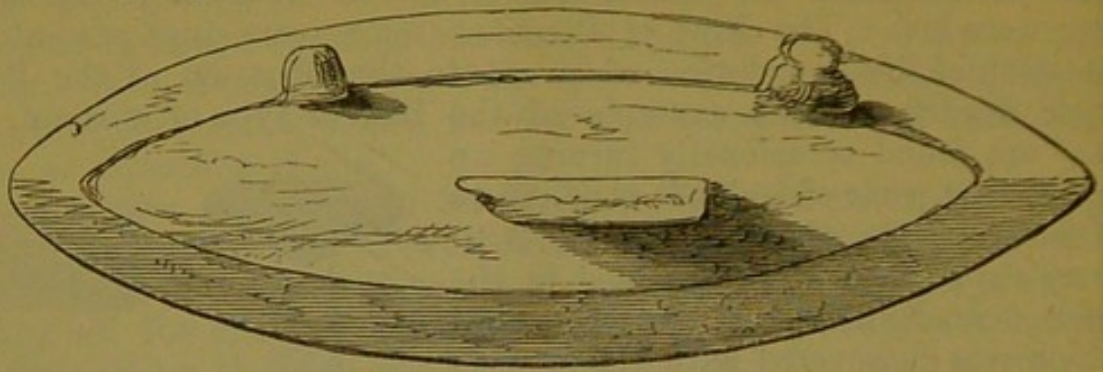


Fig. 3.

observed that the point of this dagger fitted with exactness into the nail-like perforations in the skulls.

Two bronze pins were obtained, one of them a straight pin about



Figs. 4 and 5.

3 $\frac{3}{4}$  inches in length, its head ornamented with a pattern like the cross-markings of a pine-apple or fir cone (Fig. 4). The second was one of

the characteristic Irish bronze pins of primitive manufacture, having a ring attached to its upper part; this was broken by the workmen when found, probably to try whether it was made of gold; it is such a pin both in shape and material as men and women were in the habit of using to fasten their garments. This pin (Fig. 5) was discovered lying on the level of the original soil, about twenty feet to the south of the great heap of human bodies, and not near to any skeleton, in a place where it appears to have been dropped and lost.

A simple ring of bronze was discovered *in situ* upon the finger of a skeleton, and another made of bronze wire twisted into an ornamen-

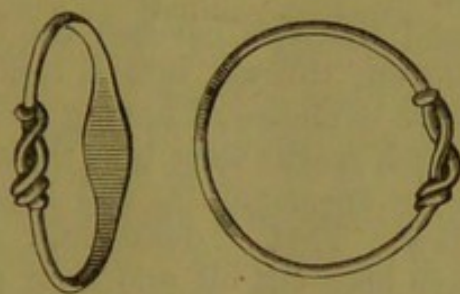


Fig. 6.

tal pattern, having a rude resemblance to two interlaced snakes (Fig. 6), was got by Dr. Todhunter, also from off the bone of the finger it encircled.

An iron ring was obtained by Dr. Macalister and myself, still remaining around the upper part of the humerus of a young female. And a second ring of rather smaller size was brought to me a few days afterwards by the workmen who found it when digging up some bones; they likewise got a thin bronze ring that measured about two inches in circumference. All these consisted of simple thin rings of metal.

A whorl of baked earthenware, such as used to be employed for

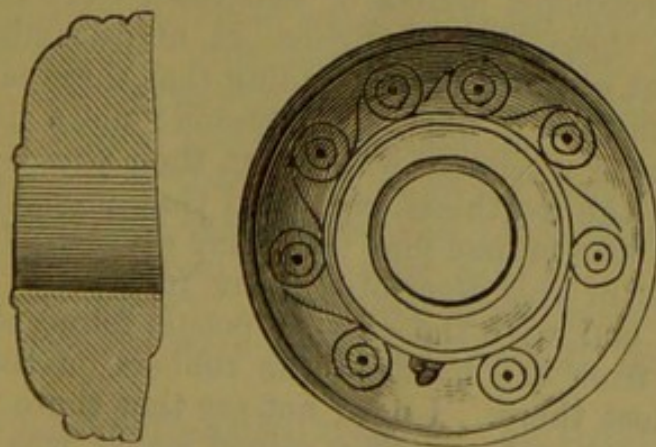


Fig. 7.

spinning, and of which an illustration is given (Fig. 7), was picked up during the excavation; it has a pretty and peculiar modification of a well-known Etruscan and Greek pattern ornamenting its surface. In

this primitive imitation of the wave ornament the curved end of the wave is represented by a single central point, which is surrounded by concentric circles, and these are joined together by means of graceful waved lines.

