

The archives of France and the records of the Birmingham Tower in Dublin Castle reveal to the curious the genealogy of Marshal MacMahon away down from the middle of the fifteenth century. It was published in the Irish Press at the time when, the Italian campaign having been victoriously concluded by Napoleon III. and the Marshal, Ireland presented a sword of honour to the soldier whom she delighted to call her son. Terence MacMahon of Clonderal, in the County Clare, married Helens, daughter of Maurice Fitzgerald, Earl of Kildare, and died in 1472. His son, Donatus, married Honoria O'Brien of Thomond; and their son, Terence, married the daughter of "The MacNamara Beagh," by whom he had a son, Bernard, who married Margaree, daughter of Donatus O'Brien of Daugh. Murtagh, son of Bernard, married the daughter of a colonel of horse in the army of the ill-starred Charles I, and became father of Maurice MacMahon, who married the daughter of the Knight of Glinn. Their son, Murtagh, married Miss MacSheehy of Ballylinan, and they had a son, Patrick of Torrodile, in the County Limerick, who married Margarita, daughter of Major John O'Sullivan of Bentry, in the County of Cork, of the House of O'Sullivan Beare. Licking his fortunes to those of James II, Patrick MacMahon sheathed his sword, and retired with his wife—"a lady," says the records, "of the rarest beauty and virtue"—to the hospitable shelter of La Belle France. Their son, John MacMahon of Autun married a French heiress, and was raised to the rank of noble under the title of Comte d'Equilly; and we read that on the 28th of September, 1749, this Count applied to the Irish Government and the Sir Bernard Burke of the day to have his family record duly authenticated, lest his posterity should ever fail to remember the cradle of their ancestors and the Irish origin of which they were justly proud. This Count d'Equilly was the grandfather of Marshal MacMahon, Duc de Magenta, in whose Christian name of Patrick as well as in whose surname MacMahon is evidence of his Irish descent and connection. Marie Edmund Patrick Maurice de MacMahon was born at Sully, in the department of Saone et Loire, on the 13th July, 1808, the birth-year also of his Imperial master, Napoleon III. He was therefore at the time of his death in his eighty-fifth year—seven years older than Prince Bismarck. MacMahon's father was a peer of France, and one of the most intimate personal friends of Charles X. It is curious to note that MacMahon himself served under two Bourbon kings, two Republics, and an Emperor, in France. The swords of the Irish exiles were devoted to France rather than to her Governments, and to her their allegiance never swerved or failed. When he was only seventeen years of age, a slim, upright, golden-haired youth, MacMahon entered the famous military school of St Cyr, where he studied the profession of arms for five years. In 1830 he first saw active service, and received his baptism of fire in Algeria, the training ground of French captains. He was attached to the headquarters staff. In 1832 he took part in the expedition to and siege of Antwerp, where he acted aide-de-camp to General Achard. In the last month of the next year he was gazetted captain and he returned to Africa, where he displayed the most signal valour in several brilliant brushes with the Arabs. He was attached as aide-de-camp to many French generals during the Algerian wars, and at the storming of Constantine in the year 1837 he especially distinguished himself. Three years afterwards, having passed into the infantry, he commanded the 10th battalion of Foot Chasseurs, and next became Lieutenant-colonel of the Foreign Legion. He was made colonel of the 41st Regiment of the Line on the 24th of April, 1845, when only thirty-seven years of age, and was a general of brigade at 40. It was here to be recorded that just as he afterwards won the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour, storming the Malakoff in the Crimea, and as he was presented with his Marshal's baton and his Dukedom on the field of Magenta, so for his courage at the siege of Constantine, already mentioned, he was *decore* as officer of the Legion; he won the grand riband of commander in July, 1849, and the glittering star of Grand Officer on the 10th of August, 1853. In 1852 MacMahon had become General of Division, and commanded in that capacity at Constantine until April, 1855, when, the Crimean War having broken out, he was recalled from Africa to Paris for service against tougher foes than Arabs, Bedouins of the desert, or Algerians. In the month of August, 1855, he was appointed to the command of a division of infantry in the corps of Marshal Boquet. The bungling or bravery of the Crimean campaign this is not the place or time to tell. Suffice to say that when it was decided to attempt the fortalices of Malakoff and the Redan as the keys of Sebastopol by a *coup de main* the Franco-Irish general it was that was chosen to head the stormers of the former, while by the English was undertaken the perilous feat of attacking the latter. Everyone knows how the assault upon the Redan was bloodily repulsed, while the heroic MacMahon, inspiring his men with his own spirit, succeeded in a few moments in carrying the frowning and formidable works of the Malakoff. Summoned to retire from a position judged untenable, he returned the famous answer that alive or dead he would remain there. Sustained by the almost superhuman *elan* of his soldiers, MacMahon endured the desperate onslaught of the Russians for hours, until at length, wearied, baffled, and despairing, the

