

DOON:

A parish, partly in the barony of Kilnemanagh, county of Tipperary, and partly in the barony of Owneybeg, but chiefly in that of Coonagh, county of Limerick, 14 miles (S.E.) from Limerick, on the old road to Templemore; containing 5311 inhabitants, of which number, 178 are in the village. This parish comprises 27, 734 statute acres, as apportioned under the tithe act, of which more than 2000 acres are mountain and bog, about 4000 under tillage, and the remainder meadow and pasture. The soil in some places is remarkably rich, but the system of agriculture is in a very unimproved state, and a considerable portion of the meadow and pasture land is overflowed by the Dead and Mulcairn rivers. The bog in the lower parts of the parish is exceedingly valuable and lets at a very high rent; near the close of the last century more than 100 acres of bog moved from one townland into two others, destroying thirteen cabins, the inmates of five of which perished. Freestone of fine quality is quarried here for public buildings; much of it has been used in the city of Limerick and in other towns, and large quantities are shipped for England and other places. The principal seats are Castle Guard, the residence of the Hon. W. O'Grady, an ancient castle of the Earls of Desmond, enlarged and restored in the baronial style, with a lofty keep and ramparts; Toomaline House, of Mrs. Marshall, formerly a priory of Canons Regular and a cell to the abbey of Inchenemeo, granted on its dissolution by Queen Elizabeth to Miler Magrath, Archbishop of Cashel, and of which there are still some remains; Bilboa House, now nearly in ruins, the property of the Earl of Stradbroke, and formerly the residence of Colonel Wilson, built wholly of brick from Holland, situated in grounds formerly richly wooded but now going to decay, and commanding a fine view of the Bilboa mountains on the north, to which it has given name; and Glengare, of G. Hodges, Esq., situated on one of the 12 townlands of this parish which are in the county of Tipperary, and together comprise 4700 acres. Fairs are held at Bilboa on 12 August and May, and a constabulary force is stationed in the village. The living is a rectory, in the diocese of Emly, constituting the prebend of Doon in the cathedral of St. Ailbe, and in the patronage of the Archbishop of Cashel: the tithes amount to £830.15.4 1/2. The glebe-house is a handsome residence, and the glebe comprises 35 acres, subject to a rent of £40 per annum payable the trustees of Erasmus Smith's fund, who own much land in this parish. The church, rebuilt in 1800 by a gift of £500 from the late Board of First Fruits, is a small plain edifice with a low square tower; in the church-yard was interred the noted outlaw, Emun-a-Cnoc, or Edmond of the Hill. In the R.C. divisions this parish, with the exception of eight townlands in the union of Cappamore, is the head of a union or district, comprising also the parish of Castletown. Lord Stanley, who has an estate of about 600 acres in the parish, has given two acres, rent-free, to erect a chapel and school-house: the shell of the former edifice is nearly completed, at an expense of £1000 to the parishioners; it is situated on a small hill over the village, commanding a fine view of the Doon and Galtee mountains. There are five private schools, in which are 300 children.