









THE  
STORY OF IRELAND

BY  
A. M. SULLIVAN

NEW EDITION  
(Brought up to recent times by a well-known Author)

*SIXTIETH IMPRESSION*

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TO

MY YOUNG FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN

AT HOME AND IN EXILE,

IN THE COTTAGE AND THE MANSION,

AMIDST THE GREEN FIELDS AND IN THE CROWDED CITIES

SOON TO BE

THE MEN OF IRELAND,

I Dedicate

THIS LITTLE BOOK, WHICH CONTAINS

THE STORY OF OUR COUNTRY,

AND SUBSCRIBE MYSELF

THEIR FRIEND,

THE AUTHOR.



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## AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

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HIS little book is written for young people. It does not pretend to the serious character of a History of Ireland. It does not claim to be more than a compilation from the many admirable works which have been published by painstaking and faithful historians. It is an effort to interest the young in the subject of Irish history, and attract them to its study.

I say so much in deprecation of the stern judgment of learned critics. I say it furthermore and chiefly by way of owning my obligations to those authors the fruits of whose researches have been availed of so freely by me. To two of these in particular, Mr. M'Gee and Mr. Haverty, I am deeply indebted. In several instances, even where I have not expressly referred to my authority, I have followed almost literally the text supplied by them. If I succeed in my design of interesting my young fellow-countrymen in the subject of Irish history, I recommend them strongly to follow it up by reading the works of the two historians whom I have mentioned. They possess this immeasurable advantage over every other previously published history of Ireland, that in them the authors were able to avail themselves of the rich stores of material brought to light by the lamented O'Curry and O'Donovan, by Todd, Greaves, Wilde, Meehan, Gilbert, and others. These revelations of authentic history, inaccessible or unknown to previous history-writers, not only throw a flood

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of light upon many periods of our history heretofore darkened and obscured, but may be said to have given to many of the most important events in our annals an aspect totally new, and in some instances the reverse of that commonly assigned to them. Mr. Haverty's book is Irish history clearly and faithfully traced, and carefully corrected by recent invaluable archæological discoveries; Mr. M'Gee's is the only work of the kind accessible to our people which is yet more than a painstaking and reliable record of events. It rises above mere chronicling, and presents to the reader the philosophy of history, assisting him to view great movements and changes in their comprehensive totality, and to understand the principles which underlay, promoted, guided, or controlled them.

In all these, however, the learned and gifted authors have aimed high. They have written for adult readers. Mine is an humble, but I trust it may prove to be a no less useful aim. I desire to get hold of the young people, and not to offer them a learned and serious "history", which might perhaps be associated in their minds with school tasks and painful efforts to remember when this king reigned or whom that one slew; but to have a pleasant talk with them about Ireland; to tell them its story, after the manner of simple storytellers; not confusing their minds with a mournful series of feuds, raids, and slaughters, merely for the sake of noting them; or with essays upon the state of agriculture or commerce, religion or science, at particular periods—all of which they will find instructive when they grow to an age to comprehend and be interested in more advanced works. I desire to do for our young people that which has been well done for the youth of England by numerous writers. I desire to interest them in their country; to convince them that its

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history is no wild, dreary, and uninviting monotony of internecine slaughter, but an entertaining and instructive narrative of stirring events, abounding with episodes, thrilling, glorious, and beautiful.

I do not take upon myself the credit of being the first to remember that "the Child is father of the Man." The Rev. John O'Hanlon's admirable "Catechism of Irish History" has already well appreciated that fact. I hope there will follow many besides myself to cater for the amusement and instruction of the young people. They deserve more attention than has hitherto been paid them by our Irish book-writers. In childhood or boyhood to-day, there rapidly approaches for them a to-morrow, bringing manhood, with its cares, duties, responsibilities. When we who have preceded them shall have passed away for ever, they will be the men on whom Ireland must depend. They will make her future. They will guide her destinies. They will guard her honour. They will defend her life. To the service of this "Irish Nation of the Future" I devote the following pages, confident that my young friends will not fail to read aright the lesson which is taught by "The Story of Ireland."

Dublin, 15th August, 1867.

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## INTRODUCTORY.

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### HOW WE LEARN THE FACTS OF EARLY HISTORY.



It may occur to my young friends, that, before I begin my narration, I ought to explain how far or by what means any one now living can correctly ascertain and narrate the facts of very remote history. The reply is, that what we know of history anterior to the keeping of written records, is derived from the traditions handed down "by word of mouth" from generation to generation. We may safely assume that the commemoration of important events by this means, was, at first, unguarded or unregulated by any public authority, and accordingly led to much confusion, exaggeration, and corruption; but we have positive and certain information that at length steps were taken to regulate these oral communications, and guard them as far as possible from corruption. The method most generally adopted for perpetuating them was to compose them into historical chants or verse-histories, which were easily committed to memory, and were recited on all public or festive occasions. When written records began to be used, the events thus commemorated were set down in the regular chronicles. Several of these latter, in one shape or another, are still in existence. From these we chiefly derive our knowledge, such as it is, of the ancient history of Erin.

It is, however, necessary to remember that all history of very early or remote times, unless what is derived from the narratives of Holy Writ, is clouded, to a greater or lesser degree, with doubt and obscurity, and is, to a greater or lesser degree, a hazy mixture of probable fact and manifest fable. When writing was unknown, and

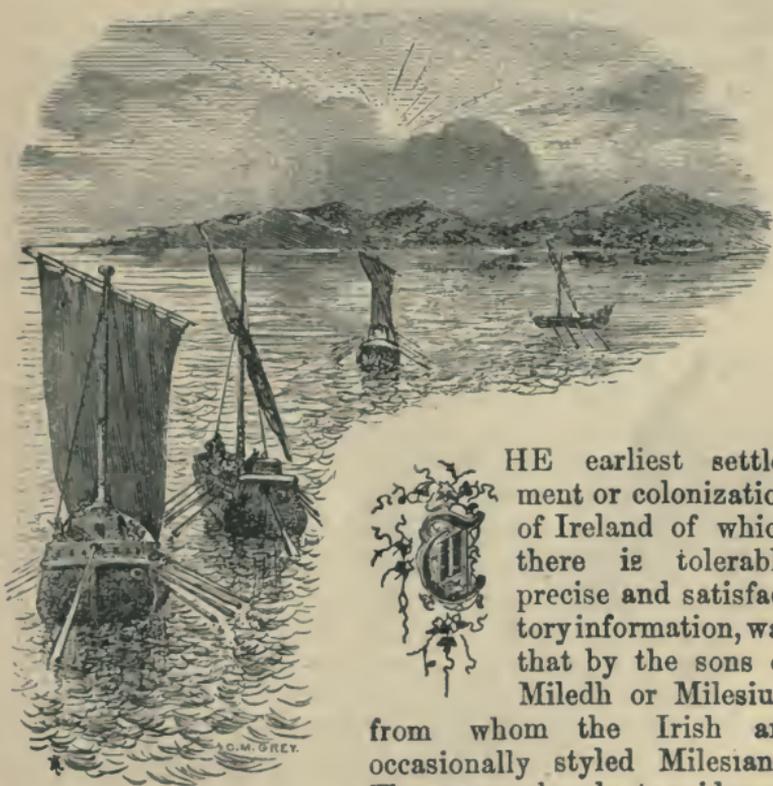
before measures were taken to keep the oral traditions with exactitude and for a public purpose, and while yet events were loosely handed down by unregulated "hearsay" which no one was charged to guard from exaggeration and corruption, some of the facts thus commemorated became gradually distorted, until, after great lapse of time, whatever was described as marvellously *wonderful* in the past, was set down as at least partly *supernatural*, and the long dead heroes whose prowess had become fabulously exaggerated, came to be regarded as demi-gods. It is thus as regards the early history of ancient Rome and Greece. It is thus with the early history of Ireland, and indeed of all other European countries.

It would, however, be a great blunder for any one to conclude that because some of those old mists of early tradition contain such gross absurdities, they contain no truths at all. Investigation is every day more and more clearly establishing the fact that, shrouded in some of the most absurd of those fables of antiquity, there are indisputable and valuable truths of history.



# THE STORY OF IRELAND

I.—HOW THE MILESIAANS SOUGHT AND FOUND “THE PROMISED ISLE”—AND CONQUERED IT.



THE earliest settlement or colonization of Ireland of which there is tolerably precise and satisfactory information, was that by the sons of Miledh or Milesius,

from whom the Irish are occasionally styled Milesians. There are abundant evidences

that at least two or three “waves” of colonization had long previously reached the island; but it is not very clear whence they came. Those first settlers are severally known in history as the Partholians, the Nemedians,

the Firbolgs, and the Tuatha de Danaans. These latter, the Tuatha de Danaans, who immediately preceded the Milesians, possessed a civilization and a knowledge of "arts and sciences" which, limited as we may be sure it was, greatly amazed the earlier settlers (whom they had subjected) by the results it produced. To the Firbolgs (the more early settlers) the wonderful things done by the conquering new-comers, and the wonderful knowledge they displayed, could only be the results of supernatural power. Accordingly they set down the Tuatha de Danaans as "magicians", an idea which the Milesians, as we shall presently see, also adopted.

The Firbolgs seem to have been a pastoral race; the Tuatha de Danaans were more of a manufacturing and commercial people. The soldier Milesian came, and he ruled over all.

The Milesian colony reached Ireland from Spain,\* but they were not Spaniards. They were an eastern people who had tarried in that country on their way westward, seeking, they said, an island promised to the posterity of their ancestor, Gadelius. Moved by this mysterious purpose to fulfil their destiny, they had passed from land to land, from the shores of Asia across the wide expanse of southern Europe, bearing aloft through all their wanderings the Sacred Banner, which symbolized to them at once their origin and their mission, the blessing and the promise given to their race. This celebrated standard, the "Sacred Banner of the Milesians", was a flag on which was represented a dead serpent and the rod of Moses; a device to commemorate for ever amongst the posterity of Gadelius the miracle by which his life had been saved. The story of this event, treasured with singular pertinacity by the Milesians, is told as follows in their traditions, which so far I have been following:—

While Gadelius, being yet a child, was sleeping one

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\* The settled Irish account; but this is also disputed by theorists who contend that all the waves of colonization reached Ireland from the continent across Britain.

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day, he was bitten by a poisonous serpent. His father—Niul, a younger son of the king of Scythia—carried the child to the camp of the Israelites, then close by, where the distracted parent with tears and prayers implored the aid of Moses. The inspired leader was profoundly touched by the anguish of Niul. He laid the child down, and prayed over him; then he touched with his rod the wound, and the boy arose healed. Then, say the Milesians, the man of God promised or prophesied for the posterity of the young prince, that they should inhabit a country in which no venomous reptile could live, an island which they should seek and find in the track of the setting sun.

It was not, however, until the third generation subsequently that the descendants and people of Gadelius are found setting forth on their prophesied wanderings; and of this migration itself—of the adventures and fortunes of the Gadelian colony in its journeyings—the history would make a volume. At length we find them tarrying in Spain, where they built a city, Brigantia, and occupied and ruled a certain extent of territory. It is said that Ith (pronounced “Eeh”) uncle of Milesius, an adventurous explorer, had, in his cruising northward of the Brigantian coast, sighted the Promised Isle, and landing to explore it, was attacked by the inhabitants (Tuatha da Danaans), and mortally wounded ere he could regain his ship. He died at sea on the way homeward. His body was reverentially preserved and brought back to Spain by his son, Lui (spelled Lugaid),\* who had accompanied him, and who now summoned the entire Milesian host to the

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\* Here let me at the outset state, once for all, that I have decided, after mature consideration, to spell most of the Irish names occurring in our annals according to their correct pronunciation or sound, and not according to their strictly correct orthography in the Irish language and typography. I am aware of all that may fairly be said against this course; yet consider the weight of advantage to be on its side. Some of our Irish names are *irretrievably* Anglicized in the worst form—uncouth and absurd. Choosing therefore between difficulties and objections, I have decided to rescue the correct *pronunciation* in this manner; giving, besides, with sufficient frequency, the correct orthography.

last stage of their destined wanderings—to avenge the death of Ith, and occupy the promised isle. The old patriarch himself, Miledh, had died before Lui arrived; but his sons all responded quickly to the summons; and the widowed queen, their mother, Scota, placed herself at the head of the expedition, which soon sailed in thirty galleys for “the isle they had seen in dreams”. The names of the sons of Milesius who thus sailed for Ireland were, Heber the Fair, Amergin, Heber the Brown, Colpa, Ir, and Heremon; and the date of this event is generally supposed to have been about fourteen hundred years before the birth of our Lord.

At that time Ireland, known as Innis Ealga (the Noble Isle), was ruled over by three brothers, Tuatha de Danaan princes, after whose wives (who were three sisters) the island was alternately called, Eire, Banba (or Banva), and Fiola (spelled Fodhla), by which names Ireland is still frequently styled in national poems. Whatever difficulties or obstacles beset the Milesians in landing they at once attributed to the “necromancy” of the Tuatha de Danaans, and the old traditions narrate amusing stories of the contest between the resources of magic and the power of valour. When the Milesians could not discover land where they thought to sight it, they simply agreed that the Tuatha de Danaans had by their black arts rendered it invisible. At length they descried the island, its tall blue hills touched by the last beams of the setting sun, and from the galleys there arose a shout of joy; Innisfail, the Isle of Destiny, was found!\* But lo, next morning the land was submerged, until only a low ridge appeared above the ocean. A device of the magicians,

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\* In Moore's *Melodies* the event here related is made the subject of the following verses:—

“ They came from a land beyond the sea,  
 And now o'er the western main  
 Set sail, in their good ships, gallantly,  
 From the sunny land of Spain.  
 “ Oh, where 's the Isle we've seen in dreams,  
 Our destin'd home or grave?  
 Thus sung they as, by the morning's beams,  
 They swept the Atlantic wave.”

say the Milesians. Nevertheless they reached the shore and made good their landing. The "magician" inhabitants, however, stated that this was not a fair conquest by the rules of war; that they had no standing army to oppose the Milesians; but if the new-comers would again take to their galleys, they should, *if able once more to effect a landing*, be recognized as masters of the isle by the laws of war.

The Milesians did not quite like the proposition. They feared much the "necromancy" of the Tuatha de Danaans. It had cost them trouble enough already to get their feet upon the soil, and they did not greatly relish the idea of having to begin it all over again. They debated the point, and it was resolved to submit the case to the decision of Amergin, who was the Ollave (the Learned Man, Lawgiver, or Seer) of the expedition. Amergin, strange to say, decided on the merits against his own brothers and kinsmen, and in favour of the Tuatha de Danaans. Accordingly, with scrupulous obedience of his decision, the Milesians relinquished all they had so far won. They reëmbarked in their galleys, and, as demanded, withdrew "nine waves off from the shore". Immediately a hurricane, raised, say their versions, by the spells of the magicians on shore, burst over the fleet, dispersing it in all directions. Several of the princes and chiefs and their wives and retainers were drowned. The Milesians paid dearly for their chivalrous acquiescence in the rather sin-

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"And, lo, where afar o'er ocean shines  
 A sparkle of radiant green,  
 As though in that deep lay emerald mines,  
 Whose light through the wave was seen.  
 "'Tis Innisfail—'tis Innisfail!  
 Rings o'er the echoing sea;  
 While, bending to heav'n, the warriors hail  
 That home of the brave and free.

"Then turn'd they unto the Eastern wave,  
 Where now their Day-God's eye  
 A look of such sunny omen gave  
 As lighted up sea and sky.  
 Nor frown was seen through sky or sea  
 Nor tear o'er leaf or sod,  
 When first on their Isle of Destiny  
 Our great forefathers trod".

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gular proposition of the inhabitants endorsed by the decision of Amergin. When they did land next time, it was not in one combined force, but in detachments widely separated; some at the mouth of the Boyne; others on the Kerry coast. A short but fiercely contested campaign decided the fate of the kingdom. In the first great pitched battle, which was fought in a glen a few miles south of Tralee,\* the Milesians were victorious. But they lost the aged Queen-Mother, Scota, who fell amidst the slain, and was buried beneath a royal cairn in Glen Scohene, close by. Indeed the Queens of ancient Ireland figure very prominently in our history, as we shall learn as we proceed. In the final engagement, which was fought at Tailtan in Meath, between the sons of Milesius and the three Tuatha de Danaan kings, the latter were utterly and finally defeated, and were themselves slain. And with their husbands, the three brothers, there fell upon that dreadful day, when crown and country, home and husband, all were lost to them, the three sisters, Queens Eire, Banva, and Fiola!

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\* All that I have been here relating is a condensation of traditions, very old, and until recently little valued or credited by historical theorists. Yet singular corroborations have been turning up daily, establishing the truth of *the main facts* thus handed down. Accidental excavations a few years since in the glen which tradition has handed down as the scene of this battle more than *three thousand years ago*, brought to light full corroboration of this fact, at least, that a battle of great slaughter was fought upon the exact spot some thousands of years ago.





Queen Scots unfurl's the Sacred Banner.



## II.—HOW IRELAND FARED UNDER THE MILESIAN DYNASTY.



It is unnecessary to follow through their details the proceedings of the Milesian princes in the period immediately subsequent to the landing. It will suffice to state that in a comparatively brief time they subdued the country, entering, however, into regular pacts, treaties, or alliances with the conquered but not powerless Firbolgs and Tuatha de Danaans. According to the constitution under which Ireland was governed for more than a thousand years, the population of the island were distinguished in two classes—the Free Clans, and the Unfree Clans; the former being the descendants of the Milesian legions, the latter the descendants of the subjected Tuatha de Danaans and Firbolgs. The latter were allowed certain rights and privileges, and to a great extent regulated their own internal affairs; but they could not vote in the selection of a sovereign, nor exercise any other of the attributes of full citizenship without special leave. Indeed, those subject populations occasioned the conquerors serious trouble by their hostility from time to time for centuries afterwards.

The sovereignty of the island was jointly vested in, or assumed by, Heremon and Heber, the Romulus and Remus of ancient Ireland. Like these twin brothers, who, seven hundred years later on, founded Rome, Heber and Heremon quarrelled in the sovereignty. In a pitched battle fought between them Heber was slain, and Heremon remained sole ruler of the island. For more than a thousand years the dynasty thus established reigned in Ireland, the sceptre never passing out of the family of Milesius in the direct line of descent, unless upon one occasion (to which I shall more fully advert at the proper time) for the brief period of less than twenty years. The Milesian sovereigns appear to have exhibited considerable energy in organizing the country and establishing what we may call "institutions", some of which have been adopted or copied, with improvements and adaptations, by the most civilized governments of the present day; and the island

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advanced in renown for valour, for wealth, for manufactures, and for commerce.

By this, however, my young readers are not to suppose that anything like the civilization of our times, or even faintly approaching that to which ancient Greece and Rome afterwards attained, prevailed at this period in Ireland. Not so. But, compared with the civilization of its own period in Northern and Western Europe, and recollecting how isolated and how far removed Ireland was from the great centre and source of colonization and civilization in the East, the civilization of pagan Ireland must be admitted to have been proudly eminent. In the works remaining to us of the earliest writers of ancient Rome, we find references to Ireland that attest the high position it then held in the estimation of the most civilized and learned nations of antiquity. From our own historians we know that more than fifteen hundred years before the birth of our Lord, gold mining and smelting, and artistic working in the precious metals, were carried on to a great extent in Ireland. Numerous facts might be adduced to prove that a high order of political, social, industrial, and intellectual intelligence prevailed in the country. Even in an age which was rudely barbaric elsewhere all over the world, the superiority of intellect over force, of the scholar over the soldier, was not only recognized but *decreed by legislation* in Ireland! We find in the Irish chronicles that in the reign of Eochy the First (more than a thousand years before Christ) society was classified into seven grades, each marked by the number of colours in its dress, and that in this classification *men of learning, i.e.* eminent scholars, or *savants* as they would now be called, were by law ranked *next to royalty*.

But the most signal proof of all, attesting the existence in Ireland at that period of a civilization marvellous for its time, was the celebrated institution of the Feis Tara, or Triennial Parliament of Tara, one of the first formal parliaments or legislative assemblies of which we have record.\*

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\* The Amphictyonic Council did not by any means partake to a like extent of the nature and character of a parliament.

This great national legislative assembly was instituted by an Irish monarch, whose name survives as a synonym of wisdom and justice, Ollav Fiola (Ollam Fórla), who reigned as Ard Ri of Erin about one thousand years before the birth of Christ. To this assembly were regularly summoned:—

Firstly—All the subordinate royal princes or chieftains;

Secondly—Ollaves and bards, judges, scholars, and historians; and

Thirdly—Military commanders.

We have in the old records the most precise accounts of the formalities observed at the opening and during the sitting of the assembly, from which we learn that its proceedings were regulated with admirable order and conducted with the greatest solemnity.

Nor was the institution of “triennial parliaments” the only instance in which this illustrious Irish monarch, two thousand eight hundred years ago, anticipated to a certain extent the forms of constitutional government of which the nineteenth century is so proud. In the civil administration of the kingdom the same enlightened wisdom was displayed. He organized the country into regular prefectures. “Over every cantred”, says the historian, “he appointed a chieftain, and over every townland a kind of prefect or secondary chief, all being the officials of the king of Ireland”. After a reign of more than forty years, this “true Irish king” died at an advanced age, having lived to witness long the prosperity, happiness, and peace which his noble efforts had diffused all over the realm. His real name was Eochy the Fourth, but he is more familiarly known in history by the title or soubriquet of “Ollav Fiola”, that is, *the* “Ollav”, or lawgiver, preëminently of Ireland, or “Fiola”.

Though the comparative civilization of Ireland at this remote time was so high, the annals of the period disclose the usual recurrence of wars for the throne between rival members of the same dynasty, which early and mediæval European history in general exhibits. Reading over the history of ancient Ireland, as of ancient Greece, Rome, Assyria, Gaul, Britain, or Spain, one is struck by the

number of sovereigns who fell by violent deaths, and the fewness of those who ended their reigns otherwise. But those were the days when between kings and princes, chiefs and warriors, the sword was the ready arbiter that decided all causes, executed all judgments, avenged all wrongs, and accomplished all ambitions. Moreover, it is essential to bear in mind that the kings of those times commanded and led their own armies, not merely in theory or by "legal fiction", but in reality and fact; and that personal participation in the battle and prowess in the field was expected and was requisite on the part of the royal commander. Under such circumstances one can easily perceive how it came to pass, naturally and inevitably, that the battle-field became ordinarily the deathbed of the king. In those early times the kings who did not fall by the sword, in fair battle or unfair assault, were the exceptions everywhere. Yet it is a remarkable fact, that we find the average duration of the reigns of Irish monarchs, for fifteen hundred or two thousand years after the Milesian dynasty ascended the throne, was as long as that of most European reigns in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. Several of the Milesian sovereigns enjoyed reigns extending to over thirty years; some to fifty years. Many of them were highly accomplished and learned men, liberal patrons of arts, science, and commerce; and as one of them, fourteen hundred years before the Christian era, instituted regularly convened parliaments, so we find others of them instituting orders of knighthood and Companionships of Chivalry long before we hear of their establishment elsewhere.

The Irish kings of this period, as well as during the first ten centuries of the Christian age, in frequent instances intermarried with the royal families of other countries—Spain, Gaul, Britain, and Alba; and the commerce and manufactures of Ireland were, as the early Latin writers acquaint us, famed in all the marts and ports of Europe.

III.—HOW THE UNFREE CLANS TRIED A REVOLUTION; AND WHAT CAME OF IT. HOW THE ROMANS THOUGHT IT VAIN TO ATTEMPT A CONQUEST OF IRELAND.



URING those fifteen hundred years preceding the Christian era, the other great nations of Europe, the Romans and the Greeks, were passing, by violent changes and bloody convulsions, through nearly every conceivable form of government—republics, confederations, empires, kingdoms, limited monarchies, despotisms, consulates, etc. During the like period (fifteen centuries) the *one* form of government, a limited monarchy, and the *one* dynasty, the Milesian, ruled in Ireland. The monarchy was *elective*, but elective out of the eligible members of the established or legitimate dynasty.

Indeed the principle of “legitimacy”, as it is sometimes called in our times—the hereditary right of a ruling family or dynasty—seems from the earliest ages to have been devotedly, I might almost say superstitiously, held by the Irish. Wars for the crown, and violent changes of rulers were always frequent enough; but the wars and the changes were always between members of the ruling family or “blood royal”; and the two or three instances to the contrary that occur, are so singularly strong in their illustration of the fact to which I have adverted, that I will cite one of them here.

The Milesians and the earlier settlers never completely fused. Fifteen hundred years after the Milesian landing, the Firbolgs, the Tuatha da Danaans, and the Milesians were still substantially distinct races or classes, the first being agriculturists or tillers of the soil, the second manufacturers and merchants, the third soldiers and rulers. The exactions and oppressions of the ruling classes at one time became so grievous that in the reign succeeding that of Creivan the Second, who was the ninety-ninth Milesian monarch of Ireland, a wide-spread conspiracy was organized for the overthrow and extirpation of the Milesian

princes and aristocracy. After three years of secret preparation, everything being ready, the royal and noble Milesian families, one and all, were invited to a "monster meeting" for games, exhibitions, feasting, etc., on the plain of Knock Ma, in the county of Galway. The great spectacle had lasted nine days, when suddenly the Milesians were set upon by the *Attacotti* (as the Latin chroniclers called the conspirators), and massacred to a man. Of the royal line there escaped, however, three princes, *children yet unborn*. Their mothers, wives of Irish princes, were the daughters respectively of the kings of Scotland, Saxony, and Brittany. They succeeded in escaping into Albion, where the three young princes were born and educated. The successful conspirators raised to the throne Carbry the First, who reigned five years, during which time, say the chronicles, the country was a prey to every misfortune; the earth refused to yield, the cattle gave no milk, the trees bore no fruit, the waters had no fish, and "the oak had but one acorn".\* Carbry was succeeded by his son, Moran, whose name deservedly lives in Irish history as "Moran the Just". He refused to wear the crown, which belonged, he said, to the royal line that had been so miraculously preserved; and he urged that the rightful princes, who by this time had grown to man's estate, should be recalled. Moran's powerful pleading commended itself readily to the popular conscience, already disquieted by the misfortunes and evil omens which, as the people read them, had fallen upon the land since the legitimate line had been so dreadfully cut down. The

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\* Such was the deep faith the Irish had in the principle of legitimacy in a dynasty! This characteristic of nearly all the Celtic nations survives in all its force in the Jacobite Relics of Ireland, the outbursts of Irish national feeling *seventeen hundred years subsequently*. *Ex. gr.* Compare the above, taken from an old chronicle of the period, with the well-known Jacobite song translated from the Irish by Callanan:—

"No more the cuckoo hails the spring;  
No more the woods with staunch hounds ring;  
*The sun scarce lights the sorrowing day,  
Since the rightful prince is far away*".

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young princes were recalled from exile, and one of them, Faradah the Righteous, was, amidst great rejoicing, elected king of Ireland. Moran was appointed chief judge of Erin, and under his administration of justice the land long presented a scene of peace, happiness, and contentment. To the gold chain of office which Moran wore on the judgment seat, the Irish for centuries subsequently attached supernatural powers. It was said that it would tighten around the neck of the judge if he was unjustly judging a cause!

The dawn of Christianity found the Romans masters of nearly the whole of the known world. Britain, after a short struggle, succumbed, and eventually learned to love the yoke. Gaul, after a gallant effort, was also overpowered and held as a conquered province. But upon Irish soil the Roman eagles were never planted. Of Ireland, or Ierne, as they called it, of its great wealth and amazing beauty of scenery and richness of soil, the all-conquering Romans heard much. But they had heard also that the fruitful and beautiful island was peopled by a soldier race, and, judging them by the few who occasionally crossed to Alba to help their British neighbours, and whose prowess and skill the imperial legions had betimes to prove, the conquest of Ierne was wisely judged by the Romans to be a work better not attempted.

The early centuries of the Christian era may be considered the period preëminently of pagan bardic or legendary fame in Ireland. In this, which we may call the "Ossianic" period, lived Cuhall or Cumhall, father of the celebrated Fin Mac Cumhall, and commander of the great Irish legion called the Fiana Erion, or Irish militia. The Ossianic poems\* recount the most marvellous stories of Fin and the Fiana Erion, which stories are compounds of undoubted facts and manifest fictions, the prowess of the heroes being in the course of time magnified into the supernatural, and the figures and poetic allegories of the earlier

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\* So-called from their author, Oisín, or Ossian, the warrior poet, son of Fin, and grandson of Cuhall.

bards gradually coming to be read as realities. Some of these poems are gross, extravagant, and absurd. Others of them are of rare beauty, and are, moreover, valuable for the insight they give, though obliquely, into the manners and customs, thoughts, feelings, guiding principles, and moving passions of the ancient Irish.

IV.—LARDIC TALES OF ANCIENT ERINN. “THE SORROWFUL FATE OF THE CHILDREN OF USNA”.



ONE of the oldest, and perhaps the most famous, of all the great national history-poems or bardic tales of the ancient Irish, is called “The Fate of the Childrer of Usna”, the incidents of which belong to the period preceding by half a century the Christian era, or anno mundi 3,960. Indeed it was always classified by the bards as one of “The

Three Sorrowful Tales of Erin". Singulary enough, the story contains much less poetic fiction, and keeps much closer to the simple facts of history, than do several of the poems of Ossian's time, written much later on. From the highly dramatic and tragic nature of the events related, one can well conceive that, clad in the beautiful idiom of the Irish tongue and told in the fanciful language of poetry, "The Story of the Children of Usnach" was calculated to win a prominent place amongst the bardic recitals of the pagan Irish. A semi-fanciful version of it has been given in English at great length by Dr. Ferguson in the *Hibernian Nights' Entertainment*; but the story is variously related by other narrators. As it may, perhaps, be interesting to my young readers, I summarize the various versions here, as the only specimen I mean to give of the semi-imaginative literature of the pagan Irish:

When Conor Mac Nessa was reigning king of Ulidia, and Eochy the Tenth was Ard Ri of Erin, it happened one day that Conor had deigned to be present at a feast which was given at the house of Felemi, son of the laureate of Ulster. While the festivities were going on, it came to pass that the wife of the host gave birth to a daughter; and the infant being brought into the presence of the king and the other assembled guests, all saw that a beauty more than natural had been given to the child. In the midst of remark and marvel on all hands at the circumstance, Kavaiee, the chief druid of the Ulidians, cried out with a loud voice and prophesied that through the infant before them there would come dark woe and misfortune to Ulster, such as the land had not known for years. When the warriors heard this, they all demanded that the child should instantly be put to death. But Conor interposed and forbade the deed. "I", said the king, "will myself take charge of this beautiful child of destiny. I shall have her reared where no evil can befall through her or to her, and in time she may become a wife for me". Then the chief druid, Kavaiee, named the child Deirdri, which means alarm or danger. Conor placed the infant under the charge of a nurse or attendant, and subse-

quently a female tutor, in a residence situated in a district which no foot of man was allowed to tread ; so that Deirdri had grown to the age of woman before she saw a human form other than those of her female attendants. And the maiden was beautiful beyond aught that the eye of man had ever beheld.

Meanwhile, at the court of the Ulidian king was a young noble named Naeisi, son of Usna, whose manly beauty, vigour, activity, and bravery were the theme of every tongue. One day, accompanied only by a faithful deerhound, Naeisi had hunted the deer from the rising of the sun, until, towards evening, he found the chase had led him into a district quite strange to his eye. He paused to think how best he might retrace his way homeward, when suddenly the terrible idea flashed across his mind, that he was within the forbidden ground which it was death to enter—the watchfully-guarded retreat of the king's mysterious *protege*, Deirdri. While pondering on his fatal position, he came suddenly upon Deirdri and her nurse, who were strolling in the sunset by a running stream. Deirdri cried out with joy to her attendant, and asked what sort of a being it was who stood beyond ; for she had never seen any such before. The consternation and embarrassment of the aged attendant was extreme, and she in vain sought to baffle Deirdri's queries, and to induce her to hasten homeward. Naeisi too, riveted by the beauty of Deirdri, even though he knew the awful consequences of his unexpected presence there, stirred not from the scene. He felt that even on the penalty of death he would not lose the enchanting vision. He and Deirdri spoke to each other ; and eventually the nurse, perplexed at first, seems to have become a confidant to the attachment which on the spot sprung up between the young people.

It was vain for them, however, to hide from themselves the fate awaiting them on the king's discovery of their affection, and accordingly Naeisi and Deirdri arranged that they would fly into Alba, where they might find a home. Now Naeisi was greatly loved by all the nobles of Ulster ; but most of all was he loved by his two brothers, Anli and

Ardan, and his affection for them caused him to feel poignantly the idea of leaving them for ever. So he confided to them the dread secret of his love for Deirdri, and of the flight he and she had planned. Then Anli and Ardan said that wherever Naeisi would fly, thither also would they go, and with their good swords guard their brother and the wife for whom he was sacrificing home and heritage. So, privately selecting a trusty band of one hundred and fifty warriors, Naeisi, Anli, and Ardan, taking Deirdri with them, succeeded in making their escape out of Ireland and into Alba, where the king of that country, aware of their noble lineage and high valour, assigned them ample "maintenance and quarterage", as the bards express it. There they lived peacefully and happily for a time, until the fame of Deirdri's unequalled beauty made the Albanian king restless and envious, reflecting that he might, as sovereign, himself claim her as wife, which demand at length he made. Naeisi and his brothers were filled with indignation at this; but their difficulty was extreme, for whither now could they fly? Ireland was closed against them for ever; and now they were no longer safe in Alba! The full distress of their position was soon realized; for the king of Alba came with force of arms to take Deirdri. After many desperate encounters and adventures, however, any one of which would supply ample materials for a poem-story, the exiled brothers and their retainers made good their retreat into a small island off the Scottish coast.

When it was heard in Ulidia that the sons of Usna were in such sore strait, great murmurs went round amongst the nobles of Ulster, for Naeisi and his brothers were greatly beloved of them all. So the nobles of the province eventually spoke up to the king, and said it was hard and a sad thing that these three young nobles, the foremost warriors of Ulster, should be lost to their native land and should suffer such difficulty "on account of one woman". Conor saw what discontent and disaffection would prevail throughout the province if the popular favourites were not at once pardoned and recalled. He

consented to the entreaties of the nobles, and a royal courier was dispatched with the glad tidings to the sons of Usna.

When the news came, joy beamed on every face but on that of Deirdri. She felt an unaccountable sense of fear and sorrow, "as if of coming ill". Yet, with all Naeisi's unbounded love for her, she feared to put it to the strain of calling on him to choose between exile with her or a return to Ireland without her. For it was clear that both he and Anli and Ardan longed in their hearts for one glimpse of the hills of Erin. However, she could not conceal the terrible dread that oppressed her, and Naeisi, though his soul yearned for home, was so moved by Deirdri's forebodings, that he replied to the royal messenger by expressing doubts of the safety promised to him if he returned.

When this answer reached Ulster, it only inflamed the discontent against the king, and the nobles agreed that it was but right that the most solemn guarantees and ample sureties should be given to the sons of Usna on the part of the king. To this also Conor assented; and he gave Fergus Mac Roi, Dutha del Ulad, and Cormac Colingas as guarantees or hostages that he would himself act towards the sons of Usna in good faith.

The royal messenger set out once more, accompanied by Fiachy, a young noble of Ulster, son of Fergus Mac Roi, one of the three hostages; and now there remained no excuse for Naeisi delaying to return. Deirdri still felt oppressed by the mysterious sense of dread and hidden danger; but (so she reflected) as Naeisi and his devoted brothers had hitherto uncomplainingly sacrificed everything for her, she would now sacrifice her feelings for their sakes. She assented, therefore (though with secret sorrow and foreboding), to their homeward voyage.

Soon the galleys laden with the returning exiles reached the Irish shore. On landing, they found a Dalaraidian legion waiting to escort them to Emania, the palace of the king; and of this legion the young Fiachy was the commander. Before completing the first day's march some misgivings seem occasionally to have flitted across the

minds of the brothers, but they were allayed by the frank and fearless, brave and honourable Fiachy, who told them to have no fear, and to be of good heart. But every spear's length they drew near to Emania, Deirdri's feelings became more and more insupportable, and so overpowered was she with the forebodings of evil, that again the cavalcade halted, and again the brothers would have turned back but for the persuasions of their escort. Next day, towards evening, they sighted Emania. "O Naeisi", cried Deirdri, "view the cloud that I here see in the sky! I see over Eman Green a chilling cloud of blood-tinged red". But Naeisi tried to cheer her with assurances of safety and pictures of the happy days that were yet before them.

Next day came Durthaent, chieftain of Fermae (now Farney), saying that he came from the king, by whose orders the charge of the escort should now be given to him. But Fiachy, who perhaps at this stage began to have misgivings as to what was in meditation, answered, that to no one would he surrender the honourable trust confided to him on the stake of his father's life and honour, which with his own life and honour he would defend.

And here, interrupting the summarized text of the story, I may state, that it is a matter of doubt whether the king was really a party to the treachery which ensued, or whether Durthacht and others themselves moved in the bloody business without his orders, using his name and calculating that what they proposed to do would secretly please him, would be readily forgiven or approved, and would recommend them to Conor's favour. Conor's character as it stands on the page of authentic history, would forbid the idea of such murderous perfidy on his part; but all the versions of the tale allege the king's guilt to be deep and plain.

Fiachy escorted his charge to a palace which had been assigned for them in the neighbourhood; and, much to the disconcerting of Durthacht of Fermae, quartered his legion of Dalaraidians as guards upon the building. That night neither the chivalrous Fiachy nor the Children of Usna disguised the now irresistible and mournful conviction, that foul ~~man~~ was to be apprehended; but Naeisi and

his brothers had seen enough of their brave young custodian to convince them that, even though his own father should come at the palace gate to bid him connive at the surrender of his charge, Fiachy would defend them while life remained.

Next morning the effort was renewed to induce Fiachy to hand over the charge of the returned exiles. He was immovable. "What interest is it of yours to obstruct the king's orders?" said Durthacht of Fernmae; "can you not turn over your responsibility to us, and in peace and safety go your way?" "It is of the last interest to me", replied Fiachy, "to see that the Sons of Usna have not trusted in vain on the word of the king, on the hostage of my father, or on the honour of my father's son". Then all chance of prevailing on Fiachy being over, Durthacht gave the signal for assault, and the palace was stormed on all sides.

Then spoke Naeisi, touched to the heart by the devotion and fidelity of Fiachy: "Why should you perish defending us? We have seen all. *Your* honour is safe, noblest of youths. We will not have you sacrificed vainly resisting the fate that for us now is clearly inevitable. We will meet death calmly, we will surrender ourselves, and spare needless slaughter". But Fiachy would not have it so, and all the entreaties of the Sons of Usna could not prevail upon him to assent. "I am here", said he, "the representative of my father's hostage, of the honour of Ulster, and the word of the king. To these and on me you trusted. While you were safe you would have turned back, but for me. Now, they who would harm you must pass over the lifeless corpse of Fiachy"

Then they asked that they might at least go forth on the ramparts and take part in the defence of the palace; but Fiachy pointed out that by the etiquette of knightly honour in Ulidia, this would be infringing on his sacred charge. He was the pledge for their safety, and he alone should look to it. They must, under no circumstances, run even the slightest peril of a spear-wound, unless he should first fall, when by the laws of honour, his trust would have been acquitted, but not otherwise. So ran the code of chivalry amongst the warriors of Dalariada.

Then Naeisi and his brothers and Deirdri withdrew into the palace, and no more, even by a glance, gave sign of any interest or thought whatsoever about their fate; whether it was near or far, brightening or darkening; "but Naeisi and Deirdri sat down at a chess-board and played at the game".

Meanwhile, not all the thunders of the heavens could equal the resounding din of the clanging of shields, the clash of swords and spears, the cries of the wounded, and the shouts of the combatants outside. The assailants were twenty to one; but the faithful Fiachy and his Dalariadans performed prodigies of valour, and at noon they still held the outer ramparts of all. By the assailants nothing had yet been won.

An attendant rushed with word to Naeisi. He raised not his eyes from the board, but continued the game.

But now the attacking party, having secured reinforcements, returned to the charge with increased desperation. For an hour there was no pause in the frightful fury of the struggle.

At length the first rampart was won.

A wounded guard rushed in with the dark news to Naeisi, who "moved a piece on the board, but never raised his eyes".

The story in this way goes on to describe how, as each fosse surrounding the palace was lost and won, and as the din and carnage of the strife drew nearer and nearer to the doomed guests inside, each report from the scene of slaughter, whether of good or evil report, failed alike to elicit the slightest motion of concern or interest one way or another from the brothers or from Deirdri. In all the relics we possess of the old poems or bardic stories of those pagan times, there is nothing finer than the climax of the tragedy which the semi-imaginative story I have been epitomising here proceeds to reach. The deafening clangour and bloody strife outside, drawing nearer and nearer, the supreme equanimity of the noble victims inside, too proud to evince the slightest emotion, is most powerfully and dramatically antithesised; the story culminating in the final act of the tragedy, when the faithful Fiachy and the

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last of his guards having been slain, "the Sons of Usna" met their fate with a dignity that befitted three such noble champions of Ulster.

When Fergus and Duthah heard of the foul murder of the Sons of Usna, in violation of the pledge for which they themselves were sureties, they marched upon Emania, and, in a desperate encounter with Conor's forces, in which the king's son was slain and his palace burned to the ground, they inaugurated a desolating war that lasted in Ulster for many a year, and amply fulfilled the dark prophecy of Kavaiee the Druid in the hour of Deirdri's birth.

Deirdri, we are told, "never smiled" from the day of the slaughter of her husband on Eman Green. In vain the king lavished kindness and favours upon her. In vain he exhausted every resource in the endeavour to cheer, amuse, or interest her. One day, after more than a year had been passed by Deirdri in this settled but placid despair and melancholy, Conor took her in his own chariot to drive into the country. He attempted to jest her sarcastically about her continued grieving for Naeisi, when suddenly she sprang out of the chariot, then flying at the full speed of the steeds, and falling head foremost against a sharp rock on the road side, was killed upon the spot.

Well known to most Irish readers, young and old, is Moore's beautiful and passionate "Lament for the Children of Usna":—

Avenging and bright fall the swift sword of Erin

On him who the brave sons of Usna betrayed!—

For every fond eye he hath waken'd a tear in,

A drop from his heart-wounds shall weep o'er her blade:

By the red cloud that hung over Conor's dark dwelling,

When Ulad's three champions lay sleeping in gore—

By the billows of war, which so often, high swelling,

Have wafted those heroes to victory's shore—

We swear to revenge them!—No joy shall be tasted,

The harp shall be silent, the maiden unwed,

Our halls shall be mute, and our fields shall lie wasted,

Till vengeance is wreak'd on the murderer's head!

Yes, monarch, tho' sweet are our home recollections;  
 Though sweet are the tears that from tenderness fall;  
 Though sweet are our friendships, our hopes, our affections,  
 Revenge on a tyrant is sweetest of all!

V.—THE DEATH OF KING CONOR MAC NESSA.



HAVE alluded to doubts suggested in my mind by the facts of authentic history, as to whether King Conor Mac Nessa was likely to have played the foul part attributed to him in this celebrated bardic story, and for which, certainly, the "sureties" Fergus, Duthach, and Cormac, held him to a terrible account. All that can be said is, that no other incident recorded of him would warrant such an estimate of his character; and it is certain he was a man of many brave and noble parts. He met his death under truly singular circumstances. The ancient bardic version of the event is almost literally given in the following poem, by Mr. T. D. Sullivan:—

DEATH OF KING CONOR MAC NESSA.

'T was a day full of sorrow for Ulster when Conor Mac Nessa went forth  
 To punish the clansmen of Connaught who dared to take spoil  
 from the North;  
 For his men brought him back from the battle scarce better than  
 one that was dead,  
 With the brain-ball of Mesgedra\* buried two-thirds of its depth  
 in his head.

\* The pagan Irish warriors sometimes took the brains out of champions whom they had slain in single combat, mixed them up with lime, and rolled them into balls, which hardened with time, and which they preserved as trophies. It was with one of these balls, which had been abstracted from his armoury, that Conor Mac Nessa was wounded, as described in the text.

His royal physician bent o'er him, great Fingen, who often before  
 Staunched the war-battered bodies of heroes, and built them for  
 battle once more,  
 And he looked on the wound of the monarch, and heark'd to his  
 low-breathed sighs,  
 And he said, "In the day when that missile is loosed from his  
 forehead, he dies.

## II.

"Yet long midst the people who love him King Conor Mac Nessa  
 may reign,  
 If always the high pulse of passion be kept from his heart and his  
 brain;  
 And for this I lay down his restrictions:—no more from this day  
 shall his place  
 Be with armies, in battles, or hostings, or leading the van of the  
 chase;  
 At night, when the banquet is flashing, his measure of wine must  
 be small,  
 And take heed that the bright eyes of woman be kept from his  
 sight above all;  
 For if heart-thrilling joyance or anger awhile o'er his being have  
 power,  
 The ball will start forth from his forehead, and surely he dies in  
 that hour".

## III.

Oh! woe for the valiant King Conor, struck down from the sum-  
 mit of life,  
 While glory unclouded shone round him, and regal enjoyment was  
 rife—  
 Shut out from his toils and his duties, condemned to ignoble repose,  
 No longer to friends a true helper, no longer a scourge to his foes!  
 He, the strong-handed smiter of champions, the piercer of armour  
 and shields,  
 The foremost in earth-shaking onsets, the last out of blood-sod-  
 den fields—  
 The mildest, the kindest, the gayest, when revels ran high in his  
 hall—  
 Oh, well might his true-hearted people feel gloomy and sad for  
 his fall!

## IV.

The princes, the chieftains, the nobles, who met to consult at his  
 board,  
 Whispered low when their talk was of combats, and wielding  
 the spear and the sword:

The bards from their harps feared to waken the full-pealing sweetness of song,  
 To give homage to valour or beauty, or praise to the wise and the strong;  
 The flash of no joy-giving story made cheers or gay laughter resound,  
 Amidst silence constrained and unwonted the seldom-filled wine-cup went round;  
 And, sadder to all who remembered the glories and joys that had been,  
 The heart-swaying presence of woman not once shed its light on the scene.

## I.

He knew it, he felt it, and sorrow sunk daily more deep in his heart;  
 He wearied of doleful inaction, from all his loved labours apart.  
 He sat at his door in the sunlight, sore grieving and weeping to see  
 The life and the motion around him, and nothing so stricken as he.  
 Above him the eagle went wheeling, before him the deer galloped by,  
 And the quick-legged rabbits went skipping from green glades and burrows a-nigh,  
 The song-birds sang out from the copses, the bees passed on musical wing,  
 And all things were happy and busy, save Conor Mac Nessa the king!

## V.

So years had passed over, when, sitting midst silence like that of the tomb,  
 A terror crept through him as sudden the noonlight was blackened with gloom.  
 One red flare of lightning blazed brightly, illuming the landscape around,  
 One thunder-peal roared through the mountains, and rumbled and crashed underground;  
 He heard the rocks bursting asunder, the trees tearing up by the roots,  
 And loud through the horrid confusion the howling of terrified brutes:  
 From the halls of his tottering palace came screamings of terror and pain,  
 And he saw crowding thickly around him the ghosts of the foes he had slain!

## VII.

And as soon as the sudden commotion that shuddered through nature had ceased,  
 The king sent for Barach, his druid, and said: "Tell me truly, O priest,

What magical arts have created this scene of wild horror and dread?  
 What has blotted the blue sky above us, and shaken the earth  
 that we tread?  
 Are the gods that we worship offended? what crime or what wrong  
 has been done?  
 Has the fault been committed in Erin, and how may their favour  
 be won?  
 What rites may avail to appease them? what gifts on their altars  
 should smoke?  
 Only say, and the offering demanded we lay by your consecrate  
 oak”.

## VIII.

“O king”, said the white-bearded druid, “the truth unto me  
 has been shown,  
 There lives but *one* God, the Eternal; far up in high Heaven is  
 His throne.  
 He looked upon men with compassion, and sent from His king-  
 dom of light  
 His Son, in the shape of a mortal, to teach them and guide them  
 aright.  
 Near the time of your birth, O King Conor, the Saviour of man-  
 kind was born,  
 And since then in the kingdoms far eastward He taught, toiled,  
 and prayed, till this morn,  
 When wicked men seized Him, fast bound Him with nails to a  
 cross, lanced His side,  
 And that moment of gloom and confusion was earth’s cry of  
 dread when He died.

## IX.

“O king, He was gracious and gentle, His heart was all pity and  
 love,  
 And for men He was ever beseeching the grace of his Father above;  
 He helped them, He healed them, He blessed them, He laboured  
 that all might attain  
 To the true God’s high kingdom of glory, where never comes sor-  
 row or pain;  
 But they rose in their pride and their folly, their hearts filled with  
 merciless rage,  
 That only the sight of His life-blood fast poured from His heart  
 could assuage:  
 Yet while on the cross-beams uplifted, His body racked, tortured,  
 and riven,  
 He prayed—not for justice or vengeance, but asked that His foes  
 be forgiven”.

## X.

With a bound from his seat rose King Conor, the red flush of rage  
 on his face.

Fast he ran through the hall for his weapons, and snatching his sword from its place,  
 He rushed to the woods, striking wildly at boughs that dropped down with each blow,  
 And he cried: "Were I midst the vile rabble, I'd cleave them to earth even so!  
 With the strokes of a high king of Erin, the whirls of my keen-tempered sword,  
 I would save from their horrible fury that mild and that merciful Lord".  
 His frame shook and heaved with emotion; the brain-ball leaped forth from his head,  
 And commending his soul to that Saviour, King Conor Mac Nessa fell dead.

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#### VI.—THE "GOLDEN AGE" OF PRE-CHRISTIAN ERINN

S early as the reign of Ard-ri Cormac the First—the first years of the third century—the Christian faith had penetrated into Ireland. Probably in the commercial intercourse between the Irish and continental ports, some Christian converts had been made amongst the Irish navigators or merchants. Some historians think the monarch himself, Cormac, towards the close of his life adored the true God, and attempted to put down druidism. "His reign", says Mr. Haverty the historian, "is generally looked upon as the brightest epoch in the entire history of pagan Ireland. He established three colleges; one for War, one for History, and the third for Jurisprudence. He collected and remodelled the laws, and published the code which remained in force until the English invasion (a period extending beyond *nine hundred years*), and outside the English Pale for many centuries after! He assembled the bards and chroniclers at Tara, and directed them to collect the annals of Ireland, and to write out the records of the country from year to year, making them synchronize with the history of other countries, by collating events with the reigns of contemporary foreign potentates; Cormac himself having been the inven-

tor of this kind of chronology. These annals formed what is called the 'Psalter of Tara', which also contained full details of the boundaries of provinces, districts, and small divisions of land throughout Ireland; but unfortunately this great record has been lost, no vestige of it being now, it is believed, in existence. The magnificence of Cormac's palace at Tara was commensurate with the greatness of his power and the brilliancy of his actions; and he fitted out a fleet which he sent to harass the shores of Alba or Scotland, until that country also was compelled to acknowledge him as sovereign. He wrote a book or tract called *Teagusc-na-Ri*, or the 'Institutions of a Prince', which is still in existence, and which contains admirable maxims on manners, morals, and government". This illustrious sovereign died A.D. 266, at Cleitach, on the Boyne, a salmon bone, it is said, having fastened in his throat while dining, and defied all efforts at extrication. He was buried at Ross-na-ri, the first of the pagan monarchs for many generations who was not interred at Brugh, the famous burial place of the pre-Christian kings." A vivid tradition relating the circumstances of his burial has been very beautifully versified by Dr. Ferguson in his poem, "The Burial of King Cormac":

"Crom Cruach and his sub-gods twelve",  
Said Cormac, "are but craven treene.  
The axe that made them, haft or helve,  
Had worthier of our worship been:

But He who made the tree to grow,  
And hid in earth the iron-stone,  
And made the man with mind to know  
The axe's use, is God alone".

The druids hear of this fearful speech, and are horrified:

Anon to priests of Crom was brought  
(Where girded in their service dread  
They ministered on red Moy Slaughter)—  
Word of the words King Cormac said.

They loosed their curse against the king,  
They cursed him in his flesh and bones,  
And daily in their mystic ring  
They turned the maledictive stones.

At length one day comes the news to them that the king is dead, "choked upon the food he ate", and they exultantly sound "the praise of their avenging God". Cormac, before he dies, however, leaves as his last behest, a direction that he shall not be interred in the old pagan cemetery of the kings at Brugh, but at Ross-na-ri:

But ere the voice was wholly spent  
That priest and prince should still obey,  
To awed attendants o'er him bent  
Great Cormac gathered breath to-say:

"Spread not the beds of Brugh for me,  
When restless death-bed's use is done,  
But bury me at Ross-na-ree,  
And face me to the rising sun.

For all the kings who lie in Brugh  
Put trust in gods of wood and stone,  
And 't was at Ross that first I knew  
One Unseen, who is God alone.

His glory lightens from the east,  
His message soon shall reach our shore,  
And idol-god and cursing priest  
Shall plague us from Moy Slaughter no more".

King Cormac dies, and his people one and all are shocked at the idea of burying him anywhere save in the ancient pagan cemetery where all his great forefathers repose. They agree that he must have been raving when he desired otherwise; and they decide to bury him in Brugh, where his grandsire, Conn of the Hundred Battles, lies armour-clad, upright, hound at foot and spear in hand:

Dead Cormac on his bier they laid:  
"He reigned a king for forty years;  
And shame it were", his captains said,  
"He lay not with his royal peers:

His grandsire, Hundred Battles, sleeps  
Serene in Brugh, and all around  
Dead kings, in stone sepulchral keeps,  
Protect the sacred burial ground.

What though a dying man should rave  
Of changes o'er the eastern sea,  
In Brugh of Boyne shall be his grave,  
And not in noteless Ross-na-ree".

Then northward forth they bore the bier,  
 And down from Sleithac's side they drew  
 With horseman and with charioteer,  
 To cross the fords of Boyne to Brugh,

Suddenly "a breath of finer air" touches the river "with  
 rustling wings".

And as the burial train came down  
 With dirge, and savage dolorous shows,  
 Across their pathway broad and brown,  
 The deep full-hearted river rose.

From bank to bank through all his fords,  
 'Neath blackening squalls he swelled and boiled,  
 And thrice the wond'ring gentile lords  
 Essay'd to cross, and thrice recoil'd.

Then forth stepped gray-haired warriors four;  
 They said: "Through angrier floods than these,  
 On link'd shield once our King we bore  
 From Dread-spear and the hosts of Deece;

And long as loyal will holds good,  
 And limbs respond with helpful thews,  
 Nor flood nor fiend within the flood  
 Shall bar him of his burial dues".

So they lift the bier, and step into the boiling surge.

And now they slide and now they swim,  
 And now amid the blackening squall,  
 Gray locks afloat with clutchings grim,  
 They plunge around the floating pall.

While as a youth with practised spear  
 Through justling crowds bears off the ring—  
 Boyne from their shoulders caught the bier,  
 And proudly bare away the King!

The foaming torrent sweeps the coffin away; next day it  
 is found far down the river, stranded on the bank under  
 Ross-na-ri; the last behest of Cormac is fulfilled after all!

At morning on the grassy marge  
 Of Ross-na-ree the corpse was found,  
 And shepherds at their early charge,  
 Entombed it in the peaceful ground.

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And life and time rejoicing run;  
 From age to age their wonted way;  
 But still he waits the risen Sun,  
 For still 't is only dawning Day.

In the two centuries succeeding, there flourished amongst other sovereigns of Ireland less known to fame, the celebrated Niall of the Nine Hostages, and King Dahi.\* During these two hundred years the flag of Ireland waved through continental Europe over victorious legions and fleets; the Irish monarchs leading powerful armies across the plains of Gaul, and up to the very confines of "the Cæsars' domains" in Italy. It was the day of Ireland's military power in Europe; a day which subsequently waned so disastrously, and, later on, set in utter gloom. Neighbouring Britain, whose yoke a thousand years subsequently Ireland was to wear, then lay helpless and abject at the mercy of the Irish hosts; the Britons, as history relates, absolutely weeping and wailing at the departure of the enslaving Roman legions, because now there would be nought to stay the visits of the Scoti, or Irish, and the Picts! The courts of the Irish princes and homes of the Irish nobility were filled with white slave attendants, brought from abroad, some from Gaul, but the most from Anglia. It was in this way the youthful Patricius, or Patrick, was brought a slave into Ireland from Gaul. As the power of Imperial Rome began to pale, and the outlying legions were being every year drawn in nearer and nearer to the great city itself, the Irish sunburst blazed over the scene, and the retreating Romans found the cohorts of Erin pushing dauntlessly and vengefully on their track. Although the Irish chronicles of the period themselves say little of the deeds of the armies abroad, the continental records of the time give us pretty full insight into the part they played on the European stage in that day.†

\* This was a soubriquet. His real name was Feredach the Second.

† Haverty the historian says: "It is in the verses of the Latin poet Claudian that we read of the sending of troops by Stilichio, the general of Theodosius the Great, to repel the Scottish hosts led by the brave and adventurous Niall. One of the passages of Claudian thus referred to is that in which the poet says:

*'Totam cum Scotus Iernem  
Movit, et infesto spumavit remige Tetys'.*

That is, as translated in Gibson's *Camden*:

*'When Scots came thundering from the Irish shores  
The ocean trembled, struck with hostile oars'.*

Niall of the Nine Hostages met his death in Gaul, on the banks of the Loire, while leading his armies in one of those campaigns. The death of King Dahi, who was killed by lightning at the foot of the Alps while marching at the head of his legions, one of our national poets, Davis, has immortalized in a poem, from which I quote here:—

Darkly their glibs o'erhang,  
 Sharp is their wolf-dog's fang,  
 Bronze spear and falchion clang—  
     Brave men might shun them!  
 Heavy the spoil they bear—  
 Jewels and gold are there—  
 Hostage and maiden fair—  
     How have they won them?

