

## Descending To Purgatory

### *St. Patrick's Purgatory*

#### A Mediæval Pilgrimage in Ireland

St. John D. Seymour

The Descent of George Crissaphan (A.D. 1353).

1918

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GEORGE CRISSAPHAN, of whose adventures in St. Patrick's Purgatory some account is given in this chapter, was born in the year 1329, and was the son of Count Crissaphan, a powerful Hungarian noble. George entered the army of King Louis I of Hungary, and served in the wars against Queen Joan of Naples. Though only about twenty years of age at this time he had evidently given sufficient proof of military ability, for his king "constituted him Captain in the region of Apulia, and placed him over several states and camps, and especially over a certain state which is commonly called Troya, and over the state of Bari and Barribi, which is commonly called Barbeton." In this high position he did not conduct himself in a manner becoming a Christian knight; he perpetrated or instigated many acts of cruelty, while it is said that he was guilty of two hundred and fifty murders, not to speak of other crimes, before he was twenty-four. At length struck with remorse for his numerous sins he determined to seek pardon through penance, and for this purpose went on pilgrimage to the famous shrine of St. James of Compostella, in which region he spent six months leading the life of a solitary. While there he heard for the first time of St. Patrick's Purgatory in Ireland, and of the many benefits that would accrue to such a sinner as him from a visit to the cave, and so he determined to make his way thither.

He visited the Purgatory in the year 1353, and probably entered it in the first week in December. The account of the twenty-eight visions seen therein by him is, as one would naturally expect, of extreme prolixity; it has never been published in its entirety, and so until it find an editor and translator it will be impossible to compare it minutely with the other vision-legends of the Purgatory. However, F. Toldy has printed as footnotes to his article on Crissaphan in the Hungarian magazine *Századok* [1] four of the twenty-eight visions (i.e., 1, 9, 12, 28), as well as the concluding chapter, and of these a free translation is given below. Unfortunately he has not seen fit to reproduce the introductory portion, which most probably contained an account of the preparatory ceremonies, as well as a description of the purgatorial cave.

Presumably George underwent the preliminary fast, and entered the purgatory with the accustomed ceremonial. On leaving the chapel he came into a wide plain—inside the Purgatory in which he found awaiting him more than three thousand devils in animal form, such as lions, bears, and the like, which belched forth from their throats a fierce and stinking fire. These had ranged themselves on either side of the path by which George had to travel, and as they stood facing each other the whole road was hidden by the bursts of smoke and flame through which he would have to make his way if he desired to reach his destination. Seeing him approaching, the largest and most terrible-looking of the demons advanced towards him, and said in an awful voice :—

“George, what do you seek?”

He replied “ I seek the grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ.”

The devil answered : “ Jesus Christ, a wicked sinner, was deservedly crucified for His misdeeds by the Jews and Pilate. He did not rise from the dead, but for His evil works is plunged in hell, there to be crucified for ever. Therefore do not believe in Him, unless you desire to commit sin, for the faith—it should rather be termed perfidy—of those Christians who believe in Him is a form of madness, and is displeasing to God. Do not believe in Him, but follow our advice : promise us eternal obedience, do all our will, and give yourself to us body and soul. In return we shall do two things for you. First, within two days we shall bestow upon you abundance of gold, silver, and precious stones, above all that your heart can desire, you shall enjoy prosperity, and be more wealthy than any of your family all the days of your life ; secondly, after your death we shall bring you to our kingdom, where you will be as powerful as we are, and enjoy eternal happiness with us as our friend and minister.”

George was not deluded by these seductive words and lying fallacies, but recognising them as so many wiles of the Evil One, stated his firm belief in the Incarnate Son of God, Who was crucified of His own free will for the sins of mankind, and Who had risen from the dead, and ascended into heaven ; and then ejaculated the pilgrim’s prayer : *Domine Jesu Christe, fili Dei vivi, miserere mihi peccatori.*

Hearing this the demon was filled with rage at George’s obduracy, and seizing him flung him into the midst of the flames to the intent that he might be burnt to ashes. George thus fell into the fire, and through the weakness of human nature well-nigh lost his senses, in which case he would have been reduced to nothing, had he not been suddenly strengthened by the Lord, and so betook himself to his prayer *Domine Jesu Christe*, on uttering which he immediately found himself safe and sound outside the fire, which had not left the slightest mark on his body or clothes. Moved with anger at this all the baffled fiends together raised such a yell that the whole world would have been terrified if it had heard it.

