DUBLIN FOR ARCHÆOLOGISTS: BEING THE OPENING ADDRESS OF THE ANTIQUARIAN SECTION IN DUBLIN.[1]

By Sir THOMAS DREW, R.H.A., F.R.I.B.A.

Introductory.

I feel in this chair, in this old room of the Royal Irish Academy house haunted by the spirits of great Irishmen—scholars and archæologists—how it is in the land of surprises that such a one as he who is called to address the Antiquarian Section of the Royal Archæological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland should take this honourable place. It is a notable occasion when such a society has transferred its session from the capital of the United Kingdom to a provincial chief city. The occasion puts it on me a first duty of courtesy to pronounce words of heartiness to our visitors of the Institute in the name of its two kindred societies —of the Royal Irish Academy, and the Royal Society of the Antiquaries of Ireland; in the names of the Church dignitaries custodians of our ancient and chief treasure-houses; in the name of scholars far above me; in the name of the keepers of our national and civic records; in the name of a host of well-meaning amateur archæologists (with whom I am classed); in the name of all stranger-loving hospitable citizens of Dublin—to say Welcome!

Yet there is for one who has known it long and revisits this room a note of sadness in thinking that this meeting in Ireland has been deferred so long. It seems but so few years since among the hosts of the Institute might have been some of the greatest of Irish scholars and archæologists—now, alas! but great names. There is perhaps the cheering side that our meeting now is in the day of popular archæology for everybody, when for one profound archæologist of the past day, there are now ten unprofound but interested followers of archæology as a popular diversion. Our oak trees seem to have fallen,

[1] Read in Dublin, July 18th, 1900.

and our aftergrowth of the woods is not quite the same. Among those whom it has been my privilege to know in forty years, this room suggests the memory of such as these :—

WILDE.—Sir William Wilde, an Irishman of Irishmen, who first gave to Irish archæology a breath of popular life ; scientist and scholar ; the accurate exponent and cataloguer of our Collection of Irish Antiquities ; but, with a noble savagery of his Irish origin, happiest as the open-air archæologist, among the mountains and glens, and by the rivers and lakes of his, to him, incomparable native land, with its folk-lore, chronicles, and memories.

FERGUSON.—Sir Samuel Ferguson, surely the poet of Irish archæology *par excellence;* whose *Lays of the Western Gael, Congal,* and the *Book of Howth* have charmed many romantic souls into the paths of archæology ; yet who, as the editor of the *Leabhar Breac* and writer on Ogham inscriptions, and as the methodical Deputy Keeper of Irish records, was no less the sane and accurate student.

REEVES (better known in best years of a long, laborious life as Dean Reeves), sometime Bishop, first of Irish scholars and ecclesiastical historians, kindliest and most courteous of great men, is a familiar and handsome presence missed in this chamber.

STOKES.—George Stokes, D.D., the historian of the Celtic and Anglo-Norman Churches, who breathed life into the dry bones of Irish ecclesiastical history, and made it fascinating as a subject to ordinary Irish people—lately gone.

GILBERT.—Sir John Gilbert, historian and profound scholar, first of editors of Irish records, who made this city of Dublin that you are visiting an open book, and a fascinating one too, in his history of its highways and byways, who contributed more to the true history of Ireland in a long and laborious life than any other writer. This is a figure whose presence and genial companionship is but lately missed. We have not the survival or replacement of Irish scholars of their day and class to present to you—visitors—a learned address upon Irish archæology. So it falls to the ordinary "man of the street" (yet one who knows and loves his streets) to tell visitors something

of what Dublin can show to the roving archæologist. It may be a little better than the guide-book of commerce, for never was any decent old city with a history so ill provided with decent handbooks of fairly accurate or reliable information.

And now for the paradox of the occasion, for I am addressing you as archæologists pure and consistent. You have not come to visit an Irish city at all! You are not now even in the city of Dublin or very near it! As archæologists you must shut your eyes to much that is present, and see visions. This map on the wall presents the main part of what is to the modern man Dublin, but this little red patch is but the Dublin *intra muros* which a rightly minded archæologist should condescend to recognise.