From the soft sons of Gaul,  
 Roman, and Frank, and thrall,  
 Borough, and hut, and hall,—  
     These have been torn.  
 Over Britannia wide,  
 Over fair Gaul they hied,  
 Often in battle tried,—  
     Enemies mourn!

\* \* \* \* \*

Up on the glacier's snow,  
 Down on the vales below,  
 Monarch and clansmen go—  
     Bright is the morning.  
 Never their march they slack,  
 Jura is at their back,  
 When falls the evening black,  
     Hideous, and warning.

Eagles scream loud on high;  
 Far off the chamois fly;  
 Hoarse comes the torrent's cry,  
     On the rocks whitening.  
 Strong are the storm's wings;  
 Down the tall pine it flings;  
 Hail-stone and sleet it brings—  
     Thunder and lightning.

Little these veterans mind  
 Thundering, hail, or wind;  
 Closer their ranks they bind—  
     Matching the storm.

While, a spear-cast or more,  
 On, the first ranks before,  
 Dathi the sunburst bore—  
     Haughty his form.

Forth from the thunder-cloud  
 Leaps out a foe as proud—  
 Sudden the monarch bowed—  
     On rush the vanguard;  
 Wildly the king they raise—  
 Struck by the lightning's blaze—  
 Ghastly his dying gaze,  
     Clutching his standard!

Mild is the morning beam,  
 Gently the rivers stream,  
 Happy the valleys seem;  
     But the lone islanders—  
 Mark how they guard their king!  
 Hark, to the wail they sing!  
 Dark is their counselling—  
     Helvetia's highlanders

Gather like ravens, near—  
 Shall Dathi's soldiers fear?  
 Soon their home-path they clear—  
     Rapid and daring;  
 On through the pass and plain,  
 Until the shore they gain,  
 And, with their spoil, again  
     Landed in Eirinn.

Little does Eire care  
 For gold or maiden fair—  
 "Where is King Dathi?—where,  
     Where is my bravest?"  
 On the rich deck he lies.  
 O'er him his sunburst flies  
 Solemn the obsequies,  
     Eire! thou gavest.

See ye that countless train  
 Crossing Ros-Comain's plain,  
 Crying, like hurricane,  
     *Uile liú ai?*  
 Broad is his *cairn's* base—  
 Nigh the "King's burial place",  
 Last of the Pagan race,  
     Lieth King Dathi!

## VII.—HOW IRELAND RECEIVED THE CHRISTIAN FAITH.



O these foreign expeditions Ireland was destined to be indebted for her own conquest by the spirit of Christianity. As I have already mentioned, in one of the military excursions of King Niall the First into Gaul, he captured and brought to Ireland amongst other white slaves, Patricius, a Romano-Gallic youth of good quality, and his sisters Darerca and Lupita. The story of St. Patrick's bondage in Ireland, of his miraculous escape, his entry into holy orders, his vision of Ireland—in which he thought he heard the cries of a multitude of people, entreating him to come to them in Erin—his long studies under St. Germain, and eventually his determination to undertake in an especial manner the conversion of the Irish, will all be found in any Irish Church History or Life of St. Patrick.\* Having received the sanction and benediction of the holy pontiff Pope Celestine, and having been consecrated bishop, St. Patrick, accompanied by a few chosen priests, reached Ireland in 432. Christianity had been preached in Ireland long before St. Patrick's time. In 431 St. Palladius, Archdeacon of Rome, was sent by Pope Celestine as a bishop to the Christians in Ireland. These, however, were evidently but few in number, and worshipped only in fear or secrecy. The attempt to preach the faith openly to the people was violently suppressed, and St. Palladius sailed from Ireland. St. Patrick and his missionaries landed on the spot where now stands the fashionable watering place called Bray, near Dublin. The hostility of the Lagenian prince and

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\* My young readers will find this glorious chapter in our religious annals, related with great simplicity, beauty, and truth, in a little publication called, "St. Patrick's: how it was restored", by the Rev. James Gaffney, of the diocese of Dublin, whose admirable volume on "The Ancient Irish Church", as well as the Rev. S. Malone's "Church History of Ireland", will be found invaluable to students.

people compelled him to reëmbark. He sailed northwards, touching at Innis-Patrick near Skerries, county Dublin, and eventually landed at Magh Innis, in Strangford Lough.

Druidism would appear to have been the form of paganism then prevailing in Ireland, though even then some traces remained of a still more ancient idol-worship, probably dating from the time of the Tuatha de Danaans, two thousand years before. St. Patrick, however, found the Irish mind much better prepared, by its comparative civilization and refinement, to receive the truths of Christianity, than that of any other nation in Europe outside imperial Rome. The Irish were always—then as they are now—preëminently a reverential people, and thus were peculiarly susceptible of religious truth. St. Patrick's progress through the island was marked by success from the outset. Tradition states that, expounding the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, he used a little sprig of trefoil, or three-leaved grass, whence the Shamrock comes to be the National Emblem, as St. Patrick is the National Saint or Patron of Ireland.

Ard-Ri Laori\* was holding a drudicial festival in Tara, at which the kindling of a great fire formed a chief feature of the proceedings, and it was a crime punishable with death for any one to light a fire in the surrounding country on the evening of that festival, until the sacred flame on Tara Hill blazed forth. To his amazement, however, the monarch beheld on the Hill of Slane, visible from Tara, a bright fire kindled early in the evening. This was the Paschal fire which St. Patrick and his missionaries had lighted, for it was Holy Saturday. The king sent for the chief druid, and pointed out to him on the distant horizon the flickering beam that so audaciously violated the sacred laws. The archpriest gazed long and wistfully at the spot, and eventually answered: "O king, there is indeed a flame lighted on yonder hill, which, *if it be not put out*

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\* Laoḡairi (pronounced Laori) the Second. He was son of Niul the First.

*to-night will never be quenched in Erin*". Much disquieted by this oracular answer, Laori directed that the offenders, whoever they might be, should be instantly brought before him for punishment. St. Patrick, on being arrested, arrayed himself in his vestments, and, crozier in hand, marched boldly at the head of his captors, reciting aloud as he went along, a litany which is still extant, in which he invoked, "on that momentous day for Erin", the Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, ever Blessed Mary the Mother of God, and the saints around the throne of heaven. Having arrived before the king and his assembled courtiers and druidical high priests, St. Patrick, undismayed, proclaimed to them that he had come to quench the fires of pagan sacrifice in Ireland, and light the flame of Christian faith. The king listened amazed and angered, yet no penalty fell on Patrick. On the contrary, he made several converts on the spot, and the sermon and controversy in the king's presence proved an auspicious beginning for the glorious mission upon which he had just entered.

It would fill a large volume to chronicle the progress of the saint through the island. Before his death, though only a few of the reigning princes had embraced the faith (for many years subsequently pagan kings ruled the country) the good seeds had been sown far and wide, and were thriving apace, and the cross had been raised throughout Ireland, "from the centre to the sea". Ours was the only country in Europe, it is said, bloodlessly converted to the faith. Strictly speaking, only one martyr suffered death for the evangelisation of Ireland, and death in this instance had been devised for the saint himself. While St. Patrick was returning from Munster a pagan chieftain formed a design to murder him. The plan came to the knowledge of Odran, the faithful charioteer of Patrick, who, saying nought of it to him, managed to change seats with the Saint, and thus received himself the fatal blow intended for his master.

Another authentic anecdote may be mentioned here. At the baptism of Aengus, King of Mononia or Munster, St. Patrick accidentally pierced through the sandal-covered



Death of King Dahi.



foot of the king with his pastoral staff,\* which terminated in an iron spike, and which it was the Saint's custom to strike into the ground by his side, supporting himself more or less thereby, while preaching or baptizing. The king bore the wound without wincing, until the ceremony was over, when St. Patrick with surprise and pain beheld the ground covered with blood, and observed the cause. Being questioned by the Saint as to why he did not cry out, Aengus replied, that *he thought it was part of the ceremony*, to represent, though faintly, the wounds our Lord had borne for man's redemption !

In the year of our Lord 493, on the 17th of March—which day is celebrated as his feast by the Catholic Church and by the Irish nation at home and in exile—St. Patrick departed this life in his favourite retreat of Saul, in the county of Down, where his body was interred. "His obsequies," say the old annalists, "continued for twelve days, during which the light of innumerable tapers seemed to turn night into day ; and the bishops and priests of Ireland congregated on the occasion."

Several of the Saint's compositions, chiefly prayers and litanies, are extant. They are full of the most powerful invocations of the saints, and in all other particulars are exactly such prayers and express such doctrines as are taught in our own day in the unchanged and unchangeable Catholic Church.

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\* "The staff of Jesus" is the name by which the crozier of St. Patrick is always mentioned in the earliest of our annals ; a well preserved tradition asserting it to have been a rood or staff which our Lord had carried. It was brought by St. Patrick from Rome when setting forth by the authority of Pope Celestine to evangelise Ireland. This staff was treasured as one of the most precious relics on Irish soil for *more than one thousand years*, and was an object of special veneration. It was sacrilegiously destroyed in the reign of Henry the Eighth by one of Henry's "reforming" bishops, who writes to the king boasting of the deed !

## VIII.—A RETROSPECTIVE GLANCE AT PAGAN IRELAND.



WE have now, my dear young friends, arrived at a memorable point in Irish history; we are about to pass from pagan Ireland to Christian Ireland. Before doing so, it may be well that I should tell you something about matters which require a few words apart from the brief narrative of events which I have been relating for you. Let us pause, and take a glance at the country and the people, at the manners and customs, laws and institutions of our pagan ancestors.

The geographical subdivisions of the country varied in successive centuries. The chief subdivision, the designations of which are most frequently used by the ancient chroniclers, was effected by a line drawn from the hill or ridge on the south bank of the Liffey, on the eastern end of which the castle of Dublin is built, running due west to the peninsula of Marey, at the head of Galway Bay. The portion of Ireland south of this line was called *Leah Moha* ("Moh Nua's half"); the portion to the north of it *Leah Cuinn* ("Conn's half"). As these names suggest, this division of the island was first made between two princes, Conn of the Hundred Battles, and Moh Nua, or Eoghan Mor, otherwise Eugene the Great, the former being the head or chief representative of the Milesian families descended from Ir, the latter the head of those descended from Heber. Though the primary object of this partition was achieved but for a short time, the names thus given to the two territories are found in use, to designate the northern and southern halves of Ireland, for a thousand years subsequently.

Within these there were smaller subdivisions. The ancient names of the four provinces into which Ireland is still divided were, *Mononia* (Munster), *Dalaradia*, or *Ulidia* (Ulster), *Lagenia* (Leinster), and *Conacia*, or *Conact* (Connaught). Again, *Mononia* was subdivided into

Thomond and Desmond, *i.e.*, north and south Munster. Besides these names, the territory or district possessed by every sept or clan had a designation of its own.

The chief palaces of the Irish kings, whose splendours are celebrated in Irish history, were: the palace of Emania, in Ulster, founded or built by Macha, queen of Cinbaeth the First (pronounced Kimbahe), about the year B.C. 700; Tara, in Meath; Cruachan, in Conact, built by Queen Maeve, the beautiful, albeit Amazonian, Queen of the West, about the year B.C. 100; Aileach, in Donegal, built on the site of an ancient Sun-temple, or Tuatha de Danaan fort-palace.

Kincora had not at this period an existence, nor had it for some centuries subsequently. It was never more than the local residence, a palatial castle, of Brian Boruma. It stood on the spot where now stands the town of Killaloe.

Emania, next to Tara the most celebrated of all the royal palaces of Ancient Erin, stood on the spot now marked by a large rath called the Navan Fort, two miles to the west of Armagh. It was the residence of the Ulster kings for a period of 855 years.

The mound or Grianan of Aileach, upon which, even for hundreds of years after the destruction of the palace, the O'Donnells were elected, installed, or "inaugurated," is still an object of wonder and curiosity. It stands on the crown of a low hill by the shores of Lough Swilly, about five miles from Londonderry.

Royal Tara has been crowned with an imperishable fame in song and story. The entire crest and slopes of Tara Hill were covered with buildings at one time; for it was not alone a royal palace, the residence of the Ard-Ri (or High King) of Erin, but, moreover, the legislative chambers, the military buildings, the law courts, and royal universities that stood thereupon. Of all these, nought now remains but the moated mounds or raths that mark where stood the halls within which bard and warrior, ruler and lawgiver, once assembled in glorious pageant.

Of the orders of knighthood, or companionships of valour chivalry, mentioned in pagan Irish history, the two chief were: the Knights of the (Craev Rua, or) Red

Branch of Emania, and the Clanna Morna, or Damnonian Knights of Iorras. The former were a Dalaradian, the latter a Conacian body; and, test the records how we may, it is incontrovertible that no chivalric institutions of modern times eclipsed in knightly valour and romantic daring those warrior companionships of ancient Erin.

Besides these orders of knighthood, several military legions figure familiarly and prominently in Irish history; but the most celebrated of them all, the Dalcassians—one of the most brave and “glory-crowned” bodies of which there is record in ancient or modern times—did not figure in Irish history until long after the commencement of the Christian era.

The Fianna Eirion, or National Militia of Erin, I have already mentioned. This celebrated enrolment had the advantage of claiming within its own ranks a warrior-poet, Ossian (son of the commander Fin), whose poems, taking for their theme invariably the achievements and adventures of the Fenian host, or of its chiefs, have given to it a lasting fame. According to Ossian, there never existed upon the earth another such force of heroes as the Fianna Eirion; and the feats he attributes to them were of course unparalleled. He would have us believe there were no taller, straighter, stronger, braver, bolder, men in all Erin, than his Fenian comrades; and with the recital of their deeds he mixes up the wildest romance and fable. What is strictly true of them is, that at one period undoubtedly they were a splendid national force; but ultimately they became a danger rather than a protection to the kingdom, and had to be put down by the regular army in the reign of king Carbri the Second, who encountered and destroyed them finally on the bloody battle field of Gavra, about the year A.D. 280.

Ben Eder, now called the Hill of Howth, near Dublin, was the camp or exercise ground of the Fianna Eirion when called out annually for training.

The laws of pagan Ireland, which were collected and codified in the reign of Cormac the First, and which prevailed throughout the kingdom as long subsequently as a vestige of native Irish regal authority remained—a space

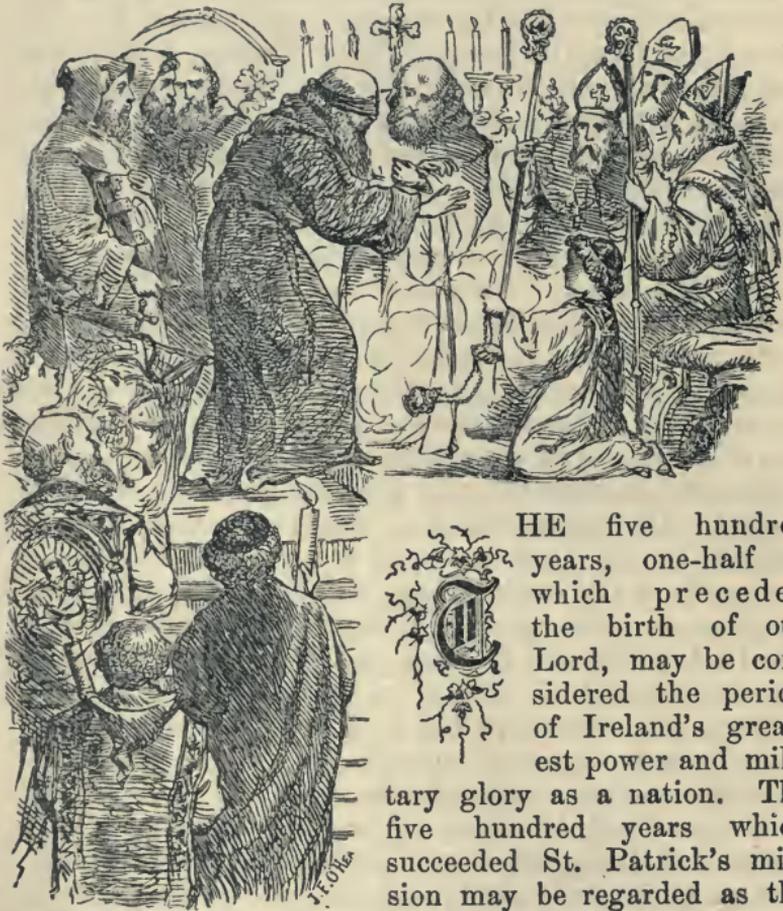
of nearly fifteen hundred years—are, even in this present age, exciting considerable attention amongst legislators and savans. A royal commission—the “Brehon Laws Commission”—appointed by the British government in the year 1856 (chiefly owing to the energetic exertions of Rev. Dr. Graves and Rev. Dr. Todd, of Trinity College, Dublin), has been labouring at their translation, parliament voting an annual sum to defray the expenses. Of course only portions of the original manuscripts are now in existence, but even these portions attest the marvellous wisdom and the profound justness of the ancient Milesian Code, and give us a high opinion of Irish jurisprudence two thousand years ago!

The Brehon Laws Commission published their first volume, the “Seanchus Mor”, in 1865, and a most interesting publication it is. Immediately on the establishment of Christianity in Ireland a royal commission of *that day* was appointed to revise the statute laws of Erin, so that they might be purged of everything applicable only to a pagan nation and inconsistent with the pure doctrines of Christianity. On this commission, we are told, there were appointed by the Irish monarch three chief Brehons or judges, three Christian bishops, and three territorial chiefs or viceroys. The result of their labours was presented to the Irish parliament of Tara, and being duly confirmed, the code thenceforth became known as the Seanchus Mor.

From the earliest age the Irish appear to have been extremely fond of games, athletic sports, and displays of prowess or agility. Amongst the royal and noble families chess was the chief domestic game. There are indubitable proofs that it was played amongst the princes of Erin two thousand years ago; and the oldest bardic chants and verse-histories mention the gold and jewel inlaid chessboards of the kings.

Of the passionate attachment of the Irish to music, little need be said, as this is one of the national characteristics which has been at all times most strongly marked, and is now most widely appreciated; the harp being universally emblazoned as a national emblem of Ireland. Even in the pre-Christian period we are here reviewing, music was an “institution” and a power in Erin.

IX.—CHRISTIAN IRELAND. THE STORY OF COLUMBA, THE  
“DOVE OF THE CELL”.



HE five hundred years, one-half of which preceded the birth of our Lord, may be considered the period of Ireland's greatest power and military glory as a nation. The five hundred years which succeeded St. Patrick's mission may be regarded as the period of Ireland's Christian and Scholastic fame. In the former she sent her warriors, in the latter her missionaries, all over Europe. Where her fierce hero-kings carried the sword, her saints now bore the cross of faith. It was in this latter period, between the sixth and the eighth centuries particularly, that Ireland became known all over Europe as the *Insula Sanctorum et Doctorum*—"the Island of Saints and Scholars".

Churches, cathedrals, monasteries, convents, universities,

covered the island. From even the most distant parts of Europe, kings and their subjects came to study in the Irish schools. King Alfred of Northumberland was educated in one of the Irish universities. A glorious roll of Irish saints and scholars belong to this period: St. Columba or Columcille, St. Columbanus, St. Gall, who evangelized Helvetia, St. Frigidian, who was bishop of Lucca in Italy, St. Livinus, who was martyred in Flanders, St. Argobast, who became bishop of Strasburg, St. Killian, the apostle of Franconia, and quite a host of illustrious Irish missionaries, who carried the blessings of faith and education all over Europe. The record of their myriad adventurous enterprises, their glorious labours, their evangelising conquests, cannot be traced within the scope of this book. There is one, however, the foremost of that sainted band, with whom exception must be made—the first and the greatest of Irish missionary saints, the abbot of Iona's isle, whose name and fame filled the world, and the story of whose life is a Christian romance—Columba, the "Dove of the Cell".\*

The personal character of Columba and the romantic incidents of his life, as well as his preëminence amongst the missionary conquerors of the British Isles, seem to have had a powerful attraction for the illustrious Montalembert, who, in his great work, "The Monks of the West", traces the eventful career of the saint in language of exquisite beauty, eloquence, and feeling. Moreover, there is this to be said further of that Christian romance, as I have called it, the life of St. Columba, that happily the accounts thereof which we possess are complete, authentic, and documentary; most of the incidents related we have on the authority of well known writers, who lived in Columba's time and held personal communication with him or with his companions.

The picture presented to us in these life-portraits of Iona's saint is assuredly one to move the hearts of Irishmen, young and old. In Columba two great features stand out in bold prominence; and never perhaps

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\* Colum Cille, or Columkille; in English. "Dove of the Cell".

were those two characteristics more powerfully developed in one man—devotion to God and passionate love of country. He was a great saint, but he was as great a “politician”, entering deeply and warmly into everything affecting the weal of Clan Nial, or the honour of Erin. His love for Ireland was something beyond description. As he often declared in his after-life exile, the very breezes that blew on the fair hills of holy Ireland were to him like the zephyrs of paradise. Our story were incomplete indeed, without a sketch, however brief, of “the Dove of the Cell”.

Columba\* was a prince of the royal race of Nial, his father being the third in descent from the founder of that illustrious house, Nial of the Nine Hostages. He was born at Gartan, in Donegal, on the 7th December, 521. “The Irish legends”, says Montalembert, “which are always distinguished, even amidst the wildest vagaries of fancy, by a high and pure morality, linger lovingly upon the childhood and youth of the predestined saint”. Before his birth (according to one of these traditions) the mother of Columba had a dream, “which posterity has accepted as a graceful and poetical symbol of her son’s career. An angel appeared to her, bringing her a veil covered with flowers of wonderful beauty, and the sweetest variety of colours; immediately after she saw the veil carried away by the wind, and rolling out as it fled over the plains, woods, and mountains. Then the angel said to her, ‘Thou art about to become the mother of a son, who shall blossom for Heaven, who shall be reckoned among the prophets of God, and who shall lead numberless souls to the heavenly country’”.

But indeed, according to the legends of the Hy Nial, the coming of their great saint was foretold still more remotely. St. Patrick, they tell us, having come northward to bless the territory and people, was stopped at the Daol—the modern Deel or Burndale river—by the breaking of his chariot wheels. The chariot was repaired, but

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\* His name was Cummhann, pronounced Creivan or Creivhan

again broke down; a third time it was refitted, and a third time it failed at the ford. Then Patrick, addressing those around him, said: "Wonder no more: behold, the land from this stream northwards needs no blessing from me; for a son shall be born there who shall be called the Dove of the Churches; and he shall bless that land; in honour of whom God has this day prevented my doing so". The name Ath-an-Charpaid (ford of the chariot) marks to this day the spot memorised by this tradition. Count Montalembert cites many of these stories of the "childhood and youth of the predestined saint". He was, while yet a child, confided to the care of the priest who had baptized him, and from him he received the first rudiments of education. "His guardian angel often appeared to him; and the child asked if all the angels in Heaven were so young and shining as he. A little later, Columba was invited by the same angel to choose among all the virtues that which he would like best to possess. 'I choose', said the youth, 'chastity and wisdom'; and immediately three young girls of wonderful beauty but foreign air, appeared to him, and threw themselves on his neck to embrace him. The pious youth frowned, and repulsed them with indignation. 'What', they said, 'then thou dost not know us?' 'No, not the least in the world'. 'We are three sisters, whom our Father gives to thee to be thy brides'. 'Who, then, is your Father?' 'Our Father is God, He is Jesus Christ, the Lord and Saviour of the world'. 'Ah, you have indeed an illustrious Father. But what are your names?' 'Our names are Virginity, Wisdom, and Prophecy; and we come to leave thee no more, to love thee with an incorruptible love'".

From the house of this early tutor Columba "passed into the great monastic schools, which were not only a nursery for the clergy of the Irish Church, but where also young laymen of all conditions were educated".

"While Columba studied at Clonard, being still only a deacon", says his biographer, "an incident took place which has been proved by authentic testimony, and which fixed general attention upon him by giving a first evidence of his supernatural and prophetic intuition. An old Christian

bard (the bards were not all Christians) named Germain had come to live near the Abbot Finnian, asking from him, in exchange for his poetry, the secret of fertilizing the soil. Columba, who continued all his life a passionate admirer of the traditionary poetry of his nation, determined to join the school of the bard, and to share his labours and studies. The two were reading together out of doors, at a little distance from each other, when a young girl appeared in the distance pursued by a robber. At the sight of the old man the fugitive made for him with all her remaining strength, hoping, no doubt, to find safety in the authority exercised throughout Ireland by the national poets. Germain, in great trouble, called his pupil to his aid to defend the unfortunate child, who was trying to hide herself under their long robes, when her pursuer reached the spot. Without taking any notice of her defenders, he struck her in the neck with his lance, and was making off, leaving her dead at their feet. The horrified old man turned to Columba. 'How long', he said, 'will God leave unpunished this crime which dishonours us?' 'For this moment only', said Columba, 'not longer; at this very hour, when the soul of this innocent creature ascends to heaven, the soul of the murderer shall go down to hell'. At the instant, like Ananias at the words of Peter, the assassin fell dead. The news of this sudden punishment, the story goes, went over Ireland, and spread the fame of the young Columba far and wide".

At the comparatively early age of twenty-five, Columba had attained to a prominent position in the ecclesiastical world, and had presided over the creation of a crowd of monasteries. As many as thirty-seven in Ireland alone recognized him as their founder. "It is easy", says Montalembert, "to perceive, by the importance of the monastic establishments which he had brought into being, even before he had attained to manhood, that his influence must have been as precocious as it was considerable. Apart from the virtues of which his after life afforded so many examples, it may be supposed that his royal birth gave him an irresistible ascendancy in a country where, since the introduction of Christianity, all the early saints, like

the principal abbots, belonged to reigning families, and where the influence of blood and the worship of genealogy still continue, even to this day, to a degree unknown in other lands. Springing, as has been said, from the same race as the monarch of all Ireland, and consequently himself eligible for the same high office, which was more frequently obtained by election or usurpation than inheritance—nephew or near cousin of the seven monarchs who successively wielded the supreme authority during his life—he was also related by ties of blood to almost all the provincial kings. Thus we see him during his whole career treated on a footing of perfect intimacy and equality by all the princes of Ireland and of Caledonia, and exercising a sort of spiritual sway equal or superior to the authority of secular sovereigns”.

His attachment to poetry and literature has been already glanced at. He was, in fact, an enthusiast on the subject; he was himself a poet and writer of a high order of genius, and to an advanced period of his life remained an ardent devotee of the muse, ever powerfully moved by whatever affected the weal of the minstrel fraternity. His passion for books (all manuscript, of course, in those days, and of great rarity and value) was destined to lead him into that great offence of his life, which he was afterwards to expiate by a penance so grievous. “He went everywhere in search of volumes which he could borrow or copy; often experiencing refusals which he resented bitterly”. In this way occurred what Montalembert calls “the decisive event which changed the destiny of Columba, and transformed him from a wandering poet and ardent book-worm, into a missionary and apostle”. While visiting one of his former tutors, Finian, he found means to copy clandestinely the abbot’s Psalter by shutting himself up at nights in the church where the book was deposited. “Indignant at what he considered as almost a theft, Finian claimed the copy when it was finished by Columba, on the ground that a copy made without permission ought to belong to the master of the original, seeing that the transcription is the son of the original book. Columba refused to give up his work. and the question was referred to the king in his

palace of Tara". What immediately follows, I relate in the words of Count Montalembert, summarising or citing almost literally the ancient authors already referred to:

"King Diarmid, or Dermott, supreme monarch of Ireland, was, like Columba, descended from the great king Niall, but by another son than he whose great-grandson Columba was. He lived, like all the princes of his country, in a close union with the Church, which was represented in Ireland, more completely than anywhere else, by the monastic order. Exiled and persecuted in his youth, he had found refuge in an island situated in one of those lakes which interrupt the course of the Shannon, the chief river of Ireland, and had there formed a friendship with a holy monk called Kieran, a zealous comrade of Columba at the monastic school of Clonard, and since that time his generous rival in knowledge and in austerity. Upon the still solitary bank of the river the two friends had planned the foundation of a monastery, which, owing to the marshy nature of the soil, had to be built upon piles. 'Plant with me the first stake', the monk said to the exiled prince, 'putting your hand under mine, and soon that hand shall be over all the men of Erin'; and it happened that Diarmid was very shortly after called to the throne. He immediately used his new power to endow richly the monastery which was rendered doubly dear to him by the recollection of his exile and of his friend. This sanctuary became, under the name of Clonmacnoise, one of the greatest monasteries and most frequented schools of Ireland, and even of Western Europe.

"This king might accordingly be regarded as a competent judge in a contest at once monastic and literary; he might even have been suspected of partiality for Columba, his kinsman,—and yet he pronounced judgment against him. His judgment was given in a rustic phrase which has passed into a proverb in Ireland—To every cow her calf, and, consequently, to every book its copy. Columba protested loudly. 'It is an unjust sentence', he said, 'and I will revenge myself'. After this incident a young prince, son of the provincial king of Connaught, who was pursued for having committed an involuntary murder, took

refuge with Columba, but was seized and put to death by the king. The irritation of the poet-monk knew no bounds. The ecclesiastical immunity which he enjoyed in his quality of superior and founder of several monasteries, ought to have, in his opinion, created a sort of sanctuary around his person, and this immunity had been scandalously violated by the execution of a youth whom he protected. He threatened the king with prompt vengeance. 'I will denounce', he said, 'to my brethren and my kindred thy wicked judgment, and the violation in my person of the immunity of the Church; they will listen to my complaint, and punish thee sword in hand. Bad king, thou shalt no more see my face in thy province, until God, the just judge, has subdued thy pride. As thou hast humbled me to-day before thy lords and thy friends, God will humble thee on the battle-day before thine enemies'. Diarmid attempted to retain him by force in the neighbourhood; but, evading the vigilance of his guards, he escaped by night from the court of Tara, and directed his steps to his native province of Tyrconnell.

"Columba arrived safely in his province, and immediately set to work to excite against king Diarmid the numerous and powerful clans of his relatives and friends, who belonged to a branch of the house of Niall, distinct from and hostile to that of the reigning monarch. His efforts were crowned with success. The Hy-Nialls of the north armed eagerly against the Hy-Nialls of the south, of whom Diarmid was the special chief.

"Diarmid marched to meet them, and they met in battle at Cool-Drewny, or Cul-Dreimhne, upon the borders of Ultonia and Connacia. He was completely beaten, and was obliged to take refuge at Tara. The victory was due, according to the annalist Tighernach, to the prayers and songs of Columba, who had fasted and prayed with all his might to obtain from Heaven the punishment of the royal insolence, and who, besides, was present at the battle, and *took upon himself before all men the responsibility of the bloodshed.*

"As for the manuscript which had been the object of this strange conflict of copyright elevated into a civil war,

it was afterwards venerated as a kind of national, military, and religious palladium. Under the name of Cathach or Fightu, the Latin Psalter transcribed by Columba, enshrined in a sort of portable altar, became the national relic of the O'Donnell clan. For more than a thousand years it was carried with them to battle as a pledge of victory, on the condition of being supported on the breast of a clerk free from all mortal sin. It has escaped as by miracle from the ravages of which Ireland has been the victim, and exists still, to the great joy of all learned Irish patriots".\*

But soon a terrible punishment was to fall upon Columba for this dread violence. He, an anointed priest of the Most High, a minister of the Prince of Peace, had made himself the cause and the inciter of a civil war, which had bathed the land in blood—the blood of Christian men—the blood of kindred. Clearly enough, the violence of political passions, of which this war was the most lamentable fruit, had, in many other ways, attracted upon the youthful monk the severe opinions of the ecclesiastical authorities. "His excitable and vindictive character", we are told, "and above all his passionate attachment to his relatives, and the violent part which he took in their domestic disputes and their continually recurring rivalries, had engaged him in other struggles, the date of which is perhaps later than that of his first departure from Ireland,

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\* "The Annals of the Four Masters report that in a battle waged in 1497, between the O'Donnells and M'Dermotts, the sacred book fell into the hands of the latter, who, however, restored it in 1499. It was preserved for thirteen hundred years in the O'Donnell family, and at present belongs to a baronet of that name, who has permitted it to be exhibited in the museum of the Royal Irish Academy, where it can be seen by all. It is composed of fifty-eight leaves of parchment, bound in silver. The learned O'Curry (p. 322) has given a fac-simile of a fragment of this MS., which he does not hesitate to believe is in the handwriting of our saint, as well as that of the fine copy of the Gospels called the Book of Kells, of which he has also given a fac-simile. See Reeves' notes upon Adarnan, p. 250, and the pamphlet upon Marianus Scotus, p. 12".—*Count Mon'a'embert's note.*

but the responsibility of which is formally imputed to him by various authorities, and which also ended in bloody battles". At all events, immediately after the battle of Cool Drewney, "he was accused by a synod, convoked in the centre of the royal domain at Tailte, of having occasioned the shedding of Christian blood". The synod seems to have acted with very uncanonical precipitancy; for it judged the cause without waiting for the defence—though, in sooth, the facts, beyond the power of any defence to remove, were ample and notorious. However, the decision was announced—sentence of excommunication was pronounced against him!

"Columba was not a man to draw back before his accusers and judges. He presented himself before the synod which had struck without hearing him. He found a defender in the famous Abbot Brendan, the founder of the monastery of Birr. When Columba made his appearance, this abbot rose, went up to him, and embraced him. 'How can you give the kiss of peace to an excommunicated man?' said some of the other members of the synod. 'You would do as I have done', he answered, 'and you never would have excommunicated him, had you seen what I see—a pillar of fire which goes before him, and the angels that accompany him. I dare not disdain a man predestined by God to be the guide of an entire people to eternal life'. Thanks to the intervention of Brendan, or to some other motive not mentioned, the sentence of excommunication was withdrawn, but Columba was charged to win to Christ, by his preaching, as many pagan souls as the number of Christians who had fallen in the battle of Cool-Drewny".

Troubled in soul, but still struggling with a stubborn self-will, Columba found his life miserable, unhappy, and full of unrest; yet remorse had even now "planted in his soul the germs at once of a startling conversion and of his future apostolic mission". "Various legends reveal him to us at this crisis of his life, wandering long from solitude to solitude, and from monastery to monastery, seeking out holy monks, masters of penitence and Christian virtue, and asking them anxiously what he should do

to obtain the pardon of God for the murder of so many victims”.

At length, after many wanderings in contrition and mortification, “he found the light which he sought from a holy monk, St. Molaise, famed for his studies of Holy Scripture, and who had already been his confessor”.

“This severe hermit confirmed the decision of the synod; but to the obligation of converting to the Christian faith an equal number of pagans as there were of Christians killed in the civil war, he added a new condition, which bore cruelly upon a soul so passionately attached to country and kindred. The confessor condemned his penitent to *perpetual exile from Ireland!*”

Exile from Ireland! Did Columba hear the words aright? *Exile from Ireland!* What! See no more that land which he loved with such a wild and passionate love! Part from the brothers and kinsmen all, for whom he felt perhaps too strong and too deep an affection! Quit for aye the stirring scenes in which so great a part of his sympathies were engaged! Leave Ireland!

Oh! it was more hard than to bare his breast to the piercing sword; less welcome than to walk in constant punishment of suffering, so that his feet pressed the soil of his worshipped Erin!

But it was even so. Thus ran the sentence of Molaise: “*perpetual exile from Ireland!*”

Staggered, stunned, struck to the heart, Columba could not speak for a moment. But God gave him in that great crisis of his life the supreme grace of bearing the blow and embracing the cross presented to him. At last he spoke, and in a voice agitated with emotion he answered: “*Be it so; what you have commanded shall be done*”.

From that instant forth his life was one prolonged act of penitential sacrifice. For thirty years—his heart bursting within his breast the while—yearning for one sight of Ireland—he lived and laboured in distant Iona. The fame of his sanctity filled the world; religious houses subject to his rule arose in many a glen and isle of rugged Caledonia; the gifts of prophecy and miracle momentarily attested him as one of God’s most favoured apostles: yet

all the while his heart was breaking; all the while in his silent cell Columba's tears flowed freely for the one grief that never left him—the wound that only deepened with lengthening time—*he was away from Ireland!* Into all his thoughts this sorrow entered. In all his songs—and several of his compositions still remain to us—this one sad strain is introduced. Witness the following, which, even in its merely literal translation into the English, retains much of the poetic beauty and exquisite tenderness of the original by Columba in the Gaelic tongue:

What joy to fly upon the white-crested sea; and watch the waves  
break upon the Irish shore!

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My foot is in my little boat; but my sad heart ever bleeds!

*There is a gray eye which ever turns to Erin; but never in this  
life shall it see Erin, nor her sons, nor her daughters!*

From the high prow I look over the sea; and great tears are in  
my eyes when I turn to Erin—

To Erin, where the songs of the birds are so sweet, and where  
the clerks sing like the birds:

Where the young are so gentle, and the old are so wise; where  
the great men are so noble to look at, and the women so fair to  
wed!

Young traveller! carry my sorrows with you; carry them to Com-  
gall of eternal life!

Noble youth, take my prayer with thee, and my blessing: one  
part for Ireland—seven times may she be blest—and the other  
for Albyn.

Carry my blessing across the sea; carry it to the West. My  
heart is broken in my breast!

If death comes suddenly to me, it will be because of the great  
love I bear to the Gael!\*

It was to the rugged and desolate Hebrides that Columba  
turned his face when he accepted the terrible penance of

\* This poem appears to have been presented as a farewell gift by St. Columba to some of the Irish visitors at Iona, when returning home to Ireland. It is deservedly classed amongst the most beautiful of his poetic compositions.

Molaise. He bade farewell to his relatives, and, with a few monks who insisted on accompanying him whithersoever he might go, launched his frail currochs from the northern shore. They landed first, or rather were carried by wind and stream, upon the little isle of Oronsay, close by Islay; and here for a moment they thought their future abode was to be. But when Columba, with the early morning, ascending the highest ground on the island, to take what he thought would be a harmless look *towards* the land of his heart, lo! on the dim horizon a faint blue ridge—the distant hills of Antrim! He averts his head and flies downwards to the strand! Here they cannot stay, if his vow is to be kept. They betake them once more to the currochs, and steering further northward, eventually land upon Iona, thenceforth, till time shall be no more, to be famed as the sacred isle of Columba! Here landing, he ascended the loftiest of the hills upon the isle, and “gazing into the distance, found no longer any trace of Ireland upon the horizon”. In Iona accordingly he resolved to make his home. The spot from whence St. Columba made this sorrowful survey is still called by the isles-men in the Gaelic tongue, *Carn-cul-ri-Erinn*, or the Cairn of Farewell—literally, *The back turned on Ireland*.

Writers without number have traced the glories of Iona.\* Here rose, as if by miracle, a city of churches; the isle became one vast monastery, and soon much too small for the crowds that still pressed thither. Then from the parent isle there went forth to the surrounding shores, and all over the mainland, off-shoot establishments and missionary colonies (all under the authority of Columba), until in time the Gospel light was ablaze on the hills of

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\* “We are now”, said Dr. Johnson, “treading that illustrious island which was once the luminary of the Caledonian regions; whence savage clans and roving barbarians derived the benefits of knowledge and the blessings of religion . . . Far from me and from my friends be such frigid philosophy as may conduct us indifferent and unmoved over any ground which has been dignified by wisdom, bravery, or virtue. That man is little to be envied whose patriotism would not gain force, upon the plain of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona”—Boswell’s *Tour to the Hebrides*.

Albyn; and the names of St. Columba and Iona were on every tongue from Rome to the utmost limits of Europe!

"This man, whom we have seen so passionate, so irritable, so warlike and vindictive, became little by little the most gentle, the humblest, the most tender of friends and fathers. It was he, the great head of the Caledonian Church, who, kneeling before the strangers who came to Iona, or before the monks returning from their work, took off their shoes, washed their feet, and after having washed them, respectfully kissed them. But charity was still stronger than humility in that transfigured soul. No necessity, spiritual or temporal, found him indifferent. He devoted himself to the solace of all infirmities, all misery, and pain, weeping often over those who did not weep for themselves.

"The work of transcription remained until his last day the occupation of his old age, as it had been the passion of his youth; it had such an attraction for him, and seemed to him so essential to a knowledge of the truth, that, as we have already said, three hundred copies of the Holy Gospels, copied by his own hand, have been attributed to him".

But still Columba carried with him in his heart the great grief that made life for him a lengthened penance. "Far from having any prevision of the glory of Iona, his soul", says Montalembert, "was still swayed by a sentiment which never abandoned him—regret for his lost country. All his life he retained for Ireland the passionate tenderness of an exile, a love which displayed itself in the songs which have been preserved to us, and which date perhaps from the first moment of his exile. . . . 'Death in faultless Ireland is better than life without end in Albyn'. After this cry of despair follow strains more plaintive and submissive.

"But it was not only in these eulogies, repeated and perhaps retouched by Irish bards and monks, but at each instant of his life, in season and out of season, that this love and passionate longing for his native country burst forth in words and musings; the narratives of his most trustworthy biographers are full of it. The most severe

penance which he could have imagined for the guiltiest sinners who came to confess to him, was to impose upon them the same fate which he had voluntarily inflicted on himself—never to set foot again upon Irish soil! But when, instead of forbidding to sinners all access to that beloved isle, he had to smother his envy of those who had the right and happiness to go there at their pleasure, he dared scarcely trust himself to name its name; and when speaking to his guests, or to the monks who were to return to Ireland, he would only say to them, ‘you will return to the country that you love’”.

At length there arrived an event for Columba full of ex-cruciating trial—*it became necessary for him to revisit Ire-land!* His presence was found to be imperatively required at the general assembly or convocation of the princes and prelates of the Irish nation, convened A.D. 573, by Hugh the Second.\* At this memorable assembly, known in his-tory as the great Convention of Drumceat, the first meeting of the States of Ireland held since the abandonment of Tara, there were to be discussed, amongst other important subjects, two which were of deep and powerful interest to Columba: firstly, the relations between Ireland and the Argyle or Caledonian colony; and secondly, the proposed decree for the abolition of the Bards.

The country now known as Scotland was, about the time of the Christian era, inhabited by a barbarous and warlike race called Picts. About the middle of the second century, when Ireland was known to the Romans as Scotia, an Irish chieftain, Carbri Riada (from whom were des-cended the Dalraids of Antrim), crossed over to the wes-tern shores of Alba or Albyn, and founded there a Dala-raidan or Milesian colony. The colonists had a hard time of it with their savage Pictish neighbours; yet they managed to hold their ground, though receiving very little aid or attention from the parent country, to which never-theless they regularly paid tribute. At length, in the year 503, the neglected colony was utterly overwhelmed by the

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\* Aedh (pronounced Aeh), son of Anmire the First.

Picts, whereupon a powerful force of the Irish Dalraids, under the leadership of Leorn, Aengus, and Fergus, crossed over, invaded Albany, and gradually subjugating the Picts, reëstablished the colony on a basis which was the foundation eventually of the Scottish monarchy of all subsequent history. To the reëstablished colony was given the name by which it was known long after, Scotia Minor; Ireland being called Scotia Major.

In the time of St. Columba, the colony, which so far had continuously been assessed by, and had duly paid its tribute to, the mother country, began to feel its competency to claim independence. Already it had selected and installed a king (whom St. Columba had formally consecrated), and now it sent to Ireland a demand to be exempted from further tribute. The Irish monarch resisted the demand, which, however, it was decided first to submit to a national assembly, at which the Scottish colony should be represented, and where it might plead its case as best it could. Many and obvious considerations pointed to St. Columba as the man of men to plead the cause of the young nationality on this momentous occasion. He was peculiarly qualified to act as umpire in this threatening quarrel between the old country, to which he felt bound by such sacred ties, and the new one, which by adoption was now his home. He consented to attend at the assembly. He did so the more readily, perhaps, because of his strong feelings in reference to the other proposition named, viz., the proscription of the bards.

It may seem strange that in Ireland, where, from an early date, music and song held so high a place in national estimation, such a proposition should be made. But by this time the numerous and absurd immunities claimed by the bardic profession had become intolerable; and by gross abuses of the bardic privileges, the bards themselves had indubitably become a pest to society. King Hugh had, therefore, a strong public opinion at his back in his design of utterly abolishing the bardic corporation.

St. Columba, however, not only was allied to them by a fraternity of feeling, but he discerned clearly that by purifying and conserving, rather than by destroying, the

national minstrelsy, it would become a potential influence for good, and would entwine itself gratefully around the shrine within which at such a crisis it found shelter. In fine, he felt, and felt deeply, as an Irishman and as an ecclesiastic, that the proposition of King Hugh would annihilate one of the most treasured institutions of the nation—one of the most powerful aids to patriotism and religion.

So, to plead the cause of liberty for a young nationality, and the cause of patriotism, religion, literature, music, and poetry, in defending the minstrel race, St. Columba to Ireland would go!

To Ireland! But then his vow! His penance sentence, that he should never more see Ireland! How his heart surged! O great allurements! O stern resolve! O triumph of sacrifice!

Yes; he would keep his vow, yet attend the convocation amidst those hills of Ireland which he was never more to see! With a vast array of attendant monks and lay princes, he embarked for the unforgotten land; but when the galleys came within some leagues of the Irish coast, and before it could yet be sighted, St. Columba *caused his eyes to be bandaged with a white scarf*, and thus blindfolded was he led on shore! It is said that when he stepped upon the beach, and for the first time during so many years felt that he trod the soil of Ireland, he trembled from head to foot with emotion.

When the great saint was led blindfold into the Convention, the whole assemblage—kings, princes, prelates, and chieftains—rose and uncovered as reverentially as if Patrick himself had once more appeared amongst them.\* It was, we may well believe, an impressive scene; and we can well understand the stillness of anxious attention with which all waited to hear once more the tones of that voice which many traditions class amongst the miraculous gifts

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\* Some versions allege that, although the saint himself was received with reverence, almost with awe, a hostile demonstration was designed, if not attempted, by the king's party against the Scottish delegation who accompanied St. Columba.

of Columba. More than one contemporary writer has described his personal appearance at this time; and Montalembert says: "All testimonies agree in celebrating his manly beauty, his remarkable height, his sweet and sonorous voice, the cordiality of his manner, the gracious dignity of his deportment and person".

Not in vain did he plead the causes he had come to advocate. Long and ably was the question of the Scottish colony debated. Some versions allege that it was amicably left to the decision of Columba, and that his award of several independence, but fraternal alliance, was cheerfully acquiesced in. Other accounts state that king Hugh, finding argument prevailing against his views, angrily drawing his sword, declared he would *compel* the colony to submission by force of arms; whereupon Columba, rising from his seat, in a voice full of solemnity and authority, exclaimed: "In the presence of this threat of tyrannic force, I declare the cause ended, and proclaim the Scottish colony free for ever from the yoke!" By whichever way, however, the result was arrived at, the independence of the young Caledonian nation was recognized and voted by the convention through the exertions of St. Columba.

His views in behalf of the bards likewise prevailed. He admitted the disorders, irregularities, and abuses alleged against the body; but he pleaded, and pleaded successfully, for reform instead of abolition. Time has vindicated the farsighted policy of the statesman saint. The national music and poetry of Ireland, thus purified and consecrated to the service of religion and country, have ever since, through ages of persecution, been true to the holy mission assigned them on that day by Columba.

The Dove of the Cell made a comparatively long stay in Ireland, visiting with scarf-bound brow the numerous monastic establishments subject to his rule. At length he returned to Iona, where far into the evening of life he waited for his summons to the beatific vision. The miracles he wrought, attested by evidence of weight to move the most callous sceptic, the myriad wondrous signs of God's favour that marked his daily acts, filled all the

nations with awe. The hour and the manner of his death had long been revealed to him. The precise time he concealed from those about him until close upon the last day of his life; but the manner of his death he long foretold to his attendants. "I shall die", said he, "without sickness or hurt; suddenly, but happily, and without accident". At length one day, while in his usual health, he disclosed to Diarmid, his "minister", or regular attendant monk, that the hour of his summons was nigh. A week before he had gone around the island, taking leave of the monks and labourers; and when all wept, he strove anxiously to console them. Then he blessed the island and the inhabitants. "And now", said he to Diarmid, "here is a secret; but you must keep it till I am gone. This is Saturday, the day called Sabbath, or day of rest: and that it will be to me, for it shall be the last of my laborious life". In the evening he retired to his cell, and began to work for the last time, being then occupied in transcribing the Psalter. When he had come to the thirty-third Psalm, and the verse, "*Inquirentes autem Dominum non deficient omni bono*", he stopped short. "I cease here", said he; "Baithin must do the rest".

Montalembert thus describes for us the "last scene of all":—"As soon as the midnight bell had rung for the matins of the Sunday festival, he rose and hastened before the other monks to the church, where he knelt down before the altar. Diarmid followed him; but, as the church was not yet lighted, he could only find him by groping and crying in a plaintive voice, 'Where art thou, my father?' He found Columba lying before the altar, and, placing himself at his side, raised the old abbot's venerable head upon his knees. The whole community soon arrived with lights, and wept as one man at the sight of their dying father. Columba opened his eyes once more, and turned them to his children at either side with a look full of serene and radiant joy. Then, with the aid of Diarmid, he raised as best he might his right hand to bless them all. His hand dropped, the last sigh came from his lips, and his face remained calm and sweet, like that of a man who in his sleep had seen a vision of heaven"

Like the illustrious French publicist whom I have so largely followed in this sketch, I may say that I have "lingered perhaps too long on the grand form of this monk rising up before us from the midst of the Hebridean sea". But I have, from the missionary saint-army of Ireland, selected this one—this typical apostle—to illustrate the characters that illumine one of the most glorious pages of our history. Many, indeed, were the "Columbs" that went forth from Ireland, as from an ark of faith, bearing blessed olive branches to the mountain tops of Europe, then slowly emerging from the flood of paganism. Well might we dwell upon this period of Irish history! It was a bright and a glorious chapter. It was soon, alas! to be followed by one of gloom. Five hundred years of military fame and five hundred years of Christian glory were to be followed by five hundred years of disorganising dissensions, leading to centuries of painful bondage.

#### X.—THE DANES IN IRELAND.



HE first dark cloud came from Scandinavia. Towards the close of the eighth century the Danes made their appearance in Ireland. They came at first as transitory coast marauders, landing and sacking a neighbouring town, church, or monastery. For this species of warfare the Irish seem to have been as little prepared as any of the other European countries subjected to the like scourge, that is to say, none of them but the Danes possessed at this period of history a powerful fleet. So when the pirates had wreaked their will upon the city or monastery, in order to plunder which they had landed, they simply reëmbarked and sailed away comparatively safe from molestation.

At length it seems to have occurred to the professional pirates, that in place of making periodical dashes on the Irish coast, they might secure a permanent footing thereupon, and so prepare the way for eventually subjugating the entire kingdom. Accordingly, they came in force and

possessed themselves of several spots favourably placed for such purposes as theirs—sites for fortified maritime cities on estuaries affording good shelter for their fleets, viz.: Dublin, Drogheda, Waterford, Limerick, Wexford, etc.

In the fourth year of Nial the Third (about the year A.D. 840), there arrived a monster fleet of these fierce and ruthless savages, under the command of Turgesius. They poured into the country and carried all before them. For nearly seven years, Turgesius exercised over a considerable district kingly authority, and the Irish groaned under the horrors of oppression the most heartless and brutal. Turgesius converted the cathedral at Clonmacnoise into a palace for his own use, and from the high altar, used as a throne, the fierce idolater gave forth his tyrannical commands. Meantime the Christian faith was proscribed, the Christian shrines were plundered, the gold and jewels were kept by the spoilers, but the holy relics were sacrilegiously given to destruction. The schools were dispersed, the books and chronicles burned, and finally the "successor of Patrick", the Archbishop of Armagh, was seized, the cathedral sacked, and the holy prelate brought a captive into the Danish stronghold.

But a day of retribution was at hand. The divided and disorganized tribes were being bitterly taught the necessity of union. These latest outrages were too much for Christian Irish flesh and blood to bear. Concerting their measures, the people simultaneously rose on their oppressors. Turgesius was seized and put to death by Malachy, prince of Westmeath, while the Irish Ard-Ri, Nial the Third, at length able to rally a powerful army against the invaders, swooped down upon them from the north, and drove them panic-stricken to their maritime fortresses, their track marked with slaughter. Nial seems to have been a really noble character, and the circumstances under which he met his death, sudden and calamitous, in the very midst of his victorious career, afford ample illustration of the fact. His army had halted on the banks of the Callan river, at the moment swollen by heavy rains. One of the royal domestics or attendants, a common *Giolla*, in endeavouring to ford the river for some purpose, was swept from his feet

and carried off by the flood. The monarch, who happened to be looking on, cried aloud to his guards to succour the drowning man, but quicker than any other he himself plunged into the torrent. He never rose again. The brave Nial, who had a hundred times faced death in the midst of reddened spears, perished in his effort to save the life of one of the humblest of his followers!

The power of the Danes was broken, but they still clung to the seaports, where either they were able to defy efforts at expulsion, or else obtained permission to remain by paying heavy tribute to the Irish sovereign. It is clear enough that the presence of the Danes came, in course of time, to be regarded as useful and profitable by the Irish, so long as they did not refuse tribute to the native power. The history of the succeeding centuries accordingly—the period of the Danish struggle—exhibits a singular spectacle. The Danes made themselves fully at home in the great maritime cities, which they may be said to have founded, and which their commerce certainly raised to importance. The Irish princes made alliances betimes with them, and Danes frequently fought on opposite sides in the internecine conflicts of the Irish princes. Occasionally seizing a favourable opportunity—(when the Irish were particularly weakened by internal feud, and when a powerful reinforcement for themselves arrived from Scandinavia)—they would make a fierce endeavour to extend their dominion on Irish soil. These efforts were mostly successful for a time, owing to the absence of a strong centralized authority amongst the Irish; but eventually the Irish, by putting forth their native valour, and even partially combining for the time, were always able to crush them.

Yet it is evident that during the three hundred years over which this Danish struggle spreads, the Irish nation was undergoing disintegration and demoralization. Towards the middle of the period, the Danes became converted to Christianity; but their coarse and fierce barbarism remained long after, and it is evident that contact with such elements, and increasing political disruption amongst themselves, had a fatal effect on the Irish. They absolutely *retrograded* in learning and civilization during this

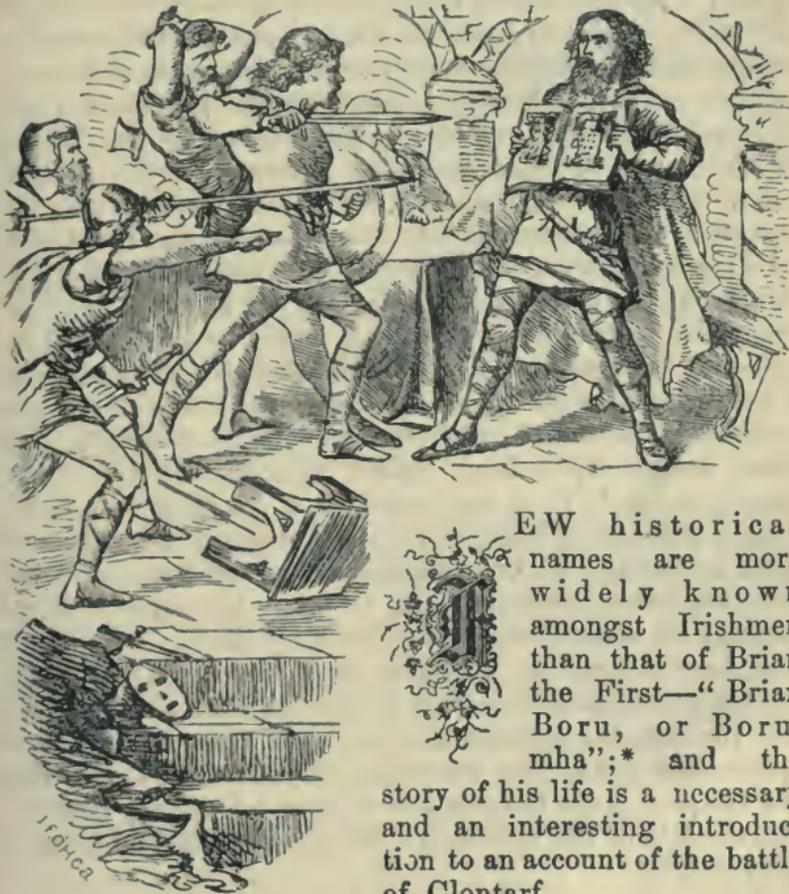
time and contracted some of the worst vices that could pave the way for the fate that a few centuries more were to bring upon them.

National pride may vainly seek to ignore or hide the great truth here displayed. During the three hundred years that preceded the Anglo-Norman invasion, the Irish princes appeared to be given over to a madness marking them for destruction! At a time when consolidation of national authority was becoming the rule all over Europe, and was becoming so necessary for them, they were going into the other extreme. As the general rule, each one sought only his personal or family ambition or aggrandisement, and strove for it lawlessly and violently. Frequently when the Ard-Ri of Erin was nobly grappling with the Danish foe, and was on the point of finally expelling the foreigner, a subordinate prince would seize what seemed to him the golden opportunity for throwing off the authority of the chief king, or for treacherously endeavouring to grasp it himself! During the whole time—three centuries—there was scarcely a single reign in which the Ard-Ri did not find occupation for his arms as constantly in compelling the submission of the subordinate native princes, as in combating the Scandinavian foe.

Religion itself suffered in this national declension. In these centuries we find professedly Christian Irish kings themselves as ruthless destroyers of churches and schools as the pagan Danes of a few years previous. The *titles* of the Irish episcopacy were sometimes seized by lay princes for the sake of the revenues attached to them; the spiritual functions of the offices, however, being performed by ecclesiastics meanwhile. In fine, the Irish national character in those centuries is to be censured, not admired. It would seem as if by adding sacrilege and war upon religion and on learning to political suicide and a fatal frenzy of factiousness, the Irish princes of that period were doing their best and their worst to shame the glories of their nation in the preceding thousand years, and to draw down upon their country the terrible chastisement that eventually befel it, a chastisement which never could have befallen it, but for the state of things I am here pointing out.

