**TARA, VISCOUNTS AND BARONS.** The 1st Viscount Tara was Thomas Preston (1585-1655), a descendant of Sir Robert de Preston, who in 1363 purchased the lands of Gormanston, Co. Meath, and who was keeper of the Great Seal in Ireland some years later. Sir Robert’s great-grandson, Robert Preston, was created Viscount Gormanston in 1478; and the latter’s great-grandson was Christopher, 4th Viscount Gormanston (d. 1599), whose second son was Thomas Preston, Viscount Tara. The latter was in the same Irish regiment in the Spanish service as Owen Roe O’Neill, and distinguished himself in the defence of Louvain against the French and Dutch in 1635. Between him and Owen Roe O’Neill there was from the first intense jealousy. Preston, who was appointed general of Leinster, took a prominent and not unsuccessful part in the war of factions that raged intermittently in Ireland from 1642 to 1652. In 1650 Charles II. while in exile created him Viscount Tara; and after his departure from Ireland in 1652 he offered his services to Charles in Paris, where he died in October 1655. His wife was a Flemish lady of rank, by whom he had several children, one of his daughters being the second wife of Sir Phelim O’Neill. His son Anthony succeeded him as 2nd Viscount Tara, a title that became ex­tinct on the death of Thomas, 3rd Viscount, in 1674.

In 1691 Meinhart de Schomberg, 3rd duke of Schomberg, second son of William III.’s famous general, was created Baron Tara, earl of Bangor, and duke of Leinster, in the peerage of Ireland, all of which titles became extinct at his death without sons in 1719. The title of Baron Tara was again revived in 1800 in favour of John Preston of Bellinter, Co. Meath, as a reward for his vote in favour of the Union in the Irish House of Commons, in which he sat as member for Navan. At his death without issue in 1821, the peerage became extinct.

**TARA,** a village of Co. Meath, Ireland. It is celebrated for the Hill of Tara, well known through Thomas Moore’s ballad, and for many centuries a royal residence and the scene of great meetings of the people. The hill, upon which five highroads converged from different parts of Ireland, is about 510 ft. in height, and stands isolated. On its summit or flanks are six raths or circular earthworks, the largest of which, called the king’s rath *(rath-na-riogh)* encloses other works, among which is the *forradh* or meeting-place, a flat-topped mound. On this (but not in its original position) stands a pillar stone, which has been held to be the stone of destiny on which the Irish kings were crowned. An oblong enclosure, 759 ft. in length by 46 ft. in breadth, formed of earthworks, with entrances at intervals on each side, represents the banquet­ing hall. In the middle of the 3rd century a.d. King Cormac Mac Art, about whom there are many records in connexion with Tara, is said to have founded here schools of military science, law and literature. In the time of St Patrick Tara is in­dicated as the chief seat of druidism and idolatry, and in or about 560 it was abandoned as a royal residence, having fallen under the curse of St Ruadan. In 980 the Danish power of Meath was overthrown in battle here; in 1798 a severe defeat of the insurgents took place here (26th of May); and in 1843 the hill of Tara, as a site sacred to Irish traditions, was the scene of one of Daniel O’Connell’s mass meetings in support of the repeal of the legislative union (15th of August).

**TARAFA** [’Amr ibn ul-’Abd ul-Bakrī] (6th cent.), Arabian poet, who, after a wild and dissipated youth spent in Bahrein, left his native land after peace had been established between the tribes of Bakr and Taghlib and went with his uncle Muta- lammis (also a poet) to the court of the king of Hira, ’Amr ibn Hind (died 568-9), and there became companion to the king’s brother. Having ridiculed the king in some verses he was sent with a letter to the ruler of Bahrein, and, in accordance with the instructions contained in the letter, was buried alive. One of his poems is contained in the *Moallakat (q.v.).*

His diwan has been published in W. Ahlwardt's *The Diwans of the Six Ancient Arabic Poets* (London, 1870). Some of his poems have been translated into Latin with notes by B. Vandenhoff *Berlin,* 1895). (G. W. T.)