Michael Denis [2] here gives an abstract of the eighth temptation, which is headed :— “ Of the apparition of George’s father and three brothers.” It would seem that four evil spirits took upon them the semblance of these members of his family, and endeavoured to seduce him to deny the Christian faith, as in the last temptation, but without success. It would appear from this chapter that his youngest brother was named Stephen.

The next vision published by Toldy, the ninth, contains the description of a most insistent temptation, in which the Devil displays his power of citing Scripture to his purpose. When leaving the district of Apulia George had entrusted some valuable property, viz., three belts ornamented with silver, and other treasures, to the care of a certain nobly-born damsel of his acquaintance, in whom he placed implicit confidence. The father of lies, whose delight it is to hinder men’s pious works in every possible way, took upon himself the form of this damsel, imitating her very looks, and gestures, and dress, and carrying as well a semblance of the actual casket in which the valuables had been placed. . This apparition met George, and said to him :—

“ Dearest friend and brother, welcome ! My heart is filled with joy at meeting you, for these two reasons. First, because I have not seen you for a long time ; and I behold you as joyful as an angel of God because through reverence for Him you have exposed yourself to so many and great dangers and torments. Secondly, because I see you have suffered so many illusions of evil spirits, (and have overcome). I have come hither by God’s will, to whom all things are possible. His angel has beheld our pious love, and wishes me to have a participation in your pilgrimage and in the fruits thereof, in order that we may behold His wonders in purgatory, in heaven, and in hell, so that by the sight of these our souls may be

strengthened and made more zealous for God's service ? The angel who bore me thither commanded me to bring the coffer with your jewels, so that by making use of them you might receive some comfort of consolation. Being unwilling to disobey the divine command I carried out his behest, and behold, here are your jewels in the coffer ! Take one of these belts, dearest brother mine, and gird yourself with it, and receive this bejewelled hood, in order that in a manner befitting your nobility you may make your appearance in the presence of God and His angels, whom you shall certainly behold in paradise."

When George considered the well-known appearance of the damsel, as well as the casket containing his jewels, and her expressions of feigned devotion, he wondered greatly. But his firm faith warned him that the figure which addressed him was not that of a real woman, but of a fiend in her likeness who was endeavouring to lead him into the sin of vain-glory and luxury. Accordingly he replied :—

" It is not fitting for a man on his pilgrimage to make use of the pomps and vanities of the world. Moreover, in accordance with the ordinance of St. Patrick, whose footsteps I follow, I was taught by the venerable prior, Paul by name, not to have any other garments than those which he put on me that is to say, these three white tunics which you see, and my head and feet bare ; and so I have no desire for the girdles and hood which you proffer me."

To this the apparition answered :—" Dearest friend and brother, I know that Paul the prior is a devout and holy man ; nevertheless it is certain that his holiness is not as great as that of the angel of God. Moreover, the latter, who sees God face to face, must know His will far better than any mortal can, who only knows God, but does not see Him, and cannot perceive the secret things of Him except through the revelation of angels. And although St. Patrick ordered that such garments as you have on should be worn by the pilgrim, nevertheless he did not thereby mean to imply that these should be retained throughout the entire course of the pilgrimage, but only as long as the vision of the demons should endure, through which by the grace of God, you have come victorious. Now, because you are speedily to enter paradise it is time to receive these ornaments, especially since the angel who sees God face to face, and knows His will, has told me that it is not merely the pleasure, but the command, of the Deity that you bedeck yourself with these, and thus adorned make your appearance in paradise before God and His saints ; just as in the world devout men, clerics and laics, are wont to adorn themselves on festivals through reverence of God and the feast. Now it should be plain to a rational being, such as you are, that the greatest feast of all is the feast of paradise, which never fails nor can fail, concerning which the Psalmist has said, *One day in thy courts is better than a thousand years*. Since this is so, it is clear that whoever desires to be present at that feast should, out of reverence for the Bridegroom, put on a wedding-garment, and not be in filthy attire, lest perchance it be said to him as to another, *Friend, how comest thou in thither not having on a wedding-garment ?* Wherefore I tell you of a surety that unless you go to the wedding-feast in comely apparel you will be dragged therefrom, and cast into outer darkness, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth. You are assured that I love you well, and so I advise you that you bedeck yourself with these ornaments, lest in any way you act contrary to the commands of God, since it is written, *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments*. Do you therefore, who desire to enter paradise, keep the commands of God and His angel, lest you sin mortally ; for you are aware that if a pilgrim on his pilgrimage fell into mortal sin immediately by divine judgment he is seized by devils, and cast body and soul into hell. Therefore, dear brother, lest you be damned eternally, keep the commands of God, and put on these jewels."