Yet was this gloomy period lit up by some brilliant flashes of glory, the brightest, if not the last, being that which surrounds the name of Clontarf, where the power of the Danes in Ireland was crushed totally and for ever.

XI.—HOW “BRIAN OF THE TRIBUTE” BECAME A HIGH KING OF ERINN.



FEW historical names are more widely known amongst Irishmen than that of Brian the First—“Brian Boru, or Borumha”;<sup>\*</sup> and the story of his life is a necessary and an interesting introduction to an account of the battle of Clontarf

<sup>\*</sup> That is, “Brian of the Tribute”.

About the middle of the tenth century the crown of Munster was worn by Mahon, son of Ceineidi (pr. Kennedy), a prince of the Dalcassian family. Mahon had a young brother, Brian, and by all testimony the affection which existed between the brothers was something touching. Mahon, who was a noble character—"as a prince and captain in every way worthy of his inheritance"—was accompanied in all his expeditions, and from an early age, by Brian, to whom he acted not only as a brother and prince, but as military preceptor. After a brilliant career, Mahon fell by a deed of deadly treachery. A rival prince of south Munster—"Molloy, son of Bran, Lord of Desmond"—whom he had vanquished, proposed to meet him in friendly conference at the house of Donovan, an Eugenic chief. The safety of each person was guaranteed by the Bishop of Cork, who acted as mediator between them. Mahon, chivalrous and unsuspecting, went unattended and unarmed to the conference. He was seized by an armed band of Donovan's men, who handed him over to a party of Molloy's retainers, by whom he was put to death. He had with him, as the sacred and (as it ought to have been) inviolable "safe-conduct" on the faith of which he had trusted himself into the power of his foes, a copy of the Gospels written by the hand of St. Barre. As the assassins drew their swords upon him, Mahon snatched up the sacred scroll, and held it on his breast, as if he could not credit that a murderous hand would dare to wound him through such a shield! But the murderers plunged their swords into his heart, piercing right through the vellum, which became all stained and matted with his blood. Two priests had, horror-stricken, witnessed the outrage. They caught up the bloodstained Gospels and fled to the bishop, spreading through the country as they went the dreadful news which they bore. The venerable successor of St. Fin Bar, we are told, wept bitterly and uttered a prophecy concerning the fate of the murderers, which was soon and remarkably fulfilled.

"When the news of his noble-hearted brother's death was brought to Brian at Kincora, he was seized with the most violent grief. His favourite harp was taken down, and he

sang the death-song of Mahon, recounting all the glorious actions of his life. His anger flashed out through his tears as he wildly chaunted—

‘My heart shall burst within my breast,  
Unless I avenge this great king.  
They shall forfeit life for this foul deed,  
Or I must perish by a violent death’.

“But the climax of his grief was, that Mahon ‘had not fallen behind the shelter of his shield, rather than trust the treacherous word of Donovan’.\*

A “Bard of Thomond” in our own day—one not unworthy of his proud pseudonym—Mr. M. Hogan of Lime-  
rick, has supplied the following very beautiful version of  
“Brian’s Lament for King Mahon” :—

Lament, O Dalcassians! the Eagle of Cashel is dead!  
The grandeur, the glory, the joy of her palace is fled;  
Your strength in the battle—your bulwark of valour is low,  
But the fire of your vengeance will fall on the murderous foe!

His country was mighty—his people were blest in his reign,  
But the ray of his glory shall never shine on them again;  
Like the beauty of summer his presence gave joy to our souls,  
When bards sung his deeds at the banquet of bright golden bowls.

Ye maids of Temora, whose rich garments sweep the green plain!  
Ye chiefs of the Sunburst, the terror and scourge of the Dane!  
Ye gray-haired *Ard-Fileas!* whose songs fire the blood of the  
brave!

Oh! weep, for your Sun-star is quenched in the night of the grave.

He clad you with honours—he filled your high hearts with delight,  
In the midst of your councils he beamed in his wisdom and might;  
Gold, silver, and jewels were only as dust in his hand,  
But his sword like a lightning-flash blasted the foes of his land.

Oh! Mahon, my brother! we’ve conquer’d and marched side by side,  
And thou wert to the love of my soul as a beautiful bride;  
In the battle, the banquet, the council, the chase and the throne,  
Our beings were blended—our spirits were filled with one tone.

Oh! Mahon, my brother! thou 'st died like the hind of the wood,  
The hands of assassins were red with thy pure noble blood;  
And I was not near, my beloved, when thou wast o'erpower'd,  
To steep in their hearts' blood the steel of my blue-beaming sword.

I stood by the dark misty river at 'eve dim and gray,  
And I heard the death-cry of the spirit of gloomy Craghlea;  
She repeated thy name in her *caoine* of desolate woe,  
Then I knew that the Beauty and Joy of Clan Tail was laid low.

All day and all night one dark vigil of sorrow I keep,  
My spirit is bleeding with wounds that are many and deep;  
My banquet is anguish, tears, groaning, and wringing of hands  
In madness lamenting my prince of the gold-hilted brands.

O God! give me patience to bear the affliction I feel,  
But for every hot tear a red blood-drop shall blush on my steel;  
For every deep pang which my grief-stricken spirit has known,  
A thousand death-wounds in the day of revenge shall atone.

And he smote the murderers of his brother with a swift and terrible vengeance. Mustering his Dalcassian legions, which so often with Mahon he had led to victory, he set forth upon the task of retribution. His first effort, the old records tell us, was directed against the Danes of Limerick, who were Donovan's allies, and he slew Ivor, their king, and his two sons. Foreseeing their fate, they had fled before him, and had taken refuge in "Scattery's Holy Isle". But Brian slew them even "between the horns of the altar". Next came the turn of Donovan, who had meantime hastily gathered to his aid the Danes of South Munster. But "Brian", say the Annals of Innisfallen, "gave them battle, and Auliffe and his Danes, and Donovan and his allies, were all cut off". Of all guilty in the murder of the brother whom he so loved, there now remained but one—the principal, Molloy, son of Bran. After the fashion in those times, Brian sent Molloy a formal summons or citation to meet him in battle until the terrible issue between them should be settled. To this Molloy responded by confederating all the Irish and Danes of South Munster whom he could rally, for yet another encounter with the avenging Dalcassian. But the curse of the Comharba of St. Barre was upon the murderers of Mahon, and the might of a passionate vengeance was in Brian's arm. Again

he was victorious. The confederated Danes and Irish were overthrown with great slaughter; Brian's son, Morrogh, then a mere lad, "killing the murderer of his uncle Mahon with his own hand". "Molloy was buried on the north side of the mountain where Mahon had been murdered and interred: on Mahon the sun shone full and fair; but on the grave of his assassin the black shadow of the northern sky rested always. Such was the tradition which all Munster piously believed. After this victory Brian was universally acknowledged king of Munster, and until Ard-Ri Malachy won the battle of Tara, was justly considered the first Irish captain of his age".\*

This was the opening chapter of Brian's career. Thenceforth his military reputation and his political influence are found extending far beyond the confines of Munster.

The supreme crown of Ireland at this time was worn by a brave and enlightened sovereign, Malachy the Second, or Malachy Mor. He exhibited rare qualities of statesmanship, patriotism, and valour, in his vigorous efforts against the Danes. On the occasion of one of his most signal victories over them, he himself engaged in combat two Danish princes, overcame and slew both of them, taking from off the neck of one a massive collar of gold, and from the grasp of the other a jewel-hilted sword, which he himself thenceforward wore as trophies. To this monarch, and to the incident here mentioned, Moore alludes in his well-known lines:—

Let Erin remember the days of old,  
Ere her faithless sons betrayed her,  
When Malachy wore the collar of gold  
That he won from the proud invader.

Whether it was that Ard-Ri Malachy began to fear the increasing and almost over-shadowing power and influence of his southern tributary, or that Brian had in his pride of strength refused to own his tributary position, it seems impossible to tell; but unfortunately for Ireland the brave

and wise Ard-Ri Malachy, and the not less brave and wise tributary Brian, became embroiled in a bitter war, the remote but indubitable consequences of which most powerfully and calamitously affected the future destinies of Ireland. For nearly twenty years the struggle between them continued. Any adversary less able than Malachy would have been quickly compelled to succumb to ability such as Brian's; and it may on the other hand be said that it was only a man of Brian's marvellous powers whom Malachy could not effectively crush in as many months. Two such men united could accomplish anything with Ireland; and when they eventually did unite, they absolutely swept the Danes into their walled and fortified cities, from whence they had begun once more to overrun the country during the distractions of the struggle between Malachy and Brian. During the short peace or truce between himself and the Ard-Ri, Brian—who was a sagacious diplomatist as well as great general—seems to have attached to his interest nearly all the tributary kings, and subsequently even the Danish princes; so that it was easy to see that already his eye began to glance at the supreme crown. Malachy saw it all, and when the decisive moment at last arrived, and Brian, playing Cæsar, “crossed the Rubicon”, the now only titular Ard-Ri made a gallant but brief defence against the ambitious usurper—for such Brian was on the occasion. After this short effort Malachy yielded with dignity and calmness to the inevitable, and gave up the monarchy of Erin to Brian. The abdicated sovereign thenceforward served under his victorious rival as a subordinate, with a readiness and fidelity which showed him to be Brian's superior at least in unselfish patriotism and in readiness to sacrifice personal pride and personal rights to the public interests of his country.

Brian, now no longer king of Munster, but Ard-Ri of Erin, found his ambition fully crowned. The power and authority to which he had thus attained, he wielded with a wisdom, a sagacity, a firmness, and a success that made his reign as Ard-Ri, while it lasted, one of almost unsurpassed glory, prosperity, and happiness for Ireland. Yet the student of Irish history finds no fact more indelibly

marked on his mind by the thoughtful study of the great page before him, than this, namely, that, glorious as was Brian's reign—brave, generous, noble, pious, learned, accomplished, politic, and wise, as he is confessed on all hands to have been—his seizure of the supreme national crown was a calamity for Ireland. Or rather, perhaps, it would be more correct and more just to say, that having reference not singly to his ambitious seizure of the national crown, but also to the loss in one day of his own life and the lives of his next heirs (both son and grandson), the event resulted calamitously for Ireland. For "it threw open the sovereignty to every great family as a prize to be won by policy or force, and no longer an inheritance to be determined by law and usage. The consequences were what might have been expected. After his death the O'Connors of the West competed with both O'Neills and O'Briens for supremacy, and a *chronic civil war prepared the way for Strongbow and the Normans*. The term 'kings with opposition' is applied to nearly all who reigned between king Brian's time and that of Roderic O'Connor" (the Norman invasion), "meaning thereby kings who were unable to secure general obedience to their administration of affairs".\*

Brian, however, in all probability, as the historian I have quoted pleads on his behalf, might have been moved by the great and statesmanlike scheme of consolidating and fusing Ireland into one kingdom; gradually repressing individuality in the subordinate principalities, and laying the firm foundation of an enduring and compact monarchical state, of which his own posterity would be the sovereigns. "For Morrogh, his first-born, and for Morrogh's descendants he hoped to found an hereditary kingship after the type universally copied throughout Christendom. He was not ignorant of what Alfred had done for England, Harold for Norway, Charlemagne for France, and Otho for Germany". If any such design really inspired Brian's course, it was a grandly useful one, comprehensive, and

truly national. Its realization was just what Ireland wanted at that period of her history. But its existence in Brian's mind is a most fanciful theory. He was himself, while a tributary king, no wondrous friend or helper of centralised authority. He pushed from the throne a wise and worthy monarch. He grasped at the sceptre, not in a reign of anarchy, but in a period of comparative order, authority, and tranquillity.

Be that as it may, certain it is that Brian was "every inch a king". Neither on the Irish throne, nor on that of any other kingdom, did sovereign ever sit more splendidly qualified to rule; and Ireland had not for some centuries known such a glorious and prosperous, peaceful, and happy time as the five years preceding Brian's death. He caused his authority to be not only unquestioned, but obeyed and respected in every corner of the land. So justly were the laws administered in his name, and so loyally obeyed throughout the kingdom, that the bards relate a rather fanciful story of a young and exquisitely beautiful lady, making, without the slightest apprehension of violence or insult, and in perfect safety, a tour of the island on foot, alone and unprotected, though bearing about her the most costly jewels and ornaments of gold! A national minstrel of our own times has celebrated this illustration of the tranquillity of Brian's reign in the well known poem, "Rich and rare were the gems she wore".

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## XII.—HOW A DARK THUNDER-CLOUD GATHERED OVER IRELAND.



**A**BOUT this time the Danish power all over Europe had made considerable advances. In France it had fastened itself upon Normandy, and in England it had once more become victorious, the Danish prince, Sweyne, having been proclaimed king of England in 1013, though it was not until the time of his successor, Canute, that the Danish line were undisputed monarchs of England. All these triumphs made them

turn their attention the more earnestly to Ireland, which they so often and so desperately, yet so vainly, sought to win. At length the Danes of this country—holding several of the large sea-port cities, but yielding tribute to the Irish monarch—seem to have been roused to the design of rallying all the might of the Scanian race for one gigantic and supreme effort to conquer the kingdom: for it was a reflection hard for northmen to endure, that they who had conquered England almost as often as they tried, who had now placed a Danish sovereign on the English throne, and had established a Danish dukedom of Normandy in France, had never yet been able to bring this dearly coveted western isle into subjection, and had never once given a monarch to its line of kings. Coincidentally with the victories of Sweyne in England, several Danish expeditions appeared upon the Irish coast: now at Cork in the south, now at Lough Foyle in the north; but these were promptly met and repelled by the vigour of the Ard-Ri, or of the local princes. These forays, however, though serious and dangerous enough, were but the prelude to the forthcoming grand assault, or as it has been aptly styled, “the last field-day of Christianity and Paganism on Irish soil”.

“A taunt thrown out over a game of chess at Kincora is said to have hastened this memorable day. Maelmurra, prince of Leinster, playing or advising on the game, made or recommended a false move, upon which Morrogh, son of Brian, observed it was no wonder his friends the Danes (to whom he owed his elevation) were beaten at Glenmana, if he gave them advice like that. Maelmurra, highly incensed by the allusion—all the more severe for its bitter truth—arose, ordered his horse, and rode away in haste. Brian, when he heard it, despatched a messenger after the indignant guest, begging him to return; but Maelmurra was not to be pacified, and refused. We next hear of him as concerting with certain Danish agents, always open to such negotiations, those measures which led to the great invasion of the year 1014, in which the whole Scanian race, from Anglesea and Man, north to Norway, bore an active share.

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“ These agents passing over to England and Man, among the Scottish isles, and even to the Baltic, followed up the design of an invasion on a gigantic scale. Suibne, earl of Man, entered warmly into this conspiracy, and sent ‘ the war-arrow ’ through all those ‘ out-islands ’ which obeyed him as lord. A yet more formidable potentate, Sigurd, of the Orkneys, next joined the league. He was the fourteenth earl of Orkney, of Norse origin, and his power was at this period a balance to that of his nearest neighbour, the king of Scots. He had ruled since the year 996, not only over the Orkneys, Shetland, and Northern Hebrides, but the coasts of Caithness and Sutherland, and even Ross and Moray rendered him homage and tribute. Eight years before the battle of Clontarf, Malcolm the Second of Scotland had been fain to purchase his alliance by giving him his daughter in marriage, and the kings of Denmark and Norway treated with him on equal terms. The hundred inhabited isles which lie between Yell and Man,—isles which after their conversion contained ‘ three hundred churches and chapels ’—sent in their contingents, to swell the following of the renowned earl Sigurd. As his fleet bore southward from Kirkwall, it swept the subject coast of Scotland, and gathered from every lough its galleys and its fighting-men. The rendezvous was the Isle of Man, where Suibne had placed his own forces, under the command of Brodar, or Broderick, a famous leader against the Britons of Wales and Cornwall. In conjunction with Sigurd, the Manxmen sailed over to Ireland, where they were joined, in the Liffey, by earl Canuteson, prince of Denmark, at the head of fourteen hundred champions clad in armour. Sitric of Dublin stood, or affected to stand, neutral in these preparations, but Maelmurra of Leinster had mustered all the forces he could command for such an expedition ”.\*

Here was a mighty thunder-storm gathering over and around Ireland! Never before was an effort of such magnitude made for the conquest of the island. Never before

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had the Danish power so palpably put forth its utmost strength, and never hitherto had it put forth such strength in vain. This was the supreme moment for Ireland to show what she could do when united in self-defence against a foreign invader. Here were the unconquered Northmen, the scourge and terror of Europe, the conquerors of Britain, Normandy, Anglesea, Orkney, and Man, now concentrating the might of their whole race, from fiord and haven, from the Orkneys to the Scilly Isles, to burst in an overwhelming billow upon Ireland! If before a far less formidable assault England went down, dare Ireland hope now to meet and withstand this tremendous shock? In truth, it seemed a hard chance. It was a trial-hour for the men of Erin. And gloriously did they meet it! Never for an instant were they daunted by the tidings of the extensive and mighty preparations going forward; for the news filled Europe, and a hundred harbours in Norway, Denmark, France, England, and the Channel Isles resounded day and night with the bustle preparatory for the coming war. Brian was fully equal to the emergency. He resolved to meet force by force, combination by combination, preparation by preparation; to defy the foe, and let them see "what Irishmen could do". His efforts were nobly seconded by the zeal of all the tributary princes (with barely a few exceptions), but most nobly of all by the deposed Malachy, whose conduct upon this occasion alone would entitle him to a proud place in the annals of Ireland. In one of the preliminary expeditions of the Danes a few years previously, he detected more quickly than Brian the seriousness of the work going forward; he sent word hurriedly to Kincora that the Danes, who had landed near Dublin, were marching inward, and entreated of Brian to hasten to check them promptly. The Ard-Ri, however, was at that time absolutely incredulous that anything more serious than a paltry foray was designed; and he refused, it is said, to lend any assistance to the local prince. But Malachy had a truer conception of the gravity of the case. He himself marched to meet the invaders, and in a battle which ensued, routed them, losing, however, in the hour of victory

his son Flann. This engagement awakened Brian to a sense of the danger at hand. He quickly despatched an auxiliary force, under his son Morrogh, to Malachy's aid; but the Danes, driven into their walled city of Dublin by Malachy, did not venture out; and so the Dal-cassian force returned southwards, devastating the territory of the traitor, Maelmorha, of Leinster, whose perfidy was now openly proclaimed.

### XIII.—THE GLORIOUS DAY OF CLONTARF.



**B**RIAN soon became fully aware of the scheme at which the Danes all over Europe were labouring, and of the terrible trial approaching for Ireland. Through all the autumn of that year, 1013, and the spring months of the year following, the two powers, Danish and Irish, were working hard at preparations for the great event, each straining every energy and summoning every resource for the crisis. Towards the close of March, Brian's arrangements being completed, he gave the order for a simultaneous march to Kilmainham,\* usually the camping ground and now the appointed rendezvous of the national forces. By the second week in April there had rallied to the national standard a force which, if numerically unequal to that assembled by the invaders, was, as the result showed, able to compensate by superior valour for whatever it lacked in numbers. The lords of all the southern half of the kingdom—the lords of Decies, Inchiquin, Fermoy, Corca-Baiskin, Kinalmeaky, and Kerry—and the lords of Hy-Manie and Hi-Fiachra in Connacht, we are told, hastened to Brian's standard. O'More and O'Nolan of Leinster, and Donald, Steward of Marr, in Scotland,

\* The district north and south of the Liffey at this point—the Phoenix Park, Kilmainham, Inchicore, and Chapel-Izod—was the rendezvous.

continues the historian, "were the other chieftains who joined him before Clontarf, besides those of his own kindred", or the forces proper of Thomond.\* Just one faint shadow catches the eye as we survey the picture presented by Ireland in the hour of this great national rally. The northern chieftains, the lords of Ulster, alone held back. Sullen and silent, they stirred not. "They had submitted to Brian; but they never cordially supported him".

The great Danish flotilla, under Brodar, the admiral-in-chief, entered Dublin Bay on Palm Sunday, the 18th of April, 1014. The galleys anchored, some of them at Sutton, near Howth, others were moored in the mouth of the river Liffey, and the rest were beached or anchored in a vast line stretching along the Clontarf shore, which sweeps between the two points indicated. Brian immediately swung his army round upon Glasnevin, crossed the Tolka at the point where the Botanical Gardens now stand, and faced his line of battle southward towards where the enemy were encamped upon the shore. Meantime, becoming aware that Maelmorra, prince of Leinster, was so eager to help the invader, that he had entered the Danish camp with every man of his following, Brian secretly despatched a body of Dalcassians, under his son Donagh, to dash into the traitor's territory and waste it with fire and sword. The secret march southward of the Dalcassians was communicated to Maelmorra by a spy in Brian's camp, and, inasmuch as the Dalcassians were famed as the "invincible legion" of the Irish army, the traitor urged vehemently upon his English allies that this

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\* "Under the standard of Brian Borumha also fought that day the Maermors, or Great Stewards of Lennox and Mar, with a contingent of the brave Gaels of Alba. It would even appear, from a Danish account, that some of the Northmen who had always been friendly to Brian, fought on his side at Clontarf. A large body of hardy men came from the distant maritime districts of Connemara; many warriors flocked from other territories, and, on the whole, the rallying of the men of Ireland in the cause of their country upon that occasion, as much as the victory which their gallantry achieved, renders the event a proud and cheering one in Irish history"—*Haverty.*

was the moment to give battle—while Brian's best troops were away. Accordingly, on Holy Thursday, the Danes announced their resolution to give battle next day. Brian had the utmost reluctance to fight upon that day, which would be Good Friday, thinking it almost a profanation to engage in combat upon the day on which our Lord died for man's redemption. He begged that the engagement might be postponed even one day; but the Danes were all the more resolute to engage on the next morning, for, says an old legend of the battle, Brodar, having consulted one of the Danish pagan oracles, was told that if he gave battle upon the Friday *Brian would fall*.

With early dawn next day, Good Friday, 23rd of April, 1014, all was bustle in both camps.\* The Danish army, facing inland, northwards or north-east, stretched along the shore of Dublin Bay; its left flank touching and protected by the city of Dublin, its centre being about the spot where Clontarf castle now stands, and its right wing resting on Dollymount. The Irish army, facing southwards, had its right on Drumcondra, its centre on Fairview, and its extreme left on Clontarf. The Danish forces were disposed of in three divisions, of which the first, or left, was composed of the Danes of Dublin, under their king, Sitric, and the princes Dolat and Conmael, with the

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\* Haverty says: "The exact site of the battle seems to be tolerably well defined. In some copies of the Annals it is called 'the Battle of the Fishing-weir of Clontarf'; and the weir in question must have been at the mouth of the Tolka, about the place where Ballybough Bridge now stands. It also appears that the principal destruction of the Danes took place when in their flight they endeavoured to cross the Tolka, probably at the moment of high water, when great numbers of them were drowned; and it is expressly stated that they were pursued with great slaughter 'from the Tolka to Dublin'". I, however, venture, though with proper diffidence, to suggest that the 'Fishing weir' stood a short distance higher up the river, to wit, at Clonliffe, directly below where the College of the Holy Cross now stands. For there is, in my opinion, ample evidence to show that at that time the sea flowed over the flats on the city side, by which Ballybough Bridge is now approached, making a goodly bay, or wide estuary, there; and that only about the point I indicate was a fishing-weir likely to have stood in 1014.

thousand Norwegians already mentioned as clothed in suits of ringed mail, under the youthful warriors Carlus and Anrud; the second, or central division, was composed chiefly of the Lagenians, commanded by Maelmorha himself, and the princes of Offaly and of the Liffey territory; and the third division, or right wing, was made up of the auxiliaries from the Baltic and the Islands, under Brodar, admiral of the fleet, and the Earl of Orkneys, together with some British auxiliaries from Wales and Cornwall. To oppose these the Irish monarch also marshalled his forces in three corps or divisions. The first, or right wing, composed chiefly of the diminished legions of the brave Dal'eassians, was under the command of his son Morrogh, who had also with him his four brothers, Tieve, Donald, Conor, and Flann, and his own son (grandson of Brian), the youthful Torlogh, who was but fifteen years of age. In this division also fought Malachy with the Meath contingent. The Irish centre division comprised the troops of Desmond, or South Munster, under the command of Kian, son of Molloy, and Donel, son of Duv Davoren (ancestor of The O'Donoghue), both of the Eugenic line. The Irish left wing was composed mainly of the forces of Connaught, under O'Kelly, prince of Hy-Manie (the great central territory of Connact) O'Heyne, prince of Hy-Fiachra Ahna, and Echtigern, king of Dalaradia. It is supposed that Brian's army numbered about 20,000 men.\*

All being ready for the signal of battle, Brian himself, mounted on a richly-caparisoned charger, rode through the Irish lines, as all the records are careful to tell us, "with his sword in one hand, and a crucifix in the other"; exhorting the troops to remember the momentous issues that depended upon the fortunes of that day—Religion and Country against Paganism and Bondage. It is said, that on this occasion he delivered an address which moved his soldiers, now to tears, and anon to the utmost pitch of enthusiasm and resolution. And we can well imagine the effect, upon an army drawn up as they were for the onset

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\* Abridged from Haverty.

of battle in defence of "Faith and Fatherland", of such a sight and such an appeal—their aged and venerable monarch, "his white hair floating in the wind", riding through their lines, with the sacred symbol of Redemption borne aloft, and adjuring them, as the chronicles tell us, to "*remember that on this day Christ died for us, on the Mount of Calvary*". Moreover, Brian himself had given them an earnest, such perhaps as monarch had never given before, of his resolve, that with the fortunes of his country he and his sons and kinsmen all would stand or fall. He had brought "his sons and nephews there", says the historian, who might have added, *and even his grandchildren*, "and showed that he was prepared to let the existence of his race depend upon the issue of the day". We may be sure a circumstance so affecting as this was not lost upon Brian's soldiers. It gave force to every word of his address. He recounted, we are told, all the barbarities and the sacrileges perpetrated by the invaders in their lawless ravages on Irish soil, the shrines they had plundered, the holy relics they had profaned, the brutal cruelties they had inflicted on unarmed non-combatants—nay, on "the servants of the Altar". Then, raising the crucifix aloft, he invoked the Omnipotent God to look down upon them that day, and to strengthen their arms in a cause so just and holy.

Mr. William Kenealy (now of Kilkenny) is the author of a truly noble poem which gives with all the native vigour and force of the original, this thrilling "Address of Brian to his army".

Stand ye now for Erin's glory! Stand ye now for Erin's cause!  
 Long ye've groaned beneath the rigour of the Northmen's savage laws.  
 What though brothers league against us? What, though myriads be  
 the foe?

Victory will be more honoured in the myriads' overthrow.

Proud Connacians! oft we've wrangled in our petty feuds of yore;  
 Now we fight against the robber Dane upon our native shore;  
 May our hearts unite in friendship, as our blood in one red tide,  
 While we crush their mail-clad legions, and annihilate their pride!

Brave Eugenians! Erin triumphs in the sight she sees to-day—  
 Desmond's homesteads all deserted for the muster and the fray!



Brian on the Morning of Clontarf.

See pages 83 and 84



Cluan's vale and Galtees' summit send their bravest and their best—  
May such hearts be theirs for ever, for the Freedom of the West!

Chiefs and Kernes of Dalcassia! Brothers of my past career,  
Oft, we 've trodden on the pirate-flag that flaunts before us here;  
You remember Inniscattery, how we bounded on the foe,  
As the torrent of the mountain bursts upon the plain below!

They have razed our proudest castles—spoiled the Temples of the  
Lord—

Burnt to dust the sacred relics—put the Peaceful to the sword—  
Desecrated all things holy—as they soon may do again,  
If their power to-day we smite not—if to-day we be not men!

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On this day the God-man suffered—look upon the sacred sign—  
May we conquer 'neath its shadow, as of old did Constantine!  
May the heathen tribe of Odin fade before it like a dream,  
And the triumph of this glorious day in our future annals gleam!

God of heaven, bless our banner—nerve our sinews for the strife!  
Fight we now for all that 's holy—for our altars, land, and life—  
For red vengeance on the spoiler, whom the blazing temples trace—  
For the honour of our maidens and the glory of our race!

Should I fall before the foeman, 't is the death I seek to-day;  
Should ten thousand daggers pierce me, bear my body not away,  
Till this day of days be over—till the field is fought and won—  
Then the holy Mass be chaunted, and the funeral rites be done.

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Men of Erin! men of Erin! grasp the battle-axe and spear!  
Chase these Northern wolves before you like a herd of frightened  
deer!

Burst their ranks, like bolts from heaven! Down on the heathen  
crew,  
For the glory of the Crucified, and Erin's glory too!

Who can be astonished that, as he ceased, a shout wild,  
furious, and deafening, burst from the Irish lines? A cry  
arose from the soldiers, we are told, demanding instantly  
to be led against the enemy. The aged monarch now  
placed himself at the head of his guards, to lead the van  
of battle; but at this point his sons and all the attendant  
princes and commanders protested against his attempting,  
at his advanced age, to take part personally in the conflict;  
and eventually, after much effort, they succeeded in pre-

vailing upon him to retire to his tent and to let the chief command devolve upon his eldest son Morrogh.

“The battle”, says a historian, “then commenced; ‘a spirited, fierce, violent, vengeful, and furious battle; the likeness of which was not to be found at that time, as the old annalists quaintly describe it. It was a conflict of heroes. The chieftains engaged at every point in single combat; and the greater part of them on both sides fell. The impetuosity of the Irish was irresistible, and their battle-axes did fearful execution, every man of the ten hundred mailed warriors of Norway having been made to bite the dust, and it was against them, we are told, that the Dalcassians had been obliged to contend single-handed. The heroic Morrogh performed prodigies of valour throughout the day. Ranks of men fell before him; and, hewing his way to the Danish standard, he cut down two successive bearers of it with his battle-axe. Two Danish leaders, Carolus and Conmael, enraged at this success, rushed on him together, but both fell in rapid succession by his sword. Twice, Morrogh and some of his chiefs retired to slake their thirst and cool their hands, swollen from the violent use of the sword; and the Danes observing the vigour with which they returned to the conflict, succeeded, by a desperate effort, in cutting off the brook which had refreshed them. Thus the battle raged from an early hour in the morning—innumerable deeds of valour being performed on both sides, and victory appearing still doubtful, until the third or fourth hour in the afternoon, when a fresh and desperate effort was made by the Irish, and the Danes, now almost destitute of leaders, began to waver and give way at every point. Just at this moment the Norwegian prince, Anrud, encountered Morrogh, who was unable to raise his arms from fatigue, but with the left hand he seized Anrud and hurled him to the earth, and with the other placed the point of his sword on the breast of the prostrate Northman, and leaning on it plunged it through his body. While stooping, however, for this purpose, Anrud contrived to inflict on him a mortal wound with a dagger, and Morrogh fell in the arms of victory. According to other accounts, Morrogh was in the act of

stooping to relieve an enemy when he received from him his death wound. This disaster had not the effect of turning the fortune of the day, for the Danes and their allies were in a state of utter disorder, and along their whole line had commenced to fly towards the city or to their ships. They plunged into the Tolka at a time, we may conclude, when the river was swollen with the tide, so that great numbers were drowned. The body of young Turlogh was found after the battle 'at the weir of Clontarf', with his hands entangled in the hair of a Dane whom he had grappled with in the pursuit.

"But the chief tragedy of the day remains to be related. Brodar, the pirate admiral, who commanded in the point of the Danish lines remotest from the city, seeing the route general, was making his way through some thickets with only a few attendants, when he came upon the tent of Brian Borumha, left at that moment without his guards. The fierce Norseman rushed in and found the aged monarch at prayer before the crucifix, which he had that morning held up to the view of his troops, and attended only by his page. Yet, Brian had time to seize his arms, and died sword in hand. The Irish accounts say that the king killed Brodar, and was only overcome by numbers; but the Danish version in the Niala Saga is more probable, and in this Brodar is represented as holding up his reeking sword, and crying: 'Let it be proclaimed from man to man that Brian has been slain by Brodar'. It is added, on the same authority, that the ferocious pirate was then hemmed in by Brian's returned guards and captured alive, and that he was hung from a tree, and continued to rage like a beast of prey until all his entrails were torn out--the Irish soldiers thus taking savage vengeance for the death of their king, who but for their own neglect would have been safe".\*

Such was the victory of Clontarf—one of the most glorious events in the annals of Ireland! It was the final effort of the Danish power to effect the conquest of this

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\* Haverty.

country. Never again was that effort renewed. For a century subsequently the Danes continued to hold some maritime cities in Ireland; but never more did they dream of conquest. That design was overthrown for ever on the bloody plain of Clontarf.

It was, as the historian called it truly, "a conflict of heroes". There was no flinching on either side, and on each side fell nearly every commander of note who had entered the battle! The list of the dead is a roll of nobility, Danish and Irish; amongst the dead being the brave Caledonian chiefs, the great Stewards of Mar and Lennox, who had come from distant Alba to fight on the Irish side that day!

But direst disaster of all—most woful in its ulterior results affecting the fate and fortunes of Ireland—was the slaughter of the reigning family: Brian himself, Morrogh, his eldest son and destined successor, and his grandson, "the youthful Torlagh", eldest child of Morrogh—three generations cut down in the one day upon the same field of battle!

"The fame of the event went out through all nations. The chronicles of Wales, of Scotland, and of Man; the annals of Ademar and Marianus;\* the sagas of Denmark and the Isles, all record the event. The Norse settlers in Caithness saw terrific visions of Valhalla 'the day after the battle'".† "The annals state that Brian and Morrogh both lived to receive the last sacraments of the Church, and that their remains were conveyed by the monks to Swords (near Dublin), and thence to Armagh by the Archbishop; and that their obsequies were celebrated for twelve days and nights with great splendour by the clergy of Armagh; after which the body of Brian was deposited in a stone coffin on the north side of the high altar in the cathedral, the body of his son being interred on the south side of the same church. The remains of Torlagh and

\* "Brian, king of Hibernia, slain on Good Friday, the 9th of the calends of May (23rd April), with his mind and his hands turned towards God" —*Chronicles of Marianus Scotus*.

† M'Gee.

of several of the other chieftains were buried in the old churchyard of Kilmainham, where the shaft of an Irish cross still marks the spot".\*

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XIV.—“AFTER THE BATTLE”. THE SCENE “UPON OSSORY’S PLAIN”. THE LAST DAYS OF NATIONAL FREEDOM.

HREE days after the battle the decimated but victory-crowned Irish legions broke up camp and marched homewards to their respective provinces, chanting songs of triumph. The Dalcassians (who had suffered terribly in the battle) found their way barred by a hostile prince, Fitzpatrick, lord of Ossory, whose opposing numbers vastly exceeded their effective force, which indeed was barely enough to convey or convey their wounded homeward to Kincora. In this extremity the wounded soldiers entreated that they might be allowed to fight with the rest. “Let stakes”, they said, “be driven into the ground, and suffer each of us, *tied to and supported by one of these stakes*, to be placed in his rank by the side of a sound man”. “Between seven and eight hundred wounded men”, adds the historian, “pale, emaciated, and supported in this manner, appeared mixed with the foremost of the troops! Never was such another sight exhibited!”† Keating’s quaint narrative of the event is well worthy of quotation. He says: “Donogh then again gave orders that one-third of his host should be placed on guard as a protection for the wounded, and that the other two-thirds should meet the expected battle. But when the wounded men heard of these orders, they sprung up in such haste that their wounds and sores burst open; but they bound them up in

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\* Haverty.

† O’Halloran.

moss, and grasping their lances and their swords, they came thus equipped into the midst of their comrades. Here they requested of Donncadh, son of Brian, to send some men to the forest with instructions to bring them a number of strong stakes, which they proposed to have thrust into the ground, 'and to these stakes', said they, 'let us be bound with our arms in our hands, and let our sons and our kinsmen be stationed by our sides; and let two warriors, who are unwounded, be placed near each one of us wounded, for it is thus that we will help one another with truer zeal, because shame will not allow the sound man to leave his position until his wounded and bound comrade can leave it likewise'. This request was complied with, and the wounded men were stationed after the manner which they had pointed out. And, indeed, that array in which the Dal g-Cais were then drawn, was a thing for the mind to dwell upon in admiration, for it was a great and amazing wonder".

Our national minstrel, Moore, has alluded to this episode of the return of the Dalcassians in one of the melodies:

Remember our wounded companions, who stood  
 In the day of distress by our side:  
 When the moss of the valley grew red with their blood,  
 They stirred not, but conquered and died.  
 The sun that now blesses our arms with its light  
 Saw them fall upon Ossory's plain:  
 Oh! let him not blush, when he leaves us to-night,  
 To find that they fell there in vain!

With the victory of Clontarf the day of Ireland's unity and power as a nation may be said to have ended. The sun of her national greatness, that had been waning previously, set suddenly in a brilliant flash of glory. If we except the eight years immediately following Brian's death, Ireland never more knew the blessing of national unity—never more was a kingdom, in the full sense of the word. Malachy Mor—well worthy of his title "the great"—the good, the magnanimous, the patriotic, and brave king, whom Brian had deposed, was unanimously recalled to the throne after Brian's death. The eight years during which Malachy ruled in this the second term

of his sovereignty, were marked by every evidence of kingly ability and virtue on his part. At length, finding death approaching, he retired for greater solitude to an island in Lough Ennel (now called Cormorant Island), whither repaired sorrowfully to his spiritual succour "Amalgaid, Archbishop of Armagh, the abbots of Clonmacnoise and of Durrow, and a good train of clergy"; and where, as the old chronicles relate it, "after intense penance, on the fourth of the nones of September, died Malachy, the pillar of the dignity and nobility of the western world".

He was the last "unquestioned" monarch of Ireland. The interval between his death and the landing of Henry the Second (over one hundred and fifty years) was a period of bloody and ruinous contention, that invited—and I had almost said merited—the yoke of a foreign rule. After Malachy's death, Brian's younger son, Donogh, claimed the throne; but his claim was scorned and repudiated by a moiety of the princes, who had, indeed, always regarded Brian himself as little better than an usurper, though a brave and a heroic sovereign. Never afterwards was an Ard-Ri fully and lawfully elected or acknowledged. There were frequently two or more claimants assuming the title at the same time, and desolating the country in their contest for sovereignty. Brian had broken the charmed line of regulated succession, that had, as I have already detailed, lasted through nearly two thousand years. His act was the final blow at the already loosened and tottering edifice of centralized national authority. While he himself lived, with his own strong hand and powerful mind to keep all things in order, it was well; no evil was likely to come of the act that supplied a new ground for wasting discords and bloody civil strife. But when the powerful hand and the strong mind had passed away; when the splendid talents that had made even the deposed monarch, Malachy, bow to their supremacy, no longer availed to bind the kingdom into unity and strength, the miseries that ensued were hopeless. The political disintegration of Ireland was aggravated a thousand-fold. The idea of national unity seemed as completely dead, buried,

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and forgotten, when the Normans came in, as if it never had existence amongst the faction-split people of Erin.

'T was self-abasement paved the way  
For villain bonds and despot's sway.

Donogh O'Brien, never acknowledged as Ard-Ri, was driven from even his titular sovereignty by his own nephew, Torlogh. Aged, broken, and weary, he sailed for Rome, where he entered a monastery and ended his life "in penance", as the old chronicles say. It is stated that this Donogh took with him to Rome the crown and the harp of his father, the illustrious Brian, and presented them to the Pope.\* This donation of his father's diadem to the Pope by Donogh has sometimes been referred to as if it implied a bestowal of the Irish sovereignty; a placing of it, as it were, at the disposal of the Father of Christendom, for the best interests of faction-ruined Ireland herself, and for the benefit of the Christian religion. Perhaps the Pope was led so to regard it. But the Supreme Pontiff did not know that such a gift was not Donogh's to give! Donogh never owned or possessed the Irish sovereignty; and even if he had been unanimously elected and acknowledged Ard-Ri (and he never was), the Irish sovereignty was a trust to which the Ard-Ri was elected for life, and which he could not donate even to his own son, except by the consent of the Royal Electors and Free Clans of Erin.

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\* The harp is still in existence. It is in the Museum of Trinity College, Dublin.

XV.—HOW ENGLAND BECAME A COMPACT KINGDOM, WHILE IRELAND WAS BREAKING INTO FRAGMENTS.



E now approach the period at which, for the first time, the history of Ireland needs to be read with that of England.

A quarter of a century after the rout of the Danes by the Irish at Clontarf, the Anglo-Saxons drove them from the English throne, the Anglo-Saxon line being restored in the person of Edward the Confessor. A quarter of a century subsequently, however, the Anglo-Saxons were again dethroned, and England was again conquered by new invaders—or the old ones with a new name—the Normans. In this last struggle, the Anglo-Saxons were aided by troops from Ireland; for the Normans were kith and kin of the Norse foes whom Ireland had such reason to hate. An Irish contingent fought side by side with the Saxons in their struggle against William; and when the brave but unfortunate Harold fell at Hastings, it was to Ireland his children were sent for friendly asylum.

The Normans treasured a bitter remembrance of this against Ireland; and there is evidence that from the first they meant to essay the subjugation of *that* island also, as soon as they should have consolidated their British conquest. These same Normans were a brave race. They possessed every quality requisite for military conquerors. To the rough fierce vigour of their Norse ancestors they had added the military discipline and scientific skill which the Gauls had learned from their Roman masters. They conquered united England in one year. Yet they were *five hundred* years unsuccessfully labouring to conquer *dis*-united Ireland!

During the one hundred and fifty years following Brian's death (devoted by the Irish princes to every factious folly and crime that could weaken, disorganize, disunite, and demoralise their country), the Normans in England were solidifying and strengthening their power. England was

becoming a compact nation, governed by concentrated national authority, and possessed of a military organization formidable in numbers and in arms, but most of all in scientific mode of warfare and perfection of military discipline; while Ireland, like a noble vessel amid the breakers, was absolutely going to pieces—breaking up into fragments, or “clans”, north, south, east, and west. As a natural result of this anarchy or wasting strife of factions, social and religious disorders supervened; and as a historian aptly remarks, the “Island of Saints” became an “Island of Sinners”. The state of religion was deplorable. The rules of ecclesiastical discipline were in many places overthrown, as was nearly every other necessary moral and social safeguard; and, inevitably, the most lamentable disorders and scandals resulted. The bishops vainly sought to calm this fearful war of factions that was thus ruining the power of a great nation, and destroying or disgracing its Christian faith. They threatened to appeal to the Supreme Pontiff, and to invoke his interposition in behalf of religion thus outraged, and civil society thus desolated. St. Malachy, the primate of Armagh, the fame of whose sanctity, piety, and learning had reached all Europe, laboured heroically amidst these terrible afflictions. He proceeded to Rome, and was received with every mark of consideration by the reigning Pope, Innocent the Second, who, “descending from his throne, placed his own mitre on the head of the Irish saint, presented him with his own vestments and other religious gifts, and appointed him apostolic legate in the place of Gilbert, bishop of Limerick, then a very old man”. St. Malachy petitioned the Pope for the necessary recognition of the Irish archiepiscopal sees, by the sending of the palliums to the archbishops; but the Pope pointed out that so grave a request should proceed from a synod of the Irish Church. The primate returned to Ireland; and after some time devoted to still more energetic measures to cope with the difficulties created by perpetual civil war, he eventually convened a national synod, which was held at Innis-Patrick, near Skerries, county Dublin. St. Malachy was authorised again to proceed to the Holy

Father, and in the name of the Irish Church beseech him to grant the palliums. The aged primate set out on his journey. But while on his way, having reached Clairvaux, he was seized with his death-sickness, and expired there (2nd November, 1148), attended by the great St. Bernard, between whom and the Irish primate a personal friendship existed, and a correspondence passed, portion of which is still extant. Three years afterwards the palliums, sent by Pope Eugene the Third, were brought to Ireland by Cardinal Paparo, and were solemnly conferred on the archbishops the year following, at a national synod held at Kells.

But all the efforts of the ministers of religion could not compensate for the want of a stable civil government in the land. Nothing could permanently restrain the fierce violence of the chiefs; and it is clear that at Rome, and throughout Europe, the opinion at this time began to gain ground that Ireland was a hopeless case. And, indeed, so it must have seemed. It is true that the innate virtue and morality of the Irish national character began to assert itself the moment society was allowed to enjoy the least respite: it is beyond question that, during and after the time of the sainted primate, Malachy, vigorous and comprehensive efforts were afoot, and great strides made, towards reforming the abuses with which chronic civil war had covered the land. But, like many another reformation, it *came too late*. Before the ruined nation could be reconstituted, the Nemesis of invasion arrived, to teach all peoples, by the story of Ireland's fate, that when national cohesiveness is gone, national power has departed and national suffering is at hand.

XVI.—HOW HENRY THE SECOND FEIGNED WONDROUS ANXIETY  
TO HEAL THE DISORDERS OF IRELAND.



HE grandson of William of Normandy, Conqueror of England, Henry the Second, was not an inattentive observer of the progressing wreck of the Irish Church and Nation. He inherited the Norman design of one day conquering Ireland also, and adding that kingdom to his English crown. He was not ignorant that at Rome Ireland was regarded as derelict. An Englishman, Pope Adrian, now sat in the Chair of Peter; and the English ecclesiastical authorities, who were in constant communication with the Holy See, were transmitting the most alarming accounts of the fearful state of Ireland. It is now known that these accounts were, in many cases, monstrously exaggerated; but it is true that, at best, the state of affairs was very bad.

The cunning and politic Henry saw his opportunity. Though his was the heart of a mere conqueror, sordid and callous, he clothed himself in the garb of the most saintly piety, and wrote to the Holy Father, calling attention to the state of Ireland, which for over a hundred years had been a scandal to Europe. But oh! it was the state of religion there that most afflicted his pious and holy Norman heart! It was all in the interests of social order, morality, religion, and civilization,\* that he now approached the Holy Father with a proposition. In those times (when Christendom was an unbroken family, of which the Pope was the head), the Supreme Pontiff was, by the voice of the nations themselves, invested with a certain kind of arbitrativè civil authority for the general good. And, indeed, even infidel and non-Catholic historians declare to us that, on the whole, and with scarcely a possible ex-

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\* Even in *that day*—seven hundred years ago—English subjugators had learned the use of these amiable pretexts for invasion and annexation!

ception, the Popes exerted the authority thus vested in them with a pure, unselfish, and exalted anxiety for the general public good and the ends of justice, for the advancement of religion, learning, civilization, and civil freedom. But this authority rested merely on the principle by which the Acadian farmers in Longfellow's poem constituted their venerable pastor supreme lawgiver, arbitrator, and regulator in their little community; a practice which, even in our own day, prevails within the realms of fact here in Ireland and in other countries.

Henry's proposition to the Pope was that he, the English king, should, with the sanction of the Holy Father, and (of course) purely in the interests of religion, morality, and social order, enter Ireland and restore order in that region of anarchy. He pleaded that the Pope was *bound* to cause some such step to be taken, and altogether urged numerous grounds for persuading the Pontiff to credit his professions as to his motives and designs. Pope Adrian is said to have complied by issuing a bull approving of Henry's scheme *as presented to him*, and with the purposes and on the conditions therein set forth. There is no such bull now to be found in the Papal archives, yet it is credited that some such bull was issued; but its contents, terms, and permissions have been absurdly misrepresented and exaggerated in some versions coined by English writers.

The Papal bull or letter once issued, Henry had gained his point. He stored away the document until his other plans should be ripe; and, meanwhile, having no longer any need of feigning great piety and love for religion, he flung off the mask and entered upon that course of conduct which, culminating in the murder of St. Thomas A'Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, drew down upon him the excommunication of Rome.

Meantime events were transpiring in Ireland destined to afford him a splendid opportunity for practically availing of his fraudulently obtained Papal letter, and making a commencement in his scheme of Irish conquest.

## XVII.—THE TREASON OF DIARMID M'MURROGH.



ABOUT the year 1152, in the course of the interminable civil war desolating Ireland, a feud of peculiar bitterness arose between Tiernan O'Ruarc, prince of Brefni, and Diarmid M'Murrogh, prince of Leinster. While one of the Ard-Righana favourable to the latter was for the moment uppermost, O'Ruarc had been dispossessed of his territory, its lordship being handed over to M'Murrogh. To this was added a wrong still more dire. Devorgilla, the wife of O'Ruarc, eloped with M'Murrogh, already her husband's most bitter rival and foe! Her father and her husband both appealed to Torlogh O'Connor for justice upon the guilty prince of Leinster. O'Connor, although M'Murrogh had been one of his supporters, at once acceded to this request. M'Murrogh soon found his territory surrounded, and Devorgilla was restored to her husband. She did not however return to domestic life. Recent researches amongst the ancient "Manuscript Materials for Irish History", by O'Curry and O'Donovan, throw much light upon this episode, and considerably alter the long prevailing popular impressions in reference thereto. Whatever the measure of Devorgilla's fault in eloping with M'Murrogh—and the researches alluded to bring to light many circumstances invoking for her more of commiseration than of angry scorn—her whole life subsequently to this sad event, and she lived for forty years afterwards, was one prolonged act of contrition and of penitential reparation for the scandal she had given. As I have already said, she did not return to the home she had abandoned. She entered a religious retreat; and thenceforth, while living a life of practical piety, penance, and mortification, devoted the immense dower which she possessed in her own right, to works of charity, relieving the poor, building hospitals, asylums, convents, and churches.

Thirteen years after this event, Roderick O'Connor, son and successor of the king who had forced M'Murrogh to

yield up the unhappy Devorgilla, claimed the throne of the kingdom. Roderick was a devoted friend of O'Ruarc, and entertained no very warm feelings towards M'Murrogh. The king claimant marched on his "circuit", claiming "hostages" from the local princes as recognition of sovereignty. M'Murrogh, who hated Roderick with intense violence, burned his city of Ferns, and retired to his Wicklow fastnesses, rather than yield allegiance to him. Roderick could not just then delay on his circuit to follow him up, but passed on southward, took up his hostages there, and then returned to settle accounts with M'Murrogh. But by this time O'Ruarc, apparently only too glad to have such a pretext and opportunity for a stroke at his mortal foe, had assembled a powerful army and marched upon M'Murrogh from the north, while Roderick approached him from the south. Diarmid, thus surrounded, and deserted by most of his own people, outwitted and overmatched on all sides, saw that he was a ruined man. He abandoned the few followers yet remaining to him, fled to the nearest seaport, and, with a heart bursting with the most deadly passions, sailed for England (A.D. 1168), vowing vengeance, black, bitter, and terrible, on all that he left behind!

"A solemn sentence of banishment was publicly pronounced against him by the assembled princes, and Morrogh, his cousin—commonly called '*Morrogh na Gael*', (or 'of the Irish'), to distinguish him from '*Morrogh na Gall*' (or 'of the Foreigners')—was inaugurated in his stead".\*

Straightway he sought out the English king, who was just then in Aquitaine quelling a revolt of the nobles in that portion of his possessions. M'Murrogh laid before Henry a most piteous recital of his wrongs and grievances, appealed to him for justice and for aid, inviting him to enter Ireland, which he was sure most easily to reduce to his sway, and finally offering to become his most submissive vassal if his majesty would but aid him in recovering

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\* M'Gee.

the possessions from which he had been expelled. "Henry", as one of our historians justly remarks, "must have been forcibly struck by such an invitation to carry out a project which he had long entertained, and for which he had been making grave preparations long before". He was too busy himself, however, just then to enter upon the project; but he gave M'Murrough a royal letter or proclamation authorising such of his subjects as might so desire to aid the views of the Irish fugitive. Diarmid hurried back to England, and had all publicity given to this proclamation in his favour; but though he made the most alluring offers of reward and booty, he was a long time before he found any one to espouse his cause. At length Robert Fitzstephen, a Norman relative of the prince of North Wales, just then held in prison by his Cambrian kinsman, was released or brought out of prison by M'Murrough, on condition of undertaking his service. Through Fitzstephen there came into the enterprise several other knights, Maurice Fitzgerald, Meyler Fitzhenry, and others—all of them men of supreme daring, but of needy circumstances. Eventually there joined one who was destined to take command of them all. Richard de Clare, earl of Pembroke, commonly called "Strongbow"; a man of ruined fortune, needy, greedy, unscrupulous, and ready for any desperate adventure; possessing unquestionable military skill and reckless daring, and having a tolerably strong following of like adventurous spirits amongst the knights of the Welsh marches—in fine, just the man for Diarmid's purpose. The terms were soon settled. Strongbow and his companions undertook to raise a force of adventurers, proceed to Ireland with M'Murrough, and reinstate him in his principality. M'Murrough was to bestow on Strongbow (then a widower between fifty and sixty years of age) his daughter Eva in marriage, with succession to the throne of Leinster. Large grants of land also were to be distributed amongst the adventurers.

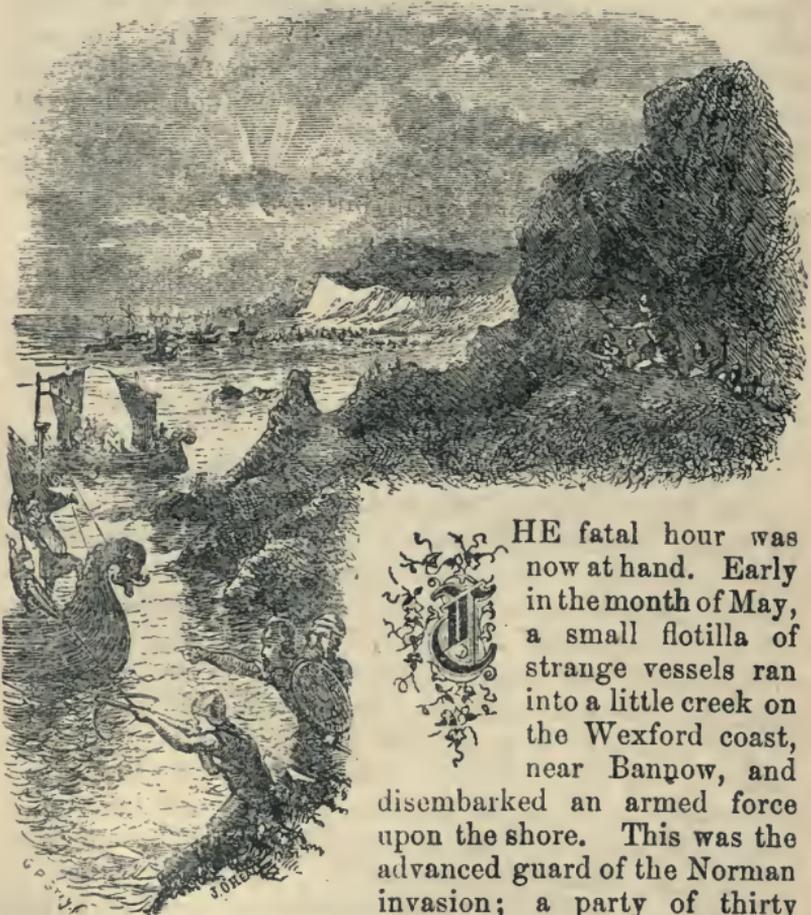
Now, Diarmid knew that "succession to the throne" was not a matter which any king in Ireland, whether provincial or national, at any time could bestow; the monarchy being elective out of the members of the reigning family. Even

if he was himself at the time in full legal possession of "the throne of Leinster", he could not promise, secure, or bequeath it, as of *right*, even to his own son.

In the next place, Diarmid knew that his offers of "grants of land" struck directly and utterly at the existing land system, the basis of all society in Ireland. For, according to the Irish constitution and laws for a thousand years, the fee-simple or *ownership* of the soil was vested in the sept, tribe, or clan; its *use or occupancy* (by the individual members of the sept or others) being only regulated on behalf of and in the interest of the whole sept, by the elected king for the time being. "Tribe land" could not be alienated unless by the king, with the sanction of the sept. The users and occupiers were, so to speak, a coöperative society of agriculturists, who, *as a body* or a community, owned the soil they tilled, while individually renting it from that body or community under its administrative official—the king.

While Strongbow and his confederates were completing their arrangements in Chester, M'Murrough crossed over to his native Wexford privately to prepare the way there for their reception. It would seem that no whisper had reached Ireland of his movements, designs, proclamations, and preparations on the other side of the channel. The wolf assumed the sheep's clothing. M'Murrough feigned great humility and contrition, and pretended to aspire only to the recovery, by grace and favour, of his immediate patrimony of Hy-Kinsella. Amongst his own immediate clansmen, no doubt, he found a friendly meeting and ready following, and, more generally, a feeling somewhat of commiseration for one deemed to be now so fallen, so helpless, so humiliated. This secured him from very close observation, and greatly favoured the preparations he was stealthily making to meet the Norman expedition with stout help on the shore.

XVIII.—HOW THE NORMAN ADVENTURERS GOT A FOOTHOLD  
ON IRISH SOIL.



HE fatal hour was now at hand. Early in the month of May, a small flotilla of strange vessels ran into a little creek on the Wexford coast, near Banow, and disembarked an armed force upon the shore. This was the advanced guard of the Norman invasion; a party of thirty knights, sixty men in armour, and three hundred footmen, under Robert Fitzstephen. Next day at the same point of disembarkation arrived Maurice de Prendergast, a Welsh gentleman who had joined the enterprise, bringing with him an additional force. Camping on the coast, they quickly despatched a courier to M'Morrogh to say that they had come. Diarmid hastened to the spot with all the men he could rally. The joint force at once

marched upon and laid siege to Wexford, which town, after a gallant defence, capitulated to them. Elate with this important victory, and strengthened in numbers, Diarmid now marched into Ossory. Here he was confronted by Fitzpatrick, prince of Ossory, commanding, however, a force quite inferior to M'Murrough's. A sanguinary engagement ensued. The Ossorians bravely held their own throughout the day, until decoyed from their chosen position into an open ground where the Norman cavalry had full play, the "poise of the beam" was turned against them; they were thrown into confusion, pressed by the enemy, and at length overthrown with great slaughter.