black-painted bayonets of the grey-coated masses of the foe were seen from the crumbling parapets and towers of the fort in full retreat. As we have said, this feat of arms, winning as it did Sebastopol for the Allies, bore to MacMahon's breast the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour, to which distinction was soon added the dignity of Senator of France. The Queen of England recognised MacMahon's services to the allies by making him Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath. The close of the Crimean War brought little term of rest to the soldier. In 1857 we find him again in Africa commanding a division of infantry and chasing the Kabyles to their remotest fastnesses and strongholds over the desert. He was shortly after appointed by the Emperor Commander-in-chief of all the Algerian forces by land and sea. In 1859 General MacMahon was hastily summoned from North Africa to the command of the Second Corps d'Armee of the Alps, when the French with Napoleon in person at their head swept down upon the Austrians and the Quadrilateral. On the 4th of June, 1859, the sun of M'Mahon's military glory reached its zenith. On the battlefield of Magenta he, by his timely arrival, saved the Emperor and defeated the Austrians. He was rewarded with the coveted baton of a marshal of France, and was created duke, with the title of the little town on the road to Milan which gave its name to the engagement. Solferino (the 24th June) soon followed Magenta, and the white uniform of the Austrian disappeared off the plains of Lombardy. The reception of Napoleon and his generals on their triumphant return is a Parisian memory; and the Duc de Magenta, with his laurels thick upon him, the man whom the Emperor delighted to honour, the idol of the soldiers, the darling of the martial-minded people, was the cynosure of all eyes, the hero of the hour, the lion of the gay capital. It was there in the full blaze of this welcome to the brave soldier that the proposal was made to present the Franco-Irish marshal with a sword of honour from Ireland. A sum of £500 was called for. £700 was subscribed in a short time. An Irish artist, Mr E. Fitzpatrick, furnished a graceful design, and a magnificent sword and scabbard were manufactured. The Marshal intimated that he would feel highly honoured and truly happy to receive so great a mark of regard from his "ancient compatriots." The Emperor graciously assented to the presentation; and Mr T. D. Sullivan and Dr George Sigerson were deputed to convey the sword and its accompanying address to the Marshal, who was at the time in command at the great camp at Chalons. The camp was *en fete* in honour of the occasion. On Sunday the Irish deputation arrived. Marshal MacMahon was attended by a crowd of generals and officers invited for the occasion. The troops were paraded. The display was magnificent in the extreme. The deputation presented the sword to the Marshal, and the following address, engrossed in Irish and French, and signed on behalf of the Irish committee by The O'Donoghue, M.P., chairman; and Mr P. J. Smyth and Mr T. D. Sullivan, hon secs:—"Excellency,—It is from that isle, the native land of your ancestors—it is in the name of a nation which through all the vicissitudes of its history, through good as through ill fortune, has ever known how (even 'mid blood and tears) to recognise worth and to show its sympathy for true valour—that we come to offer this tribute of affection to the genius and bravery of the gallant warrior who has once more identified the hereditary chivalry of Erin with the glory of Imperial France. Excellency, that land once ruled by those whose royal blood flows in your veins has felt the burthen of most unhappy days; but the glory her exiled sons have bestowed on her, by their soldierly virtues on fields of battle, and by their wisdom in the councils of Europe, is for her brow still encircled with the crepe of her widowhood, as it were a laurel which interlaces the funeral wreath of her immense sorrows. In more than one bloody battle at Cremona, as at Fontenoy, this renown has shone with the splendour of victory. To-day Ireland proclaims with the just pride of a mother that you, the heroic descendant of one of her greatest monarchs, have added new brilliancy to the glory of our nation on the smoking towers of the Malakoff and on the ever-memorable plains of Magenta. Illustrious hero of the chivalry of Celtic France, Ireland loves with the most tender love her children who, in a foreign land, yet remember with filial affection the land which gave birth to their ancestors. Excellency, you have given incontestible proofs of that affection, so warm and so deeply felt in your soldier's heart. Ireland is, then, proud to recognise in you the valiant chief, of Irish blood, whose military genius has maintained unstained the flag of victorious France—that noble nation, the sister of our own. She is bappy, too, to recognise in you the Christian hero who has preserved for the cross that hereditary fidelity of his royal ancestors; she sees also in you the worthy descendant of that heroic king who crushed the fierce foes of Ireland on the bloody plain of Clontarf. It is, then, Ireland which presents to you this sword, whose chased sheath and shining blade are the types of her ancient glory and civilisation. Under the emblems of gold, of steel, and of jewels, Ireland desires also to offer to you, the valiant scion of chivalrous ancestors, the symbols of those virtues which should adorn the escutcheon of a Christian hero. In you she is well assured these virtues will ever be as brilliant as the jewels which decorate the hilt of this sword, as pure as the gold which covers the sheath. By this tribute which