George listened to the words of this most insidious temptation, but recognising it to be such betook himself to his prayer *Domine Jesu Christe*, etc., upon which the damsel disappeared, leaving a foul stench behind.

In the twelfth vision George leaves a certain house (evidently the scene of the eleventh vision), and when he advances a little on his way he comes across a pit of immense depth, at the bottom of which lay a countless multitude of souls shrieking and wailing piteously. Up from this pit ascended a dense cloud of smoke, the stench from which exceeded all the smells in the world. The narrow path that George had to follow lay directly by the edge of this abyss, and as he was making his way along it he was suddenly hurled into the depths, but by whom he knew not. When he found himself at the bottom he fell to his oft-quoted prayer, and at that instant was liberated from the pit, and so escaped the wiles of the Devil

Subsequently George reached Paradise, for the twenty-eighth and last vision is taken up with messages which Michael the Arch-angel directed him to deliver to certain persons on earth. The recipients of these divine instructions were Richard Fitzralph, Archbishop of Armagh ; Edward III of England, and the Queen-mother ; Jean le Bon. King of France ; Pope Innocent VI ; and the “ Soldan” of Babylon (Egypt). The exact nature of these messages was not to be divulged to anyone except those for whom they were intended ; nevertheless George appears to have been permitted to make some, portions of them known. Primate FitzRalph was told, amongst other things, that he should remove the interdict which he had laid on a certain state in his Archdiocese, not indeed unjustly or unlawfully, but because that state would not discharge certain obligations incumbent upon it. The message to the Kings of England and France contained many admonitions to them to make peace. That to the Pope concerned the furtherance of the same, while he was also directed to absolve a certain prince, not mentioned by name, who had been dead a considerable time. As regards that to the Soldan of Babylon it merely indicated that it contained some instructions which would prove of the greatest benefit to the whole of Christendom.

When St. Michael had imposed the giving of these messages upon George, the latter asked him two questions. First, as to how the various recipients could be induced to believe that the bearer of them had actually been in purgatory, hell, and paradise, and had spoken with an angel face to face. In response the Archangel taught him certain secret signs which no man could know except him to whom they were sent. Next he enquired in what way he might journey to the Soldan of Babylon, seeing he was a Saracen miscreant, and the enemy of Christendom. The angel replied : “ Go fearlessly and without hesitation to him, for God knows his will, and what he has to do with reference to it (the message) ; but do you fulfil the command of God.”

The twenty-ninth and last chapter treats of the return of George to the upper air. When everything had been seen the Archangel took him by his right hand, while in his left he carried a golden cross set with precious stones, and then led him to “ the chapel of St. Patrick, where is the door of the Purgatory through which George entered.” There his coming was awaited by the prior and his canons, as well as by the King, Machacham by name, who was accompanied by a throng of nobility and gentry who were desirous of seeing George, and of hearing of the wonders which he had seen. As they stood in expectation he appeared in company with a beautiful youth, the latter clothed in gorgeous emerald robes, crowned with a diadem so richly bejewelled that it outshone the mid-day sun, and bearing in his hand the golden cross. They recognised George, but as to the other they could not tell if he were man or angel.

St Michael and the pilgrim stood conversing together for a certain space of time in the presence of them all. In the course of their conversation the Archangel warned him of two things ; first, that he should diligently observe the divine precepts, on which hung all the Law and the Prophets ; secondly, that he should deliver all the messages entrusted to him. Then Michael made the sign of the cross with his right thumb after the manner of a bishop, saying, *Our help is in the name of the Lord Who hath made heaven and earth* ; after which he blessed

George and the bystanders, saying, *The blessing of God the Father Almighty*, etc. Then he said to George, “ Know of a surety that when I return to heaven I shall with all the angels petition the Blessed Virgin to ask her Son to free thy mother from the pains of purgatory ;” so saying, he disappeared.

George then ascended all the steps leading out of the Purgatory (totaliter gradus Purgatorii), and was welcomed by the prior and all the convent, since they had visibly beheld the wonders of God made manifest in him. As he stood in the midst of the admiring throng, all were overwhelmed by the ineffable odour of paradise that was given off from his garments, so much so, that seizing knives they cut and hacked at the “ femoralia” in which he was clad, being desirous to keep the rags as relics, until at length they left him naked. Then they attempted to cut off his hair for the same purpose, and would have succeeded had not their impetuosity been restrained by the powerful influence of the king, who threw his own garments over the nude pilgrim.