Roderick the Second, titular Ard-Ri, now awakened to the necessity of interposing with the national forces; *not* as against an *invasion*; for at this period, and indeed for some time afterwards, none of the Irish princes attached such a character or meaning to the circumstance that M'Murrough had enlisted into his service some men of England. It was to check M'Murrough, the deposed king of Leinster, in his hostile proceedings, that the Ard-Ri summoned the national forces to meet him at the Hill of Tara. The provincial princes, with their respective forces, assembled at his call; but had scarcely done so, when owing to some contention, the northern contingent, under Mac Dunlevy, prince of Ulidia, withdrew. With the remainder, however, Roderick marched upon Ferns, the Lagenian capital, where M'Murrough had entrenched himself. Roderick appears to have exhibited weakness and vacillation in the crisis, when boldness, promptitude, and vigour were so vitally requisite. He began to parley and diplomatise with M'Murrough, who cunningly feigned willingness to agree to any terms; for all he secretly desired was to gain time till Strongbow and the full force from Wales would be at his side. M'Murrough, with much show of moderation and humility, agreed to a treaty with the Ard-Ri, by which the sovereignty of Leinster was restored to him; and he, on the other hand, solemnly bound himself by a secret clause, guaranteed by his own son as hostage, that he would bring over no more foreigners to serve in his army.

No suspicion of any such scheme as an *invasion* seems even for an instant to have crossed the monarch's mind; yet he wisely saw the danger of importing a foreign force into the country. He and the other princes really believed that the only object M'Murrough had was to regain the sovereignty of Leinster.

The crafty and perfidious Diarmid in this treaty gained the object he sought—time. Scarcely had Roderick and the national forces retired, than the Leinster king, hearing that a further Norman contingent, under Maurice Fitzgerald, had landed at Wexford, marched upon Dublin—then held by the Danes under their prince Hasculf Mac Turkill, tributary to the Irish Ard-Ri—and set up a claim to the monarchy of Ireland. The struggle was now fully inaugurated. Soon after a third Norman force, under Raymond le Gros (or “the Fat”), landed in Waterford estuary, on the Wexford side, and hastily fortified themselves on the rock of Dundonolf, awaiting the main force under Strongbow.

And now we encounter the evil and terrible results of the riven and disorganized state of Ireland, to which I have already sufficiently adverted. The hour at last had come, when the curse was to work, when the punishment was to fall!

It was at such a moment as this—just as Roderick was again preparing to take the field to crush the more fully developed designs of Diarmid—that Donogh O'Brien, Prince of Thomond, chose to throw off allegiance to the Ard-Ri, and precipitate a civil war in the very face of a foreign invasion! Meanwhile, Strongbow was on the point of embarking at Milford Haven with a most formidable force, when king Henry, much mistrusting the adventurous and powerful knight—and having, secretly, his own designs about Ireland, which he feared the ambition of Strongbow, if successful, might thwart—imperatively forbade his sailing. Strongbow disregarded the royal mandate, and set sail with his fleet. He landed at Waterford (23rd August, 1171), and joined by the force of Raymond, which had been cooped up in their fort on the rock of Dundonolf, laid siege to the city. Waterford, like Dublin, was a Dano-

Irish city, and was governed and commanded by Reginald, a prince of Danish race. The neighbouring Irish under O'Felan, prince of the Deisi, patriotically hurried to the assistance of the Danish citizens; and the city was defended with a heroism equal to that of the three hundred at Thermopylae. Again and again the assailants were hurled from the walls; but at length the Norman sieging skill prevailed; a breach was effected; the enemy poured into the town, and a scene of butchery shocking to contemplate ensued. Diarmid arrived just in time to congratulate Strongbow on this important victory. He had brought his daughter Eva with him, and amidst the smoking and bloodstained ruins of the city the nuptials of the Norman knight and the Irish princess were celebrated.

Strongbow and M'Murrough now marched for Dublin. The Ard-Ri, who had meantime taken the field, made an effort to intercept them, but he was out-manœuvred, and they reached and commenced to siege the city. The citizens sought a parley. The fate of Waterford had struck terror into them. They despatched to the besiegers' camp as negotiator or mediator, their archbishop, Laurence, or Lorcan O'Tuahal, the first prelate of Dublin of Irish origin.

"This illustrious man, canonized both by sanctity and patriotism, was then in the thirty-ninth year of his age, and the ninth of his episcopate. His father was lord of Imayle and chief of his clan; his sister had been wife of Dermid and mother of Eva, the prize bride of Earl Richard. He himself had been a hostage with Dermid in his youth, and afterwards abbot of Glendalough, the most celebrated monastic city of Leinster. He stood, therefore, to the besieged, being their chief pastor, in the relation of a father; to Dermid, and strangely enough to Strongbow also, as brother-in-law and uncle by marriage. A fitter ambassador could not be found.

"Maurice Regan, the 'Latiner', or secretary of Dermid, had advanced to the walls and summoned the city to surrender, and deliver up 'thirty pledges' to his master their lawful prince. Asculph, son of Torcall, was in favour of the surrender, but the citizens could not agree among

themselves as to hostages. No one was willing to trust himself to the notoriously untrustworthy Dermid. The Archbishop was then sent out on the part of the citizens to arrange the terms in detail. He was received with all reverence in the camp, but while he was deliberating with the commanders without, and the townsmen were anxiously awaiting his return, Milo de Cogan and Raymond the Fat, seizing the opportunity, broke into the city at the head of their companies, and began to put the inhabitants ruthlessly to the sword. They were soon followed by the whole force eager for massacre and pillage. The Archbishop hastened back to endeavour to stay the havoc which was being made of his people. He threw himself before the infuriated Irish and Normans, he threatened, he denounced, he bared his own breast to the swords of the assassins. All to little purpose: the blood fury exhausted itself before peace settled over the city. Its Danish chief Asculph, with many of his followers, escaped to their ships, and fled to the Isle of Man and the Hebrides in search of succour and revenge. Roderick, unprepared to besiege the enemy who had thus outmarched and outwitted him, at that season of the year—it could not be earlier than October—broke up his encampment at Clondalkin and retired to Connaught. Earl Richard having appointed De Cogan his governor of Dublin, followed on the rear of the retreating Ard-Righ, at the instigation of M'Murrogh, burning and plundering the churches of Kells, Clonard, and Slane, and carrying off the hostages of East-Meath".\*

Roderick, having first vainly noticed M'Murrogh to return to his allegiance on forfeit of the life of his hostage, beheaded the son of Diarmid, who had been given as surety for his father's good faith at the treaty of Ferns. Soon after M'Murrogh himself died, and his end, as recorded in the chronicles, was truly horrible. "His death, which took place in less than a year after his sacrilegious church burnings in Meath, is described as being accompanied by fearful evidence of divine displeasure. He died

intestate, and without the sacraments of the Church. His disease was of some unknown and loathsome kind, and was attended with insufferable pain, which, acting on the naturally savage violence of his temper, rendered him so furious, that his ordinary attendants must have been afraid to approach him, and his body became at once a putrid mass, so that its presence above ground could not be endured. Some historians suggest that this account of his death may have been the invention of enemies, yet it is so consistent with what we know of M'Murrough's character and career from other sources, as to be noways incredible. He was at his death eighty-one years of age, and is known in Irish history as Diarmaid-na-Gall, or Dermot of the "Foreigners".

An incident well calculated to win our admiration presents itself, in the midst of the dismal chapter I have just sketched in outline; an instance of chivalrous honour and good faith on the part of a Norman lord in behalf of an Irish chieftain! Maurice de Prendergast was deputed by Earl "Strongbow" as envoy to Mac Gilla Patrick, prince of Ossory, charged to invite him to a conference in the Norman camp. Prendergast undertook to prevail upon the Ossorian prince to comply, on receiving from Strongbow a solemn pledge that good faith would be observed towards the Irish chief, and that he should be free and safe coming and returning. Relying on this pledge, Prendergast bore the invitation to Mac Gilla Patrick, and prevailed upon him to accompany him to the earl. "Understanding, however, during the conference", says the historian, "that treachery was about to be used towards Mac Gilla Patrick, he rushed into Earl Strongbow's presence, and 'swore by the cross of his sword that no man there that day should dare lay hands on the kyng of Ossery'". And well kept he his word. Out of the camp, when the conference ended, rode the Irish chief, and by his side, good sword in hand, that glorious type of honour and chivalry, Prendergast, ever since named in Irish tradition and history as "the Faithful Norman"—"faithful among the faithless" we might truly say! Scrupulously did he redeem his word to the Irish prince. He not only

conducted him safely back to his own camp, but, encountering on the way a force belonging to Strongbow's ally, O'Brien, returning from a foray into Ossory, he attacked and defeated them. That night "the Faithful Norman" remained, as the old chronicler has it, "in the woods", the guest of the Irish chief, and next day returned to the English lines. This truly pleasing episode—this little oasis of chivalrous honour in the midst of a trackless expanse of treacherous and ruthless warfare, has been made the subject of a short poem by Mr. Aubrey De Vere, in his *Lyrical Chronicle of Ireland*:

THE FAITHFUL NORMAN.

Praise to the valiant and faithful foe!  
 Give us noble foes, not the friend who lies!  
 We dread the drugged cup, not the open blow:  
 We dread the old hate in the new disguise.

To Ossory's king they had pledged their word:  
 He stood in their camp, and their pledge they broke:  
 'T'hen Maurice the Norman upraised his sword;  
 The cross on its hilt he kiss'd, and spoke:

"So long as this sword or this arm hath might,  
 I swear by the cross which is lord of all,  
 By the faith and honour of noble and knight,  
 Who touches you, Prince, by this hand shall fall!"

So side by side through the throng they pass'd;  
 And Eire gave praise to the just and true.  
 Brave foe! the past truth heals at last:  
 There is room in the great heart of Eire for you!

It is nigh seven hundred years since "the faithful Norman" linked the name of Prendergast to honour and chivalry on Irish soil. Those who have read that truly remarkable work, Prendergast's *Cromwellian Settlement of Ireland*, will conclude that the spirit of Maurice is still to be found amongst some of those who bear his name.

"Barred and"—The Captives of Eua and Strongbow.





XIX.—HOW HENRY RECALLED THE ADVENTURERS. HOW HE CAME OVER HIMSELF TO PUNISH THEM AND BEFRIEND THE IRISH.



STRONGBOW having now assumed the sovereignty of Leinster, king Henry's jealousy burst into a flame. He issued a proclamation ordering Strongbow and every other Englishman in Ireland to return forthwith to England on pain of outlawry! Strongbow hurriedly despatched ambassador after ambassador to soothe Henry's anger; but all was vain. At length he hastened to England himself, and found the English sovereign assembling an enormous fleet and army with the intent of himself invading Ireland. The crafty knight humiliated himself to the utmost; yet it was with great difficulty the king was induced even to grant him audience. When he did, Strongbow, partly by his own most abject protestations of submission, and partly by the aid of mediators, received the royal pardon for his contumacy, and was confirmed in his grants of land in Wexford.

Early in October, 1171, Henry sailed with his armada of over four hundred ships, with a powerful army; and on the 18th of that month landed at Crooch, in Waterford harbour. In his train came the flower of the Norman knights, captains, and commanders; and even in the day of Ireland's greatest unity and strength she would have found it difficult to cope with the force which the English king now led into the land.

Coming in such kingly power, and with all the pomp and pageantry with which he was particularly careful to surround himself—studiously polished, politic, plausible, dignified, and courtierlike towards such of the Irish princes as came within his presence—proclaiming himself by word and act, angry with the lawless and ruthless proceedings of Strongbow, Raymond, Fitzstephen, and Fitzgerald—Henry seems to have appeared to the Irish of the neighbourhood something like an illustrious deliverer! They had full and public knowledge of his strong proclamation

against Strongbow and his companions, calling upon all the Norman auxiliaries of Dermot to *return forthwith to England on pain of outlawry*. On every occasion subsequent to his landing Henry manifested a like feeling and purpose; so much so that the Irish of Wexford, who had taken Fitzstephen prisoner, sent a deputation to deliver him up to be dealt with by Henry, and the king imprisoned him forthwith in Reginald's tower to await further sentence! In fine, Henry pretended to come as an angry king to chastise his own contumacious subjects—the Norman auxiliaries of the Leinster prince—and to adjudicate upon the complicated issues which had arisen out of the treaties of that prince with them. This most smooth and plausible hypocrisy, kept up with admirable skill, threw the Irish utterly off their guard, and made them regard his visit as the reverse of hostile or undesirable. As I have already pointed out, the idea of national unity was practically defunct among the Irish at the time. For more than a hundred years it had been very much a game of “every one for himself” (varied with “every man against everybody else”) with them. There was no stable or enduring national government or central authority in the land, since Brian's time. The nakedly hostile and sanguinary invasion of Strongbow they were all ready enough, in their disintegrated and ill-organized way, to confront and bravely resist to the death; and had Henry on this occasion really appeared to them to come as an invader, they would have instantly encountered him sword in hand; a truth most amply proven by the fact that when subsequently (but *too late*) they found out the real nature of the English designs, not all the power of united, compact, and mighty England was able, for hundreds and hundreds of years, to subdue the broken and weakened, deceived and betrayed, but still heroic Irish nation.

Attracted by the fame of Henry's magnanimity, the splendour of his power, the (supposed) justice and friendliness of his intentions, the local princes one by one arrived at his temporary court; where they were dazzled by the pomp, and caressed by the courtier affabilities, of the great English king. To several of them it seems very quickly

to have occurred, that, considering the ruinously distracted and demoralised state of the country, and the absence of any strong central governmental authority able to protect any one of them against the capricious lawlessness of his neighbours, the very best thing they could do—*possibly* for the interests of the whole country, *certainly* for their own particular personal or local interests—would be to constitute Henry a friendly arbitrator, regulator, and protector, on a much wider scale than (as *they* imagined) he intended. The wily Englishman only wanted the whisper of such a desirable pretext. It was just what he had been angling for. Yes; he, the mighty and magnanimous, the just and friendly, English sovereign would accept the position. They should all, to this end, recognize him as a nominal liege lord; and then he, on the other hand, would undertake to regulate all their differences, tranquillize the island, and guarantee to each individual secure possession of his own territory!

Thus, by a smooth and plausible diplomacy, Henry found himself, with the consent or at the request of the southern Irish princes, in a position which he never could have attained, except through seas of blood, if he had allowed them to suspect that he came as a hostile invader, not as a neighbour and powerful friend.

From Waterford he marched to Cashel, and from Cashel to Dublin, receiving on the way visits from the several local princes; and now that the news spread that the magnanimous English king had consented to be their arbitrator, protector, and liege lord, every one of them that once visited Henry went away wheedled into adhesion to the scheme. Amongst the rest was Donald O'Brien, prince of Thomond, who the more readily gave in his adhesion to the new idea, for that he, as I have already mentioned of him, had thrown off allegiance to Roderick, the titular Ard-Ri, and felt the necessity of protection by some one against the probable consequences of his conduct. Arrived at Dublin, Henry played the king on a still grander scale. A vast palace of wicker-work was erected\* for his especial

\* On the spot where now stands the Protestant church of St. Andrew, St. Andrew Street, Dublin.

residence; and here, during the winter, he kept up a continued round of feasting, hospitality, pomp, and pageantry. Every effort was used to attract the Irish princes to the royal court, and once attracted thither, Henry made them the object of the most flattering attentions. They were made to feel painfully the contrast between the marked superiority in elegance, wealth, civilization—especially in new species of armour and weapons, and in new methods of war and military tactics—presented by the Norman-English, and the backwardness of their own country in each particular; a change wrought, as they well knew, altogether or mainly within the last hundred and fifty years!

Where was the titular Ard-Ri all this time? Away in his western home, sullen and perplexed, scarcely knowing what to think of this singular and unprecedented turn of affairs. Henry tried hard to persuade Roderick to visit him; but neither Roderick nor any of the northern princes could be persuaded to an interview with the English king. On the contrary, the Ard-Ri, when he heard that Henry was likely to come westward and visit him, instantly mustered an army and boldly took his stand at Athlone, resolved to defend the integrity and independence of at least his own territory. Henry, however, disclaimed the idea of conflict; and, once again trusting more to smooth diplomacy than to the sword, despatched two ambassadors to the Irish titular monarch. The result was, according to some English versions of very doubtful and suspicious authority, that Roderick so far came in to the scheme of constituting Henry general suzeraine, as to agree to offer it no opposition on condition (readily acceded to by the ambassadors) that his own sovereignty, as, at least, next in supremacy to Henry, should be recognized. But there is no reliable proof that Roderick made any such concession, conditional or unconditional; and most Irish historians reject the story.

Having spent the Christmas in Dublin, and devoted the winter season to feasting and entertainment on a right royal scale, Henry now set about exercising his authority as general pacificator and regulator; and his first exercise

of it was marked by that profound policy and sagacity which seem to have guided all his acts since he landed. He began, not by openly aggrandising himself or his followers—that might have excited suspicion—but by evidencing a deep and earnest solicitude for the state of religion in the country. This strengthened the opinion that estimated him as a noble, magnanimous, unselfish, and friendly protector, and it won for him the favour of the country. As his first exercise of general authority in the land, he convened a synod at Cashel; and at this synod, the decrees of which are known, measures were devised for the repression and correction of such abuses and irregularities in connection with religion as were known to exist in the country. Yet, strange to say, we find by the statutes and decrees of this synod nothing of a doctrinal nature requiring correction; nothing more serious calling for regulation than what is referred to in the following enactments then made:—

1. That the prohibition of marriage within the canonical degrees of consanguinity be enforced.

2. That children should be regularly catechised before the church door in each parish.

3. That children should be baptized in the public fonts of the parish churches.

4. That regular tithes should be paid to the clergy rather than irregular donations from time to time.

5. That church lands should be exempt from the exaction of “livery”, etc.

6. That the clergy should not be liable to any share of the Eric or blood-fine, levied off the kindred of a man guilty of homicide.

7. A decree regulating wills.

Such and no more were the reforms found to be necessary in the Irish Church under Henry’s own eye, notwithstanding all the dreadful stories he had been hearing, and which he (not without addition by exaggeration) had been so carefully forwarding to Rome for years before! Truth and candour, however, require the confession, that the reason why there was so little, comparatively, needing to be set right just then, was because there had been during,

and ever since, St. Malachy's time vigorous efforts on the part of the Irish prelates, priests, princes, and people themselves, to restore and repair the ruins caused by long years of bloody convulsion.

The synod over, Henry next turned his attention to civil affairs. He held a royal court at Lismore, whereat he made numerous civil appointments and regulations for the government of the territories and cities possessed by the Norman allies of the late prince of Leinster, or those surrendered by Irish princes to himself.

While Henry was thus engaged in adroitly causing his authority to be gradually recognized, respected, and obeyed in the execution of peaceful, wise, and politic measures for the general tranquillity and welfare of the country—for, from the hour of his landing, he had not spilled one drop of Irish blood, nor harshly treated a native of Ireland—he suddenly found himself summoned to England by gathering troubles there. Papal commissioners had arrived in his realm of Normandy to investigate the murder of St. Thomas A'Becket, and threatening to lay England under an interdict, if Henry could not clear or purge himself of guilty part in that foul deed. There was nothing for it, but to hasten thither with all speed, abandoning for the time his Irish plans and schemes, but taking the best means he could to provide meantime for the retention of his power and authority in the realm of Ireland.

I do not hesitate to express my opinion that, as the Normans had fastened at all upon Ireland, it was unfortunate that Henry was called away at this juncture. No one can for an instant rank side by side the naked and heartless rapacity and bloody ferocity of the Normans who preceded and who succeeded him in Ireland, with the moderation, the statesmanship, and the tolerance exhibited by Henry while remaining here. Much of this, doubtless, was policy on his part; but such a policy, though it might result in bringing the kingdom of Ireland under the same crown with England many centuries sooner than it was so brought eventually by other means, would have spared our country centuries of slaughter, persecution, and suffering unexampled in the annals

the world. There are abundant grounds for presuming that Henry's views and designs originally were wise and comprehensive, and certainly the reverse of sanguinary. *He* meant simply to win the sovereignty of another kingdom; but the spirit in which the Normans who remained and who came after him in Ireland acted was that of mere freebooters—rapacious and merciless plunderers—whose sole redeeming trait was their indomitable pluck and undaunted bravery.

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XX.—HOW HENRY MADE A TREATY WITH THE IRISH KING—  
AND DID NOT KEEP IT.



SOON the Irish began to learn the difference between king Henry's friendly courtesies and mild adjudications, and the rough iron-shod rule of his needy, covetous, and lawless lieutenants. On all sides the Normans commenced to encroach upon, outrage, and despoil the Irish, until, before three years had elapsed, Henry, found all he had won in Ireland lost, and the

English power there apparently at the last extremity. A signal defeat which Strongbow encountered in one of his insolent forays, at the hands of O'Brien, prince of Thomond, was the signal for a general assault upon the Normans. They were routed on all sides; Strongbow himself being chased into and cooped up with a few men in a fortified tower in Waterford. But this simultaneous outbreak lacked the unity of direction, the reach of purpose, and the perseverance which would cause it to accomplish permanent rather than transitory results. The Irish gave no thought to the necessity of following up their victories; and the Norman power, on the very point of extinction, was allowed slowly to recruit and extend itself again.

Henry was sorely displeased to find affairs in Ireland in this condition; but, of course, the versions which reached him laid all the blame on the Irish, and represented the

Norman settlers as meek and peaceful colonists driven to defend themselves against treacherous savages. The English monarch, unable to repair to Ireland himself, bethought him of the Papal letters, and resolved to try their influence on the Irish. He accordingly commissioned William Fitz-adelm De Burgo and Nicholas, the prior of Wallingford, to proceed with these documents to Ireland; and report to him on the true state of affairs there. These royal commissioners duly reached that country, and we are told that, having assembled the Irish prelates, the Papal letters were read. But no chronicle, English or Irish, tells us what was said by the Irish bishops on hearing them read. Very likely there were not wanting prelates to point out that the Pope had been utterly misinformed and kept in the dark as to the truth about Ireland; and that so far the bulls were of no valid force as such: that as to the authority necessary to king Henry to effect the excellent designs he professed, it had already been pretty generally yielded to him for such purpose by the Irish princes themselves without these letters at all: that, *for the purposes and on the conditions* specified in the Papal letters, he was likely to receive every coöperation from the Irish princes; but that it was quite another thing if he expected them to yield themselves up to be plundered and enslaved—that they would resist for ever and ever; and if there was to be peace, morality, or religion in the land, it was his own Norman lords and governors he should recall or curb.

Very much to this effect was the report of the royal commissioners when they returned, and as if to confirm the conclusion that these were the views of the Irish prelates and princes at the time, we find the Irish monarch, Roderic, sending special ambassadors to king Henry to negotiate a formal treaty, recording and regulating the relations which were to exist between them. "In September, 1175", we are told, "the Irish monarch sent over to England as his plenipotentiaries, Catholicus O'Duffy, the archbishop of Tuam; Concors, abbot of St. Brendan's of Clonfert; and a third, who is called Master Laurence, his chancellor, but who was no other than the holy Archbishop of Dublin, as we know that that illustrious man was one

of those who signed the treaty on this occasion. A great council was held at Windsor, within the octave of Michaelmas, and a treaty was agreed on, the articles of which were to the effect, that Roderick was to be king under Henry, rendering him service as his vassal; that he was to hold his hereditary territory of Connaught in the same way as before the coming of Henry into Ireland; that he was to have jurisdiction and dominion over the rest of the island, including its kings and princes, whom he should oblige to pay tribute, through his hands, to the king of England; that these kings and princes were also to hold possession of their respective territories as long as they remained faithful to the king of England and paid their tribute to him; that if they departed from their fealty to the king of England, Roderick was to judge and depose them, either by his own power, or, if that was not sufficient, by the aid of the Anglo-Norman authorities; but that his jurisdiction should not extend to the territories occupied by the English settlers, which at a later period was called the English Pale, and comprised Meath and Leinster, Dublin with its dependent district, Waterford, and the country thence to Dungarvan.

The treaty between the two sovereigns, Roderick and Henry, clearly shows that the mere recognition of the English king as suzerain was all that appeared to be claimed on the one side or yielded on the other. With this single exception or qualification, the native Irish power, authority, rights, and liberties, were fully and formally guaranteed. What Henry himself thought of the relations in which he stood by this treaty towards Ireland, and the sense in which he read its stipulations, is very intelligibly evidenced in the fact that he never styled, signed, or described himself as either king or lord of Ireland, in the documents reciting and referring to his relations with and towards that country.

But neither Henry nor his Norman barons kept the treaty. Like that made with Ireland by another English king, five hundred years later on, at Limerick, it was

“broken ere the ink wherewith 't was writ was dry”.

I am inclined to credit Henry with having at one time intended to keep it. I think there are indications that he was in a certain sense coerced by his Norman lords into the abandonment, or at least the alteration, of his original policy, plans, and intentions as to Ireland, which were quite too peaceful and afforded too little scope for plunder to please those adventurers. In fact the barons revolted against the idea of not being allowed full scope for robbing the Irish; and one of them, De Courcy, resolved to fling the king's restrictions overboard, and set off on a conquering or freebooting expedition on his own account! A historian tells us that the royal commissioner Fitzadelm was quite unpopular with the colony. "His tastes were not military; *he did not afford sufficient scope for spoliation*; and he was openly accused of *being too friendly to the Irish*. De Courcy, one of his aides in the government, became so disgusted with his inactivity, that he set out, in open defiance of the viceroy's prohibition, on an expedition to the north. Having selected a small army of twenty-two knights and three hundred soldiers, all picked men, to accompany him, by rapid marches he arrived the fourth day at Downpatrick, the chief city of Ulidia, and the clangour of his bugles ringing through the streets at the break of day, was the first intimation which the inhabitants received of this wholly unexpected incursion. In the alarm and confusion which ensued, the people became easy victims, and the English, after indulging their rage and rapacity, entrenched themselves in a corner of the city. Cardinal Vivian, who had come as legate from Pope Alexander the Third to the nations of Scotland and Ireland, and who had only recently arrived from the Isle of Man, happened to be then in Down, and was horrified at this act of aggression. He attempted to negotiate terms of peace, and proposed that De Courcy should withdraw his army on the condition of the Ulidians paying tribute to the English king; but any such terms being sternly rejected by De Courcy, the Cardinal encouraged and exhorted Mac Dunlevy, the king of Ulidia and Dalaradia, to defend his territories manfully against the invaders. Coming as this advice did from the Pope's legate, we may judge in what

light the grant of Ireland to king Henry the Second was regarded by the Pope himself”.

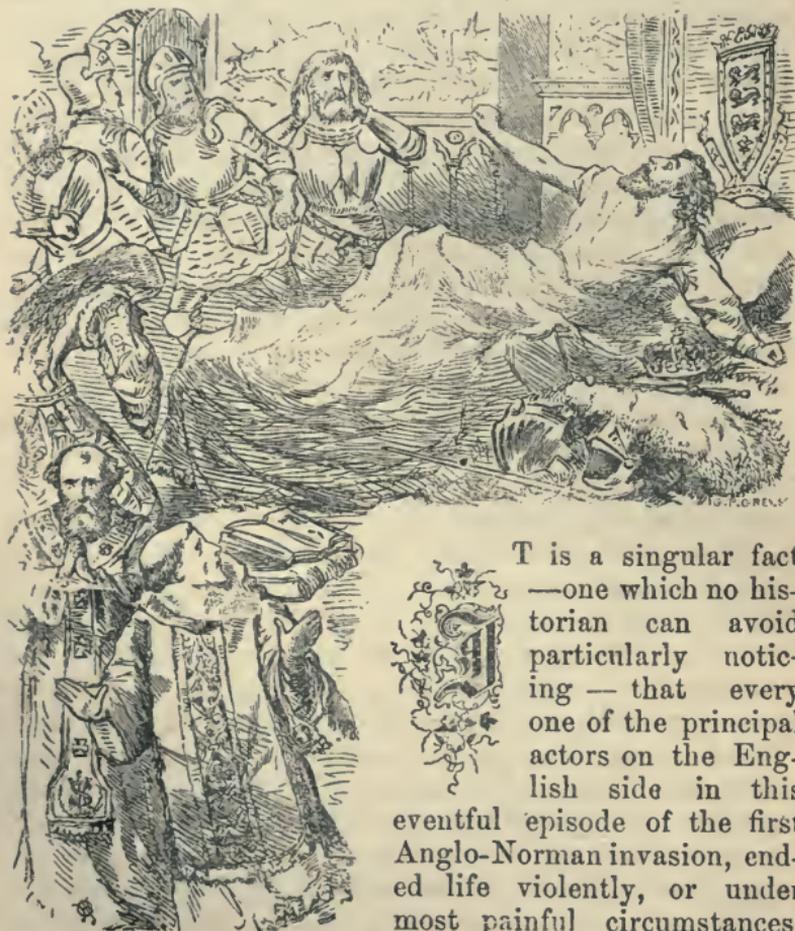
It became clear that whatever policy or principles Henry might originally have thought of acting on in Ireland, he should abandon them and come into the scheme of the barons, which was, that he should give them free and full license for the plunder of the Irish, and they in return, would extend his realm. So we find the whole aim and spirit of the royal policy forthwith altered to meet the piratical views of the barons.

One of Roderick's sons, Murrogh, rebelled against and endeavoured to depose his father (as the sons of Henry endeavoured to dethrone *him* a few years subsequently), and Milo de Cogan, by the lord deputy's orders, led a Norman force into Connaught to aid the parricidal revolt! The Connacians, however, stood by their aged king, shrank from the rebellious son, and under the command of Roderick in person gave battle to the Normans at the Shannon. De Cogan and his Norman treaty-breakers and plunder-seekers were utterly and disastrously defeated; and Murrogh, the unnatural son, being captured, was tried for his offence by the assembled clans, and suffered the *eric* decreed by law for his crime.

This was the first deliberate rent in the treaty by the English. The next was by Henry himself, who, in violation of his kingly troth, undertook to dub his son John, yet a mere child, either lord or king of Ireland, and by those plausible deceits and diplomatic arts in which he proved himself a master, he obtained the approbation of the Pope for his proceeding. Quickly following upon these violations of the treaty of Windsor, and suddenly and completely changing the whole nature of the relations between the Irish and the Normans as previously laid down, Henry began to grant and assign away after the most wholesale fashion, the lands of the Irish, apportioning amongst his hungry followers whole territories yet unseen by an English eye! Naturalists tell how the paw of a tiger can touch with the softness of velvet or clutch with the force of a vice, according as the deadly fangs are sheathed or put forth. The Irish princes had been treated

with the velvet smoothness; they were now to be torn by the lacerating fangs of that tiger grip to which they had yielded themselves up so easily.

XXI.—DEATH-BED SCENES.



It is a singular fact — one which no historian can avoid particularly noticing — that every one of the principal actors on the English side in this eventful episode of the first Anglo-Norman invasion, ended life violently, or under most painful circumstances.

Al-Murrough the traitor died, as we have already seen,

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of a mysterious disease, by which his body became putrid while yet he lingered between life and death. Strongbow died under somewhat similar circumstances; an ulcer in his foot spread upwards, and so eat away his body that it almost fell to pieces. Strongbow's son was slain by the father's hand. The death-bed of king Henry the Second was a scene of horror. He died cursing with the most fearful maledictions his own sons! In vain the bishops and ecclesiastics surrounding his couch, horror-stricken, sought to prevail upon him to revoke these awful imprecations on his own offspring! "*Accursed be the day on which I was born; and accursed of God be the sons that I leave after me*", were his last words.\* Far different is the spectacle presented to us in the death-scene of the hapless Irish monarch Roderick! Misfortunes in every shape had indeed overwhelmed him, and in his last hours sorrows were multiplied to him. "Near the junction of Lough Corrib with Lough Mask, on the boundary line between Mayo and Galway, stand the ruins of the once populous monastery and village of Cong. The first Christian kings of Connaught had founded the monastery, or enabled St. Fechin to do so by their generous donations. The father of Roderick had enriched its shrine by the gift of a particle of the true cross, reverently enshrined in a reliquary, the workmanship of which still excites the admiration of antiquaries. Here Roderick retired in the seventieth year of his age, and for twelve years thereafter—until the 29th day of November, 1198—here he wept and prayed and withered away. Dead to the world, as the world to him, the opening of a new grave in the royal corner at Clonmacnoise was the last incident connected with his name which reminded Connaught that it had lost its once prosperous prince, and Ireland, that she had seen her last Ard-Righ, according to the ancient Milesian constitution. Powerful princes of his own and other houses the land was destined to know for many

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\* "*Mandit soit le jour ou je suis né; et mandits de Dieu soient les fils qui je laisse*".

generations, before its sovereignty was merged in that of England, but none fully entitled to claim the high sounding but often fallacious title of Monarch of all Ireland”.

One other death-bed scene, described to us by the same historian, one more picture from the Irish side, and we shall take our leave of this eventful chapter of Irish history, and the actors who moved in it. The last hours of Roderick's ambassador, the illustrious archbishop of Dublin, are thus described: “From Rome he returned with legatine powers which he used with great energy during the year 1180. In the autumn of that year, he was entrusted with the delivery to Henry the Second of the son of Roderick O'Conor, as a pledge for the fulfilment of the treaty of Windsor, and with other diplomatic functions. On reaching England, he found the king had gone to France, and following him thither, he was seized with illness as he approached the monastery of Eu, and with a prophetic foretaste of death, he exclaimed as he came in sight of the towers of the convent, ‘Here shall I make my resting place’. The Abbot Osbert and the monks of the order of St. Victor received him tenderly and watched his couch for the few days he yet lingered. Anxious to fulfil his mission, he despatched David, tutor of the son of Roderick, with messages to Henry, and awaited his return with anxiety. David brought him a satisfactory response from the English king, and the last anxiety only remained. In death, as in life, his thoughts were with his country. ‘Ah, foolish and insensible people’, he exclaimed in his latest hours, ‘what will become of you? Who will relieve your miseries? Who will heal you?’ When recommended to make his last will, he answered with apostolic simplicity: ‘God knows out of all my revenues I have not a single coin to bequeath’. And thus on the 11th of November, 1180, in the forty-eighth year of his age, under the shelter of a Norman roof, surrounded by Norman mourners, the Gaelic statesman-saint departed out of this life, bequeathing one more canonized memory to Ireland and to Rome”.

## XXII.—HOW THE ANGLO-NORMAN COLONY FARED.



HAVE, in the foregoing pages, endeavoured to narrate fully and minutely all the circumstances leading to, and attendant upon, the Anglo-Norman landing and settlement in this country, A.D. 1169–1172. It transcends in importance all other events in our history, having regard to ulterior and enduring consequences; and a clear and correct understanding of that event will furnish a key to the confused history of the troubled period which immediately succeeded it.

It is not my design to follow the formal histories of Ireland in relating at full length, and in consecutive detail, the events of the four centuries that succeeded the date of king Henry's landing. It was a period of such wild, confused, and chaotic struggle, that youthful readers would be hopelessly bewildered in the effort to keep its incidents minutely and consecutively remembered. Moreover, the history of those four centuries fully written out, would make a goodly volume in itself; a volume abounding with stirring incidents and affecting tragedies, and with episodes of valour and heroism, adventurous daring, and chivalrous patriotic devotion, not to be surpassed in the pages of romance. But the scope of my story forbids my dwelling at any great length upon the events of this period. Such of my readers as may desire to trace them in detail will find them succinctly related in the formal histories of Ireland. What I propose to do here, is to make my youthful readers acquainted with the general character, course, and progress of the struggle; the phases, changes, or mutations through which it passed; the aspects it presented, and the issues it contested, as each century rolled on, dwelling only upon events of comparative importance, and incidents illustrating the actions and the actors of the period.

Let us suppose a hundred years to have passed away since king Henry's visit to Ireland—that event which Englishmen who write Irish history affect to regard as an

“easy conquest” of our country. Let us see what the Normans have achieved by the end of one hundred years in Ireland. They required but *one year* to conquer England; and, accordingly, judging by all ordinary calculations and probabilities, we ought surely, in one hundred times that duration; to find Ireland as thoroughly subdued and as completely pacified as England had been in the twelvemonth that sufficed for its utter subjugation.

The nature of the struggle waged by the Anglo-Normans against Ireland during this period was rather peculiar. At no time was it an open and avowed effort to conquer Ireland as England had been conquered, though, as a matter of fact, the military force engaged against the Irish throughout the period exceeded that which had sufficed the Normans to conquer England. King Henry, as we have already seen, presented himself and his designs in no such hostile guise to the Irish. He seems to have concluded that, broken and faction-split, disorganized and demoralized, as the Irish princes were, they would probably be rallied into union by the appearance of a nakedly hostile invasion; and he knew well that it would be easier to conquer a dozen Englands than to overcome this soldierly race if only united against a common foe. So the crown of England did not, until long after this time, openly profess to pursue a *conquest* of Ireland, any more than it professed to pursue a conquest in India in the time of Clive. An Anglo-Norman colony was planted on the south-eastern corner of the island. This colony, which was well sustained from England, was to push its own fortunes, as it were, in Ireland, and to extend itself as rapidly as it could. To it, as ample excitement, sustenance, and recompense, was given, prospectively, the land to be taken from the Irish. The planting of such a colony—composed, as it was, of able, skilful, and desperate military adventurers—and the endowing of it, so to speak, with such rich prospect of plunder, was the establishment of a perpetual and self-acting mechanism for the gradual reduction of Ireland.

Against this colony the Irish warred in their own desultory way, very much as they warred against each other,

neither better nor worse; and in the fierce warring of the Irish princes with each other, the Anglo-Norman colonists sided now with one, now with another; nay, very frequently in such conflicts Anglo-Normans fought on *each* side! The colony, however, had precisely that which the Irish needed—a supreme authority ever guiding it in the one purpose; and it always felt strong in the consciousness that, at the worst, England was at its back, and that in its front lay, not the Irish nation, but the broken fragments of that once great and glorious power.

The Irish princes, meantime, each one for himself, fought away as usual, either against the Norman colonists or against some neighbouring Irish chief. Indeed, they may be described as fighting each other with one hand, and fighting England with the other! Quite as curious is the fact, that in all their struggles with the latter, they seem to have been ready enough to admit the honorary lordship or suzerainty of the English king, but resolved to resist to the death the Norman encroachments beyond the cities and lands to the possession of which they had attained by reason of their treaties with, or successes under, Dermot M'Murrough. The fight was all for the soil. Then, as in our own times, the battle cry was "Land or Life!"

But the English power had two modes of action; and when one failed the other was tried. As long as the rapacious freebooting of the barons was working profitably, not only for themselves but for the king, it was all very well. But when that policy resulted in arousing the Irish to successful resistance, and the freebooters were being routed everywhere, or when they had learned to think too much of their own profit and too little of the king's, then his English majesty could take to the *role* of magnanimous friend, protector, or suzeraine of the Irish princes, and angry punisher of the rapacious Norman barons.

We have already seen that when Henry the Second visited Ireland, it was (pretendedly at least) in the character of a just-minded king, who came to chastise his own subjects, the Norman settlers. When next an English king visited these shores, it was professedly with a like design. In

1210 king John arrived, and during his entire stay in this country he was occupied, not in wars or conflicts with the Irish; quite the contrary—in chastising the most powerful and presumptuous of the great Norman lords! What wonder that the Irish princes were confirmed in the old idea, impressed upon them by king Henry's words and actions, that though in the Norman barons they had to deal with savage and merciless spoliators, in the English king they had a friendly suzeraine? As a matter of fact, the Irish princes who had fought most stoutly and victoriously against the Normans up to the date of John's arrival, at once joined their armies to his, and at the head of this combined force the English king proceeded to overthrow the most piratical and powerful of the barons! Says M'Gee: "The visit of king John, which lasted from the 20th of June to the 25th of August, was mainly directed to the reduction of those intractable Anglo-Irish princes whom Fitz-Henry and Gray had proved themselves unable to cope with. Of these the De Lacys of Meath were the most obnoxious. They not only assumed an independent state, but had sheltered de Braos, lord of Brecknock, one of the recusant barons of Wales, and refused to surrender him on the royal summons. To assert his authority and to strike terror into the nobles of other possessions, John crossed the channel with a prodigious fleet—in the Irish annals said to consist of seven hundred sail. He landed at Crook, reached Dublin, and prepared at once to subdue the Lacys. With his own army, and the coöperation of Cathal O'Connor, he drove out Walter de Lacy, Lord of Meath, who fled to his brother, Hugh de Lacy, since de Courcy's disgrace, Earl of Ulster. From Meath into Louth John pursued the brothers, crossing the lough at Carlingford with his ships, which must have coasted in his company. From Carlingford they retreated, and he pursued to Carrickfergus, and that fortress, being unable to resist a royal fleet and navy, they fled into Man or Scotland, and thence escaped in disguise into France. With their guest de Braos, they wrought as gardeners in the grounds of the Abbey of Saint Taurin Evreux, until the abbot, having discovered by their manners the key to their real rank,

negotiated successfully with John for their restoration to their estates. Walter agreed to pay a fine of 2,500 marks for his lordship in Meath, and Hugh 4,000 for his possessions in Ulster. Of de Braos we have no particulars; his high-spirited wife and children were thought to have been starved to death by order of the unforgiving tyrant in one his castles".

In the next succeeding reign (that of Henry the Third), we find a like impression existing and encouraged amongst the Irish princes; the king of Connacht proceeding to England and complaining to the king of the unjust, oppressive, and rapacious conduct of the barons. And we find king Henry ordering him substantial redress, writing to his lord justice in Ireland, Maurice Fitzgerald, to "pluck up by the root" the powerful De Burgo, who lorded it over all the west. There is still in existence a letter written by the Connacian king to Henry the Third, thanking him for the many favours he had conferred upon him, but particularly for this one.

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XXIII.—"THE BIER THAT CONQUERED". THE STORY OF  
GODFREY OF TYRCONNELL.

 HAVE remarked that the Irish chiefs may be said to have fought each other with one hand, while they fought the English with the other. Illustrating this state of things, I may refer to the story of Godfrey, prince of Tyrconnell—as glorious a character as ever adorned the page of history. For years the Normans had striven in vain to gain a foot-hold in Tyrconnell. Elsewhere—in Connacht, in Munster, throughout all Leinster, and in southern Ulster—they could betimes assert their sway, either by dint of arms or insidious diplomatic strategy. But never could they over-reach the wary and martial Cinel-Connal, from whom more than once the Norman armies had suffered overthrow. At length the

lord justice, Maurice Fitzgerald, felt that this hitherto invulnerable fortress of native Irish power in the north-west had become a formidable standing peril to the entire English colony; and it was accordingly resolved that the whole strength of the Anglo-Norman force in Ireland should be put forth in one grand expedition against it; and this expedition the lord justice decided that he himself would lead and command in person! At this time Tyrconnell was ruled by a prince who was the soul of chivalric bravery, wise in the council, and daring in the field—Godfrey O'Donnell. The lord justice, while assembling his forces, employed the time, moreover, in skilfully diplomatising, playing the insidious game which, in every century, most largely helped the Anglo-Norman interest in Ireland—setting up rivalries and inciting hostilities amongst the Irish princes! Having, as he thought, not only cut off Godfrey from all chance of alliance or support from his fellow-princes of the north and west, but environed him with their active hostility, Fitzgerald marched on Tyrconnell. His army moved with all the pomp and panoply of Norman pride. Lords, earls, knights, and squires, from every Norman castle or settlement in the land, had rallied at the summons of the king's representative. Godfrey, isolated though he found himself, was nothing daunted by the tremendous odds which he knew were against him. He was conscious of his own military superiority to any of the Norman lords yet sent against him—he was in fact one of the most skilful captains of the age—and he relied implicitly on the unconquerable bravery of his clansmen. Both armies met at Credan-Kille in the north of Sligo. A battle which the Normans describe as fiercely and vehemently contested, ensued and raged for hours without palpable advantage to either side. In vain the mail-clad battalions of England rushed upon the saffron kilted Irish clansmen; each time they reeled from the shock and fled in bloody rout! In vain the cavalry squadrons—long the boasted pride of the Normans—headed by earls and knights whose names were rallying cries in Norman England, swept upon the Irish lines! Riderless horses alone returned,

“ Their nostrils all red with the sign of despair”,

The lord justice in wild dismay saw the proudest army ever rallied by Norman power on Irish soil, being routed and hewn piecemeal before his eyes! Godfrey, on the other hand, the very impersonation of valour, was everywhere cheering his men, directing the battle and dealing destruction to the Normans. The gleam of his battle-axe or the flash of his sword, was the sure precursor of death to the haughtiest earl or knight that dared to confront him. The lord justice — than whom no abler general or braver soldier served the king — saw that the day was lost if he could not save it by some desperate effort, and at the worst he had no wish to survive the overthrow of the splendid army he had led into the field. The flower of the Norman nobles had fallen under the sword of Godfrey, and him the Lord Maurice now sought out, dashing into the thickest of the fight. The two leaders met in single combat. Fitzgerald dealt the Tyrconnell chief a deadly wound; but Godfrey, still keeping his seat, with one blow of his battle-axe, clove the lord justice to the earth, and the proud baron was carried senseless off the field by his followers. The English fled in hopeless confusion; and of them the chroniclers tell us there was made a slaughter that night's darkness alone arrested. The Lord Maurice was done with pomp and power after the ruin of that day. He survived his dreadful wound for some time; he retired into a Franciscan monastery which he himself had built and endowed at Youghal, and there taking the habit of a monk, he departed this life tranquilly in the bosom of religion. Godfrey, meanwhile, mortally wounded, was unable to follow up quickly the great victory of Credan-kille; but stricken as he was, and with life ebbing past, he did not disband his army till he had demolished the only castle the English had dared to raise on the soil of Tyrconnell. This being done, and the last soldier of England chased beyond the frontier line, he gave the order for dispersion, and himself was borne homewards to die.

This, however, sad to tell, was the moment seized upon by O'Neill, prince of Tyrone, to wrest from the Cinel-Connell submission to his power! Hearing that the lion-hearted Godfrey lay dying, and while yet the Tyrconnellian

clans, disbanded and on their homeward roads, were suffering from their recent engagement with the Normans, O'Neill sent envoys to the dying prince demanding hostages in token of submission? The envoys, say all the historians, no sooner delivered this message than they fled for their lives! Dying though Godfrey was, and broken and wounded as were his clansmen by their recent glorious struggle, the messengers of Tirowen felt but too forcibly the peril of delivering this insolent demand! And characteristically was it answered by Godfrey! His only reply was to order an instantaneous muster of all the fighting men of Tyrconnell. The army of Tyrowen meanwhile pressed forward rapidly to strike the Cinel-Connal, if possible, before their available strength, such as it<sup>2</sup> was, could be rallied. Nevertheless, they found the quickly re-assembled victors of Credan-kille awaiting them. But alas, sorrowful story! On the morning of the battle, death had but too plainly set his seal upon the brow of the heroic Godfrey! As the troops were being drawn up in line, ready to march into the field, the physicians announced that his last moments were at hand; he had but a few hours to live! Godfrey himself received the information with sublime composure. Having first received the last sacraments of the Church, and given minute instructions as to the order of battle, *he directed that he should be laid upon the bier which was to have borne him to the grave; and that thus he should be carried at the head of his army on their march!* His orders were obeyed, and then was witnessed a scene for which history has not a parallel! The dying king, laid on his bier, was borne at the head of his troops into the field! After the bier came the standard of Godfrey—on which was emblazoned a cross with the words, *In hoc signo vinces*\*—and next came the charger of the dying king, ca-

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\* On the banner and shield of Tyrconnell were emblazoned a Cross surrounded by the words *In hoc signo vinces*. One readily inclines to the conjecture that this was borrowed from the Roman emperor Constantine. The words may have been; but amongst the treasured traditions of the Cinel-Connal was one which there is reason for regarding as historically reliable, assigning to an inte-

Godfrey of Pyrcemell borne into Battle!



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parisoned as if for battle! But Godfrey's last fight was fought! Never more was that charger to bear him where the sword-blows fell thickest. Never more would his battle-axe gleam in the front of the combat. But as if his presence, living, dead, or dying, was still a potential assurance of triumph to his people, the Cinel-Connal bore down all opposition. Long and fiercely, but vainly, the army of Tyrowen contested the field. Around the bier of Godfrey his faithful clansmen made an adamantine rampart which no foe could penetrate. Wherever it was borne, the Tyrconnel phalanx, of which it was the heart and centre, swept all before them. At length when the foe was flying on all sides, they laid the bier upon the ground to tell the king that the day was won. But the

resting circumstance the adoption by them of the Cross as the armorial bearings of the sept. One of the earliest of St. Patrick's converts was Conall Crievan, brother of Ard-Ri-Laori, and ancestor of the Cinel-Connall. Conall was a prince famed for his courage and bravery, and much attached to military pursuits; but on his conversion he desired to become a priest; preferring his request to this effect to St. Patrick, when either baptizing or confirming him. The saint, however, commanded him to remain a soldier; but to fight henceforth as became a Christian warrior; "and under this sign serve and conquer", said the saint, raising the iron-pointed end of the "Staff of Jesus", and marking on the shield of Conall a cross. The shield thus marked by St. Patrick's crozier was ever after called "Sciath Bachlach", or the "Shield of the Crozier". Mr. Aubrey de Vere very truly calls this the "inauguration of Irish (Christian) chivalry", and has made the incident the subject of the following poem:—

#### ST. PATRICK AND THE KNIGHT.

'Thou shalt not be a priest", he said;  
 "Christ hath for thee a lowlier task:  
 Be thou his *soldier!* Wear with dread  
 His cross upon thy shield and casque!  
 Put on God's armour, faithful knight!  
 Mercy with justice, love with law;  
 Nor e'er, except for truth and right,  
 This sword, cross-hilted, dare to draw".

He spake, and with his crozier pointed  
 Graved on the broad shield's brazen boss  
 (That hour baptized, confirmed, anointed,  
 Stood Erin's chivalry) the Cross:  
 And there was heard a whisper low—  
 (Saint Michael, was that whisper thine?)—  
 Thou sword, keep pure thy virgin vow,  
 And trenchant thou shalt be as mine.

face of Godfrey was marble pale; and cold and motionless! All was over! His heroic spirit had departed amidst his people's shouts of victory!

Several poems have been written on this tragic yet glorious episode. That from which I take the following passages, is generally accounted the best: \*—

All worn and wan, and sore with wounds from Credan's bloody fray,  
In Donegal for weary months the proud O'Donnell lay;  
Around his couch in bitter grief his trusty clansmen wait,  
And silent watch, with aching hearts, his faint and feeble state.

The chief asks one evening to be brought into the open air, that he may gaze once more on the landscape's familiar scenes:—

"And see the stag upon the hills, the white clouds drifting by;  
And feel upon my wasted cheek God's sunshine ere I die".

Suddenly he starts on his pallet, and exclaims:

"A war-steed's tramp is on the heath, and onward cometh fast,  
And by the rood! a trumpet sounds! hark! 't is the Red Hand's blast!"

And soon a kern all breathless ran, and told a stranger train  
Across the heath was spurring fast, and then in sight it came.

"Go, bring me, quick, my father's sword", the noble chieftain said;

"My mantle o'er my shoulders fling, place helmet on my head;  
And raise me to my feet, for ne'er shall clansman of my foe  
Go boasting tell in far Tyrone he saw O'Donnell low".

The envoys of O'Neill arrive in Godfrey's presence, and deliver their message, demanding tribute:

"A hundred hawks from out your woods, all trained their prey to get;

A hundred steeds from off your hills, uncrossed by rider yet;  
A hundred kine from off your hills, the best your land doth know  
A hundred hounds from out your halls, to hunt the stag and roe".

Godfrey, however, is resolved to let his foes, be they Norman or native, know that, though dying, he is not dead

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\* The name of the author is unknown.

yet. He orders a levy of all the fighting men of Tyrconnell:—

“Go call around Tyrconnell’s chief my warriors tried and true;  
Send forth a friend to Donal More, a scout to Lisnahue;  
Light baal-fires quick on Esker’s towers, that all the land may  
know

O’Donnell needeth help and haste to meet his haughty foe.

“Oh, could I but my people head, or wield once more a spear,  
Saint Angus! but we ’d hunt their hosts like herds of fallow deer.  
But vain the wish, since I am now a faint and failing man;  
Yet, ye shall bear me to the field, in the centre of my clan.

“Right in the midst, and lest, perchance, upon the march I die,  
In my coffin ye shall place me, uncovered let me lie;  
And swear ye now, my body cold shall never rest in clay,  
Until you drive from Donegal O’Niall’s host away”.

Then sad and stern, with hand on skian, that solemn oath they  
swore,

And in a coffin placed their chief, and on a litter bore.  
Tho’ ebbing fast his life-throbs came, yet dauntless in his mood,  
He marshalled well Tyrconnell’s chiefs, like leader wise and good.

\* \* \* \* \*

Lough Swilly’s sides are thick with spears, O’Niall’s host is there,  
And proud and gay their battle sheen, their banners float the air;  
And haughtily a challenge bold their trumpets bloweth free,  
When winding down the heath-clad hills, O’Donnell’s band they  
see!

No answer back those warriors gave, but sternly on they stept,  
And in their centre, curtained black, a litter close is kept;  
And all their host it guideth fair, as did in Galilee  
Proud Judah’s tribes the Ark of God, when crossing Egypt’s sea.

Then rose the roar of battle loud, as clan met clan in fight;  
The axe and skian grew red with blood, a sad and woful sight;  
Yet in the midst o’er all, unmoved, that litter black is seen,  
Like some dark rock that lifts its head o’er ocean’s war serene.

Yet once, when blenching back fierce Bryan’s charge before,  
Tyrconnell wavered in its ranks, and all was nearly o’er,  
Aside those curtains wide were flung, and plainly to the view  
Each host beheld O’Donnell there, all pale and wan in hue.

And to his tribes he stretch’d his hands—then pointed to the foe,  
When with a shout they rally round, and on Clan Hugh they go;  
And back they beat their horsemen fierce, and in a column deep,  
With O’Donnell in their foremost rank, in one fierce charge they  
sweep.

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Lough Swilly's banks are thick with spears :—O'Niall's host is there,

But rent and tost like tempest clouds—Clan Donnell in the rere !  
Lough Swilly's waves are red with blood, as madly in its tide  
O'Niall's horsemen wildly plunge, to reach the other side.

And broken is Tyrowen's pride, and vanquished Clannaboy,  
And there is wailing thro' the land, from Bann to Aughnacloy  
The red hand's crest is bent in grief, upon its shield a stain,  
For its stoutest clans are broken, its stoutest chiefs are slain.

And proud and high Tyrconnell shouts ; but blending on the gale,  
Upon the ear ascendeth a sad and sullen wail ;  
For on that field, as back they bore, from chasing of the foe,  
The spirit of O'Donnell fled !—oh, woe for Ulster, woe !

Yet died he there all gloriously—a victor in the fight ;  
A chieftain at his people's head, a warrior in his might ;  
They dug him there a fitting grave upon that field of pride,  
And a lofty cairn raised above. by fair Lough Swilly's side.

In this story of Godfrey of Tyrconnell we have a perfect illustration of the state of affairs in Ireland at the time. Studying it, no one can marvel that the English power eventually prevailed ; but many may wonder that the struggle lasted so many centuries. What Irishman can contemplate without sorrow the spectacle of those brave soldiers of Tyrconnell and their heroic prince, after contending with, and defeating, the concentrated power of the Anglo-Norman settlement, called upon to hurriedly re-unite their broken and wounded ranks that they might fight yet another battle against fresh foes—those foes their own countrymen ! Only amongst a people given over to the madness that precedes destruction, could conduct like that of O'Neill be exhibited. At a moment when Godfrey and his battle-wounded clansmen had routed the common foe—at a moment when they were known to be weakened after such a desperate combat—at a moment when they should have been hailed with acclaim, and greeted with aid and succour by every chief and clan in Ireland—they are foully taken at disadvantage, and called upon to fight anew, by their own fellow-countrymen and neighbours of Tyrowen !

The conduct of O'Neill on this occasion was a fair sample of the prevailing practice amongst the Irish princes. Faction-split to the last degree, each one sought mere

his own personal advantage or ambition. Nationality and patriotism were sentiments no longer understood. Bravery in battle, dauntless courage, heroic endurance, marvellous skill, we find them displaying to the last; but the higher political virtues, so essential to the existence of a nation—unity of purpose and of action against a common foe—recognition of and obedience to a central national authority—were utterly absent. Let us own in sorrow that a people amongst whom such conduct as that of O'Neill towards Godfrey of Tyrconnel was not only possible but of frequent occurrence, deserved subjection—invited it—rendered it inevitable. Nations, like individuals, must expect the penalty of disregarding the first essentials to existence. "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty". Factionism like that of the Irish princes found its sure punishment in subjugation.

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XXIV.—HOW THE IRISH NATION AWOKE FROM ITS TRANCE,  
AND FLUNG OFF ITS CHAINS. THE CAREER OF KING  
EDWARD BRUCE.

ARLY in the second century of the Norman settlement we find the Irish for the first time apparently realising their true position in relation to England. They begin to appreciate the fact that it is England and not the Anglo-Norman colony they have to combat, and that recognition of the English power means loss of liberty, loss of honour, loss of property, alienation of the soil! Had the Irish awakened sooner to these facts, it is just possible they might have exerted themselves and combined in a national struggle against the fate thus presaged. But they awoke to them too late—

The fatal chain was o'er them cast,  
And they were men no more!

