

## CHAPTER XXXV.

## IRELAND.

"The undoubted aptitude for lace-making of the women of Ireland."  
*Jurors' Report, International Exhibition, 1862.*

LITTLE is known of the early state of manufactures in Ireland, save that the art of needlework was held in high estimation.

By the sumptuary laws of King Mogha Nuadhad, killed at the battle of Maylean, A.D. 192, we learn that the value of a queen's raiment, should she bring a suitable dowry, ought to amount to the cost of six cows; but of what the said raiment consisted, history is dark.

The same record, however, informs us that the price of a mantle, wrought with the needle, should be "a young bullock or steer."<sup>1</sup> This hooded mantle is described by Giraldus Cambrensis as composed of various pieces of cloth, striped, and worked in squares by the needle; may be a species of cutwork.

Morgan, who wrote in 1588, declares the saffron-tinted shirts of the Irish to contain from 20 to 30 ells of linen. No wonder they are described—

"With pleates on pleates they pleated are,  
 As thick as pleates may lie."<sup>2</sup>

It was in such guise the Irish appeared at court before Queen Elizabeth,<sup>3</sup> and from them the yellow starch of Mrs. Turner may have derived its origin. The Irish, however, produced the dye not from saffron, but from a lichen gathered on the rocks. Be that as it may, the government prohibited its use, and the shirts were reduced in quantity to six ells,<sup>4</sup> for the making of which "new-

<sup>1</sup> "Essay on the Dress of the Early Irish," J. C. Walker, 1788.

<sup>2</sup> "The Image of Irelande," by Jhon Derricke, 1578.

<sup>3</sup> In 1562. See Camden, "Hist. Eliz."

<sup>4</sup> Henry VIII. 1537. Against Irish fashions. Not "to weare any shirt, smock,