On leaving George received the pilgrims’ certificate from Paul the prior. It stated that “ he had laudably performed the pilgrimage of St. Patrick’s Purgatory, according to the rules and regulations of our monastery. In which Purgatory he suffered divers torments, and after these St. Michael the Archangel appeared to him, and remained with him an entire day, and finally conducted back the said George in the body ... as has been made plain to us by the confession of the said George. For having confessed, we gave him absolution by the authority of St. Patrick and our Order, and thus absolved we permitted him to enter the pit, and the ladder of the pit which is very steep (intrare puteum, et scalam putealam, et profundam valde), by which descent is made into the Purgatory, and thus we send him to you [the Bishop of Clogher, or the Primate] who has truly seen the Purgatory and many marvels.” This was dated “ at the ends of the earth,” December the 7th, 1353. [3]

In all George was the recipient of six documents :

1. The above-quoted.
2. A certificate from Nicholas MacCasey, Bishop of Clogher, dated at Clogher the 26th of December, 1353.
3. A certificate from John de Fronwich, prior of the Hospitallers, dated at the Manor of Kilmainham the 20th of January, 1354 (or probably 1355).
4. An invitation from Richard FitzRalph, Archbishop of Armagh, at Dromiskin ; date not given, but probably early in 1354.
5. A certificate from the same, stating that he had given George letters of admission to the Purgatory, and that the latter had fulfilled his pilgrimage there. Dated at Dromiskin, the 22nd of February, 1353-4.
6. A similar certificate from the same to his beloved nephew, Richard radulfi (FitzRalph), rector of the church of “ Lycholoi,” and canon of Nubia at Rome. Same place, day, and year as the last. [4]

Out of the first document an interesting point arises. The certificate appears to have been usually given by the prior a couple of days after the pilgrim completed his vigil in the cave. On the other hand the lengthy account of the visions seen (twenty-eight or so in this particular case) can hardly have been reduced to writing for some considerable time. How then are we to account for the fact that in the certificate (which must therefore be the earlier

of of the two documents) there is an allusion made to George's interview with the Archangel Michael, which incident forms an important part of the subsequent story ? May it not be that through reading or listening to the adventures of former pilgrims in the Purgatory, as well as through lassitude induced by the preliminary austerities, George was worked up into such a state of superstitious dread, that, aided by the soporific qualities which the cave seems to have possessed, he fell into a heavy sleep, in which he actually beheld some sort of nightmare which he related on coming out. Some such general explanation seems to lie at the base of the vision-stories, though nearly all the ones we possess are obviously worked up into a recognised literary form.

The story of Crissaphan's vision seems to have been exceedingly popular, its popularity continuing, strangely enough, down to the present day. Four manuscripts are known to exist : 1. A Latin version in Codex Asceticus, No. 1398, in the Imperial Library of Vienna. This H. Gaidoz considers to be the original version, taken down by some priest or scribe ; 2. A Latin version in the Benedictine convent of Melk ; this was written by one Nicholas of Newburgha in 1414. 3. A version in the German language is said to be amongst the manuscripts of Queen Christina of Sweden in the Library of the Vatican. 4. A version in Czech, of which an account is given in the appendix to this chapter. [5]

The popularity of the story is further evinced by the fact that it was printed in the Czech language, and ran through several editions. One of these was published at Lytomysl in 1878. A still later edition, entitled *Wideni Jirika Poustewnika*, was published in 1896, a copy of which is in the University Library of Prag ; this agrees substantially, though not verbally, with the Czech MS. described in the appendix. [6]

#### Table of Contents of The Czech Manuscript.

Amongst the manuscripts in the University Library of Prag is one of the fifteenth century, classed XVII. E. 2, which contains an account in the Czech language of the descent of George Crissaphan into St. Patrick's Purgatory. On this manuscript see Truhlar, *Katalog cesnych rukopisu*, p. 179, and Gebauer in *Listy filologické* (1879), p. 30. By the kindness of the *Directeur en chef* we have been enabled to reproduce here the opening words of the different chapters, which gives a sufficient clue to the contents of the manuscript.

#### George Crissaphan Czech MSS.

Fol. 198a.—George, a worthy gentleman, was son of a Hungarian nobleman named Crissaphan.

Fol. 199a.—The first vision of George. On passing through the door he came into a beautiful field.