As for your present location, you are far away from the City—in its eastern suburbs. You are in pleasant green fields known by the name of the "Mynchens' Mantle" (a pretty name, Mynchyn, I believe for nuns of doubtful age and antecedents). There is a village of "Le Hogges" lying between you and Dublin with an archæological history of its own. Walk straight down this street, now called Dawson Street (if you open your eyes for a minute), and but a bow-shot from this place you are barred in your northern course by the south wall of the dissolved monastery of All Hallows. You are in Patrick's Well Lane—*Venella quæ ad fontem S. Patricii ducit.* I presume you do not look for anything newer than 300 years ago and forbear to read the signboard with "Nassau Street" overhead. You are standing over a sacred well of St. Patrick. It is the veritable one, according to Gilbert's excellent authority, and it is there still and can be entered and venerated from the provost's garden. For the Provost, Fellows, and Scholars of the College and University of the Holy and Undivided Trinity, founded by Queen Elizabeth near Dublin, have taken the place of the prior and monks of All Saints' Irish Priory, which an Irish king, Dermot Mac Morough, founded in 1162. This is a *civitas* within itself, and an Irish one. Dublin you have ostensibly come to visit. It is a town of foreigners and lies within its own walls away to the west. All Hallows you may revisit when you have exhausted interest in

Dublin City proper. It has no inconsiderable store of archæologic interest of its own, although no trace of the monastery is now on view.

The Dublin which you are on the way to visit is as absolutely un-Irish in its history and associations for the archæologist as if it were in another land. The archæologist is to look for nothing in it that is Celtic and no Irish hand or influence in its architecture. You must go beyond the Irish Pale to study any of the interesting characteristic architecture of the mere Irish school. Within the colonists' city of Dublin there is none, for no native had footing in the exclusive fortress of the foreign invaders—first Dane, then Anglo-Norman—who held him at bay without the walls through some centuries of history.

Somewhere about 850 A.D.—allowing a discount of 400 years or so to Irish chroniclers—it may have been when the now interesting marauders, white "Gaels" or black, Vikings, Northmen, Ostmen, makers of history in these islands, ran their long galleys into the Liffey estuary, and made a footing on Irish shore. It was in a time when, in the wide Delta of the river, spring tides would have rippled up to the walls of the chapel of All Hallows, where the modern belfry of Trinity College stands on the site of the old one. But a few months ago I uncovered the old river margin in the college and its landing stage for boats. The Northmen liked such low estuaries in England, Ireland, and Scotland, where they could run in and beach their sea-going galleys, and here, according to custom. they did so, and set up the "Great Steyne," a standing pillar-stone which gave its name in like way to Steyn in Scotland, Staines at Windsor, and probably Brighthelmstone or familiar Brighton. This our record of the Danes was standing within the century and probably now lies buried under the raised street at Crampton's monument in College Street. The meadows of the Steyne and Hoggen Green, now known as modern College Green, and Dame Street, lying outside the fortified entrenchment of the city, the Danes held through their occupation of 300 years at least, for their law-giving, warlike games and recreation and burial purposes. The Dun of Dublin, a crest or ridge of strategic capability, now crowned by the ancient city cathedral which we shall visit to-morrow, they made their

circumvallated fortress. It had an Irish name, tradition said, of *Druim-Coll-Choil*, the "Wood of the Ridge of the Hazels." Henceforth in foreign Danish or Anglo-Norman holding it was to know no Celtic name for twelve centuries. Yet in this year of 1900 barrow-loads of hazel-nuts, thrown up from the peat that crowns the Dun, attest the tenacity of name tradition.

This is to be remembered in understanding ancient Dublin—that it gives up its own internal evidence that it had no existence as a city, Ptolemy and the Dublin guide-books to the contrary notwithstanding, until the Danish pirates made it their *pied-à-terre* and held it grimly against the natives until 1014. In that year a famous battle, fought with an Irish coalition under King Boroimhe at Clontarf, weakened their hold on Dublin, but did not dislodge them. A certain amount of fusion, that resulted through intermarriages with daughters of native race, softened animosities; a certain fashion of a sort of Christianity, that reached them from their relatives of Scandinavia, spoiled their fine qualities for murdering, pillaging, and annexing Irish Church treasures as matter of business. In 1038 Sigtryg Silkbeard, the Danish King of Dublin, with Donatus, his Danish bishop, actually founded a Christian church. He called it a CHRISTCHURCH, *i.e.* a head church or cathedral, and so left us one more Scandinavian word among the dozen or so we can quote in Ireland among proper names and place nomenclature. You can walk to-morrow in the crypt surviving of Sigtryg's church. I know of no other Danish church yet to be pointed to in the many foothold settlements all over the British Islands of these strange people who left so little written record of their occupation. I can, however, warn from the example of Dublin that there is much interesting unworked archæology for the English and Scottish archæologist in Danish ecclesiastical foundations. For instance, he who would take Christchurch, Hampshire, in hand would throw a new and interesting light on its history.