Such things, with a few fragments of rusted iron, the use of which it was difficult to determine, constituted the entire of the objects discovered. It would appear, therefore, that the mound contained the bones of one warrior buried apart, with his arms, sword and spear, that he had received a wound on the head from a sword sufficient to account for his death, and that at his feet were lying the remains of two women.

That the clay mound likewise covered the bones of a number of men, women, and children, thrown into a common heap; several of whom afforded conclusive evidence of having died by violence. That, as might be expected, such marks were best shown by sword-cuts, perforations from dagger or spear-points, and fractures of the bones of the head and lower jaw. That at least four groups of heads were counted, that must have been cut off and then piled up; and that, so far as could be judged, in addition to perforating wounds of the skull, these heads had received violent usage, by being thrown or kicked about, so that the face bones were broken. That with the human skeletons were mixed the scattered remains of domestic animals, detached, and sawed and broken, so that they appeared to have been cooked on the spot for human food. And that, further, the cooking stones, the charcoal of the fires, and the flint itself to kindle a fire, were all forthcoming.

The result of the exploration is conclusive that these remains of human beings were not men slain in battle. We found those of the unborn infant, the child in arms, the idiot, the lame, the mother as well as her children, both sexes alike mixed in indiscriminate confusion; and all ages, from the commencement of life to the men and women who had arrived at protracted periods of existence, were here in a common grave. Besides these clear evidences of indiscriminating massacre, we have sufficient grounds for concluding that these poor victims were stripped and plundered of all they possessed; not a single remnant of personal property or ornament was left on their persons, save two little brass rings, and the worthless iron band that probably bound a slave girl's arm. The two bronze pins that were discovered are sufficient to show that objects of this description were in ordinary use at the date of the massacre, and with the class of people found slain. They had probably fallen from the hands of the robbers on the surface of the field, and been lost there. I need not say that there were no coins of any description procured; possibly coined money was as yet unknown in Ireland, or if they possessed any, the victors took good care not to leave it behind them.

The exact date to which this wholesale destruction of human life should be referred must, in the absence of distinct historic records, remain to some extent a matter for conjecture. Sir Samuel Ferguson,

in his volume of poems lately published, has given a translation of the old bardic tale of the destruction of the house (Bruidin) of Da Derga and the death of King Conary ~~Nor~~ by the sons of Don Dessá and Ing Mel Caech. In addition to the numerous historic features of this tale, and its strange admixture of legendary belief and of fairy interference, it preserves for us this fact, that so far back as towards the end of Irish pagan times, and before the first teaching of Christian doctrines, there was a leading line of road radiating from Tara, and passing over the river Dodder not far from the sea shore; and situated on this line of road was the guest house or Bruidin da Derga, where in those primitive times a battle was fought, and numbers of warriors slain by an invading force of Pirates, the banished Irish chieftains having leagued with a British leader, Ingeel, to plunder the Irish coast. Sir Samuel Ferguson says: "In the reign of Henry III. two king's highways are described as leading from Dublin southwards; one near the sea-shore, and the other by Donnybrook. Booterstown is regarded as preserving the name of the 'bothair,' or main line of road to which they appear to have converged." It must be admitted that it becomes a matter of great interest to find preserved in an old bardic tale the distinct record of a battlefield situated in close proximity, so far as we can judge, to the scene of the present remarkable death mound; but I fear all the evidence on the subject points to a far later date for its origin than the death of King Conary.