Fol. 200a.—Second vision. On leaving this chapel he entered another field, wherein he saw more than three thousand devils.

Fol. 200b.—Third vision. Continuing on his way G. came to a very wide place, where he saw two thousand men on horseback.

*Ibidem.*—Fourth vision. Then G. walked further, assured by the grace of God, and continuing on his way he saw a large town out of which came a very beautiful lady.

Fol. 201a.—Fifth vision. Then G. entered this town, and saw there many men and women, shopkeepers.

Fol. 201b.—Sixth vision. Then G. entered a town, where he saw a great fire, in the midst of which were devils beyond count, having the appearance of men.

*Ibidem.*—Seventh vision. Then, crossing a field, G. met with Dominican friars.

Fol. 202a. Eighth vision. Continuing on his way G. saw a fair procession of priests that is to say, canons.

Fol. 202b.—Ninth vision. When G. left this field a devil appeared to him in the guise of his father Cryssaphan.

Fol. 203a.—Tenth vision. Having overcome this temptation G. gave thanks to God, and kept on his way. Then the devil took the form of a virgin.

Fol. 203b.—Eleventh vision. Continuing his course G. saw a large town all burning with molten lead, pitch, and sulphur.

*Ibidem.*—Twelfth vision. Keeping on his way G. saw a house which was a league in length and breadth, and it was enveloped in fire.

Fol. 204a.—Thirteenth vision. Continuing on his way he saw a fountain of such depth that he could scarcely see the bottom, in which was a multitude of souls.

*Ibidem.*—Fourteenth vision. Pursuing his course G. saw a very high mountain which was covered with a cloud, on the summit of which was a great host of souls uttering piteous cries.

Fol. 204b.—Fifteenth vision. By this time G. had come to an immense and deep abyss, which was hell.

*Ibidem.*—Sixteenth vision. Then a handsome young man, about 32 years of age, approached G.

Fol. 205a.—Seventeenth vision. The Archangel Michael took G. by the hand.

Fol. 206a.—Eighteenth vision. In purgatory G. perceived four things.

Fol. 206b.—Nineteenth vision. St. Michael took G. by the hand, and led-him to the abyss of hell.

Fol. 207a.—Twentieth vision. The angel said to G. “ Hast thou already seen hell ?”

*Ibidem.*—Twenty-first vision. Then he saw a beautiful garden full of all kinds of trees.

Fol. 207b.—Twenty-second vision. On coming out of the garden G. said “ I beg of you to tell me, St. Michael, if this garden where the birds sing is the true paradise ?”

*Ibidem.*—Twenty-third vision. Having entered paradise G. saw a broad plain, of which he could not see the end.

Fol. 208a.—Twenty-fourth vision. G. saw a number of angels in the form of young men.

*Ibidem.*—Twenty-fifth vision. Then G. saw a large number of Benedictines.

Fol. 208b.—Twenty-sixth vision. Then St. Michael ordered G. to ascend a little mountain, in appearance like an altar.

*Ibidem.*—Twenty-seventh vision. Then St. Michael said to G. who was on the mountain : “ Lift your eyes towards heaven.”

Fol. 209b.—Twenty-eighth vision. Then G., almost fainting with irrepressible joy, fell asleep.

Fol. 210a.—St. Michael said : “ What is it you are to do ? First you must go to Richard, Archbishop of Armagh.”

Fol. 201b.—St. Michael left G., and he saw the Archangel, with all the saints and the Blessed Virgin, beseeching on behalf of the soul of George’s mother.

#### NOTES.

[1] For April, 1871, pp. 229-47.

[2] *Codices Manuscripti Theologici Bibliothecae Palatinae*, Vol. I, pt. 2, col. 2444-50.

[3] *Századok*, pp. 236-7.

[4] Denis, *op. cit.*

[5] *Revue Celtique*, t. II, pp. 482-4 ; t. IV, pp. 105-6.

[6] *Revue Celtique*, t. IV, pp. 105-6 ; letter from University Library of Prag.

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#### The Descent of Raymond, Viscount De Perelhos (A.D. 1397).

THE visit paid to St. Patrick’s Purgatory by the Spanish nobleman, Raymond, Viscount de Perelhos, in December, 1397, is, next to that of the Knight Owen, the best-known of the purgatory legends owing to its incorporation in his *Catholic History* by Don Philip O’Sullivan Beare, the celebrated Irish historian.

