

NEW CHURCH OF ST. MICHAEL AND  
ALL ANGELS, CORKBEG.

ON the 23rd ult. the ceremony of consecrating the above church was performed by the bishop of the diocese. It is built close to the site of the old one, the material used being a sandstone procured in the neighbourhood, with dressings of cut limestone. The interior is lined with red brick, with bands and string-courses of white and black brick. The church is planned to accommodate 200 persons. At the northern side there is a convenient space, set apart for an organ-chamber and vestry-room, with heating chamber, coal-cellars, &c., underneath. One of the most pleasing features in the building is a very fine three-light stained glass window in the eastern gable. The western gable has two lancet windows, with a fine wheel window over, and a very good effect would be produced were these also filled with stained glass. The nave has seven Gothic headed windows, filled with cathedral glass. The roof is a steep pitched one, the woodwork, which is stained and varnished, being exposed on the inside. Mr. William Atkins, Cork, is the architect, and Mr. Samuel Hill the contractor. The local *Constitution* thus summarises the early history of the district :—

Corkbeg, or little Cork, is said to have formerly been one of the numerous small corporate towns which abounded in this part of Ireland, and which were entirely abolished after the Wars of the Roses, in which many of the Irish chieftains very, unnecessarily interfered. The church, which probably replaced one of the ancient cells, is mentioned in the Taxation of Pope Nicholas in 1291 as valued at 100 shillings, the tithes being 10 shillings. Of the very early incumbents we have no mention in the records, but in the Octave of SS. Peter and Paul, 1353, an inquisition was held at Cloyne before, John Whittock then bishop, and twelve men, whose names are given, and who, with other matters, found that the prior of Exeter is rector of Corkbeg, Affadd (Aghada) and Balygormor, and that he is, bound to find two competent chaplains to serve the church of Cloyne. The word *competentes* used in the original roll, proves that an order superior to the general one, was necessary to the service of the cathedral. Early in the reign of Edward III., William, son of Jordan Caunton, held Corkbeg from the bishop of Cloyne, and amongst other services he was bound to supply 4 lbs. of wax yearly for the use of the lights in the cathedral. The old castle on the peninsula was built by the Cauntons, who were probably of Welsh extraction, as many, formerly from Wales, who at an early term emigrated to Youghal, subsequently ramified and settled down here. Amongst them may be enumerated the Kenfecks or Kinifecks and others. Shortly afterwards, John, son of Nicholas Caunton, died, and again in 1354 another jury find that Corkbeg belongs to the church of Cloyne. About 1570 the patronage of Corkbeg, Trabolgan, &c., was in the hands of Sir John FitzEdmunds Fitzgerald of Cloyne, as in 1581 he presented one Philip O'Gully to the living and the entry of this gift is still in existence. Matthew Sheyn was the bishop of Cork and Cloyne; Sir John Fitzgerald signs and seals his presentation to O'Gully at Cloyne, 12th October, 1581, the bishop accepts the nomination, and orders the archdeacon of Cloyne—John Harry—to put O'Gully in possession canonically of the church, &c. This was signed at Cork by the bishop, and ratified by Philip Goold, archdeacon and vicar-general of Cork. Down to 1632 the rectors of Corkbeg seem to have, been presented by the Fitzgeralds. By the remarkable will of Sir J. Fitz E. Gerald, Knt., of Ballymaloe, executed 1st September, 1640, he bequeaths to his Majesty for his disposal, with numerous other Churches and church lands, the tithes of Corkbeg, Aghadd, Killiskin, Rostellan, &c. From this time the patronage of the church reverted to the bishops of Cloyne. The ancient church, the walls of which are adjacent to the new structure, are in excellent repair, owing to the laudable zeal of Mr. R. U. Penrose-Fitzgerald, of Corkbeg House. On the side of the door is the date, 1586—the date of the church—probably also built by the Fitzgeralds. The stoup for containing the consecrated waters still projects from the door. The font, with its original pillar, stands on a very interesting stone bracket in the wall with a groove on the south of where the altar once stood. This was most probably intended for a *credence*, but what the groove was intended for is not apparent. On the left side of the door in the wall is a stone on which are cut in high relief the emblems of the crucifixion, and in the corner is cut —“*Signum redemptionis nostrae*” Smith says (1750) in it there is an old tomb “said to have belonged to one of the Condons.”