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As if to quicken within them the stings of self-reproach, they saw their Gaelic kinsmen of Caledonia bravely battling in compact national array against this same English power that had for a time conquered them also. When king Edward marched northward to measure swords with the Scottish "rebel" Robert Bruce, he summoned his Norman lieges and all other true and loyal subjects in Ireland to send him aid. The Anglo-Norman lords of Ireland did accordingly equip considerable bodies, and with them joined the king in Scotland. The native Irish, on the other hand, sent aid to Bruce; and on the field of Bannockburn old foes on Irish soil met once more in deadly combat on new ground—the Norman lords and the Irish chieftains. "Twenty-one clans, Highlanders and Islesmen, and many Ulstermen fought on the side of Bruce on the field of Bannockburn. The grant of 'Kincardine-O'Neill', made by the victor-king to his Irish followers, remains a striking evidence of their fidelity to his person and their sacrifices in his cause. The result of that glorious day was, by the testimony of all historians, English as well as Scottish, received with enthusiasm on the Irish side of the channel".\*

Fired by the glorious example of their Scottish kinsmen, the native Irish princes for the first time took up the design of a really national and united effort to expel the English invaders root and branch. Utterly unused to union or combination as they had been for hundreds of years, it is really wonderful how readily and successfully they carried out their design. The northern Irish princes with few exceptions entered into it; and it was agreed that as well to secure the prestige of Bruce's name and the alliance of Scotland, as also to avoid native Irish jealousies in submitting to a national leader or king, Edward Bruce, the brother of king Robert, should be invited to land in Ireland with an auxiliary liberating army, and should be recognized as king. The Ulster princes, with Donald O'Neill at their head, sent off a memorial to the Pope (John the Twelfth), a document which is still extant, and is, as

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\* M'Gee.

may be supposed, of singular interest and importance. In this memorable letter the Irish princes acquaint his Holiness with their national design; and having reference to the bulls or letters of popes Adrian and Alexander, they proceed to justify their resolution of destroying the hated English power in their country, and point out the fraud and false pretence upon which those documents were obtained by king Henry from the pontiffs named. The sovereign pontiff appears to have been profoundly moved by the recital of facts in this remonstrance or memorial. Not long after he addressed to the English king (Edward the Third) a letter forcibly reproaching the English sovereigns who had obtained those bulls from popes Adrian and Alexander, with the crimes of deceit and violation of their specific conditions and covenants. To the objects of those bulls, his Holiness says, "neither king Henry nor his successors paid any regard; but, passing the bounds that had been prescribed for them, they had heaped upon the Irish the most unheard-of miseries and persecutions, and had, during a long period, imposed on them *a yoke of slavery which could not be borne*".

The Irish themselves were now, however, about to make a brave effort to break that unbearable yoke, to terminate those miseries and persecutions, and to establish a national throne once more in the land. On the 25th May, 1315, Edward Bruce, the invited deliverer, landed near Glenarm in Antrim, with a force of six thousand men. He was instantly joined by Donald O'Neill, prince of Ulster, and throughout all the northern half of the island the most intense excitement spread. The native Irish flocked to Bruce's standard; the Anglo-Normans, in dismay, hurried from all parts to encounter this truly formidable danger, and succeeded in compelling, or inducing, the Connacian prince, O'Connor, to join them. Meanwhile the Scotch-Irish army marched southward, defeating every attempt of the local English garrisons to obstruct its victorious progress. The lord justice, coming from Dublin with all the forces he could bring from the south, and Richard de Burgo, Anglo-Norman titular earl of Ulster, hurrying from Athlone with a powerful contingent raised in the

west, came up with the national army at Ardee, too late, however, to save that town, which the Irish had just captured and destroyed. This Earl Richard is known in Anglo-Irish history as "the Red Earl". He was the most prominent character, and in every sense the greatest—the ablest and most powerful and influential—man of that century amongst the Anglo-Norman rulers or nobles. As a matter of fact, his influence and power over-topped and over-shadowed that of the lord justice; and, singular to relate, the king's letters and writs, coming to Ireland, were invariably, as a matter of form, addressed to him in the first instance, that is, his name came first, and that of the lord justice for the time being next. He was, in truth, king of the Anglo-Normans in Ireland. He raised armies, levied war, made treaties, conferred titles, and bestowed lands, without the least reference to the formal royal deputy—the lord justice in Dublin—whom he looked down upon with disdain. Accordingly, when these two magnates met on this occasion, the Red Earl contemptuously desired the lord justice to get him back to his castle of Dublin as quickly as he pleased, for that he himself, Earl Richard, as befitted his titled rank of earl of Ulster, would take in hands the work of clearing the province of the Scottish-Irish army, and would guarantee to deliver Edward Bruce, living or dead, into the justice's hands ere many days. Notwithstanding this haughty speech, the lord justice and his forces remained, and the combined army now confronted Bruce, outnumbering him hopelessly; whereupon he commenced to retreat slowly, his object being to effect, either by military strategy or diplomacy, a separation of the enemy's forces. This object was soon accomplished. When the Connacian king, Felim O'Connor, joined the Red Earl, and marched against Bruce, in his own principality his act was revolted against as parricidal treason. Ruari, son of Cathal Roe O'Connor, head of the Clanna-Murtough, unfurled the national flag, declared for the national cause, and soon struck for it boldly and decisively. Hurriedly despatching envoys to Bruce, tendering adhesion, and requesting to be commissioned or recognized as prince of Connaught in place

of Felim, who had forfeited by fighting against his country at such a crisis, he meanwhile swept through all the west, tearing down the Norman rule and erecting in its stead the national authority, declaring the penalty of high treason against all who favoured or sided with the Norman enemy or refused to aid the national cause. Felim heard of these proceedings before Ruari's envoys reached Bruce, and quickly saw that his only chance of safety—and in truth the course most in consonance with his secret feelings—was, himself, to make overtures to Bruce, which he did; so that about the time Ruari's envoys arrived, Felim's offers were also before the Scoto-Irish commander. Valuable as were Ruari's services in the west, the greater and more urgent consideration was to detach Felim from the Norman army, which thus might be fought, but which otherwise could not be withstood. Accordingly, Bruce came to terms with Felim, and answered to Ruari that he was in no way to molest the possessions of Felim, who was now on the right side, but to take all he could from the common enemy the English. Felim, in pursuance of his agreement with Bruce, now withdrew from the English camp and faced homeward, whereupon Bruce and O'Neill, no longer afraid to encounter the enemy, though still superior to them in numbers, gave battle to the lord justice. A desperate engagement ensued at Connoyr, on the banks of the river Bann, near Ballymena. The great Norman army was defeated; the haughty Earl Richard was obliged to seek personal safety in flight; his brother, William, with quite a number of other Norman knights and nobles; being taken prisoners by that same soldier-chief whom he had arrogantly undertaken to capture and present, dead or alive, within a few days, at Dublin Castle gate! The shattered forces of the lord justice retreated southward as best they could. The Red Earl fled into Connact, where, for a year, he was fain to seek safety in comparative obscurity, shorn of all power, pomp, and possessions. Of these, what he had not lost on the battle field at Connoyre, he found wrested from him by the Prince of Tyrconnel, who, by way of giving the Red Earl something to do near home, had burst down upon the Anglo-Norman possessions in

the west, and levelled every castle that flew the red flag of England' The Irish army now marched southward once more, capturing all the great towns and Norman castles on the way. At Loughsweedy, in Westmeath, Bruce and O'Neill went into winter quarters, and spent their Christmas "in the midst of the most considerable chiefs of Ulster, Meath, and Connaught".

Thus closed the first campaign in this, the first really national war undertaken against the English power in Ireland. "The termination of his first campaign on Irish soil", says a historian, "might be considered highly favourable to Bruce. More than half the clans had risen, and others were certain to follow their example; the clergy were almost wholly with him, and his heroic brother had promised to lead an army to his aid in the ensuing spring".

In the early spring of the succeeding year (1316) he opened the next campaign by a march southwards. The Anglo-Norman armies made several ineffectual efforts to bar his progress. At Kells, in King's County of the present day, Sir Roger Mortimer at the head of fifteen thousand men made the most determined stand. A great battle ensued, the Irish utterly routing this the last army of any proportions now opposed to them. Soon after this decisive victory, Bruce and O'Neill returned northwards in proud exultation. Already it seemed that the liberation of Ireland was complete. Having arrived at Dundalk, the national army halted, and preparations were commenced for the great ceremonial that was to consummate and commemorate the national deliverance. At a solemn council of the native princes and chiefs, Edward Bruce was elected king of Ireland; Donald O'Neill, the heart and head of the entire movement, formally resigning by letters patent in favour of Bruce such rights as belonged to him as son of the last acknowledged native sovereign. After the election, the ceremonial of inauguration was carried out in the native Irish forms, with a pomp and splendour such as had not been witnessed since the reign of Brian the First. This imposing ceremony took place on the hill of Knocknemelan, within a mile of Dundalk; and the formal election and inauguration being over, the king and the assembled princes

and chiefs marched in procession into the town, where the solemn consecration took place in one of the churches. King Edward now established his court in the castle of Northburg, possessing and exercising all the prerogatives, powers, and privileges of royalty, holding courts of justice, and enforcing such regulations as were necessary for the welfare and good order of the country.

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XXV.—HOW THIS BRIGHT DAY OF INDEPENDENCE WAS TURNED TO GLOOM. HOW THE SEASONS FOUGHT AGAINST IRELAND, AND FAMINE FOR ENGLAND.



HE Anglo-Irish power was almost extinct. It would probably never more have been heard of, and the newly-revived nationality would have lasted long, and prospered, had there not been behind that broken and ruined colony all the resources of a great and powerful nation. The English monarch summoned to a conference with himself in London several of the Anglo-Irish barons, and it was agreed by all that nothing but a compact union amongst themselves, strong reinforcements from England, and the equipment of an army of great magnitude for a new campaign in Ireland, could avert the complete and final extinction of the English power in that country. Preparations were accordingly made for placing in the field such an army as had never before been assembled by the Anglo-Irish colony. King Edward of Ireland, on the other hand, was fully conscious that the next campaign would be the supreme trial, and both parties, English and Irish, prepared to put forth their utmost strength. True to his promise, king Robert of Scotland arrived to the aid of his brother, bringing with him a small contingent. The royal brothers soon opened the campaign. Marching southwards at the head of thirty-six thousand men, they crossed the Boyne at Slane, and soon were beneath the walls of Castle-

knock, a powerful Anglo-Norman fortress, barely three miles from the gate of Dublin. Castleknock was assaulted and taken, the governor Hugh Tyrell being made prisoner. The Irish and Scotch kings took up their quarters in the castle, and the Anglo-Normans of Dublin, gazing from the city walls, could see between them and the setting sun the royal standards of Ireland and Scotland floating proudly side by side! In this extremity the citizens of Dublin exhibited a spirit of indomitable courage and determination. To their action in this emergency—designated by some as the desperation of wild panic, but by others, in my opinion more justly, intrepidity and heroic public spirit—they saved the chief seat of Anglo-Norman authority and power, the loss of which at that moment would have altered the whole fate and fortunes of the ensuing campaign. Led on by the mayor, they exhibited a frantic spirit of resistance, burning down the suburbs of their city, and freely devoting to demolition even their churches and priories outside the walls, lest these should afford shelter or advantage to a besieging army. The Irish army had no sieging materials, and could not just then pause for the tedious operations of reducing a walled and fortified city like Dublin, especially when such a spirit of vehement determination was evinced not merely by the garrison but by the citizens themselves. In fact, the city could not be invested without the coöperation of a powerful fleet to cut off supplies by sea from England. The Irish army, therefore, was compelled to turn away from Dublin, and leave that formidable position intact in their rear. They marched southward as in the previous campaigns, this time reaching as far as Limerick. Again, as before, victory followed their banners. Their course was literally a succession of splendid achievements. The Normans never offered battle that they were not utterly defeated.

The full strength of the English, however, had not yet been available, and a foe more deadly and more formidable than all the power of England was about to fall upon the Irish army.

By one of those calamitous concurrences which are

often to be noted in history, there fell upon Ireland in this year (1317) a famine of dreadful severity. The crops had entirely failed the previous autumn, and now throughout the land the dread consequences were spreading desolation. The brothers Bruce each day found it more and more difficult to provision the army, and soon it became apparent that hunger and privation were destroying and demoralising the national force. This evil in itself was bad enough, but a worse followed upon it. As privation and hunger loosed the bonds of military discipline, the soldiers spread themselves over the country seeking food, and soon there sprung up between the Scottish contingent and the Irish troops and inhabitants bitter ill feeling and contention. The Scots—who from the very outset appear to have discriminated nought in plundering castles and churches when the opportunity came fairly in their way—now, throwing off all restraint, broke into churches, and broke open and rifled shrines and tombs. The Irish, whose reverence for religion was always so intense and solemn, were horrified at these acts of sacrilege and desecration, and there gradually spread through the country a vague but all-powerful popular belief that the dreadful scourge of famine was a “visitation of heaven” called down upon the country by the presence of the irreverent Scots!

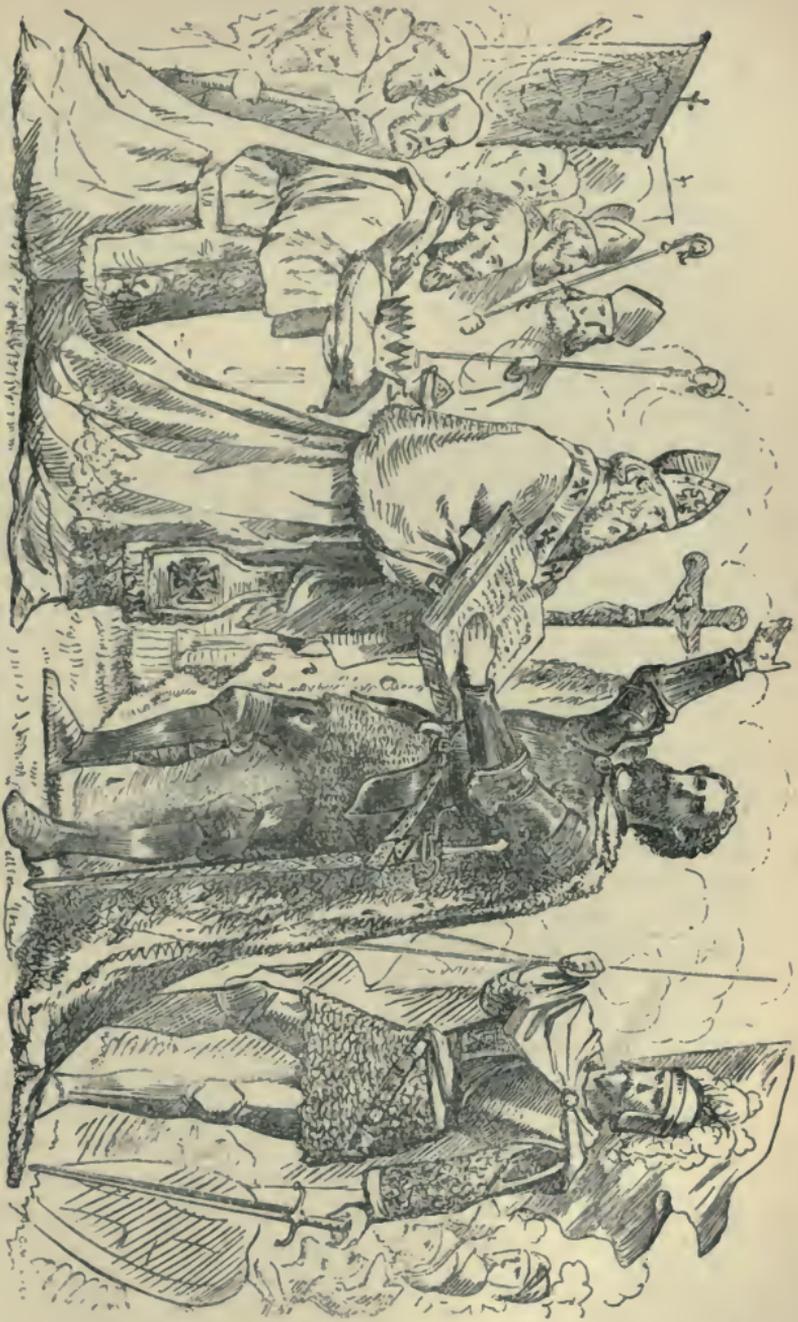
Meanwhile the English were mustering a tremendous force in the rear of the wasted Irish army. The Bruces, on learning the fact, quickly ordered a night retreat, and pushed northwards by forced marches. An Anglo-Irish army of thirty thousand men, well appointed and provisioned, lay across their path; yet such was the terror inspired by vivid recollection of the recent victories of the Irish and the prestige of Bruce’s name, that this vast force, as the historian tells us, hung around the camp of the half-starved and diminished Scotto-Irish army, without ever once daring to attack them in a pitched battle! On the 1st May, after a march full of unexampled suffering, the remnant of the Irish army safely reached Ulster.

The famine now raged with such intensity all over Ireland, that it brought about a suspension of hostilities. Neither party could provision an army in the field. King

Robert of Scotland, utterly disheartened, sailed homeward. His own country was not free from suffering, and in any event, the terrible privations of the past few months had filled the Scottish contingent with discontent. King Edward, however, nothing daunted, resolved to stand by the Irish kingdom to the last, and it was arranged that whenever a resumption of hostilities became feasible, Robert should send him another Scottish contingent.

The harvest of the following year (1318) was no sooner gathered in and found to be of comparative abundance, than both parties sprang to arms. The English commander-in-chief, John de Birmingham, was quickly across the Boyne at the head of twelve thousand men, intent on striking king Edward before his hourly expected Scottish contingent could arrive. The Irish levies were but slowly coming in, and Edward at this time had barely two or three thousand men at hand. Nevertheless he resolved to meet the English and give them battle. Donald O'Neill and the other native princes saw the madness of this course, and vainly endeavoured to dissuade the king from it. They pointed out that the true strategy to be adopted under the circumstances was to gain time, to retire slowly on their northern base, disputing each inch of ground, but risking no pitched battle until the national levies would have come in, and the Scottish contingent arrived, by which time, moreover, they would have drawn Birmingham away from his base, and would have him in a hostile country. There can be no second opinion about the merits of this scheme. It was the only one for Edward to pursue just then. It was identical with that which had enabled him to overthrow the Red Earl three years before and had won the battle of Connoyre. But the king was immovable. At all times headstrong, self-willed, and impetuous, he now seemed to have been rendered extravagantly over-confident by the singular fact (for fact it was) that never yet had he met the English in battle on Irish soil that he did not defeat them. It is said that some of the Irish princes, fully persuaded of the madness of the course resolved upon, and incensed by the despotic obstinacy of the king, withdrew from the camp. "There remained with the iron-headed

Edward Bruce Crowned King of Ireland.





king", says the historian, "the lords Mowbray de Soulis and Stewart, with the three brothers of the latter, Mac Roy, Lord of the Isles, and Mac Donald, chief of his clan. The neighbourhood of Dundalk, the scene of his triumphs and coronation, was to be the scene of the last act of Bruce's chivalrous and stormy career". From the same authority (M'Gee) I quote the following account of that scene:—

"On the 14th of October, 1318, at the Hill of Faughard, within a couple miles of Dundalk, the advance guard of the hostile armies came into the presence of each other, and made ready for battle. Roland de Jorse, the foreign Archbishop of Armagh, who had not been able to take possession of his see, though appointed to it seven years before, accompanied the Anglo-Irish, and moving through their ranks, gave his benediction to their banners. But the impetuosity of Bruce gave little time for preparation. At the head of the vanguard, without waiting for the whole of his company to come up, he charged the enemy with impetuosity. The action became general, and the skill of De Bermingham as a leader was again demonstrated. An incident common to the warfare of that age was, however, the immediate cause of the victory. Master John De Maupas, a burgher of Dundalk, believing that the death of the Scottish leader would be the signal for the retreat of his followers, disguised as a jester or a fool, sought him throughout the field. One of the royal esquires named Gilbert Harper, wearing the surcoat of his master, was mistaken for him and slain; but the true leader was at length found by De Maupas, and struck down with the blow of a leaden plummet or slung-shot. After the battle, when the field was searched for his body, it was found under that of De Maupas, who had bravely yielded up life for life. The Hiberno-Scottish forces dispersed in dismay, and when King Robert of Scotland landed, a day or two afterwards, he was met by the fugitive men of Carrick, under their leader Thompson, who informed him of his brother's fate. He returned at once into his own country, carrying off the few Scottish survivors. The head of the impetuous Edward was sent to London, but the body was interred in the churchyard of Faughard, where, within

living memory, a tall pillar stone was pointed out by every peasant in the neighbourhood as marking the grave of King Bruce”.

Thus ended the first grand effort of Ireland as an independent nation to expel the Anglo-Norman power. Never was so great an effort so brilliantly successful, yet eventually defeated by means outside and beyond human skill to avert, or human bravery to withstand. The seasons fought against Ireland in this great crisis of her fate. A dreadful scourge struck down the country in the very moment of national triumph. The arm that was victorious in battle fell lifeless at the breath of this dread destroyer. To the singular and calamitous coincidence of a famine so terrible at such a critical moment for Ireland, and to this alone, was the ruin of the national cause attributable. The Irish under the king of their choice had, in three heavy campaigns, shown themselves able to meet and overcome the utmost force that could be brought against them. England had put forth her best energies and had been defeated. Prestige was rapidly multiplying the forces and increasing the moral and material resources of the Irish; and but for the circumstances which compelled the retreat northwards from Limerick, reducing and disorganizing the national army, and leading in a long train of still greater evils, as far as human ken could see, the independent nationality of Ireland was triumphantly consolidated and her freedom securely established.

The battle of Faughard—or rather the fall of Edward under such circumstances—was a decisive termination of the whole struggle. The expected Scottish contingent arrived soon after; but all was over, and it returned home. The English king, some years subsequently, took measures to guard against the recurrence of such a formidable danger as that which had so nearly wrested Ireland from his grasp—a Scoto-Irish alliance. On the 17th March, 1328, a treaty between England and Scotland was signed at Edinburgh, by which it was stipulated that, in the event of a rebellion against Scotland in Skye, Man, or the Islands, *or against England in Ireland*, the respective kings would not assist each other's "rebel subjects". Ireland

had played for a great stake, and lost the game. The nation that had reappeared for a moment, again disappeared, and once more the struggle against the English power was waged merely by isolated chiefs and princes, each one acting for himself alone.

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XXVI.—HOW THE ANGLO-IRISH LORDS LEARNED TO PREFER IRISH MANNERS, LAWS, AND LANGUAGE, AND WERE BECOMING “MORE IRISH THAN THE IRISH THEMSELVES”. HOW THE KING IN LONDON TOOK MEASURES TO ARREST THAT DREADED EVIL.



UT a new danger arose to the English power. It was not alone fresh armies and a constant stream of subsidies that England found it necessary to be pouring into Ireland, to insure the retention of the Anglo-Norman Colony. Something more became requisite now. It was found that a constant stream of fresh colonisation from England, a frequent change of governors, nay further, the most severe repressive laws, could alone keep the colony English in spirit, in interest, in language, laws, manners, and customs. The descendants of the early Anglo-Norman settlers—gentle and simple, lord and burgher—were becoming thoroughly Hibernicised. Notwithstanding the ceaseless warfare waged between the Norman lords and the Irish chiefs, it was found that the former were becoming absorbed into or fused with the native element. The middle of the fourteenth century found the Irish language and Brehon law, native Irish manners, habits, and customs, almost universally prevalent amongst the Anglo-Normans in Ireland; while marriage and “fosterage”—that most sacred domestic tie in Gaelic estimation—were becoming quite frequent between the noble families of each race. In fact the great lords and nobles of the Colony became Chieftains, and their families and following. Septs,

Like the Irish chiefs, whom they imitated in most things, they fought against each other or against some native chief, or sided with either of them, if choice so determined. Each earl or baron amongst them kept his bard and his brehon, like any native prince; and, in several instances, they began to drop their Anglo-Norman names and take Irish ones instead.

It needed little penetration on the part of the king and his council in London, to discern in this state of things a peril far and away more formidable than any the English power had yet encountered in Ireland. True, the Anglo-Irish lords had always as yet professed allegiance to the English sovereign, and had, on the whole, so far helped forward the English designs. But it was easy to foresee that it would require but a few more years of this process of fusion with the native Irish race to make the Anglo-Irish element Irish in every sense. To avert this dreaded and now imminent evil, the London government resolved to adopt the most stringent measures. Amongst the first of these was a royal ordinance issued in 1341, declaring that whereas it had appeared to the King (Edward the Third) and his council that they would be better and more usefully served in Ireland by Englishmen whose revenues were derived from England than by Irish or English who possessed estates only in Ireland, or were married there, the king's justiciary should therefore, after diligent inquiries, remove all such officers as were married or held estates in Ireland, and replace them by fit Englishmen, having no personal interest whatever in Ireland. This ordinance set the Anglo-Irish colony in a flame. Edward's lord-deputy, Sir John Morris, alarmed at its effect on the proud and powerful barons, summoned them to a parliament to meet in Dublin to reason over the matter. But they would have no reasoning with him. They contemptuously derided his summons, and called a parliament of their own, which, accordingly, met at Kilkenny in November, 1342, whereat they adopted a strong remonstrance, and forwarded it to the king, complaining of the royal ordinance, and recriminating by alleging, that to the ignorance and incapacity of the English officials, sent over

from time to time to conduct the government of the colony, was owing to the fact that the native Irish had repossessed themselves of nearly all the land that had ever hitherto been wrested from them by "the gallant services of themselves (the remonstrancers) or their ancestors". Edward was obliged to temporise. He answered this remonstrance graciously, and "played" the dangerous barons.

But the policy of the ordinance was not relinquished. It was to be pushed on as opportunity offered. Eight years subsequent to the above proceedings—in 1360—Lionel, son of king Edward, was sent over as lord lieutenant. He brought with him a considerable army, and was to inaugurate the new system with great *eclat*. He had personal claims to assert as well as a state policy to carry out. By his wife, Elizabeth de Burgh, he succeeded to the empty titles of earl of Ulster and lord of Connaught, and the possessions supposed to follow them; but these were just then held by their rightful Irish owners, and one of Lionel's objects was to obtain them by force of arms for himself. Soon after landing he marched against "the Irish enemy", and, confident in the strength of newly-landed legions, he issued a proclamation "forbidding any of Irish birth to come near his army". This arrogance was soon humbled. His vaunted English army was a failure. The Irish cut it to pieces; and prince Lionel was obliged to abandon the campaign, and retreated to Dublin a prey to mortification and humiliation. His courtiers plied him with flatteries in order to cheer him. By a process not very intelligible, they argued that he conquered Clare, though O'Brien had utterly defeated him there, and compelled him to fly to Dublin; and they manufactured for him out of this piece of adulatory invention the title of "*Clarence*". But he only half-accepted these pleasant fictions, the falseness of which he knew too well. He recalled his arrogant and offensive proclamation, and besought the aid of the Anglo-Irish. To gain their favour he conferred additional titles and privileges on some of them, and knighted several of the most powerful commoners. After an administration of seven years it was deemed high time for Lionel to bring the new policy into

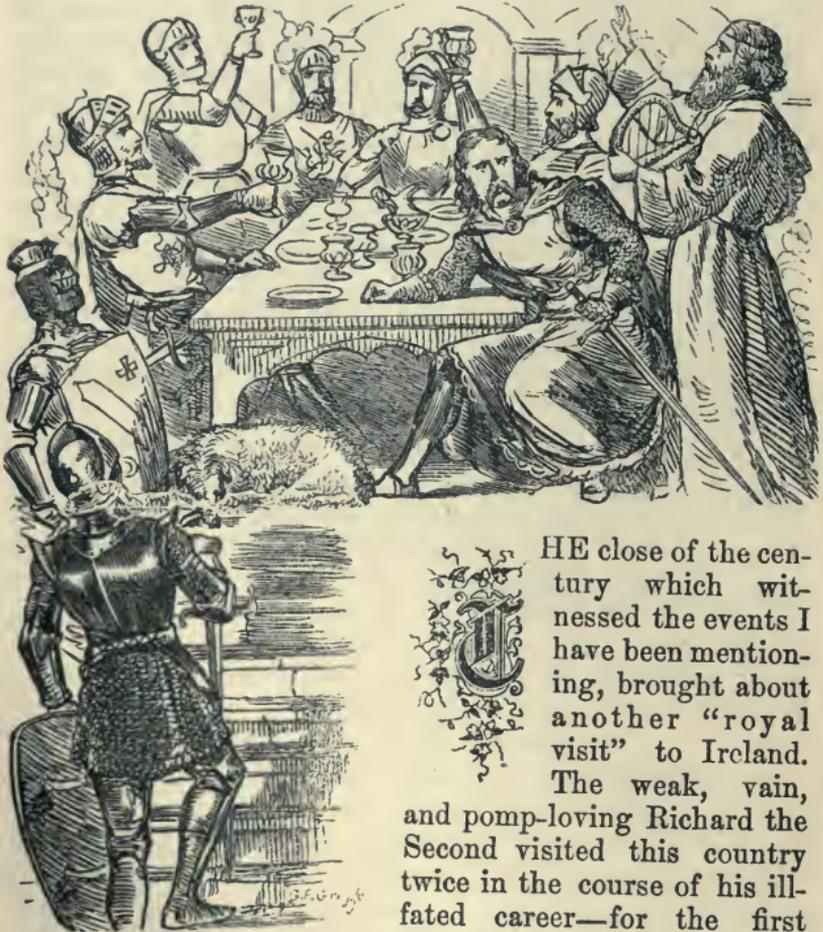
greater prominence. In 1367 he convened a parliament at Kilkenny, whereat he succeeded in having passed that memorable statute known ever since in history as "The Statute of Kilkenny"—the first formal enactment in that "penal code of race" which was so elaborately developed by all subsequent English legislation for hundreds of years. The act sets out by reciting that, "Whereas, at the conquest of the land of Ireland, and for a long time after, the English of the said land used the English language, mode of riding, and apparel, and were governed and ruled, both they and their subjects, called Betaghese (villeins) according to English law, etc.; but now many English of the said land, forsaking the English language, manners, mode of riding, laws, and usages, live and govern themselves according to the manners, fashion, and language of the Irish enemies, and also have made divers marriages and alliances between themselves and the Irish enemies aforesaid: it is therefore enacted (amongst other provisions), that all intermarriages, fosterings, gossiped, and buying or selling with the enemy shall be accounted treason; that English names, fashions, and manners shall be resumed under penalty of the confiscation of the delinquent's lands; that March laws and Brehon laws are illegal, and that there shall be no law but English law; that the Irish shall not pasture their cattle on English lands; that the English shall not entertain Irish rhymers, minstrels, or newsmen; and, moreover, that no 'mere Irishman' shall be admitted to any ecclesiastical benefice or religious house situated within the English district".

The Anglo-Irish barons must have been strangely overawed or over-reached when they were brought to pass this statute; several of themselves being at that moment answerable to all its penalties! Its immediate result, however, well nigh completed the ruin of the power it was meant to restore and strengthen. It roused the native Irish to a full conception of the English policy, and simultaneously, though without the least concert, they fell upon the colony on all sides, drove in the outposts, destroyed the castles, hunted the barons, and reoccupied the country very nearly up to the walls of Dublin. "O'Connor of

Connact and O'Brien of Thomond," says Hardiman, "laid aside for the moment their private feuds, and united against the common foe. The earl of Desmond, lord justice, marched against them with a considerable army, but was defeated and slain (captured) in a sanguinary engagement fought A.D. 1369, in the county of Limerick. O'Farrell, the chieftain of Annaly, committed great slaughter in Meath. The O'Mores, Cavanaghs, O'Byrnes, and O'Tooles, pressed upon Leinster, and the O'Neills raised the red arm in the north. The English of the Pale were seized with consternation and dismay, and terror and confusion reigned in their councils, while the natives continued to gain ground upon them in every direction. At this crisis an opportunity offered such as had never before occurred, of terminating the dominion of the English in Ireland; but if the natives had ever conceived such a project, they were never sufficiently united to achieve it. The opportunity passed away, and the disunion of the Irish saved the colony."

As for the obnoxious statute, it was found impossible to enforce it further. Cunning policy did not risk permanent defeat by pressing it at such a moment. It was allowed to remain "a dead letter" for a while; not dead, however, but only slumbering.

XXVII.—HOW THE VAIN-GLORIOUS RICHARD OF ENGLAND AND HIS OVERWHELMING ARMY FAILED TO “DAZZLE” OR CONQUER THE PRINCE OF LEINSTER. CAREER OF THE HEROIC ART M‘MURROGH.



HE close of the century which witnessed the events I have been mentioning, brought about another “royal visit” to Ireland. The weak, vain, and pomp-loving Richard the Second visited this country twice in the course of his ill-fated career—for the first time 1394. I would not deem

either worth more than a passing word (for both of them were barren of results), were it not that they interweave with the story of the chivalrous Art M‘Murrough “Kavanagh”, prince of Leinster, whose heroic figure stands out in glorious prominence on this page of Irish history.

If the M'Murroghs of Leinster in 1170 contributed to our national annals one character of evil fame, they were destined to give, two centuries later on, another, illustrious in all that ennobles or adorns the patriot, the soldier, or the statesman. Eva M'Murrogh, daughter of Diarmid the Traitor, who married Strongbow the Freebooter, claimed to be only child of her father born in lawful wedlock. That there were sons of her father then living, was not questioned; but she, or her husband on her behalf, setting up a claim of inheritance to Diarmid's possessions, impugned their legitimacy. However this may have been, the sept proceeded according to law and usage under the Irish constitution, to elect from the reigning family a successor to Diarmid, and they raised to the chieftaincy his son Donal. Thenceforth the name of M'Murrogh is heard of in Irish history only in connection with the bravest and boldest efforts of patriotism. Whenever a blow was to be struck for Ireland, the M'Murroghs were the readiest in the field—the "first in front and last in rear". They became a formidable barrier to the English encroachments, and in importance were not second to any native power in Ireland. In 1350 the sept was ruled by Art, or Arthur the First, father of our hero. "To carry on a war against him", we are told, "the whole English interest was assessed with a special tax. Louth contributed twenty pounds, Meath and Waterford, two shillings on every carucate (140 acres) of tilled land; Kilkenny the same sum, with the addition of 6d. in the pound on chattels. This Art captured the strong castles of Kilbelle, Galbarstown, Rathville; and although his career was not one of invariable success, he bequeathed to his son, also called Art, in 1375, an inheritance extending over a large portion—perhaps one-half—of the territory ruled by his ancestors before the invasion".

From the same historian\* I take the subjoined sketch of the early career of that son, Art the Second. "Art M'Murrogh, or Art Kavanagh, as he is commonly

called, was born in the year 1357, and from the age of sixteen and upwards was distinguished by his hospitality, knowledge, and feats of arms. Like the great Brian, he was a younger son, but the fortune of war removed one by one those who would otherwise have preceded him in the captaincy of his clan and connections. About the year 1375—while he was still under age—he was elected successor to his father, according to the annalists, who record his death in 1417, ‘after being forty-two years in the government of Leinster’ Fortunately he attained command at a period favourable to his genius and enterprise. His own and the adjoining tribes were aroused by tidings of success from other provinces, and the partial victories of their immediate predecessors, to entertain bolder schemes, and they only waited for a chief of distinguished ability to concentrate their efforts. This chief they found, where they naturally looked for him, among the old ruling family of the province. Nor were the English settlers ignorant of his promise. In the parliament held at Castle-dermot in 1377, they granted to him the customary annual tribute paid to his house. . . . Art M’Murrough the younger not only extended the bounds of his inheritance and imposed tribute on the English settlers in adjoining districts during the first years of his rule, but having married a noble lady of the ‘Pale’, Elizabeth, heiress to the barony of Norragh, in Kildare, which included Naas and its neighbourhood, he claimed her inheritance in full, though forfeited under ‘the statute of Kilkenny’, according to English notions. So necessary did it seem to the deputy and council of the day to conciliate their formidable neighbour, that they addressed a special representation to king Richard, setting forth the facts of the case, and adding that M’Murrough threatened, until this lady’s estates were restored and the arrears of tribute due to him fully discharged, he should never cease from war, ‘but would join with the Earl of Desmond against the Earl of Ormond, and afterwards return with a great force out of Munster to ravage the country’. . . . By this time the banner of Art M’Murrough floated over all the castles and raths on the slope of the Ridge of Leinster, or the steps of the Blackstair hills;

while the forests along the Barrow and the Upper Slaney, as well as in the plain of Carlow and in the south-western angle of Wicklow (now the barony of Shillelagh), served still better his purposes of defensive warfare. So entirely was the range of country thus vaguely defined under native sway, that John Griffin, the English bishop of Leighlin and chancellor of the exchequer, obtained a grant in 1389 of the town of Gulroestown, in the county of Dublin, 'near the marches of O'Toole, seeing he could not live within his own see for the rebels'. In 1390, Peter Creagh, bishop of Limerick, on his way to attend an Anglo-Irish parliament, was taken prisoner in that region, and in consequence the usual fine was remitted in his favour. In 1392, James, the third earl of Ormond, gave M'Murrough a severe check at Tiscoffin, near Shankill, where six hundred of his clansmen were left dead among the hills.

"This defeat, however, was thrown into the shade by the capture of New Ross, on the very eve of Richard's arrival at Waterford. In a previous chapter we have described the fortifications erected round this important seaport towards the end of the thirteenth century. Since that period its progress had been steadily onward. In the reign of Edward the Third the controversy which had long subsisted between the merchants of New Ross and those of Waterford, concerning the trade monopolies claimed by the latter, had been decided in favour of Ross. At this period it could muster in its own defence 363 cross bowmen, 1,200 long bowmen, 1,200 pikemen, and 104 horsemen—a force which would seem to place it second to Dublin in point of military strength. The capture of so important a place by M'Murrough was a cheering omen to his followers. He razed the walls and towers, and carried off gold, silver, and hostages".

From the first sentence in the concluding passage of the foregoing extract it will be gathered, that it was at this juncture the vain-glorious Richard made his first visit to Ireland. He had just recently been a candidate for the imperial throne of the Germanic empire, and had been rejected in a manner most wounding to his pride. So he formed the project of visiting Ireland with a display of pomp, power, and royal

splendour, such as had not been seen in Europe for a long time, and would, he was firmly persuaded, enable him to accomplish the complete subjugation of the Irish kingdom after the manner of that Roman general who came and saw and conquered. Early in October he landed at Waterford with a force of 30,000 bowmen and 4,000 men-at-arms; a force in those days deemed ample to over-run and conquer the strongest kingdom, and far exceeding many that sufficed to change the fate of empires previously and subsequently in Europe. This vast army was transported across channel in a fleet of some three hundred ships or galleys. Great pains were taken to provide the expedition with all the appliances and features of impressive pageantry; and in the king's train, as usual, came the chief nobles of England—his uncle, the duke of Gloster, the young earl of March (heir apparent), and of earls and lords a goodly attendance, besides several prelates, abbots, and other ecclesiastical dignitaries. But with this vast expedition king Richard accomplished in Ireland just as much as that king in the ballad, who “marched up the hill, and then marched down again”. He rehearsed king Henry and king John on Irish soil. The Irish princes were invited to visit their “friend” the mighty and puissant king of England. They did visit him, and were subjected, as of old, to the “dazzling” process. They were patronizingly fondled; made to understand that their magnanimous suzerain was a most powerful, and most grand, and most gorgeous potentate, own brother of the Sun and Moon. They accepted his flattering attentions; but they did not altogether so clearly understand or accept a proposition he made them as to surrendering their lands and chieftaincies to him, and receiving, instead, royal pensions and English titles from his most gracious hand. Many of the Irish princes yielded, from one motive or another, to this insidious proposition. But foremost amongst those who could not be persuaded to see the excellence of this arrangement was the young prince of Leinster, whose fame had already filled the land, and whose victories had made the English king feel ill at ease. Art would not come to “court” to reason over the matter with the bland and

puissant king. He was obdurate. He resisted all "dazzling". He mocked at the royal pageants, and snapped his fingers at the brother of the Sun and Moon. All this was keenly mortifying to the vain-glorious Richard. There was nothing for it but to send a royal commissioner to treat with Art. He accordingly despatched the earl marshal (Mowbray) to meet and treat with the prince of Leinster. On the plain of Balligory, near Carlow, the conference took place, Art being accompanied by his uncle Malachi. The earl marshal soon found that he had in Art a statesman as well as a soldier to treat with. Art proudly refused to treat with an *inferior*. If he was to treat at all, it should be with the king himself! Mowbray had to bend to this humiliating rebuff and try to palaver the stern M'Murrough. In vain! Art's final answer was, that "so far from yielding his own lands, his wife's patrimony in Kildare should instantly be restored to him; or —". Of course this broke up the conference. The earl marshal returned with the unwelcome news to the king, who flew into a rage! What! He, the great, the courtly, the puissant, and gorgeous king Richard of England, thus haughtily treated by a mere Irish prince! By the toe-nails of William the Conqueror, this astounding conduct should meet a dreadful chastisement! He would wipe out this haughty prince. The defiant M'Murrough should be made to feel the might of England's royal arm! So, putting himself at the head of his grand army, king Richard set out wrathfully to annihilate Art.

But the Lagenian chief soon taught him a bitter lesson. Art's superior military genius, the valour of his troops, and the patriotism of the population, soon caused the vastness of the invading English host to be a weakness, not a strength. Richard found his march tedious and tardy. It was impossible to make in that strange and hostile country commissariat arrangements for such an enormous army. Impenetrable forests and impassable bogs were varied only by mountain defiles defended with true Spartan heroism by the fearless M'Murrough clansmen. Then the weather broke into severity awful to endure. Fodder for the horses, food for the men, now became the sole objects of

each day's labour on the part of king Richard's grand army; "but", says the historian, "M'Murrough swept off everything of the nature of food—took advantage of his knowledge of the country to burst upon the enemy by night, to entrap them into ambuscades, to separate the cavalry from the foot, and by many other stratagems to thin their ranks and harass the stragglers". In fine, king Richard's splendid army, stuck fast in the Wicklow mountains, was a wreck: while the vengeful and victorious Lagenians hovered around, daily growing more daring in their disastrous assaults. Richard found there was nothing for it but to supplicate Art, and obtain peace at any price. A deputation of "the English and Irish of Leinster" was despatched to him by the king, making humble apologies and inviting him to a conference with his majesty in Dublin, where, if he would thus honour the king, he should be the royal guest, and learn how highly his valour and wisdom were esteemed by the English sovereign. Art acceded, and permitted Richard to make his way in peace northward to Dublin, crestfallen and defeated, with the relics of his grand army and the tattered rags of the gilt silk banners, the crimson canopies and other regal "properties" that were to have "dazzled" the sept of M'Murrough.

Art, a few months afterwards followed, according to invitation; but he had not been long in Dublin—where Richard had by great exertions once more established a royal court with all its splendours—when he found himself in the hands of treacherous and faithless foes. He was seized and imprisoned on a charge of "conspiring" against the king. Nevertheless, Richard found that he dared not carry out the base plot of which this was meant to be the beginning. He had already got a taste of what he might expect if he relied on *fighting* to conquer Ireland; and, on reflection, he seems to have decided that the over-reaching arts of diplomacy, and the seductions of court life were pleasanter modes of extending his nominal sway, than conducting campaigns like that in which he had already lost a splendid army and tarnished the tinsel of his vain prestige. So Art was eventually set at liberty, but three of his neighbouring fellow-chieftains were re-

tained as "hostages" for him; and it is even said, that before he was released, some form or promise of submission was extorted from him by the treacherous "hosts" who had so basely violated the sanctity of hospitality to which he had frankly trusted. Not long after, an attempt was made to entrap and murder him in one of the Norman border castles, the owner of which had invited him to a friendly feast. As M'Murrough was sitting down to the banquet, it happened that the quick eye of his bard detected in the courtyard outside certain movements of troops that told him at once what was afoot. He knew that if he or his master openly and suddenly manifested their discovery of the danger, they were lost; their perfidious hosts would slay them at the board. Striking his harp to an old Irish air, the minstrel commenced to sing to the music; but the words in the Gaelic tongue soon caught the ear of M'Murrough. They warned him to be calm, circumspect, yet ready and resolute, for that he was in the toils of the foe. The prince divined all in an instant. He maintained a calm demeanour until, seizing a favourable pretext for reaching the yard, he sprang to horse, dashed through his foes, and, sword in hand, hewed his way to freedom. This second instance of perfidy completely persuaded M'Murrough that he was dealing with faithless foes, whom no bond of honour could bind, and with whom no truce was safe; so, unfurling once more the Lagenian standard, he declared war *a la mort* against the English settlement.

It was no light struggle he thus inaugurated. Alone, unaided, he challenged and fought for twenty years the full power of England; in many a dearly bought victory proving himself truly worthy of his reputation as a master of military science. The ablest generals of England were one by one sent to cope with him; but Art outmatched them in strategy and outstripped them in valour. In the second year's campaign the strongly fortified frontier town and castle of Carlow fell before him; and in the next year (20th July, 1398) was fought the memorable battle of Kenlis. "Here", says a historian, "fell the heir presumptive to the English crown, whose premature removal was one of the causes which contributed to the revolution in England a

year or two later".\* We can well credit the next succeeding observation of the historian just quoted, that "the tidings of this event filled the Pale with consternation, and thoroughly aroused the vindictive temper of Richard. He at once despatched to Dublin his half-brother, the earl of Kent, to whom he made a gift of Carlow castle and town, to be held (if taken) by knight's service. He then, as much perhaps to give occupation to the minds of his people as to prosecute his old project of subduing Ireland, began to make preparations for his second expedition thither".

XXVIII.—HOW THE VAIN-GLORIOUS ENGLISH KING TRIED ANOTHER CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE INVINCIBLE IRISH PRINCE, AND WAS UTTERLY DEFEATED AS BEFORE.



F this second expedition of King Richard there is extant an account written by a Frenchman who was in his train. In all its main features expedition number two was a singular repetition of expedition number one; vast preparations and levies of men and materials, ships and armaments, as if for the invasion and subjugation of one of the most powerful empires of the world; gorgeous trappings, courtly attendants, and all the necessaries for renewed experiments with the royal "dazzling" policy. Landing at Waterford, Richard, at the head of his panoplied host, marched against M'Murrough, who, to a lofty and magniloquent invitation to seek the king's gracious clemency, had rudely replied, "that he would neither submit nor obey him in any way; and that he would never cease from war and the defence of his country until his death". To the overawing force of the English king, Art had, as the French narrator informs us, just "three thousand hardy men, who did not appear to be much afraid of the English". M'Murrough's

\* M'Ger

tactics were those which had stood him in such good stead on the previous occasion. He removed all the cattle and corn, food and fodder of every kind, as well as the women, children, aged, and helpless of his people, into the interior, while he himself, at the head of his Spartan band, "few, but undismayed", took up a position at Idrone awaiting the invaders. Once more Richard found his huge army entangled in impenetrable forests, hemmed in by bogs, morass, and mountain—M'Murrough fighting and retiring with deadly craft to draw him deeper and deeper into difficulty, "harassing him dreadfully, carrying off everything fit for food for man or beast, surprising and slaying his foragers, and filling his camp nightly with alarm and blood". A crumb of consolation greatly regarded by the mortified and humiliated English king was the appearance one day in his camp of Art's uncle giving in submission, supplicating for himself "pardon and favour". This Richard only too joyfully granted; and, allowing the incident to persuade him that Art himself might also be wavering, a royal message was sent to the Leinster prince assuring him of free pardon, and "castles and lands in abundance elsewhere", if only he would submit. The Frenchman records M'Murrough's reply: "MacMor told the king's people that for all the gold in the world he would not submit himself, but would continue to war and endamage the king in all that he could". This ruined Richard's last hope of anything like a fair pretext for abandoning his enterprise. He now relinquished all idea of assailing M'Murrough, and marched as best he could towards Dublin, his army meanwhile suffering fearfully from famine. After some days of dreadful privation they reached the sea-shore at Arklow, where ships with provisions from Dublin awaited them. The soldiers rushed into the sea to reach at the food, fought for it ravenously, and drank all the wine they could seize. Soon after this timely relief, a still more welcome gleam of fortune fell upon the English host. A messenger arrived from Art expressing his willingness to meet some accredited ambassador from the king and discuss the matters at issue between them. Whereupon, says the chronicler, there

was great joy in the English camp. The earl of Gloster was at once despatched to treat with Art. The French knight was among the earl's escort, and witnessed the meeting, of which he has left a quaint description. He describes Art as a "fine large man, wondrously active. To look at him he seemed very stern and savage and a very able man". The horse which Art rode especially transfixed the Frenchman's gaze. He declares, that a steed more exquisitely beautiful, more marvellously fleet, he had never beheld. "In coming down it galloped so hard, that, in my opinion, I never saw hare, deer, sheep, or any other animal, I declare to you for a certainty, run with such speed as it did". This horse Art rode "without housing or saddle", yet sat like a king, and guided with utmost ease in the most astounding feats of horsemanship. "He and the earl", the Frenchman tells, "exchanged much discourse, but did not come to agreement. They took short leave and hastily parted. Each took his way apart, and the earl returned to king Richard". The announcement brought by his ambassador was a sore disappointment to the king. Art would only agree to "peace without reserve"; "otherwise he will never come to agreement". "This speech", continues the Frenchman, "was not agreeable to the king. It appeared to me that his face grew pale with anger. He swore in great wrath by St. Bernard that no, never would he depart from Ireland till, alive or dead, he had him in his power".

Rash oath—soon broken. Little thought Richard when he so hotly swore against Art in such impotent anger, that he would have to quit Ireland, leaving Art free, unconquered, and defiant, while he returned to England only to find himself a crownless monarch, deposed and friendless, in a few brief days subsequently to meet a treacherous and cruel death in Pontefract castle!

All this, however, though near at hand, was as yet in the unforeseen future; and Richard, on reaching Dublin, devoted himself once more to "dazzling" revels there. But while he feasted he forgot not his hatred of the indomitable M'Murrough. "A hundred marks in pure gold" were publicly proclaimed by the king to any one who

should bring to him in Dublin, *alive or dead*, the defiant prince of Leinster; against whom, moreover, the army, divided into three divisions, were despatched upon a new campaign. Soon the revels and marchings were abruptly interrupted by sinister news from England. A formidable rebellion had broken out there, headed by the banished Lancaster. Richard marched southward with all speed to take shipping at Waterford, collecting on the way the several divisions of his army. He embarked for England, but arrived too late. His campaign against Art M'Murrough had cost him his crown, eventually his life; had changed the dynasty in England, and seated the house of Lancaster upon the throne.

For eighteen years subsequently the invincible Art reigned over his inviolate territory; his career to the last being a record of brilliant victories over every expedition sent against it. As we wade through the crowded annals of those years, his name is ever found in connection with some gallant achievement. Wherever else the fight is found going against Ireland, whatever hand falters or falls in the unbroken struggle, in the mountains of Wicklow there is one stout arm, one bold heart, one glorious intellect, ever nobly daring and bravely conquering in the cause of native land. Art, "whose activity defied the chilling effects of age, poured his cohorts through Sculloge Gap on the garrisons of Wexford, taking in rapid succession in one campaign (1406) the castles of Camolins, Ferns, and Enniscorthy. A few years subsequently his last great battle, probably the most serious engagement of his life, was fought by him against the whole force of the Pale under the walls of Dublin. The duke of Lancaster, son of the king and lord lieutenant of Ireland, issued orders for the concentration of a powerful army for an expedition southwards against M'Murrough's allies. But M'Murrough and the mountaineers of Wicklow now felt themselves strong enough to take the initiative. They crossed the plain which lies to the north of Dublin, and encamped at Kilmainham, where Roderick, when he besieged the city, and Brian before the battle of Clontarf, had pitched their tents of old. The English and Anglo-

Irish forces, under the eye of their prince, marched out to dislodge them, in four divisions. The first was led by the duke in person; the second by the veteran knight, Jenicho d'Artois; the third by Sir Edward Perrers, an English knight; and the fourth by Sir Thomas Butler, prior of the order of St. John, afterwards created by Henry the Fifth, for his distinguished service, earl of Kilmain. With M'Murrough were O'Byrne, O'Nolan, and other chiefs, besides his sons, nephews, and relatives. The numbers on each side could hardly fall short of ten thousand men, and the action may be fairly considered one of the most decisive of those times. The duke was carried back wounded into Dublin; the slopes of Inchicore and the valley of the Liffey were strewn with the dying and the dead; the river at that point obtained from the Leinster Irish the name of *Athcroe*, or the ford of slaughter; the widowed city was filled with lamentation and dismay".

This was the last endeavour of the English power against Art. "While he lived no further attacks were made upon his kindred or country". He was not, alas! destined to enjoy long the peace he had thus conquered from his powerful foes by a forty-four years' war! On the 12th of January, 1417, he died at Ross in the sixtieth year of age, many of the chroniclers attributing his death to poison administered in a drink. Whether the enemies whom he had so often vanquished in the battle-field resorted to such foul means of accomplishing his removal, is, however, only a matter of suspicion, resting mainly on the fact, that his chief brehon, O'Doran, who with him had partaken of a drink given them by a woman on the wayside as they passed, also died on the same day, and was attacked with like symptoms. Leeches' skill was vain to save the heroic chief. His grief-stricken people followed him to the grave, well knowing and keenly feeling that in him they had lost their invincible tower of defence. He had been called to the chieftaincy of Leinster at the early age of sixteen years; and on the very threshold of his career had to draw the sword to defend the integrity of his principality. From that hour to the last of his battles, more than forty years subsequently, he proved himself one of the most consum-

mate military tacticians of his time. Again and again he met and defeated the proudest armies of England, led by the ablest generals of the age. 'He was', say the Four Masters, 'a man distinguished for his hospitality, knowledge, and feats of arms; a man full of prosperity and royalty; a founder of churches and monasteries by his bounties and contributions'. In fine, our history enumerates no braver soldier, no nobler character, than *A<sup>nd</sup>* M'Murrough "Kavanagh", prince of Leinster

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XXIX.—HOW THE CIVIL WARS IN ENGLAND LEFT THE ANGLLO-IRISH COLONY TO RUIN. HOW THE IRISH DID NOT GRASP THE OPPORTUNITY OF EASY LIBERATION.

ITHIN the hundred years next succeeding the events we have just traced—the period embraced between 1420 and 1520—England was convulsed by the great civil war of the White and Red Roses, the houses of York and Lancaster. Irish history during the same period being chiefly a record of the contest for mastery between the two principal families of the Pale—the Butlers and the Geraldines. During this protracted civil struggle, which bathed England in blood, the colony in Ireland had, of course, to be left very much to its own resources; and, as a natural consequence, its dimensions gradually contracted, or rather it ceased to have any defined boundary at all, and the merest exertion on the part of the Irish must have sufficed to sweep it away completely. Here was, in fine, the opportunity of opportunities for the native population, had they but been in a position to avail of it, or had they been capable of profiting by *any* opportunity, to accomplish with scarcely an effort the complete deliverance of their country. England was powerless for aggression, torn, distracted, wasted, paralysed, by a protracted civil war. The lords of the Pale were equally disunited and comparatively helpless. One-hundredth part

of the exertion put forth so bravely, yet so vainly, by the native princes in the time of Donald O'Neil and Robert Bruce would have more than sufficed them now to sweep from the land every vestige of foreign rule. The chain hung so loosely that they had but to arise and shake it from their limbs. They literally needed but to will it, and they were free!

Yet not an effort, not a movement, not a motion, during all this time—while this supreme opportunity was passing away for ever—was made by the native Irish to grasp the prize thus almost thrust into their hand—the prize of national freedom! They had boldly and bravely striven for it *before*, when no such opportunity invited them; they were subsequently to strive for it yet again with valour and daring as great, when every advantage would be arrayed against them. But now, at the moment when they had but to reach out their hand and grasp the object of all their endeavours, they seemed dead to all conceptions of duty or policy. The individual chiefs, north, south, east, and west, lived on in the usual way. They fought each other or the neighbouring Anglo-Norman lord just as usual, or else they enjoyed as a pleasant diversification a spell of tranquillity, peace, and friendship. In the relations between the Pale and the Irish ground there was, for the time, no regular government “policy” of any kind on either hand. Each Anglo-Norman lord, and each Irish chieftain, did very much as he himself pleased; made peace or war with his neighbours, or took any side he listed in the current conflicts of the period. Some of the Irish princes do certainly appear to have turned this time of respite to a good account, if not for national interests, for other not less sacred interests. Many of them employed their lives during this century in rehabilitating religion and learning in all their pristine power and grandeur. Science and literature once more began to flourish; and the shrines of Rome and Compostello were thronged with pilgrim chiefs and princes, paying their vows of faith, from the Western Isle. Within this period lived Margaret of Offaly, the beautiful and accomplished queen of O'Carroll, king of Ely. She and her husband were munificent patrons of

literature, art, and science. On queen Margaret's special invitation the literati of Ireland and Scotland, to the number of nearly three thousand, held a "session" for the furtherance of literary and scientific interests, at her palace, near Killeagh, in Offaly, the entire assemblage being the guests of the king and queen during their stay. "The nave of the great church of Da Sinchell was converted, for the occasion, into a banqueting hall, where Margaret herself inaugurated the proceedings by placing two massive chalices of gold, as offerings, on the high altar, and committing two orphan children to the charge of nurses to be fostered at her charge. Robed in cloth of gold, this illustrious lady, who was as distinguished for her beauty as for her generosity, sat in queenly state in one of the galleries of the church, surrounded by the clergy, the brehons, and her private friends, shedding a lustre on the scene which was passing below, while her husband, who had often encountered England's greatest generals in battle, remained mounted on a charger outside the church to bid the guests welcome, and see that order was preserved. The invitations were issued, and the guests arranged, according to a list prepared by O'Connor's chief brehon; and the second entertainment, which took place at Rathangan, was a supplemental one, to embrace such men of learning as had not been brought together at the former feast".

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XXX.—HOW A NEW ELEMENT OF ANTAGONISM CAME INTO THE STRUGGLE. HOW THE ENGLISH KING AND NATION ADOPTED A NEW RELIGION, AND HOW THE IRISH HELD FAST BY THE OLD.