Some speculations were made by persons ignorant of the ascertained facts, as to this slaughter being caused by the swords and bullets of Cromwell's soldiery, and to the attacks they made on Baginbun Castle; but Baginbun lay altogether on the opposite, or western, side of the Dodder, and quite out of the way, close to the present barracks of Beggar's-bush. Besides there was not a trace of pistol or gun-shot wound, nor a fragment of a lead bullet got in the entire mound. The injuries sustained were all those inflicted by sword or spear, not by gunpowder. Still less satisfactory was the idea that the mound contained the remains of those Dublin citizens slaughtered by the Wicklow tribes upon Black Easter Monday, A.D. 1209, when the Tooles and Byrnes fell on them when enjoying their sports at Cullinstown. The scene of this engagement still preserves the name of the Bloody Fields, and lies across the western bank of the Dodder; and I believe it would be useless to expect ever to find traces of slain bodies on this field, for the dead were removed to Dublin, and buried by the citizens.

The most probable explanation appears to be, that it was the result of one of those piratical descents or invasions of the Irish coasts made by robber Vikings, Danars, or Black Danes, and their ferocious allies from the Island of Scotland, which were so common in the ninth and tenth centuries. These invasions took place subsequent to, and were altogether different from, the Scandinavian settlements in Ireland of Lochlanns or Azure Gentiles, who are described in the chronicles of the time by their distinctive feature of being a white or fair-haired

race. They came to our shores under the guidance of recognised leaders, who were men of admitted rank and ability, and often claimed royal descent, and were acknowledged as their kings and chieftains. These colonists settled down and established themselves as the permanent owners of extensive districts of country. Thus they possessed the land extending for ten or fifteen miles to the north of Dublin, termed Fingal, and that to the south by Donnybrook to Dalkey; their fortified town on the Liffey, Ostmanstown, being their principal centre. Clondalkin and Swords were also fortified by them. To these Scandinavian princes, when they had consolidated their rule, we are indebted for the first coinages of silver money, and they were encouragers of trade and commerce. No doubt these warriors plundered churches and abbeys; and when they first invaded the land, they devastated it, took all they could, and drove away or enslaved the inhabitants. In time they settled down, acquired property, built our cathedrals, erected permanent dwellings and fortifications, and continued to reside here until the Norman barons in their turn arrived, when they joined with them as allies and fellow-warriors. Of different race came the Danar, the black or dark-haired foreigner, who fought against and plundered the fair Norseman as fiercely as he warred with and robbed the native Irishry; but, as Dr. Todd remarks, it is to be regretted that the writers of our annals "do not always clearly distinguish between them in the descriptions of their devastations in Ireland. We cannot even be sure that the name Dane is not sometimes given to the Norwegian. The word Dane in later times was used to signify pirate robber—a cruel and ferocious barbarian without distinction of nation."

The earliest of these piratical northern invasions is recorded to have taken place in the year A.D. 794, when Rechree was burned by the Gentiles and its shrines broken. This place is supposed to have been Raghery Island, but Rev. Dr. Reeves locates it nearer to Dublin, for he refers it to Rechree of Bregia, that is Lambay. That this descent was the work of piratical Danes, or Black pagans, is confirmed by Welsh records as well as by Irish chronicles.

After this period fresh bands of invaders continued to pour in, and about A.D. 823 several localities around Dublin and its neighbourhood were plundered, such as Swords, Duleek, Slane, Killossy near Naas, and Glendalough. Notices of these invasions are contained in the "Wars of the Gaedhill with the Gaill."

Flying from an incursion of bands of pirates such as these, we can understand how the startled inhabitants of the district, young and old, rushed from their dwellings along the sea coast, and endeavoured to cross the Dodder at Donnybrook, and so get upon the main road that led to Ath Cliath, their last hope of safety; or surprised and made captive, they may have been driven there to suffer torture and death; for with the river between them and Dublin, and their captors in possession of the ford, the prisoners were altogether helpless, and at the disposal of their assailants. At all events there remains no doubt

