

O'CONNELL'S DAYS TO A MINSTREL

Recalled By Death Of Memories Of a Piper Centenarian

LINK WITH THE FAMINE PERIOD

The days of O'Connell and his trips through West Limerick are recalled by the death of Mrs. Honora D. Collins, Ballymacjordan, Abbeyfeale, who has passed away four months after receiving his letter of congratulation and customary gift of £5 from the President, Dr. Douglas Hyde, on having attained her 100th year. Born at Ballymacjordan, she told Dr. William O'Connor a few weeks before her death that she never had any need for medical attention during her long life. She was most entertaining when relating, as she did in a very intelligent manner, many interesting tales of her girlhood. In the years succeeding the famine she had heard many harrowing stories from those who survived it. In her youth she had also heard many accounts concerning the visits of O'Connell to Abbeyfeale, when the Liberator was journeying by coach from Abbeyfeale to Newcastle West, or returning to Derrynane. Those who drove him lived many years after his death. At the Abbeyfeale Inn, where horses were held in readiness for each coach, interesting records were kept. The proprietor, Mr. David Leahy, was a man of remarkably accurate business methods. His register, still extant, shows some of the best journeys of O'Connell to and from Derrynane prior to his death in Genoa. One entry records that on the 17th of January, 1836, the horses in his coach were—"Fox" and "Tidy," "Jack" and "Major," and the drivers, "Burke" and "Billy." The fare was £1 8s. 0d., and the drivers' tips 6/-. The run was to Newcastle West. O'Connell was probably returning to active life at Westminster or hurrying over the Kerry and Limerick hills to save some poor fellow from transportation, or worse, at some special or Assize Court. It was on this occasion Mr. Leahy, the inn proprietor, received a letter from O'Connell, still preserved, stating that he would be in Abbeyfeale some time after last Mass on the Sunday concerned, and that he would not allow any man drive him who had not heard Mass. On a similar journey the following year, 7th January, 1837, his horses were "Jack," "Tinker," "Bess" and "Mouse," and the drivers, "Bowling" and "Minahan." Fare and tips were the same.

There was a very large attendance at the funeral of Mrs. Collins on the 4th inst., when she was interred in St. Mary's Cemetery, Abbeyfeale. Prayers at the graveside were read by the Rev. Father Connolly, P.P., Athea; Very Rev. P. Canon Carroll, P.P., V.F.; Rev. J. Halpin, C.C.; Rev. J. Liston, C.C.; Rev. Father O'Beirne, C.C.

Reduction in Price

"RADIANT"

The Reliable Household

HIS GENIUS

He was a small, wee, silver-bearded man, the piper of my youth, always threadbare and ever thankful for a copper or a bit of "baccy," which my grandfather never refused him; not that grandfather was kindly towards beggars—he loathed them—their raids on the contents of his haggard being, at once, frequent and rapacious. But Thady, the piper, as we knew him, was in a different class to that of his confreres of the highway. To begin with, his Gaelic was rich and musical, more musical than the sounds which passed for "music" that he insisted on coaxing out of his well-worn but beloved instrument—the pipes. I can see him now, the twilight falling (it was at dusk that he played most), his aged fingers fondling the keys with a skill and assurance born of more than thirty summers playing throughout the towns and villages of West Waterford.

An admirer of Bacchus (what "knight" such as he isn't?) the charge of over-indulgence could never be laid at Tadhg's door, or, should I say, his "pillow," for he seldom slept indoors, at least, so the grey heads of the village used say amongst themselves when they thought that we, youngsters, were paying no attention to their confabs.

We, children, had added respect for him ever since the day he addressed us as "Men of the Deise," while after the occasion on which he recited, from beginning to end, without the slightest stammer, the poem "Caoch O'Leary" (it was in the Third Standard Reader) we regarded him as little short of a genius. It seems strange that he learned that poem from beginning to end; perhaps it was because the Blind Piper of the poem had so much in common with himself.

Hard put to it to keep body and soul together, and claiming more intimate association with Bacchus than with Orpheus, this itinerant piper, nevertheless, took his calling seriously. Ever on the qui vive to pick up some new air and to transmit it to the recesses of the green baize of his pipes to be emitted at the appropriate time and place, the strangely weird strains of his swirling instrument could often be heard piercing the night air, as he lay in some lonely barn or cabin, oblivious of all, save the melody that filled his soul. The story is still told of the returned American who, passing the local "rath" one night, after dark, heard the strains of music emanating therefrom. A few minutes later he arrived at a neighbour's house, convinced that he had heard "fairy" music. Tadhg turned out to be the "fairy."

He had one gift, for a gift it certainly was, that, to this day, puzzles all who claimed his acquaintance. Take a diary and ask him to name the day of the week on which any particular date fell, be it past or future; the answer would come after a few seconds' mental effort. I never knew him to be wrong, even when the date was as far ahead as nine or ten months.

My last recollection of meeting him was on the occasion of a return visit of mine to the old homestead after many years abroad.

WHO OWNS

Meaning Of V "Remove"

LENGTHY ARGUMENT COUNSEL

Two senior counsel, two counsel, two solicitors, as a number of technical (writes our Ennis correspondent) spent two days at Ennis the legal meaning of the word "remove," before Arbitrator Kelly of Dublin, President of the Royal Institution of Architects of Ireland, who reserved his

Mr. Kelly was the official Arbitrator to decide a dispute between building contractor P. C. McMahon, roadmore, Ennis, and the Mental Hospital authorities represented by the Clare Co. Council.

The point at issue concerned a structure known as a temporary kitchen which was erected by a contractor in the course of work as contractor for the building of a main kitchen block laid down in the specifications. The structure was to be removed on completion of the main building. The contractor contended that the word "remove" meant to take the temporary kitchen site and that it automatically came his property; the Hospital authorities contended that the temporary kitchen was to be removed to another part of the site and became their property. The question to be decided turned on the legal meaning of the word "remove" when used in building contracts and was held to be an important matter of point of view of the building in general.

Mr. T. K. Liston, S.C., and Mr. J. Walshe, State Solicitor, appeared for Mr. McMahon; Mr. O'B. Fitzgerald, S.C., and Mr. Danaher, B.L. (instructed by Mr. P. F. Moloney, solr.), appeared for the Mental Hospital authorities.

Among the witnesses were Messrs. P. C. McMahon, contractor; P. J. Sheahan, architect, Limerick; C. Quin, architect, E. A. Newenham, D. McLaughlin, building contractor, Limerick; Senator J. J. O'Connell, Clerk of Works.

In the course of his evidence Mr. Liston submitted that the word "remove" meant to take away. The contractor was to take away the material having done so was entitled to the disposal of them as he thought fit. Even if a person knew the meaning of the word "remove" about a building contract he would look up a dictionary to find the meaning of the word. The move was to take away the material which they observed throughout the contract. It confirmed the interpretation of the word "remove" as taking away. For some time the County Council had taken to this temporary structure and wanted it left there as it was out of keeping altogether with the parent building. The structure had a corrugated roof and could never be designed as part of the cut-stone building.

For the County Council Mr. O'B. Fitzgerald argued, by Mr. O'B. Fitzgerald and Mr. Danaher that a