It seems to some archæologists of Dublin that one who would take up fresh study of another Christchurch of the Holy Trinity, *nomine vocatam* Canterbury Cathedral,

might, in the light of Irish discovery, find some unwritten records analogous to our Dublin ones, and an unsuspected connexion with Danish England beyond the mere occupancy of the see by Odo "the Severe," a Dane by birth, A.D. 942–959.

At Dublin, Waterford, and Limerick we have still the separate Danish communities within their own walls surviving after Clontarf battle in 1014 until the Anglo-Norman invasion of 1169; somewhat mixed in matter of marriages, and Christians of their own fashion, but with neither part nor lot with the ancient Celtic Church of the country. They elected their bishops by lay vote and sent to Canterbury for orders or consecration. Armagh, primatial see of Ireland, and native orders they treated with scorn, and held themselves free, as in the good old free times, to burn it or pillage it of its pious relics if so minded.

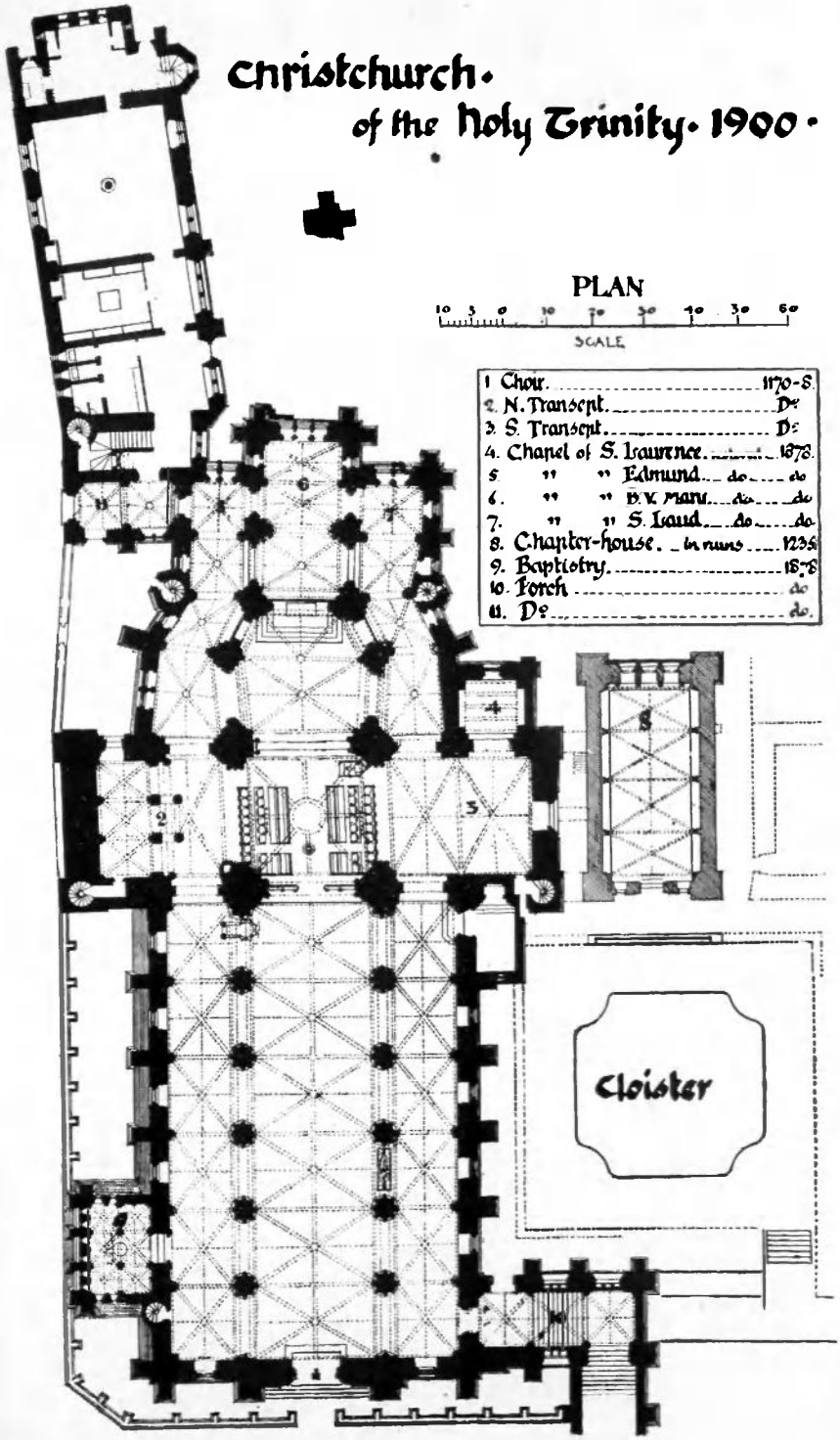
Some elementary sketch of the history of Dublin is necessary to be taken in before intelligently understanding its archæology, and especially that of its chief monuments, the cathedrals.