HE time was now at hand when, to the existing elements of strife and hatred between the Irish and the English nations, there was to be added one more fierce than all the rest; one bitterly intensifying the issues of battle already knit with such deadly vehemence between the Celt and the Saxon. Christendom was being rent in twain by a terrible convulsion. A new reli-

gion had flung aloft the standard of revolt and revolution against the successors of St. Peter; and the Christian world was being divided into two hostile camps—of the old faith and the new. This was not the mere agitation of new theories of subverting tendencies, pushed and preached with vehemence to the overturning of the old; but the crash of a politico-religious revolution, bursting like the eruption of a volcano, and as suddenly spreading confusion and change far and wide. The political policy and the personal aims and interests of kings and princes gave to the new doctrines at their very birth a range of dominion greater than original Christianity itself had been able to attain in a century. Almost instantaneously, princes and magnates grasped at the new theories according as *PERSONAL* or state policy dictated. To each and all of them those theories offered one most tempting and invaluable advantage—*supremacy*, spiritual and temporal, unshadowed, unrestrained, unaccountable, and irresponsible on earth. No more of vexing conflicts with the obstinate Roman Pontiffs. No more of supplications to the Holy See “with whispering breath and bated humbleness”, if a divorce was needed or a new wife sighted while yet the old one was alive. No more of humiliating submissions to the penances or conditions imposed by that antique tribunal in the Eternal City; but each one a king, spiritual as well as temporal, in his own dominions. Who would not hail such a system? There was perhaps not one amongst the kings of Europe who had not, at one time or another, been made to feel unpleasantly the restraint put on him by the Pope, acting either as spiritual pontiff or in his capacity of chief arbiter in the disputes of the Christian family. Sometimes, though rarely, this latter function—entirely of human origin and authority—seemed to sink into mere state policy, and like all human schemes had its varying characteristics of good and ill. But that which most frequently brought the Popes into conflict with the civil rulers of the world was the striving of the Holy See to mitigate the evils of villeinage or serfdom appertaining to the feudal system; to restrain by the spiritual authority the lawless violence and passion of feudal lords and kings; and, above all, to

maintain the sanctity and inviolability of the marriage tie, whether in the cottage of the bondman or in the palace of the king. To many of the European sovereigns, therefore, the newly propounded system—(which I am viewing solely as it affected the public policy of individual princes, pre-scinding entirely from its doctrinal aspect)—held forth powerful attractions; yet amongst the Teutonic principalities by the Rhine alone was it readily embraced at first.

So far, identity of faith had prevailed between England and Ireland; albeit English churchmen—archbishops, bishops, priests, and monks—waged the national war in their own way against the Irish hierarchy, clergy, and people, as hotly as the most implacable of the military chiefs. With the cessation of the civil war in England, and the restoration of English national power during the reign of the seventh Henry, the state policy of strengthening and extending the English colony in Ireland was vigorously resumed; and the period which witnessed the outbreak of the religious revolution in Germany found the sensual and brutal Henry the Eighth engaged in a savage war upon the Irish nation. Henry early entered the lists against the new doctrines. He wrote a controversial pamphlet in refutation of Luther's dogmas, and was rewarded therefor by an encomiastic letter from the Pope conferring on him the title of "Defender of the Faith". Indeed, ever since the time of Adrian, the Popes had always been wondrously friendly towards the English kings; much too ready to give them "aid and comfort" in their schemes of Irish subjugation, and much too little regardful of the heroic people that were battling so persistently in defence of their nationality. A terrible lesson was now to awaken Rome to remorse and sorrow. The power she had aided and sanctioned in those schemes was to turn from her with unblushing apostacy, and become the most deadly and malignant of her foes; while that crushed and broken nation whom she had uninquiringly given up to be the prey of merciless invaders, was to shame this ingratitude and perfidy by a fidelity and devotedness not to be surpassed in the history of the world.

Henry—a creature of mere animal passions—tired of

his lawful wife, and desired another. He applied to Rome for a divorce. He was, of course, refused. He pressed his application again in terms that but too plainly foreshadowed to the Supreme Pontiff what the result of a refusal might be. It was, no doubt, a serious contingency for the Holy See to contemplate—the defection to the new religion of a king and a nation so powerful as the English. In fact, it would give to the new creed a status and a power it otherwise would not possess. To avert this disaster to Catholicity it was merely required to wrong one woman; merely to permit a lustful king to have his way, and sacrifice to his brute passions his helpless wife. With full consciousness, however, of all that the refusal implied, the Holy See refused to permit to a king that which could not be permitted to the humblest of his subjects—refused to allow a wife's rights to be sacrificed, even to save to the side of Catholicity for three centuries the great and powerful English nation.

Henry had an easy way out of the difficulty. According to the new system, he would have no need to incur such mortifying refusals from this intractable, antiquated, and unprogressive tribunal at Rome, but could grant to himself divorces and dispensations *ad libitum*. So he threw off the Pope's authority, embraced the new religion, and helped himself to a new wife as often as he pleased; merely cutting off the head of the discarded one after he had granted himself a divorce from her.

In a country where feudal institutions and ideas prevailed, a king who could appease the lords carried the nation. In England, at this period, the masses of the people, though for some time past by the letter of the law freed from villeinage, were still, practically, the creatures of the lords and barons, and depended upon, looked up to, and followed them with the olden stolid docility. Henry, of course, though he might himself have changed as he listed, could never have carried the nation over with him into the new creed, had he not devised a means for giving the lords and barons also a material interest in the change. This he effected by sharing with them the rich plunder of the Church.

Few amongst the English nobility were proof against the great temptations of kingly favour and princely estates, and the great perils of kingly anger and confiscations. For, in good truth, even at a very early stage of the business, to hesitate was to lose life as well as possessions, inasmuch as Henry unceremoniously chopped off the heads of those who wavered or refused to join him in the new movement. The feudal system carried England bodily over with the king. Once he was able to get to his side (by proposing liberal bribes out of the plundered abbey lands) a sufficient number of the nobles, the game was all in his hands. The people counted for nothing in such a system. They went to their lords, like the cattle stock on the estates. The English bishops, mostly scions of the noble houses, were not greatly behind in the corrupt and cowardly acceptance of the king's scheme; but there were in the episcopacy noble and glorious exceptions to this spectacle of baseness. The body of the clergy, too, made a brave struggle for a time; but the king and the nobles made light of what *they* could do. A brisk application of the axe and the block—a rattling code of penalties for premunire and soforth—and soon the troublesome priests were all either killed off or banished.

But now, thought Henry, what of Ireland! How is the revolution likely to be received by the English colony there? In truth, it was quite a ticklish consideration; and Henry appears to have apprehended very nearly that which actually resulted—namely, that in proportion as the Anglo-Irish lords had become Hibernicised, they would resist that revolution, and stand by the old faith; while those of them least imbued with Irish sentiment would proportionately be on his side. Amongst the former, and of all others most coveted now and feared for their vast influence and power, were the Geraldines. Scions of that great house had been amongst the earliest to drop their distinctive character as Anglo-Norman lords, and become Anglo-Irish chiefs—adopting the institutions, laws, language, manners, and customs of the native Irish. For years the head of the family had been kept on the side of the English power simply by confiding to him its supreme

control in Ireland; but of the Irish sympathies of Clan Gerald, Henry had misgivings sore, and ruefully suspected now that it would lead the van in a powerful struggle in Ireland against his politico-religious revolution. In fact, at the very moment in which he was plunging into his revolt against the Pope, a rebellion, led by a Geraldine chief, was shaking to its foundations the English power in Ireland—the rebellion of “Silken Thomas”.

XXXI.—“THOSE GERALDINES! THOSE GERALDINES!”



HE history of the Geraldine family is a perfect romance, and in many respects out-  
 rivals the creations of fiction. From the earliest period of their settlement in Ireland they attained to a position of almost kingly power, and for full five hundred years were the foremost figures in Anglo-Irish history. Yet with what changing fortunes! Now vice-kings reigning in Dublin, their vast estates stretching from Maynooth to Lixnaw, their strong castles sentinelling the land from sea to sea! Anon captive victims of attainder, stripped of every earthly honour and possession; to-day in the dungeon, to-morrow led to the scaffold! Now a numerous and powerful family—a fruitful, strong, and wide-spreading tree. Anon hewn down to earth, or plucked up seemingly root and branch, beyond the possibility of further existence; yet mysteriously preserved and budding forth from some single seedling to new and greater power! Often the Geraldine stock seemed extinct; frequently its jealous enemies—the English king or his favourites—made safe and sure (as they thought) that the dangerous line was extirpated. Yet as frequently did they find it miraculously resurgent, grasping all its ancient power and renewing all its ancient glory.

At a very early period the Geraldine line was very nearly cut off for ever, but was preserved in the person of

one infant child, under circumstances worthy of narration. In the year 1261 a pitched battle was fought between the justiciary, Lord Thomas Fitzgerald, and the MacCarthy More, at a glen a few miles east of Kenmare in Kerry. It was a formidable engagement, in which each side put forth all its resources of military generalship and strength of levies. The Irish commander completely out-generalled the Normans. At the close of a protracted and sanguinary battle they were routed with fearful slaughter, Lord Thomas being mortally wounded, and his son, besides numerous barons and knights, left dead upon the field. "Alas!" continues the narrative of O'Daly (who wrote in the year 1655), "the whole family of the Geraldines had well nigh perished; at one blow they were cut off—father and son; and now there remained but an infant one year old, to wit, the son of John Fitz-Thomas, recently slain. The nurse, who had heard the dismal tidings at Tralee, ran about here and there distraught with grief, and left the cradle of the young Geraldine without a watcher; thereupon an ape (which was kept for amusement sake) came and raised the infant out of the cradle and carried him to the top of the castle. There, to the astonishment of those who passed by, the ape took off the babe's swaddling clothes, licked him all over, clothed him again, and brought him back to his cradle safe and sound. Then coming to the nurse, as it were in reproof for her neglect, he dealt her a blow. Ever after was that babe called Thomas *a n' Appa*; that is, 'of the Ape'; and when he grew to man's estate he was ennobled by many virtues. Bravely did he avenge his father's and grandfather's murder, and reërect the fortunes of his house.\* He left a son, Maurice Fitz-Thomas, who was the first earl of Desmond".

Of Lord Thomas, the sixth earl, is related a romantic, yet authentic story, known to many Irish readers. While on a hunting expedition in some of the lonely and picturesque glens in North Kerry, he was benighted on his

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\* To this incident is attributed the circumstance that the armorial ensigns of the Geraldine family exhibit two apes as supporters.

homeward way. Weary and thirsting, he urged his steed forward through the tangled wood. At length, through the gloom he discerned close by an humble cottage, which proved to be the dwelling of one of his own retainers or clansmen, named MacCormick. Lord Thomas rode to the door, halted, and asked for a drink. His summons was attended to and his request supplied by Catherine, the daughter of the cottager, a young girl whose simple grace and exquisite beauty struck the young earl with astonishment—and with warmer feelings too. He dismounted and rested awhile in the cottage, and became quite charmed with the daughter of its humble host. He bade her farewell, resolving to seek that cottage soon again. Often subsequently his horse bore him thither; for Lord Thomas loved Catherine MacCormick, and loved her purely and honourably. Not perhaps without certain misgivings as to the results did he resolve to make her wife; yet never did he waver in that resolve. In due time he led the beautiful cottage girl to the altar, and brought her home his wife.

His worst fears were quickly realised. His kindred and clansmen all rose against him for this *mesalliance*, which, according to their code, forfeited for him lands and title! In vain he pleaded. An ambitious uncle, James, eventually seventh earl, led the movement against him, and, claiming for himself the title and estates thus “forfeited”, was clamorous and uncompassionate. Lord Thomas at the last nobly declared that even on the penalty thus inexorably decreed against him, he in no wise repented him of his marriage, and that he would give up lands and titles rather than part his peasant wife. Relinquishing everything, he bade an eternal adieu to Ireland, and sailed with his young wife for France, where he died at Rouen in 1420. This romantic episode of authentic history furnished our national melodist with the subject of the following verses:

By the Feal's wave benighted,  
No star in the skies,  
To thy door by love lighted,  
I first saw those eyes.

Some voice whispered o'er me,  
 As the threshold I cross'd,  
 There was ruin before me;  
 If I lov'd, I was lost.

Love came, and brought sorrow  
 Too soon in his train;  
 Yet so sweet, that to-morrow  
 'T were welcome again!  
 Though misery's full measure  
 My portion should be,  
 I would drain it with pleasure  
 If poured out by thee!

You, who call it dishonour  
 To bow to love's flame,  
 If you 've eyes, look but on her.  
 And blush while you blame.  
 Hath the pearl less whiteness  
 Because of its birth?  
 Hath the violet less brightness  
 For growing near earth?

No: man for his glory  
 To ancestry flies;  
 But woman's bright story  
 Is told in her eyes.  
 While the monarch but traces  
 Through mortals his line,  
 Beauty, born of the graces,  
 Ranks next to divine!

In the reign of the eighth Henry, as well as for a long time previous thereto, the Geraldine family comprised two great branches, of which the earl of Desmond and the earl of Kildare were respectively the heads; the latter being paramount. Early in Henry's reign Gerald earl of Kildare, or "The Great Earl", as he is called in the Irish annals, died after a long life, illustrious as a soldier, statesman, and ruler. He was succeeded by his son, Garret Oge, or Gerald the younger, who was soon appointed by the crown to the high office and authority of lord deputy as vested in his father. Gerald Oge found his enemies at court active and restless in plotting his overthrow. He had more than once to proceed to England to make his defence against fatal charges, but invariably succeeded in vindicating himself with the king. With Henry, indeed,

he was apparently rather a favourite; while, on the other hand, Cardinal Wolsey viewed him with marked suspicion. Kildare, though at the head of the English power in Ireland, was, like many of the Geraldines, nearly as much of an Irish chief as an English noble. Not only was he, to the sore uneasiness of the court at London, in friendly alliance with many of the native princes, but he was allied by the closest ties of kindred and alliance with the royal houses of Ulster. So proud was he of this relationship, that, upon one occasion, when he was being reinstated as lord deputy, to the expulsion of Ormond, his accusing enemy, we are told, that at Kildare's request "*his kinsman, Con O'Neill*, carried the Sword of State before him to St. Thomas's Abbey, where he entertained the king's commissioners and others at a sumptuous banquet".

But soon Gerald's enemies were destined to witness the accomplishment of all their designs against his house. James, earl of Desmond, "a man of lofty and ambitious views", entered into a correspondence with Charles the Fifth, king of Spain, and Francis the First of France, for the purpose, some hold, of inducing one or other of those sovereigns to invade Ireland. What follows I quote textually from O'Daly's quaint narrative, as translated by the Rev. C. P. Meehan:—

"Many messages passed between them, of all which Henry the Eighth was a long time ignorant. It is commonly thought that Charles the Fifth at this time meditated an invasion of Ireland; and when at length the intelligence of these facts reached the king of England, Cardinal Wolsey (a man of immoderate ambition, most inimical to the Geraldines, and then ruling England as it were by his nod) caused the earl to be summoned to London; but Desmond did not choose to place himself in the hands of the cardinal, and declined the invitation. Thereupon the king despatched a messenger to the earl of Kildare, then viceroy in Ireland, ordering him to arrest Desmond and send him to England forthwith. On receipt of the order, Kildare collected troops and marched into Munster to seize Desmond; but, after some time, whether through inability or reluctance to injure his kinsman, the business

failed and Kildare returned. Then did the cardinal poison the mind of the king against Kildare, asseverating that by his connivance Desmond had escaped—(this, indeed, was not the fact, for Kildare, however so anxious, could not have arrested Desmond). Kildare was then arraigned before the privy council, as Henry gave willing ear to the cardinal's assertions, but before the viceroy sailed for England, he committed the state and administration of Ireland to Thomas, his son and heir, and then presented himself before the council. The cardinal accused him of high treason to his liege sovereign, and endeavoured to brand him and all his family with the ignominious mark of disloyalty. Kildare, who was a man of bold spirit, and despised the base origin of Wolsey, replied in polished, yet vehement language; and though the cardinal and court were hostile to him, nevertheless he so well managed the matter, that he was only committed to the tower of London. But the cardinal, determined to carry out his designs of vengeance, without knowledge of the king, sent private instructions to the constable of the tower ordering him to behead the earl without delay. When the constable received his orders, although he knew how dangerous it was to contravene the cardinal's mandate, commiserating the earl, he made him aware of his instructions. Calmly, yet firmly, did Kildare listen to the person who read his death-warrant; and then launching into a violent invective against the cardinal, he caused the constable to proceed to the king, to learn if such order had emanated from him, for he suspected that it was the act of the cardinal unauthorized. The constable, regardless of the risk he ran, hastened to the king, and, about ten o'clock at night, reported to his majesty the order of the cardinal for destroying Kildare. Thereon the king was bitterly incensed against Wolsey, whom he cursed, and forbade the constable to execute any order not sanctioned by his own sign-manual; stating, at the same time, that he would cause the cardinal to repent of his usurped authority and unjust dislike to Kildare. The constable returned, and informed the earl of his message; but Kildare was nevertheless detained a prisoner in the tower to the end of his days"

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“There is”, says O’Daly’s translator, “a chapter in Galt’s *Life of Wolsey* full of errors and gross misrepresentations of Ireland and the Irish. It is only fair, however, to give him credit for the spirited sketch he has given of the dialogue between Wolsey and Kildare. ‘My lord’, said Wolsey, ‘you will remember how the earl of Desmond, your kinsman, sent letters to Francis, the French king, what messages have been sent to you to arrest him (Desmond), and it is not yet done . . . but, in performing your duty in this affair, merciful God! how dilatory have you been! . . . what! the earl of Kildare dare not venture! nay, the king of Kildare; for you reign more than you govern the land’. ‘My lord chancellor’, replied the earl, ‘if you proceed in this way, I will forget half my defence. I have no school tricks nor art of recollection; unless you hear me while I remember, your second charge will hammer the first out of my head. As to my kingdom, I know not what you mean . . . I would you and I, my lord, exchanged kingdoms for one month; I would in that time undertake to gather more crumbs than twice the revenues of my poor earldom. While you sleep in your bed of down, I lie in a poor hovel; while you are served under a canopy, I serve under the cope of heaven; while you drink wine from golden cups, I must be content with water from a shell; my charger is trained for the field, your jennet is taught to amble’. O’Daly’s assertion that Wolsey issued the earl’s death-warrant does not appear to rest on any solid foundation; and the contrary appears likely, when such usurpation of royalty was not objected in the impeachment of the cardinal”.

## XXXII.—THE REBELLION OF SILKEN THOMAS.



HEN Kildare was summoned to London—as it proved to be for the last time—he was called upon to nominate some one who should act for him in his absence, and for whom he himself would be responsible. Unfortunately he nominated his own son Thomas,\* a hot, impetuous, brave, daring, and chivalrous youth, scarce one-and-twenty years of age.

For some time the earl lay in London tower, his fate as yet uncertain; the enemies of his house meanwhile striving steadily to insure his ruin.

It was at this juncture that the events detailed in bygone pages—Henry's quarrel with the Pope, and the consequent politico-religious revolution in England—flung all the English realm into consternation and dismay. Amidst the tidings of startling changes and bloody executions in London brought by each mail to Ireland, came many disquieting rumours of the fate of the Geraldine earl. The effect of these stories on the young Lord Thomas seems to have suggested to the anti-Geraldine faction a foul plot to accomplish his ruin. Forged letters were circulated giving out with much circumstantiality how the earl his father had been beheaded in the Tower of London, notwithstanding the king's promise to the contrary. The effect of this news on the Geraldine party, but most of all on the young Lord Thomas, may be imagined. Stunned for an instant by this cruel blow, his resolution was taken in a burst of passionate grief and anger. Vengeance! vengeance on the trebly perjured and blood-guilty king, whose crimes of lust, murder, and sacrilege called aloud for punishment, and forfeited for him allegiance, throne, and

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\* Known in history as "Silken Thomas". He was so called, we are told, from the silken banners carried by his standard-bearers—others say, because of the richness of his personal attire.

life! The youthful deputy hastily assembling his guards and retainers, and surrounded by a crowd of his grief-stricken and vengeful kinsmen, marched to Mary's Abbey, where the privy council was already sitting, waiting for him to preside over its deliberations. The scene at the council chamber is picturesquely sketched by Mr. Ferguson, in his *Hibernian Nights Entertainment*.\*

"Presently the crowd collected round the gates began to break up and line the causeways at either side, and a gallant cavalcade was seen through the open arch advancing from Thomas' Court towards the drawbridge. 'Way for the lord deputy', cried two truncheon-bearers, dashing through the gate, and a shout arose on all sides that Lord Thomas was coming. Trumpeters and pursuivants at arms rode first, then came the mace-bearer with his symbol of office, and after him the sword of state, in a rich scabbard of velvet, carried by its proper officer. Lord Thomas himself, in his robes of state, and surrounded by a dazzling array of nobles and gentlemen, spurred after. The arched gateway was choked for a moment with tossing plumes and banners, flashing arms and gleaming faces, as the magnificent troop burst in like a flood of fire upon the dark and narrow precincts of the city. But behind the splendid cortege which headed their march, came a dense column of mailed men-at-arms, that continued to defile through the close pass long after the gay mantles and waving pennons of their leaders were indistinct in the distance.

"The gate of Mary's Abbey soon received the leaders of the revolt; and ere the last of their followers had ceased to pour into the echoing court-yard, Lord Thomas and his friends were at the door of the council-chamber. The assembled lords rose at his entrance, and way was made for him to the chair of state.

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\* The book here alluded to, it may be right to remind young readers, does not purport to be more than a fanciful story founded on facts; but the author so closely adheres to the outlines of authentic history, that we may credit his sketches and descriptions as well justified approximations to the literal truth.

“ ‘Keep your seats, my lords’, said he, stopping midway between the entrance and council table, while his friends gathered in a body at his back. ‘I have not come to preside over this council, my lords; I come to tell you of a bloody tragedy that has been enacted in London, and to give you to know what steps I have thought fit to take in consequence’.

“ ‘What tragedy, my lord?’ said Alan, the archbishop of Dublin; ‘your lordship’s looks and words alarm me: what means this multitude of men now in the house of God? My lord, my lord, I fear this step is rashly taken; this looks like something, my lord, that I would be loth to name in the presence of loyal men’.

“ ‘My lord archbishop’, replied Thomas, ‘when you pretend an ignorance of my noble father’s murder’

“ ‘Murder!’ cried the lord chancellor, Cromer, starting from his seat, and all at the council table uttered exclamations of astonishment in horror, save only Alan and the lord high treasurer.

“ ‘Yes, my lord’, the young Geraldine continued, with a stern voice, still addressing the archbishop, ‘when you pretend ignorance of that foul and cruel murder, which was done by the instigation and traitorous procuring of yourself and others, your accomplices, and yet taunt me with the step which I have taken, rashly, as it may be, but not, I trust, unworthily of my noble father’s son, in consequence, you betray at once your treachery and your hypocrisy’. By this time the tumult among the soldiery without, who had not till now heard of the death of the earl, was as if a thousand men had been storming the abbey. They were all native Irish, and to a man devoted to Kildare. Curses, lamentations, and cries of rage and vengeance sounded from every quarter of the court-yard; and some who rushed into the council-hall with drawn swords, to be revenged on the authors of their calamity, were with difficulty restrained by the knights and gentlemen around the door from rushing on the archbishop, and slaying him as they heard him denounced by their chief, on the spot. When the clamour was somewhat abated,

Alan, who had stood up to speak at its commencement, addressed the chancellor.

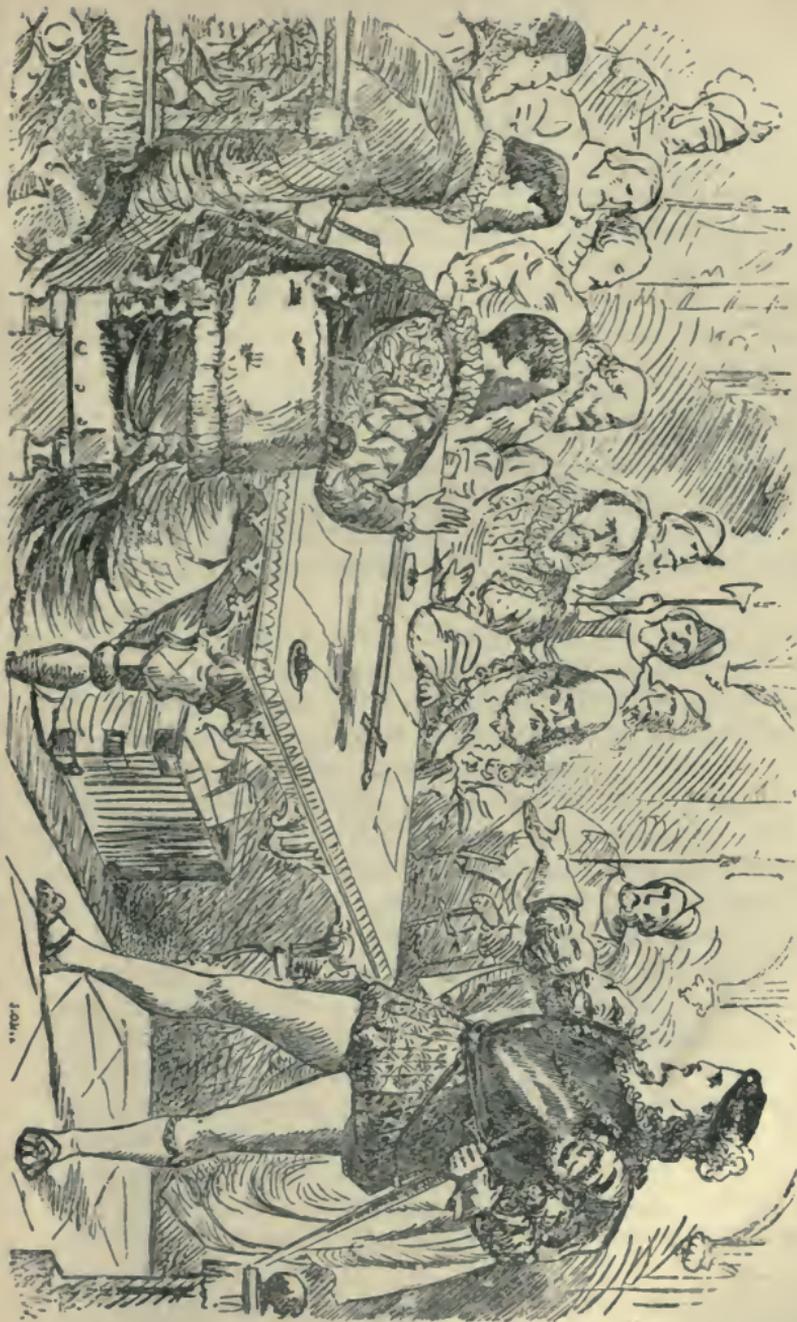
“My lord, this unhappy young man says he knows not what. If his noble father, which God forbid, should have come under his majesty’s displeasure—if he should, indeed, have suffered—although I know not that he hath—the penalty of his numerous treasons’——

“‘Bold priest, thou liest!’ cried Sir Oliver Fitzgerald; ‘my murdered brother was a truer servant of the crown than ever stood in thy satin shoes!’

“Alan and the lord chancellor Cromer, also an archbishop and primate of Armagh, rose together; the one complaining loudly of the wrong and insult done his order; the other beseeching that all present would remember they were Christians and subjects of the crown of England; but, in the midst of this confusion, Lord Thomas, taking the sword of state out of the hands of its bearer, advanced up the hall to the council-table with a lofty determination in his bearing that at once arrested all eyes. It was plain he was about to announce his final purpose, and all within the hall awaited what he would say in sullen silence. His friends and followers now formed a dense semicircle at the foot of the hall; the lords of the council had involuntarily drawn round the throne and lord chancellor’s chair; Thomas stood alone on the floor opposite the table, with the sword in his hands. Anxiety and pity were marked on the venerable features of Cromer as he bent forward to hear what he would say; but Alan and the treasurer, Lord James Butler, exchanged looks of malignant satisfaction.

“‘My lord’, said Thomas, ‘I come to tell you that my father has been basely put to death, for I know not what alleged treason, and that we have taken up arms to avenge his murder. Yet, although we be thus driven by the tyranny and cruelty of the king into open hostility, we would not have it said hereafter that we have conspired like villains and churls, but boldly declared our purpose as becomes warriors and gentlemen. This sword of state, my lords, is yours, not mine. I received it with an oath, that I would use it for your benefit; I should stain my

Silkent Thomas flings up the Sword of State.



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honour if I turned it to your hurt. My lords, I have now need of my own weapon, which I can trust; but as for the common sword, it has flattered me not—a painted scabbard, while its edge was yet red in the best blood of my house—aye, and is even now whetted anew for further destruction of the Geraldines. Therefore, my lords, save yourselves from us as from open enemies. I am no longer Henry Tudor's deputy—I am his foe. I have more mind to conquer than to govern—to meet him in the field than to serve him in office. And now, my lords, if all the hearts in England and Ireland, that have cause thereto, do but join in this quarrel, as I look that they will, then shall the world shortly be made sensibly of the tyranny, cruelty, falsehood, and heresy, for which the age to come may well count this base king among the ancient traitors of most abominable and hateful memory'.

“‘Croom aboo!’ cried Neale Roe O’Kennedy, Lord Thomas’s bard, who had pressed into the body of the hall at the head of the Irish soldiery. He was conspicuous over all by his height and the splendour of his native costume. His legs and arms were bare; the sleeves of his yellow cothone, parting above the elbow, fell in voluminous folds almost to the ground, whilst its skirts, girded at the loins, covered him to the knee. Over this he wore a short jacket of crimson, the sleeves just covering the shoulders, richly wrought and embroidered, and drawn round the waist by a broad belt, set with precious stones, and fastened with a massive golden buckle. His laced and fringed mantle was thrown back, but kept from falling by a silver brooch, as broad as a man’s palm, which glittered on his breast. He stretched out his hand, the gold bracelets rattling as they slid back on the thickness of his arm, and exclaimed in Irish:—

“‘Who is the young lion of the plains of Liffey, that affrights the men of counsel, and the ruler of the Saxon, with his noble voice?

“‘Who is the quickened ember of Kildare, that would consume the enemies of his people, and the false churls of the cruel race of clan-London?

“It is the son of Gerald—the top branch of the oak of ffaly!”

“It is Thomas of the silken mantle—Ard-Righ Eireann!”

“Righ Tomas go bragh!” shouted the soldiery; and many of the young lord’s Anglo-Irish friends responded—‘Long live King Tomas!’ but the chancellor, archbishop Cromer, who had listened to his insane avowal with undisguised distress, and who had already been seen to wring his hand, and even to shed tears as the misguided nobleman and his friends thus madly invoked their own destruction, came down from his seat, and earnestly grasping the young lord by the hand, addressed him:

“‘Good my lord,’ he cried, while his venerable figure and known attachment to the house of Kildare, attested as it was by such visible evidences of concern, commanded for a time the attention of all present. ‘Good my lord, suffer me to use the privilege of an old man’s speech with you, before you finally give up this ensign of your authority and pledge of your allegiance.’”

The archbishop reasoned and pleaded at much length and with deep emotion; but he urged and prayed in vain.

“‘My Lord Chancellor,’ replied Thomas, ‘I came not here to take advice, but to give you to understand what I purpose to do. As loyalty would have me know my prince, so duty compels me to reverence my father. I thank you heartily for your counsel; but it is now too late. As to my fortune, I will take it as God sends it, and rather choose to die with valour and liberty, than live under King Henry in bondage and villainy. Therefore, my lord, I thank you again for the concern you take in my welfare, and since you will not receive this sword out of my hand, I can but cast it from me, even as here I cast off and renounce all duty and allegiance to your master.’”

“So saying, he flung the sword of state upon the council table. The blade started a hand’s breadth out of its sheath, from the violence with which it was dashed out of his hands. He then, in the midst of a tumult of acclamation from his followers, and cries of horror and pity from the lords and prelates around, tore off his robes of

office and cast them at his feet. Stripped thus of his ensigns of dignity, Lord Thomas Fitzgerald stood up, amid the wreck of his fair fortune, an armed and avowed rebel, equipped in complete mail, before the representatives of England and Ireland. The cheering from his adherents was loud and enthusiastic, and those without replied with cries of fierce exultation".

The gallant but hapless Geraldine was now fully launched on his wild and desperate enterprise. There is no doubt that, had it partaken less of a hasty burst of passionate impetuosity, had it been more deliberately planned and organized, the revolt of Silken Thomas might have wrested the Anglo-Irish colony from Henry's authority. As it was, it shook the Anglo-Irish power to its base, and at one time seemed irresistible in its progress to success. But, however the ties of blood, kindred, and clanship might draw men to the side of Lord Thomas, most persons outside the Geraldine party soon saw the fate that surely awaited such a desperate venture, and saw too that it had all been the result of a subtle plot of the Ormond faction to ruin their powerful rivals. Moreover, in due time the truth leaked out that the old earl had not been beheaded at all, but was alive a prisoner in London. Lord Thomas now saw the gulph of ruin into which he had been precipitated, and knew now that his acts would only seal the doom or else break the heart of that father, the news of whose murder had driven him into this desperate course. But it was all too late to turn back. He would see the hopeless struggle through to the bitter end.

One of his first acts was to besiege Dublin city while another wing of his army devastated the possessions and reduced the castles of Ormond. Alan, the archbishop of Dublin, a prominent enemy of the Geraldines, fled from the city by ship. The vessel, however, was driven ashore on Clontarf, and the archbishop sought refuge in the village of Artane. News of this fact was quickly carried into the Geraldine camp at Dublin; and before day's-dawn Lord Thomas and his uncles, John and Oliver, with an armed party, reached Artane, and dragged the archbishop from his bed. The unhappy prelate pleaded hard for his

life; but the elder Geraldines, who were men of savage passion, barbarously murdered him as he knelt at their feet. This foul deed ruined any prospect of success which their cause might have had. It excited universal horror, and drew down upon its perpetrators, and all who should aid or shelter them, the terrible sentence of excommunication. This sentence was exhibited to the hapless earl of Kildare in his dungeon in London tower, and, it is said, so affected him that he never rallied more. He sank under the great load of his afflictions, and died of a broken heart.

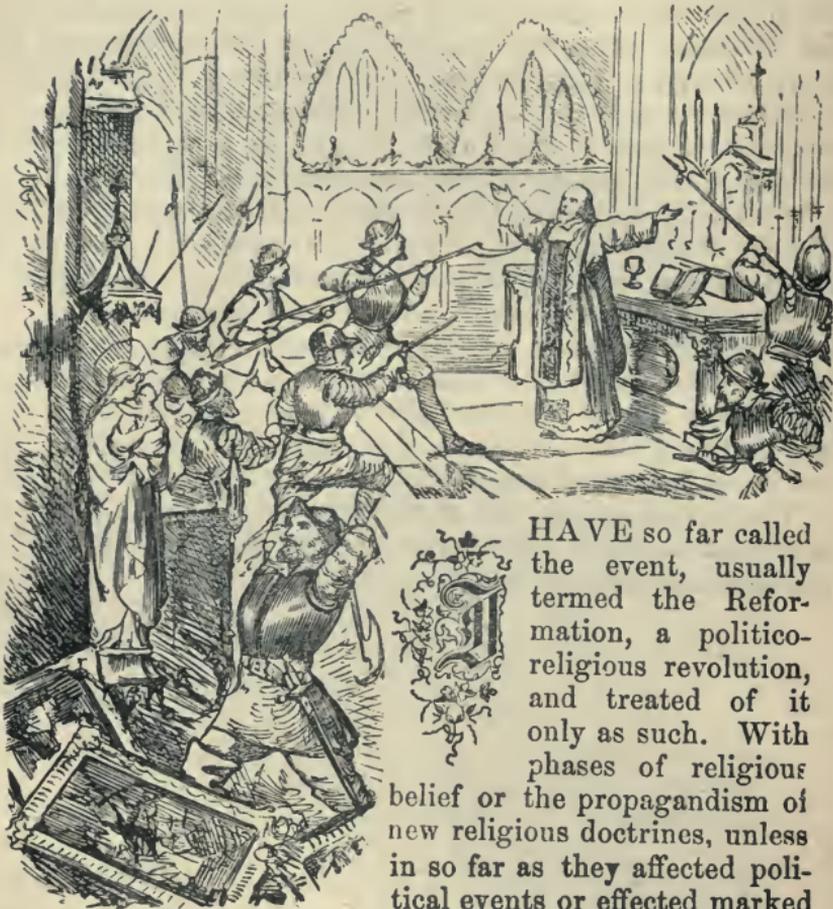
Meanwhile, Lord Thomas was pushing the rebellion with all his energies, and for a time with wondrous success. He despatched ambassadors to the emperor Charles the Fifth, and to the Pope, demanding aid in this war against Henry as the foe of God and man. But it is clear that neither the Pope nor the emperor augured well of Silken Thomas's ill-devised endeavours. No succours reached him. His fortunes eventually began to pale. Powerful levies were brought against him; and, finally, he sought a parley with the English commander-in-chief, Lord Leonard Gray, who granted him terms of life for himself and uncles. Henry was wroth that any terms should have been promised to such daring foes; but as terms had been pledged, there was nothing for it, according to Henry's code of morality, but to break the promise. Accordingly, the five uncles of Silken Thomas, and the unfortunate young nobleman himself, were treacherously seized—the uncles at a banquet to which they were invited, and which was, indeed, given in their honour, by the lord deputy Gray—and brought to London, where, in violation of plighted troth, they were all six beheaded at Tyburn, 3rd January, 1537.

This terrible blow was designed to cut off the Geraldine family for ever; and to all appearance it seemed, and Henry fondly believed, that this wholesale execution had accomplished that design, and left neither root nor seed behind. Yet once again that mysterious protection, which had so often preserved the Geraldine line in like terrible times, saved it from the decreed destruction. "The im-

prisoned earl (Lord Thomas's father) having died in the tower on the 12th December, 1534, the sole survivor of this historic house was now a child of twelve years of age, whose life was sought with an avidity equal to Herod's, but who was protected with a fidelity which defeated every attempt to capture him. Alternately the guest of his aunts, married to the chiefs of Offaly and Donegal, the sympathy everywhere felt for him led to a confederacy between the northern and southern chiefs, which had long been wanting. A loose league was formed, including the O'Neils of both branches, O'Donnell, O'Brien, the earl of Desmond, and the chiefs of Moylurg and Breffni. The lad, the object of so much natural and chivalrous affection, was harboured for a time in Munster, thence transported through Connaught into Donegal, and finally, after four years, in which he engaged more of the minds of statesmen than any other individual under the rank of royalty, was safely landed in France".

The Geraldine line was preserved once more! From this child Gerald it was to branch out as of yore, in stately strength and princely power.

XXXIII.—HOW THE "REFORMATION" WAS ACCOMPLISHED IN ENGLAND, AND HOW IT WAS RESISTED IN IRELAND.



HAVE so far called the event, usually termed the Reformation, a politico-religious revolution, and treated of it only as such. With phases of religious belief or the propagandism of new religious doctrines, unless in so far as they affected political events or effected marked

national changes, I do not purpose dealing in this Story. As a matter of fact, however, the Reformation was during the reign of Henry much less of a religious than a political revolution. The only points Henry was particular about were the matters of *supremacy* and *church property*. For a long period the idea of adopting the new form of faith in all its doctrinal sequence seemed quite foreign to his mind. The doctrine, firstly, that he, Henry, was *supreme king*, spiritual as well as temporal, within his *own* realms; the doctrine, secondly, that he could, in

virtue of such spiritual supremacy, give full rein to his beastly lusts, and call concubinage marriage; and lastly, that whatever property the Church possessed, bequeathed for pious uses, he might rob and keep for himself, or divide as bribes between his abetting nobles, legislators, and statesmen—these were the “reforms”, so-called, upon which the king set most value. Other matters he allowed for a time to have their way; at least it was so wherever difficulty was anticipated in pulling down the old and setting up new forms of worship. Thus we find the king at the same time sending a “reforming” archbishop to Dublin while sanctioning prelates of the old faith in other dioceses, barely on condition of taking the oath of allegiance to him. Doctrine or theology had scarcely any concern for him or his statesmen, and it is clear and plain to any student of history, that if the Catholic Church would only sanction to him his polygamy, and to them the rich plunder they had clutched, they would never have gone further, and would still be wondrous zealous “defenders of the faith”. But the Catholic Church, which could have avoided the whole disaster at the outset by merely suffering one lawful wife to be unlawfully put away, was not going to compromise, with him or with them, an iota of sacred truth or public morality, much less to sacrifice both wholesale after this fashion. So, in time, the king and his party saw that having gone so far, they must needs go the whole way. Like the panther that has tasted blood, their thirst for plunder was but whetted by their taste of Church spoil. They should go farther or they might lose all. They knew right well that of these spoils they never could rest sure as long as the owner, the Catholic Church, was allowed to live; so to kill the Church outright became to them as much of a necessity as the sure “dispatching” of a half-murdered victim is to a burglar or an assassin. Had it not been for this question of Church property—had there been no plunder to divide—in all human probability there would have been no “reformation” consummated in these countries. But by the spoils of the sanctuary Henry was able to bribe the nobles to his side, and to give them such an interest in the utter abolition of Catholicity and the per-

petuation of the new system, that no king or queen coming after him would be able permanently to restore the old order of things.

Here the reflection at once confronts us—what a mean, sordid, worldly-minded kennel these same “nobles” must have been! Aye, mean and soulless indeed! If there was any pretence of religious convictions having anything to say in the business, no such reflection would arise; no such language would be seemly. But few or none of the parties cared to get up even a semblance of interest in the doctrinal aspect of the passing revolution. One object, and one alone, seemed fixed before their gaze—to get as much as possible of “what was going”; to secure some of the loot, and to keep it. Given this one consideration, all things else might remain or be changed a thousand times over for all they cared. If any one question the correctness of this estimate of the conduct of the English and Anglo-Irish lords of the period before us, I need only point to the page of authentic history. They were a debased and cowardly pack. As long as Henry fed them with bribes from the abbey lands, they made and unmade laws “to order” for him. He asked them to declare his marriage with Catherine of Arragon invalid—they did it; his marriage with Anna Boleyn lawful—they did it; this same marriage unlawful and its fruits illegitimate—they did it; his marriage with Jane Seymour lawful—they did it. In fine they said and unsaid, legitimized and illegitimized, just as he desired. Nor was this all. In the reign of his child Edward, they enacted every law deemed necessary for the more complete overthrow of the ancient faith and the setting up of the new. But no sooner had Mary come to the throne, than these same lords, legislators, and statesmen instantaneously wheeled around, beat their breasts, became wondrously pious Catholics, whined out repentantly that they had been frightful criminals; and, like the facile creatures that they were, at the request of Mary, or to please her, undid in a rush all they had been doing during the two preceding reigns—but all on one condition, most significant and most necessary to mark, viz.: *that they should not be called upon to give back the stolen property!*

Again a change on the throne, and again *they* change! Elizabeth comes to undo all that Mary had restored, and lo! the venal lords and legislators in an instant wheel around once more; they decree false and illegitimate all they had just declared true and lawful; they swallow their own words, they say and unsay, they repeal and reënact, do and undo, as the whim of the queen, or the necessity of conserving their sacrilegious robberies dictates!

Yes; the history of the world has nothing to parallel the disgusting baseness, the mean sordid cowardice of the English and Anglo-Irish lords and legislators. Theirs was not a change of religious convictions, right or wrong, but a greedy venality, a facile readiness to change *any* way or *every* way for worldly advantage. Their model of policy was Judas Iscariot, who sold our Lord for thirty pieces of silver.

That Ireland also was not carried over into the new system was owing to the circumstance that the English authority had, so far, been able to secure for itself but a partial hold on the Irish nation. It must have been a curious reflection with the supreme pontiffs, that Ireland might in a certain sense be said to have been saved to the Catholic Church by its obstinate disregard of exhortations addressed to it repeatedly, if not by the popes, under cover or ostensible sanction of papal authority, in support of the English crown; for had the Irish yielded all that the English king demanded with Papal bull in hand, and become part and parcel of the English realm, Ireland, too, was lost to the old faith. At this point one is tempted to indulge in bitter reflections on the course of the Roman pontiffs towards Ireland. "Hitherto"—(so one might put it)—"that hapless nation in its fearful struggle against ruthless invaders found Rome on the side of its foes. It was surely a hard and a cruel thing for the Irish, so devotedly attached to the Holy See, to behold the rapacious and blood-thirsty Normans, Plantagenets, and Tudors, able to flourish against them Papal bulls and rescripts, until now when Henry quarrelled with Rome. Now—henceforth—*too late*—all that is to be altered; henceforth the bulls and the rescripts are all to exhort the broken and ruined

Irish nation to fight valiantly against that power to which, for four hundred years, the Roman court had been exhorting or commanding it to submit. Surely Ireland had been the sport of Roman policy, if not its victim!"

These bitter reflections would be not only natural but just, if the facts of the case really supported them. But the facts do not quite support this view, which, it is singular to note, the Irish themselves never entertained. At all times they seem to have most justly and accurately appreciated the real attitude of the Holy See towards them, and fixed the value and force of the bulls and rescripts obtained by the English sovereign at their true figure. The conduct of the popes was not free from reproach in a particular subsequently to be noted; but the one thing they had really urged, rightly or wrongly, on the Irish from the first was the acceptance of the sovereignty of the English king, by no means implying an incorporation with the English nation, or an abandonment of their nationality. In this sense the popes' exhortations were always read by the native Irish; and it will be noted that in this sense from the very beginning the Irish princes very generally were ready to acquiesce in them. The idea, rightly or wrongly, appears to have been that this strong sovereignty would be capable of reducing the chaotic elements in Ireland (given up to such hopeless disorder previously) to compactness and order—a good to Ireland and to Christendom. This was the guise in which the Irish question had always been presented by plausible English envoys, civil or ecclesiastical, at Rome. The Irish themselves did not greatly quarrel with it so far; but there was all the difference in the world between this the theory and the bloody and barbarous fact and practice as revealed in Ireland.

What may be said with truth is, that the popes inquired too little about the fact and practice, and were always too ready to write and exhort upon such a question at the instance of the English. The Irish chiefs were sensible of 'th's wrong done them; but in their every act and word they evidenced a perfect consciousness that the rectitude of *enem tives* animating the popes was not to be questioned. Even when the authority of the Holy See was most pain-

fully misused against them, they received it with reverence and respect. The time had at length arrived, however, when Rome was to mourn over whatever of error or wrong had marked its past policy towards Ireland, and for ever after nobly and unchangeably to stand by her side. But alas! too late—all too late now for succeeding! All the harm had been done, and was now beyond repairing. The grasp of England had been too firmly tightened in the past. At the very moment when the Pope desired, hoped, urged, and expected Ireland to arise triumphant and glorious, a free Catholic nation; a recompense for lost England, she sank broken, helpless, and despairing under the feet of the sacrilegious Tudor.

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XXXIV.—HOW THE IRISH CHIEFS GAVE UP ALL HOPE AND YIELDED TO HENRY; AND HOW THE IRISH CLANS SERVED THE CHIEFS FOR SUCH TREASON.

ENRY THE EIGHTH was the first English sovereign styled King of Ireland, and it must be confessed he had more to show for assuming such a title than his predecessors had for the lesser dignities of the kind which they claimed; inasmuch as the title was "voted" to him in the first formal parliament in which Irish chieftains and Anglo-Norman lords sat side by side. To be sure the Irish chieftains had no authority from the septs (from whom alone they derived any authority or power) to give such a vote; and, as we shall learn presently, some of those septs instantly on becoming aware of it and the consequences it implied, deposed the chiefs thus acting, and promptly elected (in each case from the same family however) others in their stead. But never previously had so many of the native princes in a manner so formal given in their acknowledgment of the English dynasty, and their renunciation of the ancient institutions of their nation. Utterly broken down in spirit, reft of hope, weary of

struggle, they seem to have yielded themselves up to inevitable fate. "The arguments", says one of our historians, "by which many of the chiefs might have justified themselves to the clans in 1541-2-3, for submitting to the inevitable laws of necessity, in rendering homage to Henry the Eighth, were neither few nor weak. Abroad there was no hope of an alliance sufficient to counterbalance the immense resources of England; at home, life-wasting private wars, the conflict of laws, of languages, and of titles to property had become unbearable. That fatal family pride which would not permit an O'Brien to obey an O'Neill, nor an O'Connor to follow either, rendered the establishment of a native monarchy (even if there had been no other obstacle) wholly impracticable". Another says: "The chief lords of both English and Irish descent were reduced to a state of deplorable misery and exhaustion. . . . It was high time, therefore, on the one side to think of submission, and prudent on the other to propose concession; and Henry was just then fortunate in selecting a governor for Ireland who knew how to take advantage of the favourable circumstances" This was Sainteger, whose politic course of action resulted in the assembling at Dublin, 12th June, 1541, of a parliament at which, besides all the principal Anglo-Norman lords, there attended, Donogh O'Brien, tanist of Thomond, the O'Reilly, O'More, M'William, Fitzpatrick, and Kavanagh.\* The speeches in the English language were translated in the Gaelic tongue to the Irish chiefs by the Earl of Ormond. The main business was to consider a bill voting the crown of Ireland to Henry, which was unanimously passed—registered rather; for, as far as the native "legislators" were concerned, the assemblage was that of conquered and subdued chieftains, ready to acknowledge their subjection in *any* way. O'Neill and O'Donnell refused to attend. They held out sullenly yet awhile in the North.

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\* Son of M'Murrough who had just previously "submitted", renouncing the title of M'Murrough, adopting the name of Kavanagh, and undertaking on the part of his sept. that no one henceforth would assume the renounced title!

But in the next year they "came in", much to the delight of Henry, who loaded them with flatteries and attentions. The several chiefs yielded up their ancient Irish titles, and consented to receive English instead. O'Brien was created Earl of Thomond; Ulick M'William was created Earl of Clanrickard and Baron Dunkeilin; Hugh O'Donnell was made Earl of Tyrconnel; O'Neill was made Earl of Tyrone; Kavanagh was made Baron of Ballyann; and Fitzpatrick, Baron of Ossory. Most of these titles were conferred by Henry in person at Greenwich palace, with extravagant pomp and formality, the Irish chiefs having been specially invited thither for that purpose, and sums of money given them for their equipment and expenses. In many instances, if not in all, they consented to receive from Henry royal patents or title deeds for "their" lands, as the English from their feudal stand-point would regard them; not *their* lands, however, in point of fact and law, but the "tribe-lands" of their septs. The acceptance of these "patents" of land proprietorship, still more than the acceptance of English titles, was "a complete abrogation of the Gaelic relation of clansman and chief". Some of the new earls were moreover apportioned a share of the plundered Church lands. This was yet a further outrage on their people. Little need we wonder, therefore, that while the newly created earls and barons were airing their modern dignities at the English court, feted and flattered by Henry, the clans at home, learning by dark rumour of these treasons, were already stripping the backsliding chiefs of all authority and power, and were taking measures to arrest and consign them to punishment on their return! O'Donnell found most of his clan, headed by his son, up in arms against him; O'Brien, on his return, was confronted by like circumstances; the new "Earl of Clanrickard" was incontinently attainted by his people, and a Gaelic "M'William" was duly installed in his stead. O'Neill, "the first of his race who had accepted an English title", found that his clansmen had formally deposed him, and elected as the O'Neill, his son John, surnamed "John the Proud"—the celebrated "Shane" O'Neill, so called in the jargon of English writers. On all sides the septs repu-

diated and took formal and practical measures to disavow and reverse the acts of their representatives. The hopelessness that had broken the spirit of the chief found no place in the heart of the clan.

This was the beginning of new complications in the already tangled skein of Irish affairs. A new source of division and disorganisation was now planted in the country. Hitherto the clans at least were intact, though the nation was shattered. Henceforth the clans themselves were split into fragments. From this period forward we hear of a king's or a queen's O'Reilly and an Irish O'Reilly; a king's O'Neill and an Irish O'Neill; a king's O'Donnell and an Irish O'Donnell. The English government presented a very artful compromise to the septs—offering them a chief of the native family stock, but requiring that he should hold from the crown, not from the clan. The nominee of the government, backed by all the English power and interest, was generally able to make head for a time as least against the legitimate chief duly and legally chosen and elected by the sept. In many instances the English nominee was able to rally to his side a considerable section of the clan, and even without external aid to hold the chosen chief in check. By the internal feuds thus incited, the clans were utterly riven, and were given over to a self-acting process of extinction. Occasionally, indeed, the crown nominee, once he was firmly seated in the chieftaincy, threw off all allegiance to his foreign masters, declared himself an *Irish* chief, cast away scornfully his English earlship, and assumed proudly the ancient title that named him head of his clan. In this event the government simply declared him “deposed”, proceeded to nominate another chief in his place, and sent an army to instal the new nominee on the necks of the stubborn clan. This was the artful system—copied in all its craft and cruelty by the British in India centuries afterwards—pursued towards the native princes and chiefs of Ireland from the reign of Henry the Eighth to the middle of the seventeenth century.

XXXV.—HENRY'S SUCCESSORS: EDWARD, MARY, AND ELIZABETH. THE CAREER OF "JOHN THE PROUD".



HE changes of English sovereigns little affected English policy in Ireland. Whatever meaning the change from Henry to Edward, from Edward to Mary, and from Mary to Elizabeth, may have had in England, in Ireland it mattered little who filled the throne; the policy of subjugation, plunder, and extirpation went on. In Mary's reign, indeed, incidents more than one occurred to show that, though of course bent on completing the conquest and annexation of Ireland, she was a stranger to the savage and cruel passions that had ruled her father, and that were so fearfully inherited by his other daughter, Elizabeth. The aged chief of Offaly, O'Connor, had long lain in the dungeons of London Tower, all efforts to obtain his release having failed. At length his daughter Margaret, hearing that now a queen—a woman—sat on the throne, bethought her of an appeal in person to Mary for her father's life and freedom. She proceeded to London and succeeded in obtaining an audience of the queen. She pleaded with all a woman's eloquence, and with all the fervour of a daughter petitioning for a father's life! Mary was touched to the heart by this instance of devotedness. She treated young Margaret of Offaly with the greatest tenderness, spoke to her cheerfully, and promised her that what she had so bravely sought should be freely granted. And it was so. O'Connor Faly returned with his daughter to Ireland a free man.

Nor was this the only instance in which Mary exhibited a womanly sympathy for misfortune. The fate of the Geraldines moved her to compassion. The young Gerald—long time a fugitive among the glens of Muskery and Donegal, now an exile sheltered in Rome—was recalled and restored to all his estates, honours, and titles; and with O'Connor Faly and the young Geraldine there were allowed to return to their homes, we are told, the heirs of

the houses of Ormond and Upper Ossory, "to the great delight of the southern half of the kingdom".

To Mary there succeeded on the English throne her Amazonian sister, Elizabeth. The nobles and commoners of England had, indeed, as in Mary's case, at her father's request, declared and decreed as the immortal and unchangeable truth that she was illegitimate; but, according to their code of morality, that was no earthly reason against their now declaring and decreeing as the immortal and unchangeable truth that she was legitimate. For these very noble nobles and most uncommon commoners eat dirt with a hearty zest, and were ready to decree and declare, to swear and unswear, the most contradictory and irreconcilable assertions, according as their venality and servility suggested.

Elizabeth was a woman of marvellous ability. She possessed abundantly the talents that qualify a statesman. She was greatly gifted indeed; but nature, while richly endowing her with so much else besides, forgot or withheld from her one of the commonest gifts of human kind—Elizabeth had no heart. A woman devoid of heart is, after all, a terrible freak of nature. She may be gifted with marvellous powers of intellect, and endowed with great personal beauty, but she is still a monster. Such was Elizabeth; a true Tudor and veritable daughter of King Henry the Eighth; one of the most remarkable women of her age, and in one sense one of the greatest of English sovereigns.

Her reign was memorable in Irish history. It witnessed at its opening the revolt of John the Proud in Ulster; later on the Desmond rebellion; and towards the close the great struggle that to all time will immortalize the name of Hugh O'Neill.

John the Proud, as I have already mentioned, was elected to the chieftaincy of the O'Neills on the deposition of his father by the clan. He scornfully defied all the efforts of the English to dispute his claim, and soon they were fain to recognize him and court his friendship. Of this extraordinary man little more can be said in praise than that he was an indomitable and, up to the great reverse which

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suddenly closed his career, a successful soldier, who was able to defy and defeat the best armies of England on Irish soil, and more than once to bring the English government very submissively to terms of his dictation. But he lacked the personal virtues that adorned the lives and inspired the efforts of the great and brave men whose struggles we love to trace in the annals of Ireland. His was, indeed, a splendid military career, and his administration of the government of his territory was undoubtedly exemplary in many respects, but he was in private life no better than a mere English noble of the time; his conduct towards the unfortunate Calvach O'Donnell leaving a lasting stain on his name.\* The state papers of England reveal an incident in his life, which presents us with an authenticated illustration of the means deemed lawful by the English government often enough in those centuries for the removing of an Irish foe. John had reduced all the north to his sway, and cleared out every vestige of English dominion in Ulster. He had encountered the English commander-in-chief and defeated him. He had marched to the very confines of Dublin, spreading terror through the Pale. In this strait Sussex, the lord lieutenant, bethought him of a good plan for the effectual removal of this dangerous enemy to the crown and government. With the full cognizance and sanction of the queen, he hired an assassin to murder O'Neill. The plot, however, miscarried, and we should probably have never heard of it, but that, very awkwardly for the memory of Elizabeth and of her worthy viceroy, some

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\* He invaded the O'Donnell's territory, and acting, it is said, on information secretly supplied by the unfaithful wife of the Tyrconnell chief, succeeded in surprising and capturing him. He kept O'Donnell, who was his father-in-law, for years a close prisoner, and lived in open adultery with the perfidious wife of the imprisoned chief, the step-mother of his own lawful wife! "What deepens the horror of this odious domestic tragedy", says M'Gee, "is the fact, that the wife of O'Neill, the daughter of O'Donnell, thus supplanted by her shameless step-mother under her own roof, died soon afterwards of 'horror loathing grief and deep anguish' at the spectacle afforded by the private life of O'Neill, and the severities inflicted on her wretched father!"

portions of their correspondence on the subject remained undestroyed amongst the state papers, and are now to be seen in the State Paper Office! The career of John the Proud closed suddenly and miserably. He was utterly defeated (A.D. 1567) in a great pitched battle by the G'Dounells; an overthrow which it is said affected his reason. Flying from the field with his guilty mistress, his secretary, and a bodyguard of fifty horsemen, he was induced to become the guest of some Scottish adventurers in Antrim, upon whom he had inflicted a severe defeat not long previously. After dinner, when most of those present were under the influence of wine—John it is said, having been purposely plied with drink—an Englishman who was present, designedly got up a brawl, or pretence of a brawl, about O'Neill's recent defeat of his then guests. Daggers were drawn in an instant, and the unfortunate John the Proud, while sitting helplessly at the banqueting board, was surrounded and butchered!