Before proceeding to the narrative proper it will be necessary to give a brief account of the two versions on which it depends. The original version was written in the Catalan dialect either by Raymond himself, or under his direction, but the present location of this manuscript, if indeed it be in existence, is not known. In the seventeenth century it was examined by O’Sullivan Beare at the Castilian court, who inserted it in his Latin *Historiae Catholicae Iberniae Compendium*, which was published at Lisbon in 1621. O’Sullivan’s version appears to be rather an adaption than a translation ; he has changed the order, and has suppressed or abridged certain passages which are of extreme interest. This writer also states that he saw a *printed* copy of the Catalan version, which was published at Perpignan, and of which a specimen was preserved in the Franciscan convent of that town, but nothing appears to be known of this. The second version, which is written in the dialect of Languedoc, is contained in a manuscript in the Municipal Library of Toulouse, and has been published by M. M. Jeanroy and Vignaux in *Bibliothèque Méridionale* [1] ; as this seems to differ in many details from O’Sullivan it will not be unprofitable for anyone who can read this particular dialect to compare the two accounts.

The hero of the tale, Raymond, who is known to us from several sources, was Viscount of Perelhos, a hamlet in Rousillon, and of Roda, a little town of Catalonia, the latter title having been bestowed upon him by King John I of Arragon in the year 1391. As to the barony of Serret or Sereta, which appears in both versions of the tale, it is said never to have existed ;



but in the fifteenth century the Perelhos family became Lords of Ceret. His father, Francis, a gentleman in the service of the King of Arragon, was a friend of the King of France. He was sent to Paris in 1355 to conclude an alliance between the two sovereigns, and again in 1360 to bring nine galleys to the King. His latter years were devoted entirely to the service of France, for in 1367 he was Chamberlain to Charles V., and raised to the dignity of Admiral of France ; he died in 1369.

His young son Raymond was entrusted by him to Charles V, and remained in France until the death of that prince, when he went to the kingdom of Arragon, where he was welcomed and received into high favour by the King, John I. Combining in his person the qualities of soldier and diplomat we find him in consequence frequently employed on different errands of state. In 1390 he was one of the ambassadors who was sent to Charles VI. In the commencement of 1395 he set out for the Island of Cyprus to treat about the marriage of the eldest son of the King, John of Lusignan, Prince of Antioch, with the Infanta Isabella, daughter of the King of Arragon. He is subsequently found at Avignon, having entered the service of his compatriot, the Arragonese Peter de Luna (Pope Benedict XIII), and when there heard of the death of his friend King John I of Arragon. Accordingly he determined to set out for St. Patrick's Purgatory, partly by way of penance, partly in order to know how it fared with the soul of John I. He received a safe conduct—to be hereafter alluded to—from Richard II. of England on September 6th, 1397, and left Avignon two days later.

Even at the risk of some repetitions we may allow the Viscount to give the account of himself and his adventures in the Purgatory as englished by Dr. Henry Jones in his *Patrick his Purgatory*.

“ I Ramon by the grace of God Viscount of Perels and Baron of Sereta was a follower of Charles, King of France, to whom my father (being intimate with him, and commander of his army) on his death-bed recommended me, and with whom from my childhood I was instructed. The court of this so great prince was famous for the resort of many noble persons, as well strangers as subjects. Many of these did I often hear discoursing of strange and remarkable things in several parts of the world, which I did earnestly desire to see. But I shall only speak of those things which concern my going into St. Patrick's Purgatory. Neither will I divulge all that there I saw, only those things which I might lawfully relate.

“ When Charles the French King was dead, to whose care I was recommended by my dying father, I did repair to John King of Arragon in Spain, whose subject I was by the law of nations, my possessions lying within his dominions. He did always esteem of me as much as a king would a subject, and mine observance of him was as great. He first made me Master of his Horse, and after gave me command of three galleys for the service of Pope Clement. And after his death I served under his successor, Pope Benedict XIII, at which time the news was brought to me of my king's death, with which sad relation much perplexed I did earnestly desire to know in what state the king's soul was, or if in purgatory it were, and what pains it suffered, whereupon I called to mind what I heard reported of St. Patrick's Purgatory, and resolved to visit it, that I might as well know some certainty of the king, as for obtaining pardon of God for my sins.

“ And first, fearing I might fail of my duty, if without leave from the Pope I had undertaken the pilgrimage ; to him I made known my resolutions, desiring his favour that I might be gone. But he so mainly opposed himself to mine intentions, that scarcely did I know how to gainsay. But at the last by much importunity I gained so far with Pope Benedict that I was with his blessing confirmed in it, and so departed from Avignon, where he then was, in the year 1328 [*recté* 1397], in the month of September, about the even of that day which is sacred to the Blessed Virgin [Nativity of B.V.M., Sept. 8th].