The history of present Ireland starts, according to chronicle, at 1169. It is unnecessary to fix it at an arbitrary date, or be concerned with the petty faction fights and tribal incidents of an inglorious warfare earlier. The wave of settlement of the dominant and masterful people of Anglo-Norman ascendancy on the neighbouring island of Ireland, was as inevitable as fate. It was but the destiny at its birth of an imperial race—yet to overflow many lands in seven centuries to follow—to pass over a narrow sea to master a ruder, divided people. Their history of petty skirmishes, much dwelt on by local chronicles, are not, as history, now worth time to read about. They shrink, to be but trivial incidents in the march of historic event. I do not recommend to the exhaustive study of any visitor the history of the invasion of Ireland; yet in making intelligible what Dublin has for the archæologist, it is absolutely necessary for him to take in some incidents of the English settlement in it.

For instance, I have to face the inevitable query, "Why has Dublin two cathedrals?" It is not a conun-

To face page 292.

Christchurch. of the Holy Trinity. 1900.



drum—I could bear with that kind of thing; but it is a question which becomes a terror when scores of times put, sprung on one as congenial conversation by a next-door neighbour at dinner, and by the tourist or mere tripper as one passes through either cathedral. Therefore will I be borne with if I anticipate the querist by giving so much history of the Anglo-Norman settlement in Ireland as accounts for two cathedral churches of one communion standing side by side, for the most part each of contemporaneous English style, both by the hands of English builders, and of materials sea-borne from the same English quarries.

No warrior, no Churchman, no battle-field struggle, could have diverted the destiny of Ireland, but the personality of some engaged in history-making, and leaving record in the architectural monuments which the archæologist studies, cannot be ignored. Therefore shall I inflict on you such sketch of history as is bound up with its chief monument and standing witness, the old City and Diocesan Cathedral. It will deal with the personalities of "Strongbow," first and principal invader, of his sister Basilea, the wife of Raymond-le-Gros, and of Laurence O'Toole, their ally, the Hiberno-Danish Bishop of Dublin, who received the invaders in friendship and joined with them.

Strongbow and his *entourage*, militant and cleric, arriving in Dublin, found themselves in the midst of a community somewhat self-contained and barbarous too, in a diocese which was coincident merely with the Danish "Kingdom of Dublin," that is, its little city and few outpost seaports in the present county of Dublin, such as Dalkey, Howth, etc. It found a Church, somewhat barbarous and unlearned, isolated from that native Celtic Church which had still traditions of ancient learning, of noble seminaries, and a certain simple and apostolic flavour. In the Danish "Churchman" it needed but to scratch him skin deep to find the pagan with much of his Norse superstition abiding underneath. There stood out, however, one remarkable man and figure among them, yet not of them, *Laurence O'Toole*, Bishop of the Hiberno-Danes of Dublin.

Laurence was no Dane but an Irishman of gentle

birth and educated at one of the famous Irish seminaries still surviving, of fine presence, one who had travelled, and was known in Rome as a distinguished man, and at Dublin as the friend of the poor, of simple and austere life, a firm ruler in his diocese and chapter, "a holy man," says his biographer, "reverent and religious, a lover of honesty, zealous." Laurence had, five years before the coming of the English, shown his impatience of his barbarous surroundings and undisciplined and unlearned clergy, who knew not even the tongue in which they were supposed to say their offices in their rude church. At one stroke he had superseded the old Danish community of seculars and brought from Flanders a community of Arroasian canons, as we can now see, to reform the administration of the service of the church. From his life we learn that "he first caused men and boys in his cathedral at Dublin to stand in order about the altar and lend to their service decorum, and to their voices harmonies." So we can date at 1165 the introduction of a choral worship which has been maintained by unbroken devolution, if in varying form, in the church of Laurence for seven hundred years. Laurence joined hands with the gentlemen immigrants, more in sympathy with him than his rude people; and soon, zealous Churchman that he was, influenced them to mark their possession of the land by founding for him a nobler church such as he had seen in other lands. Strongbow, FitzStephen, and Raymond-le-Gros are by the record the co-founders with Laurence, now first Archbishop of Dublin. The sidelights of history constrain me to believe that there was a lady in the case, and that it was to the sympathy of the remarkable sister of Strongbow we owe particularly our Anglo-Norman church. Husband, brother, and all relatives were hard-pressed warriors fighting for existence at Waterford or Limerick, and with no time for planning churches. At Dublin was the clever and spirited lady in charge. There was also at Dublin the handsome young bishop (for he was not yet forty), accomplished in church architecture and music, and saintly in his life withal. The conjectural story is as old as the church—the pious and devoted female, the charming and wor-