about their subsequent fate. We can recognise the traces of the pirates' feast; the captives themselves were plundered and cruelly treated and slain; their bodies, piled together, were left in a heap to decay, and before their friends and survivors ventured to cover them with a thin layer of clay, decomposition had already advanced, and it was impossible to recognise or separate the murdered victims. I believe the Irish wolf, too, claimed his share of the prey. The rude cairn under which they lay interred must for ages have left its traditional story in the minds of the people of that district, for the place ever after remained deserted and uncultivated. Even tradition at last failed, and all remembrance of their deaths was lost; and were it not for the accidental discovery of the sword and spear, I might in all probability have never heard of the Aylesbury-road mound, or been permitted to attempt the unravelling of its eventful records. In this Paper I have related so much of the ethnological investigations as could be detailed without publishing full measurements of the crania, and other particulars that appear better suited for a separate notice. These measurements have much importance, for no discovery of similar extent of undoubted early Irish crania belonging to the tenth or eleventh centuries has ever yet been made; and I feel much indebted to Mr. Wardrop and his family for the ample opportunities afforded me during several months for investigating every circumstance connected with the mound and its contents.

The drawings to illustrate this Paper were made by Mr. T. H. Longfield, and I have to thank him for his kindness in preparing them.

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XII.—ON CERTAIN PAPERS RELATING TO LADY BELLASYSE, AND THE PRIVATE HISTORY OF JAMES II. WHEN DUKE OF YORK. By W. FRAZER, F.R.C.S.I.

[Read, November 29, 1879.]

Who was Lady Bellasyse? She was a lady who might have been Queen of England, Susan Armine, the daughter of Sir William Armine, of Osgodby, Lincolnshire; her mother was Mary Talbot, niece of the Earl of Shrewsbury. She married Henry Bellasyse, son and heir of Lord Bellasyse, and nephew of Lord Fauconberg; he was created Knight of the Bath, but appears to have been a rash, foolish man; he quarrelled with his dearest friend, Tom Porter, Groom of the Chambers to Charles II., and for a punctilio of honour they killed each other; the duel took place in Covent Garden, in 1667. His widow captivated the affections of the Duke of York, afterwards James II., and only relinquished her claim for substantial reasons, now for the first time, I believe, fully known, although part of the consideration was her receiving a peerage for life from Charles II. in 1674, when she became Baroness Bellasyse of Osgodby, having succeeded to her family estates upon the death of her parents. Ten years afterwards she was married to a gentleman named Fortrey, of whom little is known, and she survived him. Her son, Henry Bellasyse, succeeded in 1684 to his grandfather, as Lord Bellasyse of Worlaby, and died about 1690. He married Anne Bradenel, sister of the Countess of Newborough, and she afterwards married Charles Lennox, Duke of Richmond. Lady Bellasyse herself died 6th January, 1713.

Bishop Burnet, in his *History of His Own Times*, gives an interesting account of this lady, referring to whom he says:—

“The Duke [of York] was now looking for another wife. He made addresses to the Lady Bellasis, the widow of the Lord Bellasis’s son. She was a zealous Protestant, though she married into a popish family. She was a woman of much life and great vivacity, but of a very small proportion of beauty, as the Duke was often observed to be led by his *amours* to objects that had no extraordinary charms. Lady Bellasis gained so much on the Duke, that he gave her a promise under his hand to marry her; and he sent Coleman to her to draw her over to popery, but in that she could not be moved. When some of her friends reproached her for admitting the Duke so freely to see her, she could not bear it, but said she could show that his addresses were honourable. When this came to the Lord Bellasis’s ears, who was her father-in-law, and was a zealous papist, and knew how untractable the lady was in those matters, he gave the whole design of bringing in their religion for gone if that was not quickly broke; so he, pretending a zeal for the King and the Duke’s honour,

went and told the King all he had heard. The King sent for the Duke, and told him it was too much that he had played the fool once; that was not to be done a second time, and at such an age. The lady was also so threatened that she gave up the promise, but kept an attested copy of it, as she herself told me."—See Bishop Burnet's *History of His Own Times*, p. 198, 2-volume edition.