“ First I went to the French court in Paris, where I departed with the King’s letter of recommendation to his son-in-law the King of England, of whom I courteously was received, and with his letters sent away into Ireland.”

The letter from Richard II is printed in Rymer’s *Foedera*, [2] and briefly runs as follows :—The King to all constables, marshals, etc. The nobleman Raymond, Viscount de Perilleux, Knight of Rhodes, and Chamberlain of the King of France, has come to England, and proposes to visit St. Patrick’s Purgatory with twenty men and thirty horses in his company. The said Raymond is taken into the King’s protection, and the said constables, etc., are to protect him from injury provided that he presents these letters, and pays for any food or necessities he takes. Given at Westminster, Sept. 6th, 1397. The discrepancy in the dating strikes one immediately. Possibly the Viscount mis-dated the commencement of his journey. He embarked at Chester, touched at Holyhead [Olyet], and the Isle of Man [yla d’Arman], and finally landed at Dublin [Belvi].

“ When I was come to Dublin, the metropolis of the kingdom, I did address myself to the Earl of March, brother’s son to Richard, being then Deputy of Ireland, he having received the king’s and queen’s letters did receive me honourably. But understanding my resolution, he laboured by all means to dissuade me, laying before me the great dangers of that Purgatory, in which many had miscarried ; but prevailing with me nothing he sent me to Drogheda, to the Archbishop of Armagh, to whom in matters of religion all the Irish are without contradiction subject. Who having perused the letters entertained me lovingly and freely, and endeavoured to divert me, shewing how difficult the enterprise was, and that many went thither who never returned. But seeing my resolution he did advise me, dismissing me with letters to O’Neill the king, from whom with gifts I departed to a village called Tarmuin—that is to say, Protection or Sanctuary. The lord of this place with his brother shewed me great curtesies, and in ferrys wafted me and my followers into the island where the Purgatory was, together with many others who from several nations flocked thither to visit this Purgatory.

“ I was conducted into the church of the monastery, and being by the prior in the presence of many questioned I shewed the reason of my resolution that I proposed to commit myself into the Purgatory, then he said ‘ Thou hast undertaken a difficult and dangerous thing, which some few have attempted, yet could not compass. I do confess indeed that to descend into the Purgatory is easy, but the chief work is to return thence,’ To all which I answered, that seeing I came thither purposely and to that end, it was expedient I should succeed. To which he said ‘ If such be your resolution, then doth it behove you to observe the rites of this place, in manner as they were by St. Patrick appointed, and by my predecessors observed.’

“ Shortly after the priests adjoining, with all the religious of the convent, being called together, that mass was celebrated with music and solemnity, which is used to be said for the dead ; which being finished, and all ceremonies observed, the priests being placed in order, I was in procession brought to the door of the cave.” The Languedoc version contains some points omitted by O’Sullivan, one of which is, that prior to his entering the cave Raymond made four knights, viz. his own two sons, an Englishman named Thomas, and a Spaniard named Peyre Masco. When he had been sprinkled with holy water, and the Litany had been sung, the prior unlocked the door, and warned him about the meeting with the twelve men, and the subsequent encounter with the demons. “ After this I kissed them all, and said farewell, and so going into the cave after me followed an English knight.” In the Latin version this latter pilgrim is styled Taresi Dominus ; evidently his surname was Tracey ; but in the Languedoc version he is a foreigner of high rank, and is named “ Mossenhor Guilhem, senhor de Corsi.” They are forbidden to speak to each other on pain of death, and the prior locked the door, and withdrew.

“ Now when I was shut in, and had taken notice of the greatness of the cave, which I conceive to be about four elnes (ulnas), I found the inner part thereof to turn and extend itself a little to the left hand as I went in. Where I had trodden I found the ground under me weak and shaking, that it seemed as though it could not bear a man ; therefore fearing to fall into some unknown depth I did step back, and having settled myself in the Catholic Faith, and being firm in my resolution, I did cast myself upon my knees to pray, supposing there had been no more to be done. But about one hour after I did begin to tremble every joint of me, to sweat and be heartsick, to vomit also, as if I had been on a long voyage at sea. In which troubles I was overtaken with sleep, but again roused up with the noise of a great thunder, which was not heard by me alone, but by as many as were in the island, with which they were the more astonished, in that it was a clear and fair day.