shipped cleric, and they two running together a "church improvement fund." It was, I have no doubt (for there is no other female to which it could be assigned), the effigy of Basilea, the noblest "Sister of the Congregation of the Holy Trinity," which was found in the place of honour in the chapter-house in 1886, and now lies near the (so alleged by tradition) heart of St. Laurence suspended in a casket in the chapel of St. Laud at Christchurch.

I am almost tempted to digress to tell a story characteristic of the ability and courage of this lady, who has undeservedly dropped out of history—but forbear.

Laurence, who was in touch with Rome, and knew Italy and the church building of the Comacine Brotherhood beyond Ireland, brought a foreign architect to Ireland. He knew where to find him—a Comacine master of Parma, and then in the province of Asturias of Spain, with which there was familiar Irish intercourse of trading.

It may be asked where this record is found. English archæologists know how rare is the record in England of the architect or master-builder of any cathedral. It was the custom of the haughty Norman Churchman to ignore him and take the honour and glory of building. In Italy and Spain it was otherwise. The honoured magister, *maestro*, *Lombardo*, was recorded in his buildings and the archives.

In the last few months Dublin Cathedral has given up the name of its Italo-Spanish architect, one John. An inscription, long misunderstood and long preserved and traditionally honoured, has given up its meaning to modern students of Norman-French. It runs thus :—

John, the master-builder of the Brotherhood of Parma, and Dame Ramez Perez of St. Salvador of Asturias.

Another hand has added :—

His wife and all his family, who died in this land, lie here.

It is to this masterly John that we may ascribe the remarkable and unique plan of Christchurch. It was not to eliminate the ancient church, but to overbuild (*superædificare*), that he laid his mind. He pulled down

its rude arched and stone-covered roofs, leaving its intact ground plan as seen in the present crypt. On this, pier over pier, and following the substructure as he found it, he designed the remarkable plan of a superstructure which presents itself to us. It is a curious plan. It is neither consistently square-ended nor apsidally ended. There is said to have been once such a quaint plan of a church at Pershore, in Worcestershire. It is not there now at all events, and no church-plan in all the kingdom resembles that of the Dublin Christchurch.

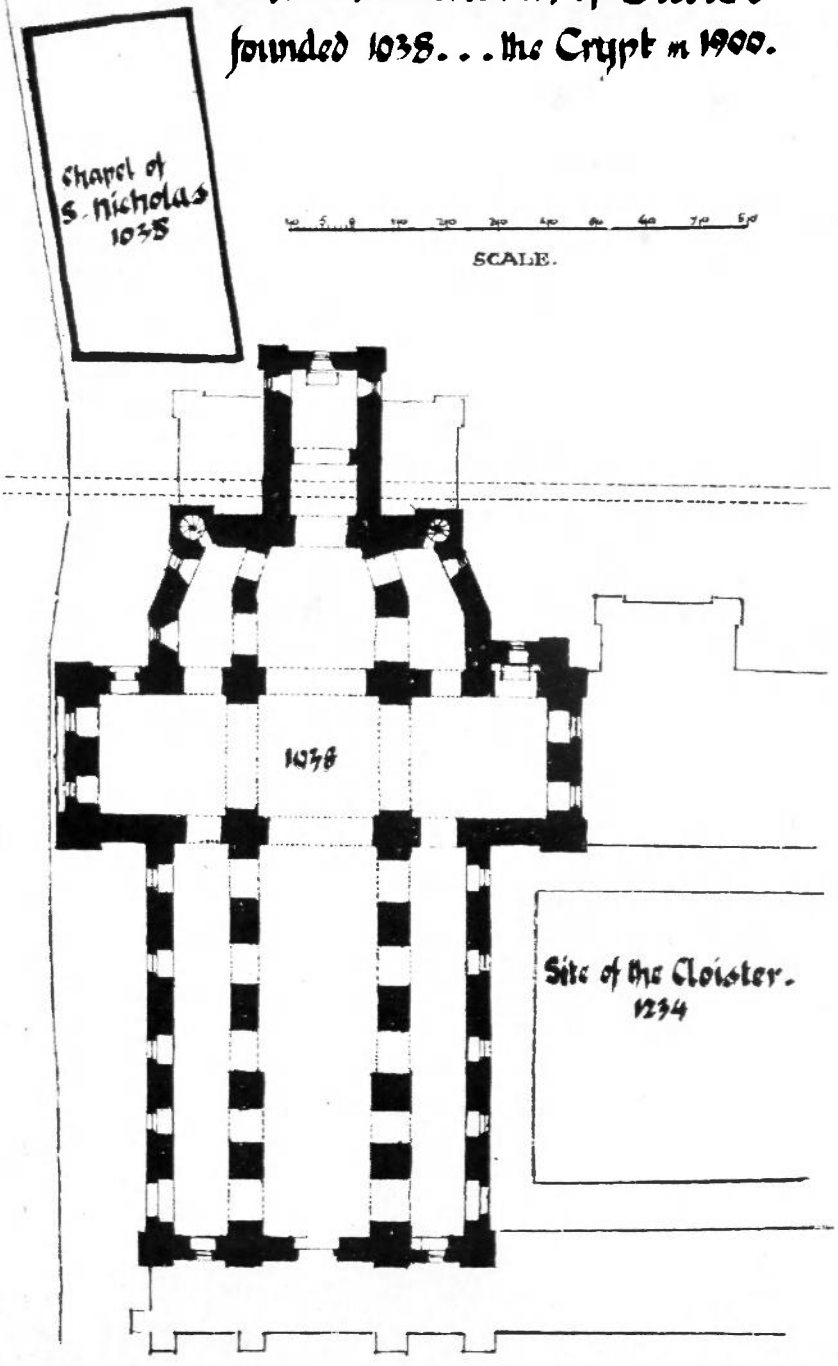
A fair remnant of the work of Laurence and his Comacine architect survives in the transepts and part of the sanctuary of the Christchurch. It gives up a history, too, of the Somerset school of masons, who were its builders.