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XXXVI.—HOW THE GERALDINES ONCE MORE LEAGUED AGAINST ENGLAND UNDER THE BANNER OF THE CROSS. HOW "THE ROYAL POPE" WAS THE EARLIEST AND THE MOST ACTIVE ALLY OF THE IRISH CAUSE.



HE death of John the Proud gave the English power respite in the north; but, respited for a moment in the north, that power was doomed to encounter danger still as menacing in the south. Once more the Geraldines were to put it severely to the proof.

Elizabeth had not witnessed and studied in vain the events of her father's reign. She very sagaciously concluded, that if she would safely push her war against the Catholic faith in Ireland, she must first get the dreaded Geraldines out of the way. And she knew, too, from all previous events, how necessary it was to

guard that not even a solitary seedling of that dangerous race was allowed to escape. She wrote to Sydney, her lord lieutenant, to lay a right cunning snare for the catching of the Geraldines in one haul. That faithful viceroy of a gracious queen forthwith "issued an invitation for the nobility of Ireland to meet him on a given day in the city of Dublin, to confer with him on some matters of great weight, particularly regarding religion". The bait took. "The dynasts of Ireland, little suspecting the design, hastened to the city, and along with them the Earl of Desmond and his brother John". They had a safe conduct from Sydney, but had scarcely arrived when they were seized and committed to the Castle dungeons, whence they were soon shipped off to the Tower of London. This was the plan Elizabeth had laid, but it had only partially succeeded. All the Geraldines had not come into the snare, and she took five years to decide whether it would be worth while murdering these (according to law), while so many other members of the family were yet outside her grasp. The earl and his brother appear not to have been imprisoned, but merely held to residence under surveillance in London. According to the version of the family chronicler, they found means of transmitting a document or message to their kinsmen and retainers, appointing their cousin James, son of Maurice—known as James Fitzmaurice—to be the head and leader of the family in their absence, "for he was well-known for his attachment to the ancient faith, no less than for his valour and chivalry". "Gladly", says the old chronicler, "did the people of Earl Desmond receive these commands, and inviolable was their attachment to him who was now their appointed chieftain".

This was that James Fitzmaurice of Desmond—"James Geraldine of happy memory", as Pope Gregory calls him—who originated, planned, and organized the memorable Geraldine League of 1579, upon the fortunes of which for years the attention of Christendom was fixed. With loftier, nobler, holier aims than the righting of mere family wrongs he conceived the idea of a great league in defence of religion; a holy war, in which he might demand the sustain-

ment and intervention of the Catholic powers. Elizabeth's own conduct at this juncture in stirring up and subsidising the Huguenots in France supplied Fitzmaurice with another argument in favour of his scheme. First of all he sent an envoy to the Pope—Gregory the Thirteenth—demanding the blessing and assistance of the Supreme Pontiff in this struggle of a Catholic nation against a monarch nakedly violating all title to allegiance. The act of an apostate sovereign of a Catholic country drawing the sword to compel his subjects into apostacy on pain of death, was not only a forfeiture of his title to rule, it placed him outside the pale of law, civil and ecclesiastical. This was Henry's position when he died; to this position, as the envoy pointed out, Elizabeth succeeded "with a vengeance"; and so he prayed of Pope Gregory, "his blessing on the undertaking and the concession of indulgences which the Church bestows on those who die in defence of the faith". The Holy Father flung himself earnestly and actively into the cause. "Then", says the old Geraldine chaplain, "forth flashed the sword of the Geraldine; like chaff did he scatter the host of reformers; fire and devastation did he carry into their strongholds, so that during five years he won many a glorious victory, and carried off innumerable trophies".

This burst of rhapsody, excusable enough on the part of the old Geraldine chronicler, gives, however, no faithful idea of what ensued; many brilliant victories, it is true, James Geraldine achieved in his protracted struggle. But after five years of valiant effort and of varied fortunes, the hour of reverses came. One by one Fitzmaurice's allies were struck down or fell away from him, until at length he himself with a small force stood to bay in the historic Glen of Aherlow, which "had now become to the patriots of the south what the valley of Glenmalure had been for those of Leinster—a fortress dedicated by nature to the defence of freedom". Here he held out for a year; but, eventually, he despatched envoys to the lord president at Kilmallock to make terms of submission, which were duly granted. Whether from motives of policy, or in compliance with these stipulations, the imprisoned earl and his brother were forthwith released in London; the queen

making them an exceedingly smooth and bland speech against the sin of rebellion. The gallant Fitzmaurice betook himself into exile, there to plot and organize with redoubled energy in the cause of Faith and Country; while the earl of Desmond, utterly disheartened no doubt by the result of James's revolt, and "only too happy to be tolerated in the possession of his 570,000 acres, was eager enough to testify his allegiance by any sort of service".

Fitzmaurice did not labour in vain. He went from court to court pleading the cause he had so deeply at heart. He was received with honour and respect everywhere; but it was only at Rome that he obtained that which he valued beyond personal honours for himself—aid in men, money, and arms for the struggle in Ireland. A powerful expedition was fitted out at Civita Vecchia by the sovereign pontiff; and from various princes of Europe secret promises of further aid were showered upon the brave Geraldine. He little knew, all this time, while he in exile was toiling night and day—was pleading, urging, beseeching—planning, organizing, and directing—full of ardour and of faithful courageous resolve, that his countrymen at home—even his own kinsmen—were temporising and compromising with the lord president! He little knew that, instead of finding Ireland ready to welcome him as a deliverer, he was to land in the midst of a prostrate, dispirited, and apathetic population, and was to find some of his own relatives, not only fearing to countenance, but cravenly arrayed against him! It was even so. As the youthful Emmett exclaimed of his own project against the British crown more than two hundred years subsequently, we may say of Fitzmaurice's—"There was failure in every part". By some wild fatality everything miscarried. There was concert nowhere; there was no one engaged in the cause of ability to second James's efforts; and what misfortune marred, incompetency ruined. The Pope's expedition, upon which so much depended, was diverted from its destination by its incompetent commander, an English adventurer named Stukely, knave or fool, to whom, in an evil hour, James had unfortunately confided such a trust. Stukely, having arrived at Lisbon on

his way to Ireland, and having there learned that the king of Portugal was setting out on an expedition against the Moors, absolutely joined his forces to those of Dom Sebastian, and accompanied him,\* leaving James of Desmond to learn as best he might of this inexplicable imbecility, if not cold-blooded treason!

Meanwhile, in Ireland, the air was thick with rumours, vague and furtive, that James was "on the sea", and soon to land with a liberating expedition. The government was, of course, on the alert, fastening its gaze with lynx-eyed vigilance on all men likely to join the "foreign emissaries", as the returning Irish and their friends were styled; and around the south-western coast of Ireland was instantly drawn a line of British cruisers. The government fain would have seized upon the earl of Desmond and his brothers, but it was not certain whether this would aid or retard the apprehended revolt; for, so far, these Geraldines protested their opposition to it, and to them—to the earl in particular—the population of the south looked for leadership. Yet, in sooth, the English might have believed the earl, who, hoping nothing of the revolt, yet sympathising secretly with his kinsman, was in a sad plight what to do, anxious to be "neutral", and trying to convince the lord president that he was well affected. The government party, on the other hand, trusting him nought, seemed anxious to goad him into some "overt act" that would put him utterly in their power. While all was excitement about the expected expedition, lo! three suspicious strangers were landed at Dingle from a Spanish ship! They were seized as "foreign emissaries", and were brought first before the earl of Desmond. Glad of an opportunity for showing the government his zeal, he forthwith sent them prisoners to the lord president at Kilmallock. In vain they protested that they were not conspirators or invaders. And indeed they were not, though they were

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\* Stukely, and most of his force, perished on the bloody field of Alcazarquebir, where Dom Sebastian and two Moorish kings like-wise fell.

what was just as bad in the eyes of the law, namely, Catholic ecclesiastics, one of them being Dr. O'Haly, bishop of Mayo, and another Father Cornelius O'Rorke. To reveal what they really were would serve them little; inasmuch as hanging and beheading as "rebels" was in no way different from hanging and beheading as "Popish ecclesiastics". Yet would the authorities insist that they were vile foreign emissaries. They spoke with a Spanish accent; they wore their beard in the Spanish fashion, and their boots were of Spanish cut. So to force a confession of what was not truth out of them, no effort was spared. They were "put to every conceivable torture", says the historian, "in order to extract intelligence of Fitzmaurice's movements". After their thighs had been broken with hammers they were hanged on a tree, and their bodies used as targets by the soldiery.

By this time James, all unconscious of Stukely's defection, had embarked from Spain for Ireland, with a few score Spanish soldiers in three small ships. He brought with him Dr. Saunders, Papal legate, the bishop of Killaloe, and Dr. Allen. The little fleet, after surviving shipwreck on the coast of Galicia, sailed into Dingle Harbour 17th July, 1579. Here James first tasted disheartening disillusion. His great kinsman the earl, so far from marching to welcome him and summoning the country to rise, "sent him neither sign of friendship nor promise of coöperation". This was discouragement indeed; yet Fitzmaurice was not without hope that when in a few days the main expedition under Stukely would arrive, the earl might think more hopefully of the enterprise, and rally to it that power which he alone could assemble in Munster. So, weighing anchor, James steered for a spot which no doubt he had long previously noted and marked as preëminently suited by nature for such a purpose as this of his just now—Illan-an-Oir, or Golden Island, in Smerwick harbour, on the north-west Kerry coast, destined to be famed in story as Fort del Ore. This was a singular rock, a diminutive Gibraltar, jutting into the harbour or bay of Smerwick. Even previously its natural strength as a site for a fort had been noticed, and a rude fortification of some sort

crowned the rock. Here James landed his small force, threw up an earthwork across the narrow neck of land connecting the "Isle of Gold" with the mainland, and waited for news of Stukely.

But Stukely never came! There did come, however, unfortunately for James, an English man-of-war, which had little difficulty in capturing his transports within sight of the helpless fort. All hope of the expected expedition soon fled, or mayhap its fate became known, and matters grew desperate on Illan-an-Oir. Still the earl made no sign. His brothers John and James, however, less timid or more true to kinship, had chivalrously hastened to join Fitzmaurice. But it was clear the enterprise was lost. The government forces were mustering throughout Munster, and nowhere was help being organized. In this strait it was decided to quit the fort and endeavour to reach the old fastnesses amidst the Galtees. The little band in their eastward march were actually pursued by the earl of Desmond, not very much in earnest indeed—in downright sham, the English said, yet in truth severely enough to compel them to divide into three fugitive groups, the papal legate and the other dignitaries remaining with Fitzmaurice. Making a desperate push to reach the Shannon, his horses utterly exhausted, the brave Geraldine was obliged to impress into his service some horses belonging to Sir William Burke, through whose lands he was then passing. Burke, indeed, was a relative of his, and Fitzmaurice thought that revealing his name would silence all objection. On the contrary, however, this miserable Burke assembled a force, pursued the fugitives, and fell upon them, as "few and faint", jaded and outworn, they had halted at the little river Mulkern in Limerick county. Fitzmaurice was wounded mortally early in the fray, yet his ancient prowess flashed out with all its native brilliancy at the last. Dashing into the midst of his dastard foes, at one blow he clove to earth Theobald Burke, and in another instant laid the brother of Theobald mortally wounded at his feet. The assailants, though ten to one, at once turned and fled. But alas! vain was the victory—James Geraldine had received his death wound! Calmly receiving the last rites of the Church at the

hands of Dr. Allen, and having with his last breath dictated a message to his kinsmen enjoining them to take up the banner fallen in his hand, and to fight to the last in the holy war—naming his cousin John of Desmond as leader to succeed him—the chivalrous Fitzmaurice breathed his last sigh. “Such”, says the historian, “was the fate of the glorious hopes of Sir James Fitzmaurice! So ended in a squabble with churls about cattle, on the banks of an insignificant stream, a career which had drawn the attention of Europe, and had inspired with apprehension the lion-hearted English queen!”

Faithful to the dying message of Fitzmaurice, John of Desmond now avowed his resolution to continue the struggle; which he did bravely, and not without brilliant results. But the earl still “stood on the fence”. Still would he fain persuade the government that he was quite averse to the mad designs of his unfortunate kinsmen; and still government, fully believing him a sympathiser with the movement, lost no opportunity of scornfully taunting him with insinuations. Eventually they commenced to treat his lands as the possessions of an enemy, wasting and harrying them; and at length the earl, finding *too late* that in such a struggle there was for him no neutrality, took the field. But this step on his part, which if it had been taken earlier, might have had a powerful effect, was now, as I have said, all too late for any substantial influence upon the lost cause. Yet he showed by a few brilliant victories at the very outset that he was, in a military sense, not all unworthy of his position as First Geraldine. The Spanish king, too, had by this time been moved to the aid of the struggle. The Fort del Ore once more received an expedition from Spain, where this time there landed a force of 700 Spaniards and Italians, under the command of Sebastian San Josef, Hercules Pisano, and the Duke of Biscay. They brought moreover arms for 5,000 men, a large supply of money, and cheering promises of still further aid from over the sea. Lord Grey, the deputy, quickly saw that probably the future existence of British power in Ireland depended upon the swift and sudden crushing of this formidable expedition; accordingly

with all vehemence did he strain every energy to concentrate with rapidity around Fort del Ore, by land and sea, an overwhelming force before any aid or coöperation could reach it from the Geraldines. "Among the officers of the besieging force were three especially notable men—Sir Walter Raleigh, the poet Spenser, and Hugh O'Neill—afterwards Earl of Tyrone, but at this time commanding a squadron of cavalry for her majesty queen Elizabeth. San Josef surrendered the place on conditions; that savage outrage ensued, which is known in Irish history as 'the massacre of Smerwick'. Raleigh and Wingfield appear to have directed the operations by which 800 prisoners of war were cruelly butchered and flung over the rocks. The sea upon that coast is deep, and the tide swift; but it has not proved deep enough to hide that horrid crime, or to wash the stains of such wanton bloodshed from the memory of its authors!"\*

It may be said that the Geraldine cause never rallied after this disaster. "For four years longer", says the historian whom I have just quoted, "the Geraldine League flickered in the south. Proclamations offering pardon to all concerned, except earl Gerald and a few of his most devoted adherents, had their effect. Deserted at home, and cut off from foreign assistance, the condition of Desmond grew more and more intolerable. On one occasion he narrowly escaped capture by rushing with his countess into a river, and remaining concealed up to the chin in water. His dangers can hardly be paralleled by those of Bruce after the battle of Falkirk, or by the more familiar adventures of Charles Edward. At length on the night of the 11th November, 1584, he was surprised with only two followers in a lonesome valley, about five miles distant from Tralee, among the mountains of Kerry. The spot is still remembered and the name of 'the Earl's Road' transports the fancy of the traveller to that tragical scene. Cowering over the embers of a half-extinct fire in "miserable hovel, the lord of a country which in time of

peace had yielded an annual rental of '40,000 golden pieces', was despatched by the hands of common soldiers, without pity, or time, or hesitation. A few followers watching their creaghts or herds, farther up the valley, found his bleeding trunk flung out upon the highway; the head was transported over seas to rot upon the spikes of London Tower".

Such was the end of the great Geraldine League of 1579. Even the youngest of my readers must have noticed in its plan and constitution, one singular omission which proved a fatal defect. It did not raise the issue of national independence at all. It made no appeal to the national aspirations for liberty. It was simply a war to compel Elizabeth to desist from her bloody persecution of the Catholic faith. Furthermore it left out of calculation altogether the purely Irish elements. It left all the northern half of the kingdom out of sight. It was only a southern movement. The Irish princes and chiefs—those of them most opposed to the English power—never viewed the enterprise with confidence or sympathy. Fitzmaurice devoted much more attention to foreign aid than to native combination. In truth his movement was simply an Anglo-Irish war to obtain freedom of conscience, and never raised issues calculated to call forth the united efforts of the Irish nation in a war against England

Before passing to the next great event of this era, I may pause to note here a few occurrences worthy of record, but for which I did not deem it advisable to break in upon the consecutive narration of the Geraldine war. My endeavour throughout is to present to my young readers in clear and distinct outline, a sketch of the *chief* event of each period more or less complete by itself, so that it may be easily comprehended and remembered. To this end I omit many minor incidents and occurrences, which, if engrafted or brought in upon the main narrative, might have a tendency to confuse and bewilder the facts in one's recollection.

XXXVII.—HOW COMMANDER COSBY HELD A “FEAST” AT MULLAGHMAST; AND HOW “RUARI OGE” RECOMPENSED THAT “HOSPITALITY”. A VICEROY’S VISIT TO GLENMALURE, AND HIS RECEPTION THERE.



T was within the period which we have just passed over, that the ever-memorable massacre of Mullaghmast occurred. It is not, unhappily, the only tragedy of the kind to be met with in our blood-stained annals; yet it is of all the most vividly perpetuated in popular traditions. In 1577, Sir Francis Cosby, commanding the queen's troops in Leix and Offaly, formed a diabolical plot for the permanent conquest of that district. Peace at the moment prevailed between the government and the inhabitants; but Cosby seemed to think that in *extirpation* lay the only effectual security for the crown. Feigning, however, great friendship, albeit suspicious of some few “evil disposed” persons, said not to be well-affected, he invited to a grand feast all the chief families of the territory; attendance thereat being a sort of test of amity. To this summons responded the flower of the Irish nobility in Leix and Offaly, with their kinsmen and friends—the O'Mores, O'Kellys, Lalors, O'Nolans, etc. The “banquet”—alas!—was prepared by Cosby in the great Rath or Fort of Mullach-Maisten, or Mullaghmast, in Kildare county. Into the great rath rode many a pleasant cavalcade that day; but none ever came forth that entered in. A gentleman named Lalor who had halted a little way off, had his suspicions in some way aroused. He noticed, it is said, that while many went into the rath, none were seen to reappear outside. Accordingly he desired his friends to remain behind while he advanced and reconnoitred. He entered cautiously. Inside, what a horrid spectacle met his sight! At the very entrance the dead bodies of some of his slaughtered kinsmen! In an instant he himself was set upon; but drawing his sword, he hewed his way out of the fort and back to his friends, and they

barely escaped with their lives to Dysart! He was the only Irishman, out of more than four hundred who entered the fort that day, that escaped with life! The invited guests were butchered to a man; one hundred and eighty of the O'Mores alone having thus perished.

The peasantry long earnestly believed and asserted that on the encircled rath of slaughter rain nor dew never fell, and that the ghosts of the slain might be seen, and their groans distinctly heard "on the solemn midnight blast"—

O'er the Rath of Mullaghmast,  
On the solemn midnight blast,  
What bleeding spectres pass'd  
With their gashed breasts bare!

Hast thou heard the fitful wail  
That o'erloads the sullen gale  
When the waning moon shines pale  
O'er the cursed ground there?

Hark! hollow moans arise  
Through the black tempestuous skies,  
And curses, strife, and cries,  
From the lone rath swell;

For bloody Sydney there  
Nightly fills the lurid air  
With the unholy pompous glare  
Of the foul, deep hell.

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False Sydney! knighthood's stain!  
The trusting brave—in vain  
Thy guests—ride o'er the plain  
To thy dark cow'rd snare;

Flow'r of Offaly and Leix,  
They have come thy board to grace—  
Fools! to meet a faithless race,  
Save with true swords bare.

While cup and song abound,  
The triple lines surround  
The closed and guarded mound,  
In the night's dark noon.

Alas! too brave O'Moore,  
Ere the revelry was o'er,  
They have spill'd thy young heart's gore,  
Snatch'd from love too soon!



On the bloody day of Glenmalure, when the red flag of England went down in the battle's hurricane, and Elizabeth's proud viceroy, Lord Gray de Wilton, and all the chivalry of the Pale were scattered and strewn like autumn leaves in the gale, Cosby of Mullaghmast fell in the rout, sent swiftly to eternal judgment with the brand of Cain upon his brow. A like doom, a fatality, tracked his children from generation to generation! They too perished by the sword or the battle-axe—the last of them, son and grandson, on one day, by the stroke of an avenging O'More\*—until it may be questioned if there now exists a human being in whose veins runs the blood of the greatly infamous knight commander, Sir Francis Cosby.

The battle of Glenmalure was fought 25th of August, 1580. That magnificent defile, as I have already remarked, in the words of one of our historians, had long been for the patriots of Leinster "a fortress dedicated by nature to the defence of freedom"; and never had fortress of freedom a nobler soul to command its defence than he who now held Glenmalure for God and Ireland—Feach M'Hugh O'Byrne, of Ballinacor, called by the English "The Firebrand of the Mountains". In his time no sword was drawn for liberty in any corner of the island, near or far, that his own good blade did not leap responsively from its scabbard to aid "the good old cause". Whether the tocsin was sounded in the north or in the south, it ever woke pealing echoes amidst the hills of Glenmalure. As in later years, Feach of Ballinacor was the most trusted and faithful of Hugh O'Neill's friends and allies, so was he now in arms stoutly battling for the Geraldine league. His son-in-law, Sir Francis Fitzgerald, and James Eustace, Viscount Balinglass, had rallied what survived of the clansmen of Idrone, Offaly, and Leix, and had effected a junction with him, taking up strong positions in the passes of Slieveroe and Glenmalure. Lord Grey of Wilton arrived as lord lieutenant from England on the 12th August.

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\* "Ouney, son of Ruari Oge O'More, slew Alexander and Francis Cosby, son and grandson of Cosby of Mullaghmast, and routed their troops with great slaughter, at Stradbally Bridge, 19th May, 1597".

Eager to signalise his advent to office by some brilliant achievement, he rejoiced greatly that so near at hand—within a day's march of Dublin Castle—an opportunity presented itself. Yes! He would measure swords with this wild chief of Glenmalure who had so often defied the power of England. He would extinguish the "Firebrand of the Mountain", and plant the cross of St. George on the ruins of Ballinacor! So, assembling a right royal host, the haughty viceroy marched upon Glenmalure. The only accounts which we possess of the battle are those contained in letters written to England by Sir William Stanley and others of the lord lieutenant's officials and subordinates; so that we may be sure the truth is very scantily revealed. Lord Grey having arrived at the entrance to the glen, seems to have had no greater anxiety than to "hem in" the Irish. So he constructed a strong earthwork or entrenched camp at the mouth of the valley the more effectually to stop "escape"! It never once occurred to the vain-glorious English viceroy that it was he himself and his royal army that were to play the part of fugitives in the approaching scene! All being in readiness, Lord Grey gave the order of the advance; he and a group of courtier friends taking their place on a high ground commanding a full view up the valley, so that they might lose nothing of the gratifying spectacle anticipated. An ominous silence prevailed as the English regiments pushed their way into the glen. The courtiers waxed witty; they wondered whether the game had not "stolen away"; they sadly thought there would be "no sport"; or they halloed right merrily to the troops to follow on and "unearth" the "old fox". After a while the way became more and more tedious. "We were", says Sir William Stanley, "forced to slide sometimes three or four fathoms ere we could stay our feet"; the way being "full of stones, rocks, logs, and wood; in the bottom thereof a river full of loose stones which we were driven to cross divers times". At length it seemed good to Feach M'Hugh O'Byrne to declare that the time had come for action. Then from the forest-clad mountain sides there burst forth a wild shout whereat many of the jesting courtiers turned

pale; and a storm of bullets assailed the entangled English legions. As yet the foe was unseen; but his execution was disastrous. The English troops broke into disorder. Lord Grey, furious and distracted, ordered up the reserves; but now Feach passed the word along the Irish lines to charge the foe. Like the torrents of winter pouring down those hills, down swept the Irish force from every side upon the struggling mass below. Vain was all effort to wrestle against such a furious charge. From the very first it became a pursuit. How to escape was now each castle courtier's wild endeavour. Discipline was utterly cast aside in the panic rout! Lord Grey and a few attendants fled early, and by fleet horses saved themselves; but of all the brilliant host the viceroy had led out of Dublin a few days before, there returned but a few shattered companies to tell the tale of disaster, and to surround with new terrors the name of Feach M'Hugh, the "Firebrand of the Mountains".

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XXXVIII.—"HUGH OF DUNGANNON". HOW QUEEN ELIZABETH BROUGHT UP THE YOUNG IRISH CHIEF AT COURT, WITH CERTAIN CRAFTY DESIGNS OF HER OWN.



HERE now appears upon the scene of Irish history that remarkable man whose name will live in song and story as long as the Irish race survives; leader of one of the greatest struggles ever waged against the Anglo-Norman subjugation; *Ḃó* (pronounced Aeh), Anglicised Hugh O'Neill; called in English "patents" Earl of Tyrone.

Ever since the closing years of the eighth Henry's reign—the period at which, as I have already explained, the policy of splitting up the clans by rival chiefs began to be adopted by the English power—the government took care to provide itself, by fair means or by foul, with a supply of material from which crown chiefs might be taken.

That is to say, the government took care to have in its hands, and trained to its own purposes, some member or members of each of the ruling families—the O'Neills, O'Reillys, O'Donnells, M'Guires, O'Connors, etc., ready to be set up as the king's or queen's O'Neill, O'Reilly, or O'Donnell, as the case might be, according as policy dictated and opportunity offered. One of these government *proteges* was Hugh O'Neill, who, when yet a boy, was taken to London and brought up in the court of Elizabeth. As he was a scion of the royal house of O'Neill, and, in English plannings, destined one day to play the most important part as yet assigned to a queen's chief in Ireland, viz., the reducing to subserviency of that Ulster which formed the standing menace of English power, the unconquerable citadel of nationality, the boy Hugh—the young Baron of Dungannon as he was called—was the object of unusual attention. He was an especial favourite with the queen, and as may be supposed the courtiers all, lords and ladies, took care to pay him suitable obeisance. No pains were spared with his education. He had the best tutors to attend upon him, and above all he was assiduously trained into court finesse, how to dissemble, and with smooth and smiling face to veil the true workings of mind and heart. In this way it was hoped to mould the young Irish chief into English shape for English purposes; it never once occurring to his royal trainers that nature some day might burst forth and prove stronger than courtly artificiality, or that the arts they were so assiduously teaching the boy chief for the ruin of his country's independence, might be turned against themselves. In due time he was sent into the army to perfect his military studies, and eventually (fully trained, polished, educated, and prepared for the role designed for him by his English masters) he took up his residence at his family seat in Dungannon.

Fortunately for the fame of Hugh O'Neill, and for the Irish nation in whose history he played so memorable a part, the life of that illustrious man has been written in our generation by a biographer worthy of the theme. Amongst the masses of Irishmen, comparatively little would be known of that wondrous career had its history

not been popularised by John Mitchel's *Life of Hugh O'Neill*. The dust of centuries had been allowed to cover the noble picture drawn from life by the master hand of Don Philip O'Sullivan Beare—a writer but for whom we should now be without any contemporaneous record of the most eventful period of Anglo-Irish history, save the unjust and distorted versions of bitterly partizan English officials.\* Don Philip's history, however, was practically inaccessible to the masses of Irishmen; and to Mr. Mitchel is almost entirely owing the place O'Neill now holds—his rightful prominence—in popular estimation.

Mr. Mitchel pictures the great Ulster chieftain to us a patriot from the beginning; adroitly and dissemblingly biding his time; learning all that was to be learned in the camp of the enemy; looking far ahead into the future, and shaping his course from the start with fixed purpose towards the goal of national independence. This, however, cannot well be considered more than a "view", a "theory", a "reading". O'Neill was, during his earlier career, in purpose and in plan, in mind, manner, and action, quite a different man from the O'Neill of his later years. It is very doubtful that he had any patriotic aspirations after national independence—much less any fixed policy or design tending thereto—until long after he first found himself, by the force of circumstances, in collision with the English power. In him we see the conflicting influences of nature and nature-repressing art. His Irishism was ineradicable, though long dormant. His court tutors strove hard to eliminate it, and to give him instead a "polished"

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\* To Don Philip's great work the *Historiæ Oatholicæ Ibernice*, we are indebted for nearly all that we know of this memorable struggle. "He is", says Mr. Mitchel, "the only writer, Irish or foreign, who gives an intelligible account of O'Neill's battles; but he was a soldier as well as a chronicler". Another writer says, "The loss of this history could not be supplied by any work extant". Don Philip was nephew to Donal, last lord of Beare, of whom we shall hear more anon. The *Historiæ Ibernice* was written in Latin, and published about the year 1621, in Lisbon, the O'Sullivan's having settled in Spain after the fall of Dunboy.

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Englishism ; but they never more than partially succeeded. They put a court lacquer on the Celtic material, and the superficial wash remained for a few years, not more. The voice of nature was ever crying out to Hugh O'Neill. For some years after leaving court, he lived very much like any other Anglicised or English baron, in his house at Dungannon. But the touch of his native soil, intercourse with neighbouring Irish chieftains, and the force of sympathy with his own people, now surrounding him, were gradually telling upon him. His life then became a curious spectacle of inconsistencies, as he found himself pulled and strained in opposite directions by opposite sympathies, claims, commands, or impulses ; sometimes, in proud disregard of his English masters, behaving like a true Irish O'Neill ; at other times swayed by his foreign allegiance into acts of very obedient suit and service to the queen's cause. . But the day was gradually nearing when these struggles between two allegiances were to cease, and when Hugh, with all the fervour of a great and noble heart, was to dedicate his life to one unalterable purpose, the overthrow of English rule and the liberation of his native land !

XXXIX.—HOW LORD DEPUTY PERROT PLANNED A RIGHT CUNNING EXPEDITION, AND STOLE AWAY THE YOUTHFUL PRINCE OF TYRCONNELL. HOW, IN THE DUNGEONS OF DUBLIN CASTLE, THE BOY CHIEF LEARNED HIS DUTY TOWARDS ENGLAND; AND HOW HE AT LENGTH ESCAPED AND COMMENCED DISCHARGING THAT DUTY.



EANWHILE, years passed by, and another Hugh had begun to rise above the northern horizon, amidst signs and perturbations boding no good to the crown and government of the Pale. This was Hugh O'Donnell—"Hugh Roe" or "Red Hugh"—son of the reigning chief of Tyrconnell. Young O'Donnell, who was at this time "a fiery stripling of fifteen, was already known throughout the five pro-

vinces of Ireland, not only by the report of his beauty, his agility, and his noble deeds', but as a sworn foe to the Saxons of the Pale"; and the mere thought of the possibility of the two Hughs—Hugh of Tyrone and Hugh of Tyrconnell—ever forming a combination, sufficed to fill Dublin Castle with dismay. For already indeed, Hugh O'Neill's "loyalty" was beginning to be considered rather unsteady. To be sure, as yet no man durst whisper a word against him in the queen's hearing; and he was still ready at call to do the queen's fighting against southern Geraldine, O'Brien, or Mac Caura. But the astute in these matters noted that he was unpleasantly neighbourly and friendly with the northern chiefs and tanists; that, so far from maintaining suitable ill-will towards the reigning O'Neill (whom the queen meant him some day to overthrow), Hugh had actually treated him with respect and obedience. Moreover "the English knew", says the chronicler of Hugh Roe, "that it was Judith, the daughter of O'Donnell, and sister of the beforementioned Hugh Roe, that was the spouse and best beloved of the Earl O'Neill". "Those six companies of troops also", says Mr. Mitchel, "that he kept on foot (in the queen's name, but for his own behoof) began to be suspicious in the eyes of the state; for it is much feared that he changes the men so soon as they thoroughly learn the use of arms, replacing them by others, all of his own clansmen, whom he diligently drills and reviews for some unknown service. And the lead he imports—surely the roofing of that house of Dungannon will not need all these ship-loads of lead;—lead enough to sheet Glenshane, or clothe the sides of Cairnockier. And, indeed, a rumour does reach the deputy in Dublin, that there goes on at Dungannon an incredible casting of *bullets*. No wonder that the eyes of the English government began to turn anxiously to the north".

"And if this princely Red Hugh should live to take the leading of his sept—and if the two potent chieftains of the north should forget their ancient feud, and unite for the cause of Ireland", proceeds Mr. Mitchel, "then, indeed, not only this settlement of the Ulster 'counties' must be

adjourned, one knows not how long; but the Pale itself or the Castle of Dublin might hardly protect her majesty's officers. These were contingencies which any prudent agent of the queen of England must speedily take order to prevent; and we are now to see Perrot's device for that end.

“Near Rathmullan, on the western shore of Lough Swilly, looking towards the mountains of Innishowen, stood a monastery of Carmelites and a church dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, the most famous place of devotion in Tyrconnell, whither all the clan-Connell, both chiefs and people, made resort at certain seasons to pay their devotions. Here the young Red Hugh, with Mac Swyne of the battle-axes, O'Gallagher of Ballyshannon, and some other chiefs, were in the summer of 1587 sojourning a short time in that part to pay their vows of religion; but not without stag-hounds and implements of chase, having views upon the red-deer of Fanad and Innishowen. One day, while the prince was here, a swift-sailing merchant ship doubled the promontory of Dunaff, stood up the lough, and cast anchor opposite Rathmullan; a 'bark, black-hatched, deceptive', bearing the flag of England, and offering for sale, as a peaceful trader, her cargo of Spanish wine. And surely no more courteous merchant than the master of that ship had visited the north for many a year. He invited the people most hospitably on board, solicited them, whether purchasers or not, to partake of his good cheer, entertained them with music and wine, and so gained very speedily the good will of all Fanad. Red Hugh and his companions soon heard of the obliging merchant and his rare wines. They visited the ship, where they were received with all respect, and, indeed, with unfeigned joy; descended into the cabin, and with connoisseur discrimination tried and tasted, and finally drank too deeply; and at last when they would come on deck and return to the shore, they found themselves secured under hatches; their weapons had been removed; night had fallen; they were *prisoners* to those traitor Saxons. Morning dawned, and they looked anxiously towards the shore; but, ah! where is Rathmullan and the Carmelite church? And what wild coast is this? Past Malin and the cliffs of

Innishowen; past Benmore, and southward to the shores of Antrim and the mountains of Mourne flew that ill-omened bark, and never dropped anchor till she lay under the towers of Dublin. The treacherous Perrot joyfully received his prize, and 'exulted', says an historian, 'in the easiness and success with which he had procured hostages for the peaceable submission of O'Donnell'. And the prince of Tyrconnell was thrown into 'a strong stone castle', and kept in heavy irons three years and three months, 'meditating', says the chronicle, 'on the feeble and impotent condition of his friends and relations, of his princes and supreme chiefs, of his nobles and clergy, his poets and professors.'\*

Three long and weary years—oh! out they seemed three ages!—the young Hugh pined in the grated dungeons of that "Bermingham Tower", which still stands in Dublin Castle yard. How the fierce hot spirit of the impetuous northern youth chafed in this cruel captivity! He, accustomed daily to breathe the free air of his native hills in the pastimes of the chase, now gasped for breath in the close and fetid atmosphere of a squalid cell! He, the joy and the pride of an aged father—the strong hope of a thousand faithful clansmen—was now the helpless object of jailers' insolence, neglect, and persecution! "Three years and three months", the old chroniclers tell us,—when hark! there is whispering furtively betimes as young Hugh and Art Kavanagh, and other of the captives meet on the stone stairs, or the narrow landing, by the warders' gracious courtesy. Yes; Art had a plan of escape. Escape! Oh! the thought sends the blood rushing hotly through the veins of Red Hugh. Escape! Home! Freedom on the Tyrconnell hills once more! O blessed, thrice blessed words!

It is even so. And now all is arranged, and the daring attempt waits but a night favourably dark and wild—which comes at last; and while the sentries shelter themselves from the pitiless sleet, the young fugitives, at peril

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\* Mitchel's *Life of F'ugh O'Neill*.

of life or limb, are stealthily scaling or descending bastion and battlement, fosse and barbican. With beating hearts they pass the last sentry, and now through the city streets they grope their way southwards; for the nearest hand of succour is amidst the valleys of Wicklow. Theirs is a slow and toilsome progress; they know not the paths, and they must hide by day and fly as best they can in the night-time through wooded country. At length they cross the Three Rock Mountain, and look down upon Glencree. But alas! Young Hugh sinks down exhausted! Three years in a dungeon have cramped his limbs, and he is no longer the Hugh that bounded like a deer on the slopes of Glenvigh! His feet are torn and bleeding from sharp rock and piercing bramble; his strength is gone; he can no further fly. He exhorts his companions to speed onwards and save themselves, while he secretes himself in the copse and awaits succour if they can send it. Reluctantly, and only yielding to his urgent entreaties, they departed. A faithful servant, we are told, who had been in the secret of Hugh's escape, still remained with him, and repaired for succour to the house of Felim O'Tuhal, the beautiful site of whose residence is now called Powerscourt. Felim was known to be a friend, though he dared not openly disclose the fact. He was too close to the seat of the English power, and was obliged to keep on terms with the Pale authorities. But now "the flight of the prisoners had created great excitement in Dublin, and numerous bands were despatched in pursuit of them". It was next to impossible—certainly full of danger—for the friendly O'Tuhal, with the English scouring-parties spread all over hill and vale, to bring in the exhausted and helpless fugitive from his hiding place, where nevertheless he must perish if not quickly reached. Sorrowfully and reluctantly Felim was forced to conclude that all hope of escape for young Hugh this time must be abandoned, and that the best course was to pretend to discover him in the copse, and to make a merit of giving him up to his pursuers. So, with a heart bursting with mingled rage, grief, and despair, Hugh found himself once more in the gripe of his savage foes. He was brought back to

Dublin "loaded with heavy iron fetters", and flung into a narrower and stronger dungeon, to spend another year cursing the day that Norman foot had touched the Irish shore.

There he lay until Christmas Day, 25th December, 1592, "when", says the old chronicle, "it seemed to the Son of the Virgin time for him to escape". Henry and Art O'Neill, fellow-prisoners, were on this occasion companions of Hugh's flight. In fact the lord deputy, Fitzwilliam, a needy and corrupt creature, had taken a bribe from Hugh O'Neill to afford opportunity for the escape. Hugh of Dungannon had designs of his own in desiring the freedom of all three; for events to be noted further on had been occurring, and already he was, like a skilful statesman, preparing for future contingencies. He knew that the liberation of Red Hugh would give him an ally worth half Ireland, and he knew that rescuing the two O'Neills would leave the government without a "queen's O'Neill" to set up against him at a future day. Of this escape Haverty gives us the following account:—

"They descended by a rope through a sewer which opened into the Castle ditch; and leaving there the soiled outer garments, they were conducted by a young man, named Turlough Roe O'Hagan, *the confidential servant or emissary of the Earl of Tyrone*, who was sent to act as their guide. Passing through the gates of the city, which were still open, three of the party reached the same Slieve Rua which Hugh had visited on the former occasion. The fourth, Henry O'Neill, strayed from his companions in some way—probably before they left the city—but eventually he reached Tyrone, where the earl seized and imprisoned him. Hugh Roe and Art O'Neill, with their faithful guide, proceeded on their way over the Wicklow mountains towards Glenmalure, to Feagh Mac Hugh O'Byrne, a chief famous for his heroism, and who was then in arms against the government. Art O'Neill had grown corpulent in prison, and had besides been hurt in descending from the Castle, so that he became quite worn out from fatigue. The party were also exhausted with hunger, and as the snow fell thickly, and their clothing

was very scanty, they suffered additionally from intense cold. For awhile Red Hugh and the servant supported Art between them; but this exertion could not long be sustained, and at length Red Hugh and Art lay down exhausted under a lofty rock, and sent the servant to Glenmalure for help. With all possible speed Feagh O'Byrne, on receiving the message, despatched some of his trusty men to carry the necessary succour; but they arrived almost too late at the precipice under which the two youths lay. 'Their bodies', say the Four Masters, 'were covered with white-bordered shrouds of hailstones freezing around them, and their light clothes adhered to their skin, so that, covered as they were with the snow, it did not appear to the men who had arrived that they were human beings at all, for they found no life in their members, but just as if they were dead'. On being raised up, Art O'Neill fell back and expired, and was buried on the spot; but Red Hugh was revived with some difficulty, and carried to Glenmalure, where he was secreted in a sequestered cabin and attended by a physician".

Mr. Mitchel describes for us the sequel. "O'Byrne brought them to his house and revived and warmed and clothed them, and instantly sent a messenger to Hugh O'Neill (with whom he was then in close alliance) with the joyful tidings of O'Donnell's escape. O'Neill heard it with delight, and sent a faithful retainer, Tirlough Buidhe O'Hagan, who was well acquainted with the country, to guide the young chief into Ulster. After a few days of rest and refreshment, O'Donnell and his guide set forth, and the Irish chronicler minutely details that perilous journey;—how they crossed the Liffey far to the westward of Fitzwilliam's hated towers, and rode cautiously through Fingal and Meath, avoiding the garrisons of the Pale, until they arrived at the Boyne, a short distance west of Inver Colpa (Drogheda), 'where the Danes had built a noble city'; how they sent round their horses through the town, and themselves passed over in a fisherman's boat; how they passed by Mellifont, a great monastery, 'which belonged to a noted young Englishman attached to Hugh O'Neill', and therefore met with no interruption there:

rode right through Dundalk, and entered the friendly Irish country, where they had nothing more to fear. One night they rested at Feadhth Mor (the Fewes), where O'Neill's brother had a house, and the next day crossed the Blackwater at Moy, and so to Dungannon, where O'Neill received them right joyfully. And here 'the two Hughs' entered into a strict and cordial friendship, and told each other of their wrongs and of their hopes. O'Neill listened, with such feelings as one can imagine, to the story of the youth's base kidnapping and cruel imprisonment in darkness and chains; and the impetuous Hugh Roe heard with scornful rage of the English deputy's atrocity towards Mac Mahon, and attempts to bring his accursed sheriffs and juries amongst the ancient Irish of Ulster. And they deeply swore to bury for ever the unhappy feuds of their families, and to stand by each other with all the powers of the North against their treacherous and relentless foe. The chiefs parted, and O'Donnell, with an escort of the Tyrowen cavalry, passed into Mac Gwire's country. The chief of Fermanagh received him with honour, eagerly joined in the confederacy, and gave him 'a black polished boat', in which the prince and his attendants rowed through Lough Erne, and glided down that 'pleasant salmon-breeding river' which leads to Ballyshannon and the ancient seats of the Clan-Conal.

"We may conceive with what stormy joy the tribes of Tyrconnell welcomed their prince; with what mingled pity and wrath, thanksgivings and curses, they heard of his chains, and wanderings, and sufferings, and beheld the feet that used to bound so lightly on the hills, swollen and crippled by that cruel frost, by the crueller fetters of the Saxon. But little time was now for festal rejoicing or the unprofitable luxury of cursing; for just then, Sir Richard Bingham, the English leader in Connaught, relying on the irresolute nature of old O'Donnell, and not aware of Red Hugh's return, had sent two hundred men by sea to Donegal, where they took by surprise the Franciscan monastery, drove away the monks (making small account of their historic studies and learned annals), and garrisoned the buildings for the queen. The fiery Hugh could ill en-

ture to hear of these outrages, or brook an English garrison upon the soil of Tyrconnell. He collected the people in hot haste, led them instantly into Donegal, and commanded the English by a certain day and hour to betake themselves with all speed back to Connaught, and leave behind them the rich spoils they had taken; all which they thought it prudent without further parley to do. And so the monks of St. Francis returned to their home and their books, gave thanks to God, and prayed, as well they might, for Hugh O'Donnell".

XL.—HOW HUGH OF DUNGANNON WAS MEANTIME DRAWING OFF FROM ENGLAND AND DRAWING NEAR TO IRELAND.

URING the four years over which the imprisonment of Red Hugh extended, important events had been transpiring in the outer world; and amidst them the character of Hugh of Dungannon was undergoing a rapid transmutation. We had already seen him cultivating friendly relations with the neighbouring chiefs, though most of them were in a state of open hostility to the queen. He, by degrees, went much farther than this. He busied himself in the disloyal work of healing the feuds of the rival clans, and extending throughout the north feelings of amity—nay, a net-work of alliances between them. To some of the native princes he lends one or two of his fully trained companies of foot; to others, some troops of his cavalry. He secretly encourages some of them (say his enemies at court) to stouter resistance to the English. It is even said that he harbours Popish priests. "North of Slieve Gullion the venerable brehons still arbitrate undisturbed the causes of the people; the ancient laws, civilization, and religion stand untouched. Nay, it is credibly rumoured to the Dublin deputy that this noble earl, forgetful apparently of his coronet and golden chain, and of his high favour with so potent a princess, does

about this time get recognized and solemnly inaugurated as chieftain of his sept, by the proscribed name of 'The O'Neill'; and at the ratb of Tulloghoge, on the Stone of Royalty, amidst the circling warriors, amidst the bards and ollamhs of Tyr-eoghain, 'receives an oath to preserve all the ancient former customs of the country inviolable, and to deliver up the succession peaceably to his tanist; and then hath a wand delivered to him by one whose proper office that is, after which, descending from the stone, he turneth himself round thrice forward and thrice backward', even as the O'Neills had done for a thousand years; altogether in the most un-English manner, and with the strangest ceremonies, which no garter king-at-arms could endure".

While matters were happening thus in Ulster, England was undergoing the excitement of apprehended invasion. The Armada of Philip the Second was on the sea, and the English nation—queen and people—Protestant and Catholic—persecutor and persecuted—with a burst of genuine patriotism, prepared to meet the invaders. The elements, however, averted the threatened doom. A hurricane of unexampled fury scattered Philip's flotilla, so vauntingly styled "invincible"; the ships were strewn, shattered wrecks, all over the coasts of England and Ireland. In the latter country the crews were treated very differently, according as they happened to be cast upon the shores of districts amenable to English authority or influences, or the reverse. In the former instances they were treated barbarously—slain as queen's enemies, or given up to the queen's forces. In the latter, they were sheltered and succoured, treated as friends, and afforded means of safe return to their native Spain. Some of these ships were cast upon the coast of O'Neill's country, and by no one were the Spanish crews more kindly treated, more warmly befriended, than by Hugh, erstwhiles the queen's most favoured *protege*, and still professedly her most true and obedient servant. This hospitality to the shipwrecked Spaniards, however, is too much for English flesh and blood to bear. Hugh is openly murmured against in Dublin and in London. And soon formal proof of his



Hugh O'Donnell's welcome home.



“treason” is preferred. An envious cousin of his, known as John of the Fetters—a natural son of John the Proud, by the false wife of O'Donnell—animated by a mortal hatred of Hugh, gave information to the lord deputy that he had not only regaled the Spanish officers right royally at Dungannon, but had then and there planned with them an alliance between himself and king Philip, to whom Hugh—so said his accuser—had forwarded letters and presents by the said officers. All of which the said accuser undertook to prove, either upon the body of Hugh in mortal combat, or before a jury well and truly packed or empannelled, as the case might be. Whereupon there was dreadful commotion in Dublin Castle. Hugh's reply was—to arrest the base informer on a charge of treason against the sacred person and prerogatives of his lawful chief. Which charge being proved, John of the Fetters was at once executed. Indeed, some accounts say that Hugh himself had to act as executioner; since in all Tyrone no man could be prevailed upon to put to death one of the royal race of Niall—albeit an attainted and condemned traitor. Then Hugh, full of a fine glowing indignation against these accusing murmurers in Dublin, sped straightway to London, to complain of them to the queen, and to convince her anew, with that politic hypocrisy taught him (for quite a different use, though) in that same court, that her majesty had no more devoted admirer than himself. And he succeeded. He professed and promised the most ample loyalty. He would undertake to harbour no more popish priests; he would admit sheriffs into Tyrone; he would no more molest chiefs friendly to England, or befriend chiefs hostile to the queen; and as for the title of “The O'Neill”, which, it was charged, he gloried in, while feeling quite ashamed of the mean English title, “Earl of Tyrone”, he protested by her majesty's most angelic countenance (ah, Hugh!) that he merely adopted it, lest some one else might possess himself thereof; but if it in the least offended a queen so beautiful and so exalted, why he would disown it for ever!\*

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\* Thus, according to the tenor of English chroniclers; but as a

Elizabeth was charmed by that dear sweet-spoken young noble—and so handsome too. (Hugh, who was brought up at court, knew Elizabeth's weak points.) The Lord of Dungannon returned to Ireland higher than ever in the queen's favour; and his enemies in Dublin Castle were overturned for that time.

The most inveterate of these was Sir Henry Bagnal, commander of the Newry garrison. "The marshal and his English garrison in the castle and abbey of Newry", says Mr. Mitchel, "were a secret thorn in the side of O'Neill. They lay upon one of the main passes to the north, and he had deeply vowed that one day the ancient monastery, *de viridi ligno*, should be swept clear of this foreign soldiery. But in that castle of Newry the Saxon marshal had a fair sister, a woman of rarest beauty, whom O'Neill thought it a sin to leave for a spouse to some churl of an English undertaker. And indeed we next hear of him as a love-suitor at the feet of the English beauty". Haverty tells the story of this romantic love-suit as follows:—

"This man—the marshal, Sir Henry Bagnal—hated the Irish with a rancour which bad men are known to feel towards those whom they have mortally injured. He had shed a great deal of their blood, obtained a great deal of their lands, and was the sworn enemy of the whole race. Sir Henry had a sister who was young and exceedingly beautiful. The wife of the Earl of Tyrone, the daughter of Sir Hugh Mac Manus O'Donnell, had died, and the heart of the Irish chieftain was captivated by the beautiful English girl. His love was reciprocated, and he became in due form a suitor for her hand; but all efforts to gain her brother's consent to this marriage were in vain. The story, indeed, is one which might seem to be borrowed from some old romance, if we did not find it circumstantially detailed in the matter-of-fact documents of the State Paper

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matter of fact Hugh had not at this time been elected as The O'Neill. This event occurred subsequently; the existing O'Neill having been persuaded or compelled by Hugh Roe of Tyrconnell to abdicate, that the clans might, as they desired to do, elect Hugh of Dungannon in his place.

Office. The Irish prince and the English maiden mutually plighted their vows, and O'Neill presented to the lady a gold chain worth one hundred pounds; but the inexorable Sir Henry removed his sister from Newry to the house of Sir Patrick Barnwell, who was married to another of his sisters, and who lived about seven miles from Dublin. Hither the earl followed her. He was courteously received by Sir Patrick, and seems to have had many friends among the English. One of these, a gentleman named William Warren, acted as his confidant, and at a party at Barnwell's house, the earl engaged the rest of the company in conversation while Warren rode off with the lady behind him, accompanied by two servants, and carried her safely to the residence of a friend at Drumcondra, near Dublin. Here O'Neill soon followed, and the Protestant bishop of Meath, Thomas Jones, a Lancashire man, was easily induced to come and unite them in marriage the same evening. This elopement and marriage, which took place on the 3rd of August, 1591; were made the subject of violent accusations against O'Neill. Sir Henry Bagnal was furious. He charged the earl with having another wife living; but this point was explained, as O'Neill showed that this lady, who was his first wife, the daughter of Sir Brian Mac Felim O'Neill, had been divorced previous to his marriage with the daughter of O'Donnell. Altogether the government would appear to have viewed the conduct of O'Neill in this matter rather leniently; but Bagnal was henceforth his most implacable foe, and the circumstance was not without its influence on succeeding events".

KLI.—HOW RED HUGH WENT CIRCUIT AGAINST THE ENGLISH  
IN THE NORTH. HOW THE CRISIS CAME UPON O'NEILL.



Y this time young Hugh Roe O'Donnell had, as we have already learned, escaped from his cruel captivity in Dublin, mainly by the help of that astute and skilful organiser, Hugh of Dungannon. In the spring of the year following, "on the 3rd of May, 1593, there was a solemn meeting of the warriors, clergy, and bards of Tyrconnell, at the Rock of Doune, at Kilmacrenan, 'the nursing place of Columbcille'. And here the father of Red Hugh renounced the chieftaincy of the sept, and his impetuous son at nineteen years of age was duly inaugurated by Erenach O'Firghil, and made the O'Donnell with the ancient ceremonies of his race".

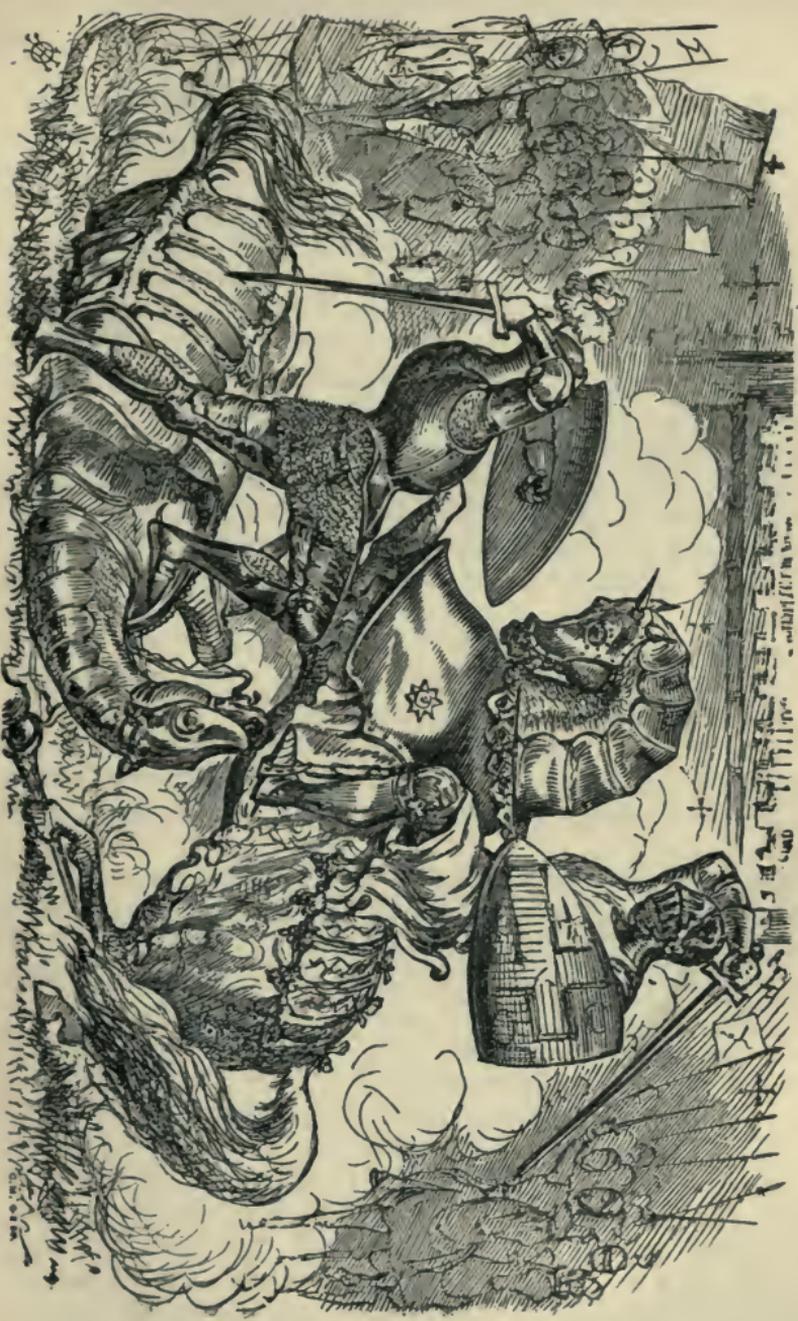
The young chief did not wear his honours idly. In the Dublin dungeons he had sworn vows, and he was not the man to break them; vows that while his good right hand could draw a sword, the English should have no peace in Ireland. Close by the O'Donnell's territory, in Strabane, old Torlogh Lynagh O'Neill had admitted an English force as "auxiliaries" forsooth. "And it was a heart-break", says the old chronicler, "to Hugh O'Donnell, that the English of Dublin should thus obtain a knowledge of the country". He fiercely attacked Strabane, and chased the obnoxious English "auxiliaries" away, "pardoning old Torlogh only on solemn promise not to repeat his offence. From this forth Red Hugh engaged himself in what we may call a circuit of the north, rooting out English garrisons, sheriffs, seneschals, or functionaries of what sort soever, as zealously and scrupulously as if they were plague-pests. Woe to the English chief that admitted a queen's sheriff within his territories! Hugh was down upon him like a whirlwind! O'Donnell's cordial ally in this crusade was Maguire lord of Fermanagh, a man truly worthy of such a colleague. Hugh of Dungannon saw with dire concern this premature conflict precipitated by Red

Hugh's impetuosity. Very probably he was not unwilling that O'Donnell should find the English some occupation yet awhile in the north; but the time had not at all arrived (in his opinion) for the serious and comprehensive undertaking of a stand up fight for the great stake of national freedom. But it was vain for him to try remonstrance with Hugh Roe, whose nature could ill brook restraint, and who, indeed, could not relish or comprehend at all the subtle and politic slowness of O'Neill. Hugh of Dunganon, however, would not allow himself at any hazard to be pushed or drawn into open action a day or an hour sooner than his own judgment approved. He could hardly keep out of the conflict so close beside him, and so, rather than be precipitated prematurely into the struggle which, no doubt, he now deemed inevitable, and for which, accordingly, he was preparing, he made show of joining the queen's side, and led some troops against Maguire. It was noted, however, that the species of assistance which he gave the English generally consisted in "moderating" Hugh Roe's punishment of them, and pleading with him merely to sweep them away a little more gently; "interfering", as Moryson informs us, "to save their lives, *on condition of their instantly quitting the country!*" Now this seemed to the English (small wonder indeed) a very queer kind of "help". It was not what suited them at all; and we need not be surprised that soon Hugh's accusers in Dublin and in London once more, and more vehemently than ever, demanded his destruction.