“ The fear of which sudden thunder was not over, when a new and greater terror seized on me, for scarcely was I awake when that I did slide downwards about six elnes, with which sudden fall notwithstanding that I were fully awakened and affrighted, yet did I not recover myself until I had said those words the prior taught me :—*Christ, the Son of the Living God, have mercy upon me, a sinner*

“ After which I did perceive the cave to be larger and higher and the further I went, for now I went alone having lost my companion, it was still more deep and large. Neither rested I until I had entered into a place extremely dark and utterly destitute of any light, but the darkness soon passed. I did come into a very large hall, yet having no more light than in our twilight in winter. It had not one long continued wall, but was arched, and stood on pillars. In which after I had walked here and there, thinking I had been at my journey’s end, I sat down admiring the structure, elegancy, and beauty of that strange work, which in mine opinion surpasseth all human skill.” Then enter the twelve men clad in white, who advise him as to his future conduct. On their departure the devils arrive, who endeavour to seduce him with promises, and on Raymond’s refusing to hear them they light a fire in the middle of the hall, and cast him into it, but he is delivered by his prayer. The devils fled at this, but “ some of the spirits remained in the hall, who drew me through a long way set with briars and thorns, being dark, and full of wicked spirits, where also was so fierce and terrible a wind that it took away my hearing, and seemed to pierce even my body.”

The devils conduct him successively into the four fields of punishment, and in the fourth “ I met many men and women whom I knew, and such as were allied to me, here I met with John my king, of whom I demanded for what fault it was he was here ; although he did confer of many other things with me, yet to this question he only answered that it behoved princes and great men of this world not to wrong any one in favour of others, although never so dear to them. There also did I see a certain religious man [in the Languedoc version “ friar Francis del Pueg, a Franciscan of Gerona”] grievously punished for some sins he had committed, for which it wanted little, but he was eternally punished in hell, and assuredly it had gone hard with him had he not expiated his fault with much grief at heart, many tears, and strict penance. There also I met the lady Aldonsa Carolea, my kinswoman [in the Languedoc version “ Aldosa de Queralt, my niece”] of whose death I did not hear before. For when I began my pilgrimage she was alive. She was chiefly punished that she had spent so much time in trimming and painting her face : yet were all these in the way of salvation.”

The remainder of Raymond’s journey through the regions of pain and bliss corresponds to that of Owen. Finally he returned to the hall, where he meets with the knight who had entered the Purgatory with him. “ But my companion the knight was so tired with labour and torments that he could not return without my help ; when we had gone a little way, we found no way nor passage to get out, wherewith being much terrified, and on our knees beginning to desire the Lord, that as He had freed us from former dangers, so He would not now leave

us. In our praying we were overtaken with deep sleep, being wearied out with so much watchings and so many temptations of devils, and out of this sleep we were awakened by a great thunder, yet less than the former, and we were lifted up and laid in great astonishment at that place of the cave whence we fell, and near the entrance. Now had the prior and priests, with the rest who were present, opened the gate, and received us with great joy and gratulation, bringing us both into the church, where we did give thanks. Thence having saluted the venerable prior and the rest of the religious, I went through England to Paris. And such was my pilgrimage to St. Patrick's Purgatory."

Raymond returned to France, apparently in the spring of 1398. In November of that year Pope Benedict XIII, who was then besieged in his palace of Avignon, sent him on an embassy to Paris. In the service of the Pope he made constant journeys between the two towns ; his subsequent history, and the date of his death are not known, but his name appears for the last recorded time in 1405.

Raymond's narrative is obviously modelled on the prototype of Owen, though with some slight differences. In the earlier story no mention is made of the treacherous quaking ground down which Raymond slips, nor of the peals of thunder at the commencement and close of the pilgrim's vigil. In the fourth field Owen recognises some of his former friends and acquaintances ; so does Raymond, with this addition, that he gives their names as well as some description of the sins for which they were punished. These variations may be due to the inventive powers of O'Sullivan Beare, though, as Montalvan reproduces them in his account of Louis Enius, it is just possible that both these writers drew them from a variant of the received text that may have been current in Spain.

#### NOTES.

[1]. I *Série*, tom. VIII.

[2]. Vol. VIII, p. 14 (London, 1709).

The portions of Raymond's tour in Ireland which have been omitted by O'Sullivan, but are included in the Languedoc version, have been translated into English in *Hermathena*, xl.

Saint Patrick's purgatory : a mediaeval pilgrimage in Ireland ([1918?])

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