Strongbow died (it was of a bad foot), and was buried in the lines of the yet unbuilt nave—*in conspectu crucis*—and so lies until this day. Laurence was summoned to Rome, and going or returning falls sick and dies at Eu or Auge, in Normandy, where a grand church dedicated to his saintship still recalls him. *Reliquiæ* of his poor body he desired to be transferred to that church of his affections in his native land. Building at Christchurch stood suspended. Comyn, a haughty Anglo-Norman prelate, and successor of Laurence, coming into strange Ireland, did not take kindly to his metropolitan church and its independent and easy-lived clergy. It is evident enough, without special record, his motive in conceiving a new and grand church—a collegiate church without the walls of Dublin—destined to be a cathedral church, and on the lines of Salisbury and Wells. He adopted an ancient church of St. Patrick de Insula, lying in the low valley outside the walls, as its nucleus. He apportioned and mapped the manses of his coming dignitaries, but Comyn did not (don't believe Dublin guide-books) build any part of St. Patrick's in 1190. The building is its own record that its beautiful geometrical plan and all its details are later than Comyn by from thirty to sixty years. We recognise then the strange coincidence that one Archbishop Luke, succeeding in 1220–30, was favouring building both at St. Patrick's *extra muros* and the more ancient city church *intra muros* of contem-

To face page 296.

The Christchurch of Sitric.

founded 1038... the Crypt in 1900.



poraneous Early English style, but by the hands of utterly different schools of mason-builders.

The nave of Christchurch is dated for us, and witnessed by a western arch existing on the north side. On the 25th of September, 1234, the King granted to his good men of Bristol in Dublin, license to close an ancient street passing the west end of the Church of the Holy Trinity *ad elongandam ecclesiam.* The arch tells its own history —how the completion of the nave had stood still for a time until this leave was obtained to extend the church by another bay beyond the lines of Sitric's church, and how when this western bay to complete was taken in hand it was not by those who had done the previous work. It is ruder in moulding, and has no sculpture. The band of masons from Somerset who had done the rest of the work had probably passed to their native country.