The end of this amour was that the Duke of York at once proposed for and married the daughter of the Duke of Modena, and when the eventful June 10th, 1688, arrived, the birth-day of the long-wished-for Prince of Wales, Burnet again mentions Lady Bellasyse as being one of the two ladies present at that important event. He says: "Lord Arran sent notice to the Countess of Sunderland, so she came. The Lady Bellasis came also in time." Many years passed, and in the latter end of the reign of Queen Anne Dean Swift, in one of his letters to Mrs. Dingley, mentions her death, and that Lord Berkeley of Stratton had succeeded by her will to about £10,000, which she had left him.

Some original letters of this Lady Bellasyse and of Lord Berkeley's lately fell into my possession, and they afford us a large amount of information, quite unknown up to this time, respecting her, and, I may add, quite unsuspected; yet she was no unimportant person, and must have had a narrow escape of sitting on a royal throne as Queen of England. There are two letters written at her dictation, and signed by herself, that demonstrate beyond question that she must have retained to an advanced period of life all the cleverness and shrewdness she is stated to have possessed thirty-four years previously, when she captivated the affections of the Royal Duke, and obtained from him a written promise of marriage. They also demonstrate beyond question that this clear-headed widow was not unmindful of her own interests, and made right good terms with James, securing for herself no less than £2000 a-year, charged upon the Irish estates he possessed, and that she continued to draw her princely fortune to the end of her long life. As citizens of Dublin, this annuity has additional interest for us, for we find she had for paymasters well-known Dublin people, namely, Mr. Chaigneau and Sir John Rogerson. Sir John was Lord Mayor in the year 1693, and his name is still recorded by Sir John Rogerson's-quay. These worthy people appear to have regarded Lady Bellasyse and her recurring payments in a different light from that in which she viewed them, and to have felt unreasonable annoyance at the tenacity of life of the old lady, who managed to draw her very handsome allowance from the Irish estates of James all through the reigns of William III. and Anne, whilst it is more than doubtful whether James was able to obtain the least aid or assistance for himself from these same estates all the years he lived at St. Germain, a pensioner on the King of France.

The following *verbatim* copy of a letter, dated November 11, 1712, and signed by Lady Bellasyse, which I exhibit to the Members of the Royal Irish Academy, appears to me to possess most interest.

The second letter, dated August 16, 1712, relates to the same circumstances, but gives less particulars, and is not so important or full of details.

“ KENSINGTON, *Novemb<sup>r</sup> ye 11<sup>th</sup>*, 1712.

“ MR. REDING,

“ My Lady Bellasyse did hope that before this time she should have sent you an answer in full to your letter and instructions how to proceed against S<sup>r</sup> John Rogerson. She and all the world must owne he is an original. My Lady saw M<sup>r</sup>. Whichet before his going to Ireland, and she was to have seen him y<sup>e</sup> next day by appointment, but her not being well prevented it, in order to have had my Lord Whorton and some other hands, to her being alive, and being the very Lady Bellasyse to whom the Duke of York granted at ent charge of 2000 pound a year out of his private estate in Ireland.

“ She supposes that the inclosed, which she sends you, will be usefull, and have the same effect. My Lord Marlborough and my Lord Berkeley being of her acquaintance at that time, and they both did her the favour to come to Kensington, to her house. Her Lady<sup>p</sup> indisposition has turned to a fit of ye gout, upon which they wished her joy, and her lady<sup>p</sup> says you may doe ye same to S<sup>r</sup> John Rogerson, and tell him from her that her physician gives her great hopes she may live 20 or 30 year longer. Her lady<sup>p</sup> would have you wait upon M<sup>r</sup>. Whichet, and if he thinks it of consequence to have it attested by any more, her lady<sup>p</sup> can, with very little trouble, send him a scrowl as long as from here to Chearin Cross. After you have waited of M<sup>r</sup>. Whichet, you will be able to Inform her in what manner he thinks it propper to proceed in her concerns, and her lady<sup>p</sup> leaves it to him and to you to pitch upon ye propper person of them you have named to employ.

“ If the exchange continue low and that you have any money in your hands, her lady<sup>p</sup> desires you will send it over.

“ BELLASYSE.

“ *For* MR. DAVID REDING,

“ *To be left at the Post House in Ireland.*”





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on first page.

Tight gutters throughout.