**TARAI,** or Terai (*i.e.* “ moist land ”), the name of the sub­montane strip of marshy jungle stretching beneath the lower ranges of the Himalaya in northern India. This strip may be said to extend roughly from the Jumna river on the west to the Brahmaputra on the east, though the term is now officially confined to a subdivision of Naini Tal district in the United Provinces; area, 776 sq. in.; population (1901) 118,422. At its northern edge, where the waterless forest tract of the Bhabar ends, a series of springs burst from the surface, and these, increasing and uniting in their progress, form the numerous streams that intersect the Tarai. The Deoha is the great river of the Tarai proper, and is navigable at Pilibhit. Elephants, tigers, bears, leopards and other wild animals arc found. Every­where it is most unhealthy, and inhabited only by tribes who seem proof against malaria. A large portion lies within Nepal.

**TARANTO** (anc. *Tarentum, q.v.),* a seaport of Apulia, Italy, in the province of Lecce, 50 m. from that town VV. by N. by road, and 68 m. by rail (44 m. W. by S. from Brindisi). Pop. (1901) 50,592 (town); 60,331 (commune). The city proper is situated on a rocky island 56 ft. above sea-level, which in ancient times was a peninsula, the isthmus on the west having been cut through by Ferdinand I. of Aragon. This island separates the Gulf of Taranto from the deep inlet of the Mare Piccolo, and is sheltered by two other flat islands, San Pietro and San Paolo; the latter is occupied by a lighthouse. This rock is the site of the citadel of the ancient town; its popula­tion is confined within small houses and narrow streets. The Strada Garibaldi along the Marc Piccolo is inhabited by fisher­men whose language retains traces of Greek. The cathedral, dedicated to San Cataldo, an Irish bishop, dating from the 11th century, has externally some remains of Saracenic Gothic; internally it has been completely modernized, and the shrine of the patron saint has been termed “ an orgy of rococo.’’ Below it is an early Christian basilica excavated in 1901. There is a fine museum in the former convent of San Pasquale con­taining antiquities unearthed in the neighbourhood. Adjacent is the Palazzo degli Uffizi, completed in 1896, containing various public offices. To the south, outside the Porta di Lecce, is the Citta Nuova, on the site of the main part of the ancient town. The chief industry is the cultivation of oysters in four large beds in the Mare Piccolo; besides oysters, Taranto carries on a large trade in *cozze,* a species of large black mussel, which is packed in barrels with a special sauce. The other trades are olive-oil refining, barrel-making and soap-boiling; corn, honey and fruit are largely exported. Excellent fish abound in the Mare Piccolo, ninety-three different species being found. The ebb and flow of the tide is distinctly visible here, Taranto being one of the few places in the Mediterranean where it is perceptible. In 1861 the strategic importance of Taranto was recognized by the Italian government, and in 1864 a Naval Commission designated it as third maritime arsenal after Spezia and Venice. Work was begun on the arsenal in 1883 and continued as the finances of the state per­mitted; it is capable of turning out new warships and of exe­cuting repairs of all kinds for the Mediterranean squadron. The arsenal extends for a mile and a half along the southern, coast of the Mare Piccolo, which constitutes its chief basin. The receiving-dock and the anchorage for torpedo boats, with its wide landing-stage, form dependencies. The dock, 655 ft. long, 130 ft. wide and 37 ft. deep, is divided into two compart­ments, each capable of containing a full-sized battleship, and can be pumped dry in eight hours by two 600 h.p. steam pumps. The Mare Grande is connected with the Mare Piccolo by a channel 875 yds. long, large enough to permit the passage of the largest battleship; the channel was bridged in 1887 by an iron swivel bridge, which when open leaves a passage way 196 ft. broad. In its present form the Mare Piccolo provides a well-sheltered anchorage, 36 ft. deep and 6325 acres in extent. The com­mercial harbour lies S. of the railway station outside the Mare Piccolo. In 1905 nearly 180,000 tons of shipping cleared the port.

In 927 Taranto was entirely destroyed by the Saracens, but rebuilt in 967 by Nicephorus Phocas, to whom is due the