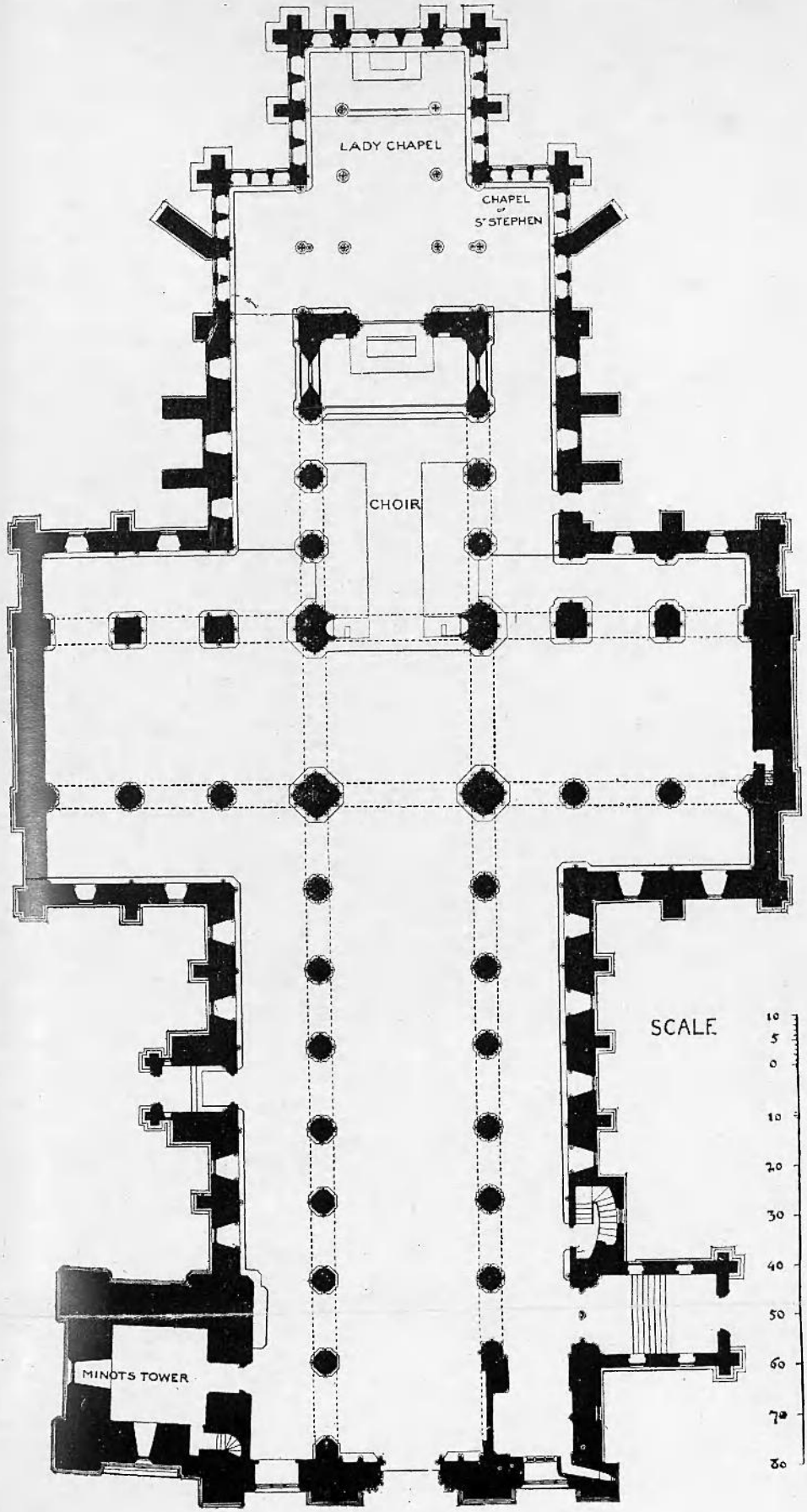
It is to be noted of the church of the Anglo-Norman garrison in Dublin that it was not only of English workmanship, but of English materials, water-borne, and landed within the lines of the fortress. The wrought stone was an oolite from Somerset. The nook-shafts of windows and doors were composed of little columns of Purbeck marble uniformly $16\frac{1}{4}$ inches long, imported in quantities, and adapted by introduction of annulets of stone, which are characteristic. Tiles, slates, the very lime used, seem to have been imported by a beleaguered people who could not obtain materials outside their walls.

Beyond study of its architecture, Christchurch has for the archæologist a wealth of MSS. Its White and Black Books contain a vast amount of interesting, and for the most part unpublished, knowledge, and are the authority for nearly all that is recorded of ancient Dublin City. Its Chapter Acts exist from the beginning of the sixteenth century. The Book of the Obits (deposited in Trinity College) is a remarkable record of the life of a curious and unique community, while its vast possessions of leases, papal bulls, miscellaneous records passing back to Sitric's Danish grants of 1038, to the number of 2,040, have been not long since transferred to the Record Office. Of fine plate, chiefly of early eighteenth century sort, it has good store for the hall-mark enthusiast. For the musical archæologist it has a well kept library of

English cathedral music of the last century, some rare, or only now found here, in MSS. It is an epitome in illustrations of Dublin history; of its Danish origin, its Anglo-Norman possession; of the Protestant Reformation in Ireland under Elizabeth; of the rule of Queen Mary, of Oliver Cromwell, of James II., and the Revolution; of the Huguenot immigration after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which brought, it may be said, the arts, and chief industries, and commercial enterprise into Ireland.

