

A WORD FOR MUNSTER.

In a note attending Dr. Sigerson's translation of a poem by Michael O'Lonigan, as it is reprinted in a recent issue of the "Shan," I notice an error, which, by some means, has escaped the vigilance of our usually alert and well-informed editor. This is in reference to the supposed peaceful attitude of Munster during the year of rebellion, 1798. In one place it is stated that "While Ulster, Connaught, and Leinster were striving... Munster took no part in the fray;" and in another we are treated to a recapitulation of how Munster retrieved her reputation in the next century. This is all, to me, at least, a little incomprehensible. There is on record the account of one considerable battle fought in Munster between the King's troops and the United Irishmen, in which the rebels displayed an amount of gallantry and daring not excelled in any other province. At Ballynascarty, on the road between Clonakilty and Bandon, 220 men of the Westmeath Regiment of Militia, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Hugh O'Reilly, and accompanied by two six-pounders, were attacked on the 19th of June by a body of 300 or 400 men, mostly armed with pikes. The troops were a trained, disciplined, and well-armed body, but so fierce was the attack and so well arranged the preparations of the insurgents that the Irish carried all before them for some time, and would undoubtedly have won the day but for the unexpected arrival on the scene of another Royalist force, consisting of 100 men of the Caithness Legion, under a Major Innes. These coming up on the flank of the rebels opened fire upon them, and the two detachments of the King's forces thus uniting, the Republicans were forced to retire, as they were almost totally unprovided with firearms. This engagement took place on the 19th of June, two days before the battle of Vinegar Hill. Had it been a Republican victory it would probably have been the prelude to a general uprising throughout Cork county, as the battle of Oulart Hill (similar in many of its details) had been to the Wexford uprising. The fact that it occurred during the progress of the Wexford fight explains why the poet, Michael O'Longain, could write regretfully of "Munster's Slumbers;" he being in Wexford knew nothing of the brave attempt in Cork county. But that which was

pardonable in him is inexplicable on the part of people writing a century later. It might also be added in defence of Munster that, considering the difficulties which must have attended the transmission of news in those days, the fact that an attempt, and a gallant one, was made in three weeks from the time Wexford took the field speaks volumes for the spirit animating the common people of that province.

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