

CURIOSITIES: Under this heading may be included the various freaks of nature of the cavernous limestone, mentioned under "Geology", though too numerous to be mentioned individually in detail.

"GODS of THE NEALE": The Neale Park, formerly the residence of Lord Kilmaine & now split up & divided amongst small holders, is on the right of the Ballinrobe road, just N. of The Neale vill. The demesne comprised many acres of broad rich parkland, plentifully wooded, but the house, now empty, is a surprisingly plain & un-imposing bldg for so magnificent a setting. Close to the front of the house, amongst the trees, will be found one of the most strange objects imaginable - not so much in appearance as in what it reveals on inspection.

Facing outwards from a square stone structure is an inscribed stone slab. The letters are very crudely inscribed & the text is so nonsensical & complicated that one must reach the conclusion after study that the entire object is merely the product of the peculiar humour of some former Lord Kilmaine. The inscription "reads" as follows:- (Copied from Rd. Hayward's version).

"The Irish characters on the above stone import that in this cave we have by us the Gods of Cons:-

Lett us follow their steps sick of love with FVLL confidencin in Loo Lave Adda Yackene the Shepherd of Ireland of his eraan D.J. These jimages were found in a cave behind the place they now stand & were the ancient Gods of the Neale or the Gods of Felicity from which the place in Irish was called Ne Heale in English the Neale LL reigned AM 2577 PD 927 AHTE Cl496 and was then 60: CEDNA reigned AM2994 & 64 of Edna was wel 50 CON MOIL was ye son of Heber who divided this Kingdom with his brother and had the western parts of this jsland for his lott all which was originally called from Con Conovcht or Cons portion and his son LOO LAVEADDA who found the Druids was thought to have drawn all his knowledged from the SVN Thus the Irish history.

N.B. the smaller letters on the upper part of the great plinth jmort that it was erected by Edna Loos Gods were adopted by Con and Edna of the line of Heber established their worship there 1753.

CURIOSITIES: "GODS OF THE NEALE" (cont'd.)

In a smaller plinth above this slab, three odd carvings are set. These are similar to the grotesques which might be found in an old church. The lower one is of a horrific animal like a giant cow or dragon with a tail on which are three fingers & thumb. Over this, the other two might represent a cow, sitting on its tail, & an ecclesiastical-looking figure, with cap & long garment, holding an object like a shield. A third & smaller plinth, surmounted by a pointed finial, rests on top. On three of its four sides old Gothic characters form a puzzling & probably meaningless inscription. The main side of this plinth carries an inscription which Hayward, with the aid of Prof. Macalister & others, working upon a rubbing made by Peter Foy of Cong, finally reduced to the following: "ORATE PRO AIA MOAINCUS QUI INIUR" This solution was only arrived at by the use of imagination & by suppling missing letters & the translation suggested was "Pray for the Soul of Moaincus who made me." A Roman-lettered inscription on another face looks like a date numeral, preceded by an unrecognisable word or portion of a word, whilst on the north side is more unintelligible lettering.

Lewis describes the carvings as of "an unicorn opposite to a man surrounded with a glory & a lion below them", but I think the other description is more apt.

LONSECNAN STONE: This celebrated inscribed slab was formerly set in the orchard wall, near the "Gods of The Neale", but was recently restored to the ruin at Breaffy, to which it originally belonged until stolen by a Lord Kilmaine. An inscription regarding this stone remains on the wall where the stone had been placed. It reads:-

"The above stone was found at Brefy, in the County of Mayo, A.D. 1732, in a coffin inscribed in Irish characters: The Coffin of Genan, which contained a skeleton twelve & a half feet long. Genan was King of Ireland, AM3352, PD7024, AC1681; and this monument is erected to show the antiquity of the Irish character and the size of menkind in those early ages, AD 1756."

"THE PYRAMID." In a field some few hundred yards N. of the "Gods" & close by the main road, is an odd structure, composed of fairly regular-sized stones, built in tiers & known locally as "The Pyramid." It is also known as the "Weathercock" & was obviously intended only as an ornament when erected by Lord Kilmaine. A new road nearby has been built through the demesne to serve new dwellings on the divided estate. The "Pyramid" was constructed probably in the 19th century.

"THE TEMPLE": This is a hexagonal structure of grey limestone, consisting of six tall pillars built on an artificial mound & joined at their tops by a six-sided ring. The artificial mound is constructed internally in the form of spacious vaulted apartments. The Temple is modelled after the Greek structures & is also an ornamental edifice & of no great age, probably 19th century. It is seen to the right near the end of the new road through The Neale Park.

ANGLING (Fresh Water): The Corrib is the largest lake in Eire, second in all Ireland to Lough Neagh, & is about 68 sq. miles in area. Nearly 150 islands, those at the north end being thickly wooded, enhance the beauty of the scenery & provide very welcome shelter in squalls & bad weather. It has been said to provide the best all-round free fishing in Great Britain or Ireland. L. Corrib is noted mainly for its brown trout & pike &, to a lesser degree, salmon. It also contains perch &, according to the "Angler's Guide", char, rudd & bream, though these latter three are never mentioned by local anglers.

The potentialities of trout fishing in the Cong, or northern, area of the lake are said to be excellent, but constant re-stocking seems very desirable, if not probably essential, since a great many fry are lost owing to the