All Christchurch has for the archæologist is mainly unworked ground for study, and its records, yet to be published. During centuries of neglect its architecture was obscured and buried, it may be said, awaiting a resurrection to the light of day in 1886. Its treasures of record were but known by the sparse quotations of one writer, Ware, in the seventeenth century, and undisturbed by scholars since. What it can present of interest is now all accessible, and has the charm for the true enthusiast in archæology that it is fresh in the finding.

Passing to St. Patrick's, without the walls, the interest in it lies chiefly in tracing the noble conception of a cathedral establishment conceived by its founder, Comyn, never to be realised. The church plan as carried on by his successor is perfect, and is itself a beautiful study of a symmetrical plan and exquisite proportions, and remarkable as the outcome of design in a mathematical exercise. The entire plan and internal divisions of bays and elevation are applotted on a rigid system of lines of equilateral triangles of like area throughout. Through more than six centuries its design was obscured and inappreciable. Poverty and vicissitude had left it unfinished. Its south transept was walled off as a chapter-house, its north transept, in like separation, assigned to the parishioners of St. Nicholas Without, its Lady-chapel alienated and subsequently assigned as a built-off church to the Huguenot settlers for a French church. It was not until 1864 that, by the discrimination of an eminent citizen of Dublin, the interpolated walls and obstructions were removed, and it first dawned upon Dublin's citizens what a noble and symmetrical great church it was their fortune to possess. In


LADY CHAPEL
CHAPEL OF ST STEPHEN
CHOIR
MINOTS TOWER
SCALE
10
5
0
10
20
30
40
50
60
70
80

fact, it may be said that it is not half appreciated yet, and a casual belief exists in Dublin that it is a church of many restorations and effacements. It is an undertaking for the genuine archæologist to demonstrate to Dublin citizens themselves how much of ancient worth survives, especially in its crossing, choir, and stone-roofed aisles, and in Minot's noble tower of 1380, a feature which, in another city, would be famed and written of as an historic monument, while among the Dublin natives it scarcely commands a passing interest or any pride.

St. Patrick's Liberty was designed as a separate and fortified city within itself. It had flanking towers and walls, independent charters and immunities and jurisdictions. In fact, Whately, Archbishop of Dublin, so late as the middle of this century, paramount within the liberties of St. Patrick and St. Sepulchre, might, if he were so minded, have hanged offenders.

The laying out of the grand scheme is traceable now for the archæologist on ancient maps. The manses of the dignitaries, canons, and petty canons were all assigned, and, indeed, built, it would appear, but it was a failure. The clerical system was not strong enough to man its battlements against the aggressive Irish enemy. It is recorded in *The Well of St. Patrick and its Quest*, which I have written for local interest, and read extracts from here.

Passing from the two mediæval cathedrals, I would but mention for the visitor that one other mediæval church of which remains survive, St. Audoen's, within the city walls, is worthy of some interest. He may also remark in the parish names that, within the walls, such as St. Audoen, or Owen, St. Werburgh, St. Michael and St. John, St. Andrew, and Mary-le-dam indicate English fashion and connection. Without the walls, St. Patrick, St. Bride, or Bridget, St. Kevin, etc., indicate Irish sympathies. In the suburbs the names of St. Michan, of Oxmantown, *i.e.* Ostmantown on the north of the Liffey, St. Mary Ostmanby, and on the south St. Andrew Thingmote, are associative with Danish Dublin.

Conclusion.

For Dublin as happy hunting-ground and excursion for the archæologist I have no more to say, for is it not written, of its attraction for the foreigner even in Danish times—

> Why should we hurry home?
> For my heart is at Dublin,
> And this autumn I will not visit
> The matrons of Drontheim.
>
> I am happy that a young woman
> Does not forbid my addresses,
> For there is an Irish girl
> That I love better than myself.

Such is the Saga of Magnus Barefoot, King of Norway, who, in 1102, visited Dublin. One of his commanders counsels him to break through the Irish who barred the way and go home to his native Norway, but Magnus demurs. Dublin was good enough for him. The natives, and especially the female sort, were taking, and good company, and hospitable. May our trippers of 800 years later find us so, linger with us, and come again.