It was now the statesmen and courtiers of England began to feel that craft may overleap itself. In the moment when first they seriously contemplated Hugh as a foe to the queen, they felt like "the engineer hoist by his own petard". Here was their own pupil, trained under their own hands, versed in their closest secrets, and let into their most subtle arts! Here was the steel they had polished and sharpened to pierce the heart of Ireland, now turned against their own breast! No wonder there was dismay and consternation in London and Dublin—it was so hard to devise any plan against him that Hugh would not divine like one of themselves! Failing any better

resort, it was resolved to inveigle him into Dublin by offering him a safe-conduct, and, this document notwithstanding, to seize him at all hazards. Accordingly Hugh was duly notified of charges against his loyalty, and a royal safe-conduct was given to him that he might "come in and appear". To the utter astonishment of the plotters, he came with the greatest alacrity, and daringly confronted them at the council-board in the Castle! He would have been seized in the room, but for the nobly honourable conduct of the Earl of Ormond, whose indignant letter to the lord treasurer Burleigh (in reply to the queen's order to seize O'Neill) is recorded by Carte:—"My lord, I will never use treachery to any man; for it would both touch her highness's honour and my own credit too much; and whosoever gave the queen advice thus to write, is fitter for such base service than I am. Saving my duty to her majesty, I would I might have revenge by my sword of any man that thus persuaded the queen to write to me". Ormond acquainted O'Neill with the perfidy designed against him, and told him that if he did not fly that night he was lost, as the false deputy was drawing a cordon round Dublin. O'Neill made his escape, and prepared to meet the crisis which now he knew to be at hand. "News soon reached him in the north", as Mr. Mitchel recounts, "that large reinforcements were on their way to the deputy from England, consisting of veteran troops who had fought in Bretagne and Flanders under Sir John Norrys, the most experienced general in Elizabeth's service; and that garrisons were to be forced upon Ballyshannon and Belleek, commanding the passes into Tyrconnell, between Lough Erne and the sea. The strong fortress of Portmore also, on the southern bank of the Blackwater, was to be strengthened and well manned; thus forming, with Newry and Greencastle, a chain of forts across the island, and a basis for future operations against the north".

The Combat before Arragh.





XLII.—O'NEILL IN ARMS FOR IRELAND. CLONTIBRET AND  
BEAL-AN-ATHA-BUIE.



HERE was no misunderstanding all this. "It was clear that, let King Philip send his promised aid, or send it not, open and vigorous resistance must be made to the further progress of foreign power, or Ulster would soon become an English province". Moreover, in all respects, save the aid from Spain, Hugh was well forward in organization and preparation.

A great Northern Confederacy, the creation of his mastermind, now spanned the land from shore to shore, and waited only for him to take his rightful place as leader, and give the signal for such a war as had not tried the strength of England for two hundred years.

"At last", says Mitchel, "the time had come; and Dungannon with stern joy beheld unfurled the royal standard of O'Neill, displaying, as it floated proudly on the breeze, that terrible *Red Right Hand* upon its snow-white folds, waving defiance to the Saxon queen, dawning like a new Aurora upon the awakened children of Heremon.

"With a strong body of horse and foot, O'Neill suddenly appeared upon the Blackwater, stormed Portmore, and drove away its garrison, 'as carefully', says an historian, 'as he would have driven poison from his heart'; then demolished the fortress, burned down the bridge, and advanced into O'Reilly's country, everywhere driving the English and their adherents before him to the south (but without wanton bloodshed, slaying no man save in battle, for cruelty is no where charged against O'Neill); and, finally, with Mac Guire and Mac Mahon, he laid close siege to Monaghan, which was still held for the queen of England. O'Donnell, on his side, crossed the Saimer at the head of his fierce clan, burst into Connaught, and shutting up Bingham's troops in their strong places at Sligo, Ballymote, Tulsk, and Boyle, traversed the

country with avenging fire and sword, putting to death every man *who could speak no Irish*, ravaging their lands, and sending the spoil to Tyrconnell. Then he crossed the Shannon, entered the Annally's, where O'Ferghal was living under English dominion, and devastated that country so furiously, that 'the whole firmament', says the chronicle, 'was one black cloud of smoke'".

This rapidity of action took the English at complete disadvantage. They accordingly (merely to gain time) feigned a great desire to "treat" with the two Hughs. Perhaps those noble gentlemen had been wronged. If so, the queen's tender heart yearned to have them reconciled; and so forth. Hugh, owing to his court training, understood this kind of thing perfectly. It did not impose upon him for a moment; yet he consented to give audience to the royal commissioners, whom he refused to see except at the head of his army, "nor would he enter any walled town as liege man of the queen of England". "So they met", we are told, "in the open plain, in the presence of both armies". The conditions of peace demanded by Hugh were:—

1. Complete cessation of attempts to disturb the Catholic Church in Ireland.

2. No more garrisons—no more sheriffs or English officials of any sort soever to be allowed into the Irish territories, which should be unrestrictedly under the jurisdiction of their lawfully elected native chiefs.

3. Payment by Marshal Bagnol to O'Neill of one thousand pounds of silver "as a marriage portion with the lady *whom he had raised to the dignity of an O'Neill's bride*"

We may imagine how hard the royal commissioners must have found it to even hearken to these propositions, especially this last keen touch at Bagnol. Nevertheless, they were fain to declare them very reasonable indeed; only they suggested—merely recommended for consideration—that as a sort of set-off, the confederates might lay down their arms, beg forgiveness, and "discover" their correspondence with foreign states. Phew! There was a storm about their ears! Beg "pardon" indeed! "The rebels

grew insolent", says Moryson. The utmost that could be obtained from O'Neill was a truce of a few days' duration.

Early in June, Bagnal took the field with a strong force, and effecting a junction with Norreys, made good his march from Dundalk to Armagh. Not far from Monaghan is Clontibret—Cluain-Tuberaid, the "Lawn of the Spring". What befel there, I will relate in the words of Mr. Mitchell:—

"The castle of Monaghan, which had been taken by Con O'Neill, was now once more in the hands of the enemy, and once more was besieged by the Irish troops. Norreys, with his whole force, was in full march to relieve it; and O'Neill, who had hitherto avoided pitched battles, and contented himself with harassing the enemy by continual skirmishes in their march through the woods and bogs, now resolved to meet this redoubtable general fairly in the open field. He chose his ground at Clontibret, about five miles from Monaghan, where a small stream runs northward through a valley enclosed by low hills. On the left bank of this stream the Irish, in battle array, awaited the approach of Norreys. We have no account of the numbers on each side, but when the English general came up, he thought himself strong enough to force a passage. Twice the English infantry tried to make good their way over the river, and twice were beaten back, their gallant leader each time charging at their head, and being the last to retire. The general and his brother, Sir Thomas, were both wounded in these conflicts, and the Irish counted the victory won, when a chosen body of English horse, led on by Segrave, a Meathian officer, of gigantic bone and height, spurred fiercely across the river, and charged the cavalry of Tyrowen, commanded by their prince in person. Segrave singled out O'Neill, and the two leaders laid lance in rest for deadly combat, while the troops on each side lowered their weapons and held their breath, awaiting the shock in silence. The warriors met, and the lance of each was splintered on the other's corslet, but Segrave again dashed his horse against the chief, flung his giant frame against his enemy, and endeavoured to unhorse him by the mere weight of his gauntleted hand

O'Neill grasped him in his arms, and the combatants rolled together in that fatal embrace to the ground:—

'Now, gallant Saxon, hold thine own :  
No maiden's arms are round thee thrown'.

There was one moment's deadly wrestle and a death groan: the shortened sword of O'Neill was buried in the Englishman's groin beneath his mail. Then from the Irish ranks arose such a wild shout of triumph as those hills had never echoed before—the still thunder-cloud burst into a tempest—those equestrian statues become as winged demons, and with their battle cry of *Lamh-dearg-aboo*, and their long lances poised in eastern fashion above their heads, down swept the chivalry of Tyrowen upon the astonished ranks of the Saxon. The banner of St. George wavered and went down before that furious charge. The English turned their bridle-reins and fled headlong over the stream, leaving the field covered with their dead, and, worse than all, leaving with the Irish that proud red-cross banner, the first of its disgraces in those Ulster wars. Norreys hastily retreated southwards, and the castle of Monaghan was yielded to the Irish”.

This was opening the campaign in a manner truly worthy of a royal O'Neill. The flame thus lighted spread all over the northern land. Success shone on the Irish banners, and as the historian informs us, “at the close of the year 1595, the Irish power predominated in Ulster and Connacht”.

The proceedings of the next two years—1596 and 1597—during which the struggle was varied by several efforts at negotiation, occupy too large a portion of history to be traced at length in these pages. The English forces were being steadily though slowly driven in upon the Pale from nearly all sides, and strenuous efforts were made to induce O'Neill to accept terms. He invariably professed the utmost readiness to do so; deplored the stern necessity that had driven him to claim his rights in the field, and debated conditions of peace; but, either mistrusting the designs of the English in treating with him, or because he had hopes

far beyond anything they were likely to concede, he managed so that the negotiations somehow fell through at all times. On one occasion royal commissioners actually followed and chased him through the country with a royal "pardon" and treaty, which they were beseeching him to accept, but O'Neill continued to "miss" all appointments with them. More than once the English bitterly felt that their quondam pupil was feathering his keenest arrows against them with plumes plucked from their own wing! But it was not in what they called "diplomacy" alone Hugh showed them to their cost that he had not forgotten his lessons. He could enliven the tedium of a siege—and, indeed, terminate it—by a ruse worthy of an humorist as of a strategist. On the expiration of one of the truces, we are told, he attacked Norreys' encampment with great fury, "and drove the English before him with heavy loss till they found shelter within the walls of Armagh". He sat down before the town and began a regular siege; "but the troops of Ulster were unused to a war of posts, and little skilled in reducing fortified places by mines, blockades, or artillery. They better loved a rushing charge in the open field, or the guerilla warfare of the woods and mountains, and soon tired of sitting idly before battlements of stone. O'Neill tried a stratagem. General Norreys had sent a quantity of provisions to relieve Armagh under a convoy of three companies of foot and a body of cavalry, and the Irish had surprised these troops by night, captured the stores, and made prisoners of all the convoy. O'Neill caused the English soldiers to be stripped of their uniform, and an equal number of his own men to be dressed in it, whom he ordered to appear by day break as if marching to relieve Armagh. Then, having stationed an ambuscade before morning in the walls of a ruined monastery lying on the eastern side of the city, he sent another body of troops to meet the red-coated gallo-glasses, so that when day dawned the defenders of Armagh beheld what they imagined to be a strong body of their countrymen in full march to relieve them with supplies of provisions, then they saw O'Neill's troops rush to attack these, and a furious conflict seemed to proceed, but appa-

rently the English were overmatched, many of them fell, and the Irish were pressing forward, pouring in their shot and brandishing their battle axes with all the tumult of a deadly fight. The hungry garrison could not endure this sight. A strong sallying party issued from the city and rushed to support their friends; but when they came to the field of battle all the combatants on both sides turned their weapons against them alone.

“The English saw the snare that had been laid for them, and made for the walls again; but Con O’Neill and his party issued from the monastery and barred their retreat. They defended themselves gallantly, but were all cut to pieces, and the Irish entered Armagh in triumph. Stafford and the remnant of his garrison were allowed to retire to Dundalk, and O’Neill, who wanted no strong places, dismantled the fortifications and then abandoned the town”.

Over several of the subsequent engagements in 1596 and 1597 I must pass rapidly, to reach the more important events in which the career of O’Neill culminated and closed. My young readers can trace for themselves on the page of Irish history the episodes of valour and patriotism that memorise “Tyrrell’s Pass” and “Portmore”. The *ignis fatuus* of “aid from Spain” is still in O’Neill’s eyes. He was waiting—but striking betimes, parleying with royal commissioners, and corresponding with King Philip, when he was not engaging Bagnal or Norreys; Red Hugh meanwhile echoing in Connacht every blow struck by O’Neill in Ulster. At length in the summer of 1598, he seems to have thrown aside all reliance upon foreign aid, and to have organised his countrymen for a still more resolute stand than any they yet had made against the national enemy.

“In the month of July, O’Neill sent messengers to Phelim Mac Hugh, then chief of the O’Byrnes, that he might fall upon the Pale, as they were about to make employment in the north for the troops of Ormond, and at the same time he detached fifteen hundred men and sent them to assist his ally, O’More, who was then besieging Portelaise, a fort of the English in Leix. Then he made a sudden stoop upon the castle of Portmore, which, says Moryson,

'was a great eye-sore to him lying upon the chiefe passage into his country', hoping to carry it by assault.

"Ormond now perceived that a powerful effort must be made by the English to hold their ground in the north, or Ulster might at once be abandoned to the Irish. Strong reinforcements were sent from England, and O'Neill's spies soon brought him intelligence of large masses of troops moving northward, led by Marshal Sir Henry Bagnal, and composed of the choicest forces in the queen's service. Newry was their place of rendezvous, and early in August, Bagnal found himself at the head of the largest and best appointed army of veteran Englishmen that had ever fought in Ireland. He succeeded in relieving Armagh, and dislodging O'Neill from his encampment at Mullaghbane, where the chief himself narrowly escaped being taken, and then prepared to advance with his whole army to the Blackwater, and raise the siege of Portmore. Williams and his men were by this time nearly famished with hunger; they had eaten all their horses, and had come to feeding on the herbs and grass that grew upon the walls of the fortress. And every morning they gazed anxiously over the southern hills, and strained their eyes to see the waving of a red-cross flag, or the glance of English spears in the rising sun.

"O'Neill hastily summoned O'Donnell and Mac William to his aid, and determined to cross the marshal's path, and give him battle before he reached the Blackwater. His entire force on the day of battle, including the Scots and the troops of Connaught and Tyrconnell, consisted of four thousand five hundred foot and six hundred horse, and Bagnal's army amounted to an equal number of infantry and five hundred veteran horsemen, sheathed in corslets and head pieces, together with some field artillery, in which O'Neill was wholly wanting.

"Hugh Roe O'Donnell had snuffed the coming battle from afar, and on the 9th of August joined O'Neill with the clans of Connaught and Tyrconnell. They drew up their main body about a mile from Portmore, on the way to Armagh, where the plain was narrowed to a pass, enclosed on one side by a thick wood, and on the other by

a bog. To arrive at that plain from Armagh the enemy would have to penetrate through wooded hills, divided by winding and marshy hollows, in which flowed a sluggish and discoloured stream from the bogs, and hence the pass was called *Beal-an-atha-buidhe*, 'the mouth of the yellow ford'. Fearfasa O'Clery, a learned poet of O'Donnell's, asked the name of that place, and when he heard it, remembered (and proclaimed aloud to the army) that St. Bercan had foretold a terrible battle to be fought at a yellow ford, and a glorious victory to be won by the ancient Irish.

"Even so, Moran, son of Moin! and for thee, wisest poet, O'Clery, thou hast this day served thy country well, for, to an Irish army, auguries of good were more needful than a commissariat; and those bards' songs, like the Dorian flute of Greece, breathed a passionate valour that no blare of English trumpets could ever kindle.

"Bagnal's army rested that night in Armagh, and the Irish bivouacked in the woods, each warrior covered by his shaggy cloak, under the stars of a summer night, for to 'an Irish rebel', says Edmund Spenser, 'the wood is his house against all weathers, and his mantle is his couch to sleep in'. But O'Neill, we may well believe, slept not that night away; the morrow was to put to proof what valour and discipline was in that Irish army, which he had been so long organizing and training to meet this very hour. Before him lay a splendid army of tried English troops in full march for his ancient seat of Dungannon, and led on by his mortal enemy. And O'Neill would not have had that host weakened by the desertion of a single man, nor commanded—no, not for his white wand of chieftaincy—by any leader but this his dearest foe".

To Mr. Mitchel, whose vivid narrative I have so far been quoting, we are indebted for the following stirring description of O'Neill's greatest battle—ever memorable *Beal-an-atha-buie*:—

"The tenth morning of August rose bright and serene upon the towers of Armagh and the silver waters of Avonmore. Before day dawned the English army left the city in three divisions, and at sunrise they were winding through

the hills and woods behind the spot where now stands the little church of Grange.

“The sun was glancing on the corslets and spears of their glittering cavalry, their banners waved proudly, and their bugles rung clear in the morning air, when, suddenly, from the thickets on both sides of their path, a deadly volley of musketry swept through the foremost ranks. O'Neill had stationed here five hundred light armed troops to guard the defiles, and in the shelter of thick groves of fir trees they had silently waited for the enemy. Now they poured in their shot, volley after volley, and killed great numbers of the English; but the first division, led by Bagnal in person, after some hard fighting, carried the pass, dislodged the marksmen from their position, and drove them backwards into the plain. The centre division under Cosby and Wingfield, and the rear-guard led by Cuin and Billing, supported in flank by the cavalry under Brooke, Montacute, and Fleming, now pushed forward, speedily cleared the difficult country, and formed in the open ground in front of the Irish lines. ‘It was not quite safe’, says an Irish chronicler (in admiration of Bagnal’s disposition of his forces) ‘to attack the nest of griffins and den of lions in which were placed the soldiers of London’. Bagnal at the head of his first division, and aided by a body of cavalry, charged the Irish light-armed troops up to the very entrenchments, in front of which O'Neill’s foresight had prepared some pits, covered over with wattles and grass, and many of the English cavalry rushing impetuously forward, rolled headlong, both men and horses, into these trenches and perished. Still the marshal’s chosen troops, with loud cheers and shouts of ‘St. George for merry England!’ resolutely attacked the entrenchment that stretched across the pass, battered them with cannon, and in one place succeeded, though with heavy loss, in forcing back their defenders. Then first the main body of O'Neill’s troops was brought into action, and with bagpipes sounding a charge, they fell upon the English, shouting their fierce battle-cries, *Lamh-dearg!* and *O'Donnell aboo!* O'Neill himself, at the head of a body of horse, pricked forward to seek out Bagnal amidst the throng of battle, but they never met :

the marshal, who had done his devoir that day like a good soldier, was shot through the brain by some unknown marksman. The division he had led was forced back by the furious onslaught of the Irish, and put to utter rout; and, what added to their confusion, a cart of gunpowder exploded amidst the English ranks and blew many of their men to atoms. And now the cavalry of Tyrconnell and Tyrowen dashed into the plain and bore down the remnant of Brooke's and Flemming's horse; the columns of Wingfield and Cosby reeled before their rushing charge—while in front, to the war-cry of Bataillah-aboo! the swords and axes of the heavy armed gallowglasses were raging amongst the Saxon ranks. By this time the cannon were all taken; the cries of 'St. George' had failed, or turned into death-shrieks; and once more, England's royal standard sunk before the Red Hand of Tyrowen".

Twelve thousand gold pieces, thirty-four standards, and all the artillery of the vanquished army were taken. Nearly three thousand dead were left by the English on the field. The splendid army of the Pale was, in fact, annihilated.

Beal-an-atha-buie, or, as some of the English chroniclers call it, Blackwater, may be classed as one of the great battles of the Irish nation; perhaps the greatest fought in the course of the war against English invasion. Other victories as brilliant and complete may be found recorded in our annals; many defeats of English armies as utter and disastrous; but most of these were, in a military point of view, not to be ranked for a moment with the "Yellow Ford". Very nearly all of them were defile surprises, conducted on the simplest principles of warfare common to struggles in mountainous country. But Beal-an-atha-buie was a deliberate engagement, a formidable pitched battle between the largest and the best armies which England and Ireland respectively were able to send forth, and was fought out on principles of military science in which both O'Neill and Bagnal were proficient. It was a fair stand-up fight between the picked troops and chosen generals of the two nations; and it must be told of the vanquished on that day, that, though defeated, they were

not dishonoured. The Irish annals and chants, one and all, do justice to the daring bravery and unflinching endurance displayed by Bagnal's army on the disastrous battle-field of Beal-an-atha-buie.

As might be supposed, a victory so considerable as this has been sung by a hundred bards. More than one notable poem in the native Gaelic has celebrated its glory; and quite a number of our modern bards have made it the theme of stirring lays. Of these latter, probably the best known is Drennan's ballad, from which I quote the opening and concluding verses:

By O'Neill close beleaguer'd, the spirits might droop  
Of the Saxon three hundred shut up in their coop,  
Till Bagnal drew forth his Toledo, and swore  
On the sword of a soldier to succour Portmore.

His veteran troops, in the foreign wars tried,  
Their features how bronzed, and how haughty their stride,  
Step'd steadily on; it was thrilling to see  
That thunder-cloud brooding o'er Beal-an-atha-Buidh!

The flash of their armour, inlaid with fine gold,  
Gleaming matchlocks and cannons that mutteringly roll'd,  
With the tramp and the clank of those stern cuirassiers,  
Dyed in blood of the Flemish and French cavaliers.

\* \* \* \* \*

Land of Owen aboo! and the Irish rushed on:  
The foe fir'd but one volley—their gunners are gone.  
Before the bare bosoms the steel coats have fled,  
Or, despite casque or corslet, lie dying or dead.

And brave Harry Bagnal, he fell while he fought,  
With many gay gallants: they slept as men ought,  
Their faces to Heaven: there were others, alack!  
By pikes overtaken, and taken aback.

And the Irish got clothing, coin, colours, great store,  
Arms, forage, and provender—plunder *go leor*.  
They munch'd the white manchets, they champ'd the brown chine,  
Fuliluah for that day, how the natives did dine!

The chieftain looked on, when O'Shanagan rose,  
And cried: Harken, O'Neill, I've a health to propose—  
To our Sassenach hosts, and all quaffed in huge glee,  
With *Cead mile fuille go!* BEAL-AN-ATHA-BUIDH!

The same subject has been the inspiration of, perhaps, the most beautiful poem in Mr. Aubrey de Vere's *Lyrical Chronicle of Ireland* :—

THE WAR-SONG OF TYRCONNELL'S BARD AT THE BATTLE OF BLACK-WATER.

Glory to God, and to the Powers that fight  
 For Freedom and the Right!  
 We have them then, the invaders! there they stand  
 Once more on Oriel's land!  
 They have pass'd the gorge stream cloven,  
 And the mountain's purple bound;  
 Now the toils are round them woven,  
 Now the nets are spread around!  
 Give them time: their steeds are blown;  
 Let them stand and round them stare,  
 Breathing blasts of Irish air:  
 Our eagles know their own!

Thou rising sun, fair fall  
 Thy greeting on Armagh's time-honoured wall  
 And on the willows hoar  
 That fringe thy silver waters, Avonmore!  
 See! on that hill of drifted sand  
 The far-famed marshal holds command,  
 Bagnal, their bravest:—to the right,  
 That recreant, neither chief nor knight,  
 "The Queen's O'Reilly", he that sold  
 His country, clan, and church for gold!  
 "Saint George for England!"—recreant crew,  
 What are the saints ye spurn to you?  
 They charge; they pass yon grassy swell;  
 They reach our pit-falls hidden well:  
 On!—warriors native to the sod!  
 Be on them, in the power of God!

\* \* \* \* \*

Seest thou yon stream, whose tawny waters glide  
 Through weeds and yellow marsh lingeringly and slowly:  
 Blest is that spot and holy!  
 There, ages past, Saint Bercan stood and cried,  
 "This spot shall quell one day th' invader's pride!"  
 He saw in mystic trance  
 The blood-stain flush yon rill:  
 On!—hosts of God, advance!  
 Your country's fate fulfil!

\* \* \* \* \*

Hark ! the thunder of their meeting !  
 Hand meets hand, and rough the greeting !  
 Hark ! the crash of shield and brand ;  
 They mix, they mingle, band with band,  
 Like two horn-commingling stags,  
 Wrestling on the mountain crags,  
 Intertwined, intertangled,  
 Mangled forehead meeting mangled !  
 See ! the wavering darkness through  
 I see the banner of Red Hugh ;  
 Close beside is thine, O'Neill !  
 Now they stoop and now they reel,  
 Rise once more and onward sail,  
 Like two falcons on one gale !  
 O ye clansmen past me rushing,  
 Like mountain torrents seaward gushing,  
 Tell the chiefs that from this height  
 Their chief of bards beholds the fight ;  
 That on theirs he pours his spirit ;  
 Marks their deeds and chaunts their merit ;  
 While the Priesthood evermore,  
 Like him that ruled God's host of yore,  
 With arms outstretched that God implore !

\* \* \* \* \*

Glory be to God on high !  
 That shout rang up into the sky !  
 The plain lies bare ; the smoke drifts by ;  
 Again that cry ; they fly ! they fly !  
 O'er them standards thirty-four  
 Waved at morn : they wave no more.

Glory be to Him alone who holds the nations in His hand,  
 And to them the heavenly guardians of our Church and native land !  
 Sing, ye priests, your deep Te Deum ; bards, make answer loud and  
 long,

In your rapture flinging heavenward censers of triumphant song.  
 Isle for centuries blind in bondage, lift once more thine ancient boast,  
 From the cliffs of Innishowen southward on to Carbery's coast !  
 We have seen the right made perfect, seen the Hand that rules the  
 spheres,

Glance like lightning through the clouds, and backward roll the  
 wrongful years.

Glory fadeth, but this triumph is no barren mundane glory ;  
 Rays of healing it shall scatter on the eyes that read our story :  
 Upon nations bound and torpid as they waken it shall shine,  
 As on Peter in his chains the angel shone, with light divine.  
 From th' unheeding, from th' unholy it may hide, like truth, its ray ;  
 But when Truth and Justice conquer, on their crowns its beam  
 shall play :

O'er the ken of troubled tyrants it shall trail a meteor's glare ;  
 For the blameless it shall glitter as the star of morning fair ;  
 Whensoever Erin triumphs, then its dawn it shall renew ;  
 Then O'Neill shall be remember'd, and Tirconnell's chief, Red  
 Hugh !

The fame of this great victory filled the land. Not in Ireland alone did it create a sensation. The English historians tell us that for months nothing was talked of at court or elsewhere throughout England, but O'Neill and the great battle on the Blackwater, which had resulted so disastrously for "her Highness". Moryson himself informs us that "the generall voyce was of Tyrone amongst the English after the defeat of Blackwater, as of Hannibal amongst the Romans after the defeat at Cannæ". The event got noised abroad, too, and in all the courts of Europe Hugh of Tyrone became celebrated as a military commander and as a patriot leader.

**XLII.—HOW HUGH FORMED A GREAT NATIONAL CONFEDERACY  
 AND BUILT UP A NATION ONCE MORE ON IRISH SOIL.**

 Ulster was Ireland, Ireland now was free. But all that has been narrated so far, has affected only half the island. The south all this time lay in the heavy trance of helplessness, suffering, and despair, that had supervened upon the desolating Desmond war. At best the south was very unlikely to second with equal zeal, energy, and success, such an effort as the north had made. Munster was almost exclusively possessed by Anglo-Irish lords, or Irish chiefs in the power of, and submissive to, the English. Ulster was the stronghold of the native cause; and what was possible there might be, and in truth was, very far from feasible in the "colonised" southern province. Nevertheless, so irresistible was the inspiration of Hugh's victories in the north, that even the occupied, conquered, broken, divided, and desolated south

began to take heart and look upward. Messengers were despatched to Hugh entreating him to send some duly authorised lieutenants to raise the standard of Church and Country in Munster, and take charge of the cause there. He complied by detaching Richard Tyrrell, of Fertullah, and Owen, son of Ruari O'Moore, at the head of a chosen band, to unfurl the national flag in the southern provinces. They were enthusiastically received. The Catholic Anglo-Norman lords and the native chiefs entered into the movement, and rose to arms on all sides. The newly-planted "settlers", or "undertakers" as they were styled—(English adventurers amongst whom had been parcelled out the lands of several southern Catholic families, lawlessly seized on the ending of the Desmond rebellion)—fled pell mell, abandoning the stolen castles and lands to their rightful owners, and only too happy to escape with life.\* The Lord President had to draw in every outpost, and abandon all Munster, except the garrison towns of Cork and Kilmallock, within which, cooped up like prisoners, he and his diminished troops were glad to find even momentary shelter. By the beginning of 1599, "no English force was able to keep the field throughout all Ireland". O'Neill's authority was paramount—was loyally recognized and obeyed everywhere outside two or three garrison towns. He exercised the prerogatives of royalty; issued commissions, conferred offices, honours, and titles; removed or deposed lords and chiefs actively or passively disloyal to the national authority, and appointed others in their stead. And all was done so wisely, so impartially, so patriotically—with such scrupulous and fixed regard for the one great object, and no other—namely, the common cause of national independence and freedom—that even men chronically disposed to suspect family or clan selfish-

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\* Amongst them was Spenser, a gentle poet and rapacious freebooter. His poesy was sweet, and full of charms, quaint, simple, and eloquent. His prose politics were brutal, venal, and cowardly. He wooed the muses very blandly, living in a stolen home and philosophically counselled the extirpation of the Irish owners of the land, for the greater security of himself and fellow-adventurers.

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ness in every act, gave in their full confidence to him as to a leader who had completely sunk the clan chief in the national leader. In fine, since the days of Brian the First, no native sovereign of equal capacity—singularly qualified as a soldier and as a statesman—had been known in Ireland. “He omitted no means of strengthening the league. He renewed his intercourse with Spain; planted permanent bodies of troops on the Foyle, Erne, and Blackwater; engaged the services of some additional Scots from the Western Isles, improved the discipline of his own troops, and on every side made preparations to renew the conflict with his powerful enemy. For he well knew that Elizabeth was not the monarch to quit her deadly gripe of this fair island without a more terrible struggle than had yet been endured”.\*

That struggle was soon inaugurated. England, at that time one of the strongest nations in Europe, and a match for the best among them by land and sea, ruled over by one of the ablest, the boldest, and most crafty sovereigns that had ever sat upon her throne, and served by statesmen, soldiers, philosophers, and writers, whose names are famous in history—was now about to put forth all her power in a combined naval and military armament against the almost reconstituted, but as yet all too fragile Irish nation. Such an effort, under all the circumstances, could scarcely result otherwise than as it eventually did; for there are, after all, odds against which no human effort can avail and for which no human valour can compensate. It was England's good fortune on this occasion, as on others previously and subsequently, that the Irish nation challenged her when she was at peace with all the world—when her hands were free and her resources undivided. Equally fortunate was she at all times, on the other hand, in the complete tranquillity of the Irish when desperate emergencies put her on her own defence, and left her no resources to spare for a campaign in Ireland, had she been challenged then. What we have to contemplate in the

closing scenes of O'Neill's glorious career is the heroism of Thermopylæ, not the success of Salamis or Plataea.

Elizabeth's favourite, Essex, was despatched to Ireland with *twenty thousand* men at his back; an army not only the largest England had put into the field for centuries, but in equipment, in drill, and in armament, the most complete ever assembled under her standard. Against this the Irish nowhere had ten thousand men concentrated in a regular army or moveable corps. In equipment and in armament they were sadly deficient, while of sieging material they were altogether destitute. Nevertheless, we are told "O'Neill and his confederates were not dismayed by the arrival of this great army and its magnificent leader". And had the question between the two nations depended solely upon such issues as armies settle, and superior skill and prowess control, neither O'Neill nor his confederates would have erred in the strong faith, the high hope, the exultant self-reliance that now animated them. The campaign of 1599—the disastrous failure of the courtly Essex and his magnificent army—must be told in a few lines. O'Neill completely out-generaled and overawed or overreached the haughty deputy. In more than one fatal engagement his splendid force was routed by the Irish, until, notwithstanding a constant stream of reinforcements from England, it had wasted away, and was no longer formidable in O'Neill's eyes. In vain the queen wrote letter after letter endeavouring to sting her quondam favourite into "something notable"; that is, a victory over O'Neill. Nothing could induce Essex to face the famous hero of Clontibret and the Yellow Ford, unless, indeed, in peaceful parley. At length having been taunted into a movement northward, he proceeded thither reluctantly and slowly. "On the high ground north of the Lagan, he found the host of O'Neill encamped, and received a courteous message from their leader, soliciting a personal interview. At an appointed hour the two commanders rode down to the opposite banks of the river, wholly unattended, the advanced guards of each looking curiously on from the uplands".\*

O'Neill, ever the flower of courtesy, spurred his horse into the stream up to the saddlegirths. "First they had a private conference, in which Lord Essex, won by the chivalrous bearing and kindly address of the chief, became, say the English historians, too confidential with an enemy of his sovereign, spoke without reserve of his daring hopes and most private thoughts of ambition, until O'Neill had sufficiently read his secret soul, fathomed his poor capacity, and understood the full meanness of his shallow treason. Then Cormac O'Neill and five other Irish leaders were summoned on the one side, on the other Lord Southampton and an equal number of English officers, and a solemn parley was opened in due form".\* O'Neill offered terms: "first, complete liberty of conscience; second, indemnity for his allies in all the four provinces; third, the principal officers of state, the judges, and one-half the army to be henceforth Irish by birth". Essex considered these very far from extravagant demands from a man now virtually master in the island. He declared as much to O'Neill, and concluded a truce pending reply from London. Elizabeth saw in fury how completely O'Neill had dominated her favourite. She wrote him a frantic letter full of scornful taunt and upbraiding. Essex flung up all his duties in Ireland without leave, and hurried to London, to bring into requisition the personal influences he had undoubtedly possessed at one time with the queen. But he found her unapproachable. She stamped and swore at him, and ordered him to the tower, where the unfortunate earl paid, with his head upon the block, the forfeit for not having grappled successfully with the "Red Hand of Ulster".

The year 1600 was employed by O'Neill in a general circuit of the kingdom, for the more complete establishment of the national league and the better organization of the national resources. "He marched through the centre of the island at the head of his troops to the south", says his biographer, "a kind of royal progress, which he thought fit to call a pilgrimage to Holy Cross. He held

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\* Mitchel.

princely state there, concerted measures with the southern lords, and distributed a manifesto announcing himself as the accredited Defender of the Faith". "In the beginning of March", says another authority, "the Catholic army halted at Inniscarra, upon the river Lee, about five miles west of Cork. Here O'Neill remained three weeks in camp consolidating the Catholic party in South Munster. During that time he was visited by the chiefs of the ancient Eugenician clans—O'Donohoe, O'Donovan, and O'Mahony. Thither also came two of the most remarkable men of the southern province: Florence McCarthy, lord of Carberry, and Donald O'Sullivan, lord of Bearhaven. McCarthy, 'like Saul, higher by the head and shoulders than any of his house', had brain in proportion to his brawn; O'Sullivan, as was afterwards shown, was possessed of military virtues of a high order. Florence was inaugurated with O'Neill's sanction as McCarthy More; and although the rival house of Muskerry fiercely resisted his claim to superiority at first, a wiser choice could not have been made had the times tended to confirm it.

"While at Inniscarra, O'Neill lost in single combat one of his most accomplished officers, the chief of Fermanagh. Maguire, accompanied only by a priest and two horsemen, was making observations nearer to the city than the camp, when Sir Warham St. Leger, marshal of Munster, issued out of Cork with a company of soldiers, probably on a similar mission. Both were in advance of their attendants when they came unexpectedly face to face. Both were famous as horsemen and for the use of their weapons, and neither would retrace his steps. The Irish chief, poising his spear, dashed forward against his opponent, but received a pistol shot which proved mortal the same day. He, however, had strength enough left to drive his spear through the neck of St. Leger, and to effect his escape from the English cavalry. St. Leger was carried back to Cork where he expired. Maguire, on reaching the camp, had barely time left to make his last confession when he breathed his last. This untoward event, the necessity of preventing possible dissensions in Fermanagh, and still more the menacing movements of the new deputy, lately

sworn in at Dublin, obliged O'Neill to return home earlier than he intended. Soon after reaching Dungannon he had the gratification of receiving a most gracious letter from Pope Clement the Eighth, together with a crown of phoenix feathers, symbolical of the consideration with which he was regarded by the Sovereign Pontiff".\*

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XLIV.—HOW THE RECONSTRUCTED IRISH NATION WAS OVERBORNE. HOW THE TWO HUGHS "FOUGHT BACK TO BACK" AGAINST THEIR OVERWHELMING FOES. HOW THE "SPANISH AID" RUINED THE IRISH CAUSE. THE DISASTROUS BATTLE OF KINSALE.



HERE now appear before us two remarkable men whose names are prominently identified with this memorable epoch in Irish history—Mountjoy, the new lord deputy; and Carew, the new lord president of Munster. In the hour in which these men were appointed to the conduct of affairs in Ireland, the Irish cause was lost. Immense resources were placed at their disposal, new levies and armaments were ordered; and again all the might of England by land and sea was to be put forth against Ireland. But Mountjoy and Carew alone were worth all the levies. They were men of indomitable energy, masters of subtlety, craft, and cunning, utterly unscrupulous as to the employment of means to an end; cold-blooded, callous, cruel, and brutal. Norreys and Bagnal were soldiers—able generals, illustrious in the field. Essex was a lordly courtier vain and pomp-loving. Of these men—soldier and courtier—the Irish annals speak as of fair foes. But of Mountjoy and Carew a different memory is kept in Ireland. They did their work by the wile of the serpent, not by the skill of the soldier. Where the brave

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\* M'Gee.

and manly Norreys tried the sword, they tried snares, treachery, and deceit, gold, flattery, promises, temptation and seduction in every shape. To split up the confederation of chiefs was an end towards which they steadily laboured by means the most subtle and crafty that human ingenuity could devise. Letters, for instance, were forged purporting to have been written secretly to the lord deputy by the Earl of Desmond, offering to betray one of his fellow confederates, O'Connor. These forgeries were "disclosed", as it were, to O'Connor, with an offer that he should "forestal" the earl, by seizing and giving up the latter to the government, for which, moreover, he was to have a thousand pounds in hand, besides other considerations promised. The plot succeeded. O'Connor betrayed the earl and handed him over a prisoner to the lord deputy, and of course going over himself as an ally also. This rent worked the dismemberment of the league in the south. Worse defections followed soon after; defections unaccountable, and, indeed, irretrievable. Art O'Neill and Nial Garv O'Donnell, under the operation of mysterious influences, went over to the English, and in all the subsequent events, were more active and effective than any other commanders on the queen's side! Nial Garv alone was worth a host. He was one of the ablest generals in the Irish camp. His treason fell upon the national leaders like a thunderbolt. This was the sort of "campaigning" on which Mountjoy relied most. Time and money were freely devoted to it, and not in vain. After the national confederation had been sufficiently split up and weakened in this way—and when, north and south, the defecting chiefs were able of themselves to afford stiff employment for the national forces, the lord deputy took the field.

In the struggle that now ensued O'Neill and O'Donnell presented one of those spectacles which, according to the language of the heathen classics, move gods and men to sympathy and admiration. Hearts less brave might despair; but *they*, like Leonidas and the immortal Three Hundred, would fight out the battle of country while life remained. The English now had in any one province a force superior to the entire strength of the national army.

The eventful campaign of 1601, we are told, was fought out in almost every part of the kingdom. To hold the coast lines on the north—where Dowcra had landed (at Derry) four thousand foot and four hundred horse—was the task of O'Donnell; while to defend the southern Ulster frontier was the peculiar charge of O'Neill. "They thus", says the historian, "fought as it were back to back against the opposite lines of attack". Through all the spring and summer months that fight went on. From hill to valley, from pass to plain, all over the island, it was one roll of cannon and musketry, one ceaseless and universal engagement; the smoke of battle never lifted off the scene. The two Hughs were all but ubiquitous; confronting and defeating an attack to-day at one point; falling upon the foes next day at another far distant from the scene of the last encounter! Between the two chiefs the most touching confidence and devoted affection subsisted. Let the roar of battle crash how it might on the northern horizon, O'Neill relied that all was well, for O'Donnell was at his post. No matter what myriads of foes were massing in the south, it was enough for O'Donnell to know that O'Neill was there. "Back to back", indeed, as many a brave battle against desperate odds has been fought, they maintained the unequal combat, giving blow for blow, and so far holding their ground right nobly. By September, except in Munster, comparatively little had been gained by the English beyond the successful planting of some further garrisons; but the Irish were considerably exhausted, and sorely needed rest and recruitment. At this juncture came the exciting news that—at length!—a powerful auxiliary force from Spain had landed at Kinsale. The Anglo-Irish privy council were startled by the news while assembled in deliberation at Kilkenny. Instantly they ordered a concentration of all their available forces in the south, and resolved upon a winter campaign. They acted with a vigour and determination which plainly showed their conviction that on the quick crushing of the Spanish force hung the fate of their cause in Ireland. A powerful fleet was sent round the coast, and soon blockaded Kinsale; while on the land

side it was invested by a force of some fifteen thousand men.

This Spanish expedition, meant to aid, effected the ruin of the Irish cause. It consisted of little more than three thousand men, with a good supply of stores, arms, and ammunition. In all his letters to Spain, O'Neill is said to have strongly urged that if a force under five thousand men came, it should land in *Ulster*, where it would be morally and materially worth ten thousand landed elsewhere; but that if Munster was to be the point of debarkation, anything less than eight or ten thousand men would be useless. The meaning of this is easily discerned. The south was the strong ground of the English, as the north was of the Irish side. A force landed in Munster should be able of itself to cope with the strong opposition which it was sure to encounter. These facts were not altogether lost sight of in Spain. The expedition as fitted out consisted of six thousand men; but various mishaps and disappointments reduced it to half the number by the time it landed at Kinsale. Worse than all, the wrong man commanded it; Don Juan D'Aquilla, a good soldier, but utterly unsuited for an enterprise like this. He was proud, sour-tempered, hasty, and irascible. He had heard nothing of the defections and disasters in the south. The seizure of Desmond and the ensnaring of Florence McCarthy—the latter the most influential and powerful of the southern nobles and chiefs—had paralysed everything there; and Don Juan, instead of finding himself in the midst of friends in arms, found himself surrounded by foes on land and sea. He gave way to his natural ill-temper in reproaches and complaints; and in letters to O'Neill, bitterly demanded whether he and the other confederates meant to hasten to his relief. For O'Neill and O'Donnell, with their exhausted and weakened troops to abandon the north and undertake a winter march southward, was plain destruction. At least it staked *everything* on the single issue of success or defeat before Kinsale; and to prevent defeat and to insure success there, much greater organization for coöperation and concert, and much more careful preparation, were needed than was possible now, hurried south-

ward in this way by D'Aquilla. Nevertheless, there was nothing else for it. O'Neill clearly discerned that the crafty and politic Carew had been insidiously working on the Spanish commander, to disgust him with the enterprise, and induce him to sail homeward on liberal terms. And it was so. Don Juan, it is said, agreed, or intimated that if, within a given time, an Irish army did not appear to his relief, he would treat with Carew for terms. If it was, therefore, probable disaster for O'Neill to proceed to the south, it was certain ruin for him to refuse; so with heavy hearts the northern chieftains set out on their winter march for Munster, at the head of their thinned and wasted troops. "O'Donnell, with his habitual ardour, was first on the way. He was joined by Felim O'Doherty, MacSwiney-na-Tuath, O'Boyle, O'Rorke, the brother of O'Connor Sligo, the O'Connor Roe, Mac Dermott, O'Kelly, and others; mustering in all about two thousand five hundred men". O'Neill, with MacDonnell of Antrim, Mac Gennis of Down, MacMahon of Monaghan, and others of his suffragans, marched southward at the head of between three and four thousand men. Holy Cross was the point where both their forces appointed to effect their junction. O'Donnell was first at the rendezvous. A desperate effort on the part of Carew to intercept and overwhelm him before O'Neill could come up, was defeated only by a sudden night-march of *nearly forty miles* by Red Hugh. O'Neill reached Belgooley, within sight of Kinsale, on the 21st December.

In Munster, in the face of all odds—amidst the wreck of the national confederacy, and in the presence of an overwhelming army of occupation—a few chiefs there were, undismayed and unflinching, who rallied faithfully at the call of duty. Foremost amongst these was Donal O'Sullivan, Lord of Beare, a man in whose fidelity, intrepidity, and military ability, O'Neill appears to have reposed unbounded confidence. In all the south, the historian tells us, "only O'Sullivan Beare, O'Driscoll, and O'Connor Kerry declared openly for the national cause" in this momentous crisis. Some of the missing ships of the Spanish expedition reached Castlehaven in November, just

as O'Donnell, who had made a detour westward, reached that place. Some of this Spanish contingent were detailed as garrisons for the forts of Dunboy, Baltimore, and Castlehaven, commanding three of the best havens in Munster. The rest joined O'Donnell's division, and which soon sat down before Kinsale.

When O'Neill came up, his master-mind at once scanned the whole position, and quickly discerned the true policy to be pursued. The English force was utterly failing in commissariat arrangements; and disease as well as hunger was committing rapid havoc in the besiegers' camp. O'Neill accordingly resolved to *besiege the besiegers*; to increase their difficulties in obtaining provision or provender, and to cut up their lines of communication. These tactics manifestly offered every advantage to the Irish and allied forces, and were certain to work the destruction of Carew's army. But the testy Don Juan could not brook this slow and cautious mode of procedure. "The Spaniards only felt their own inconveniences; they were cut off from escape by sea by a powerful English fleet; and", continues the historian, "Carew was already practising indirectly on their commander his 'wit and cunning' in the fabrication of rumours and the forging of letters. Don Juan wrote urgent appeals to the northern chiefs to attack the English lines without another day's delay; and a council of war in the Irish camp, on the third day after their arrival at Belgooey, decided that the attack should be made on the morrow". At this council, so strongly and vehemently was O'Neill opposed to the mad and foolish policy of risking an engagement, which, nevertheless, O'Donnell, ever impetuous, as violently supported, that for the first time the two friends were angrily at issue, and some writers even allege that on this occasion question was raised between them as to who should assume command-in-chief on the morrow. However this may have been, it is certain that once the vote of the council was taken, and the decision found to be against him, O'Neill loyally acquiesced in it, and prepared to do his duty.

"On the night of the 2nd January (new style)—24th December old style, in use among the English—the Irish

army left their camp in three divisions; the vanguard led by Tyrrell, the centre by O'Neill, and the rear by O'Donnell. The night was stormy and dark, with continuous peals and flashes of thunder and lightning. The guides lost their way, and the march, which even by the most circuitous route ought not to have exceeded four or five miles, was protracted through the whole night. At dawn of day, O'Neill, with whom were O'Sullivan and O'Campo, came in sight of the English lines, and to his infinite surprise found the men under arms, the cavalry in troops posted in advance of their quarters. O'Donnell's division was still to come up, and the veteran earl now found himself in the same dilemma into which Bagnal had fallen at the Yellow Ford. His embarrassment was perceived from the English camp; the cavalry were at once ordered to advance. For an hour O'Neill maintained his ground alone; at the end of that time he was forced to retire. Of O'Campo's 300 Spaniards, 40 survivors were with their gallant leader taken prisoners; O'Donnell at length arrived and drove back a wing of the English cavalry; Tyrrell's horsemen also held their ground tenaciously. But the route of the centre proved irremediable. Fully 1,200 of the Irish were left dead on the field, and every prisoner taken was instantly executed. On the English side fell Sir Richard Graeme; Captains Danvers and Godolphin, with several others, were wounded; their total loss they stated at two hundred, and the Anglo-Irish, of whom they seldom made count in their reports, must have lost in proportion. The earls of Thomond and Clanricarde were actively engaged with their followers, and their loss could hardly have been less than that of the English regulars.

“On the night following their defeat, the Irish leaders held council together at Innishannon, on the river Bandon, where it was agreed that O'Donnell should instantly take shipping for Spain to lay the true state of the contest before Philip the Third; that O'Sullivan should endeavour to hold his castle of Dunboy, as commanding a most important harbour; that Rory O'Donnell, second brother of Hugh Roe, should act as chieftain of Tyrconnell, and that

O'Neill should return into Ulster to make the best defence in his power. The loss in men was not irreparable; the loss in arms, colours, and reputation, was more painful to bear, and far more difficult to retrieve".\*

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XLV.—“THE LAST LORD OF BEARA”. HOW DONAL OF DUNBOY WAS ASSIGNED A PERILOUS PROMINENCE, AND NOBLY UNDERTOOK ITS DUTIES. HOW DON JUAN'S IMBECILITY OR TREASON RUINED THE IRISH CAUSE.



CONFESSEDLY for none of the defeated chiefs did the day's disaster at Kinsale involve such consequences as it presaged for the three southern leaders—O'Sullivan, O'Driscoll, and O'Connor Kerry. The northern chieftains returning homeward, retired upon and within the strong lines of what we may call the vast entrenched camp of the native cause. But the three southern—who alone of all their Munster compeers had dared to take the field against the English side in the recent crisis—were left isolated in a distant extremity of the island, the most remote from native support or coöperation, left at the mercy of Carew, now master of Munster, and leader of a powerful army flushed with victory. The northerns might have some chance, standing together and with a considerable district almost entirely in their hands, of holding out, or exacting good terms as they had done often before. But for the doomed southern chiefs, if aid from Spain came not soon, there was literally no prospect but the swift and immediate crash of Carew's vengeance; no hope save what the strong ramparts of Dunboy and the stout heart of its chieftain might encourage!

O'Neill, as I have already remarked, had a high opinion of O'Sullivan—of his devotedness to the national cause—

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\* M'Gee.

of his prudence, skill, foresight, and courage. And truly the character of the "last lord of Beara" as writ upon the page of history—as depicted by contemporary writers, as revealed to us in his correspondence, and as displayed in his career and actions from the hour when, at the call of duty, with nothing to gain and all to peril, he committed himself to the national struggle—is one to command respect, sympathy, and admiration. In extent of territorial sway and in "following" he was exceeded by many of the southern chiefs, but his personal character seems to have secured for him by common assent the position amongst them left vacant by the imprisonment of Florence Mac Carthy, *facile princeps* among the Irish of Munster, now fast held in London tower. In manner, temperament, and disposition, O'Sullivan was singularly unlike most of the impulsive ardent Irish of his time. He was a man of deep, quiet, calm demeanour; grave and thoughtful in his manner yet notably firm and inflexible in all that touched his personal honour, his duty towards his people,\* or his loyalty to religion or country. His family had flung themselves into the struggle of James Geraldine, and suffered the penalties that followed thereupon. Early in Elizabeth's reign, Eoghan, or Eugene, styled by the English Sir Owen O'Sullivan, contrived to possess himself of the chieftaincy and territory of Beara, on the death of his brother Donal, father of the hero of Dunboy. Eugene accepted an English title, sat in Lord Deputy Perrot's parliament of 1585, in the records of which we find his name duly registered, and took out a "patent" in his own name for the tribe land. His nephew, young Donal—Donal Mac Donal

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\* Nothing strikes the reader of Donal's correspondence with king Philip and the Spanish ministers, more forcibly than the constant solicitude, the deep feeling and affectionate attachment he exhibits towards his "poor people", as he always calls them. Amidst the wreck of all his hopes, the loss of worldly wealth and possessions, home, country, friends, his chief concern is for his "poor people" abandoned to the persecution of the merciless English foe. In all his letters it is the same. No murmur, no repining for himself, but constant solicitude about Ireland, and constant sorrow for his poor people, left "like sheep without a shepherd when the storm shuts out the sky".

O'Sullivan, as he was called—vehemently disputed the validity of Sir Owen's title to the lands, and after a lengthy law-suit, a letter of partition was issued under the great seal in January, 1593, according to which Donal was to have the lordship, castles, and dependencies of Beara, while Sir Owen was to possess those eastward and northward of the peninsula. It is highly probable that by this decision the Pale authorities hoped to enthral Donal without losing Sir Owen, to make both branches of the family, as it were, compete in loyalty to the English power, and in any event, by putting enmity between them, cause them to split up and weaken their own influence. In this latter calculation they were not disappointed, as the sequel shows; but their speculations or expectations about Donal were all astray. He was indeed averse to hopeless and prospectless struggles against the power of England, and on attaining to the chieftaincy, directed his attention mainly to the internal regulation of his territory, and the bettering of the condition of his people in every respect, not by forays on neighbouring clans, but by the peaceful influences of industry. But Donal, grave and placid of exterior, truly patriotic of heart, watched attentively the rise and progress of O'Neill's great movement in the north. For a time he believed it to be merely a quarrel between the queen's protegee and his royal patroness, sure to be eventually adjusted; and accordingly up to a recent period he displayed no sympathy with either side in the conflict. But when that conflict developed itself into a really national struggle, O'Sullivan never wavered for a moment in deciding what his attitude should be; and that attitude, once taken, was never abandoned, never varied, never compromised by act or word or wish, through all that followed of sacrifice and suffering and loss. O'Neill, who was a keen discernor of character, read O'Sullivan correctly when he estimated all the more highly his accession, because it was that of a man who acted not from hot impulse or selfish calculation, but from full deliberation and a pure sense of duty. In fine, it was not lightly the Irish council at Innishannon selected the lord of Dunboy for such honourable but perilous prominence as to name him one of the

three men to whom was committed, in the darkest crisis of their country, the future conduct of the national cause.\*

We may imagine the memorable scene of the morn succeeding that night of sleepless consultation at Innishannon over "hapless Erin's fate"—the parting of the chiefs! Wildly they embraced each other, and like clutch of iron was the farewell grasp of hand in hand, as each one turned away on the path of his allotted task! O'Neill marched northward, where we shall trace his movements subsequently. O'Donnell took shipping for Spain, and O'Sullivan at the head of his faithful clansmen marched westward for Bantry and Bearhaven. Had Don Juan D'Aquilla been a true and steadfast man—had he been at all worthy and fit to command or conduct such an enterprise—had he been at all capable of appreciating its peculiar exigencies and duties—the defeat at Kinsale, heavy and full of disaster as it was, might soon have been retrieved, and the whole aspect of affairs reversed. Had he but held his ground (as not unreasonably he might have been expected to do, with three thousand men within a fortified and well-stored town) until the arrival of the further reinforcements which he must have known his royal master was sending, or would quickly send, and thus coöperated in the scheme of operations planned by the Irish chiefs at Innishannon, nothing that had so far happened could be counted of such great moment as to warrant abandonment of the expedition. But D'Aquilla's conduct was miserably inexplicable. He could not act more despairingly if his last cartridge had been fired, if his last gunner had perished, if his "last horse had been eaten", or if assured that king Philip had utterly abandoned him. After a few sorties, easily repulsed, he offered to capitulate. Carew, who hereby saw that Don Juan was a fool, was, of course, only

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\* "These high Irishmen, namely, O'Neill and O'Donnell, ordered that the chief command and leadership of these (the Munster forces) should be given to O'Sullivan Beare, i.e., Donal, the son of Donal the son of Dermot; for he was at this time the best commander among their allies in Munster for wisdom and valour"  
—*Annals of the Four Masters*.

too happy to grant him *any* terms that would ensure the departure of the Spanish aids. By conceding conditions highly flattering to D'Aquilla's personal vanity, the lord president induced that outwitted commander not only to draw off to Spain the entire of the expedition, but to undertake to yield up to the English all the castles and fortresses of the Irish chiefs in which Spanish garrisons had been placed, and to order back to Spain any further troops that might arrive before his departure. This imbecility or treason ruined the Irish cause in the south, and ruining it there at such a juncture, ruined it everywhere. Such a capitulation was utter and swift destruction to the southern leaders. It "took the ground from under their feet". It left them of bases of operations, and flung them as mere fugitives unsheltered and unprovisioned into the open field, the forest, the morass, or the mountain, to be hunted and harried, cut off in detail, and pitilessly put to the sword by Carew's numerous, powerful, and well-appointed field corps or scouring parties.

Don Juan's capitulation was signed 11th January, 1602 (N.S.). Seven days afterwards the lord deputy and the lord president drew off to Cork. "The day following the captains received directions to repair to sundry towns in Munster appointed for their garrisons; and the same day Captain Roger Harvie and Captain George Flower were despatched with certain companies to go by sea to receive the castles of Castlehaven, Donnashed, and Donnelong at Baltimore, and Dunboy at Bearhaven". On the 12th February, the Spanish officer in command at Castlehaven gave up the castle to Harvie. On the 21st he proceeded to Baltimore, the two castles of which the Spanish officers therein gave up in like manner; and in a few weeks all the coast district castles of the south-west, those of the Beara promontory alone excepted, were in the hands of the English. A month later (16th March) Don Juan sailed for Spain, most of his forces having been shipped thither previously.\*

\* "On his return to Spain he was degraded from his rank for his too great intimacy with Carew, and confined a prisoner in his own house. He is said to have died of a broken heart occasioned by these indignities".—M'Gee.

O'Sullivan heard with dismay and indignation of Don Juan's audacious undertaking to deliver up to his "cruel, cursed, misbelieving enemies", his castle of Dunboy, the key of his inheritance.\* With speed, increased by this evil news, he pushed rapidly homeward, and in due time he appeared with the remnant of his little force† before the walls of the castle, demanding admittance. The Spaniards refused; they had heard of D'Aquilla's terms of capitulation, they regretted them, but felt constrained to abide by them. Donal, however, knowing a portion of the outworks of the place which afforded some facilities for his purpose, availed himself a dark and stormy night to effect an entrance, mining his way through the outer wall, and surprising and overpowering the Spaniards. He then addressed them feelingly on the conduct of D'Aquilla and the present posture of affairs, stating his resolution to hold the castle till King Philip would send fresh aid, and offering a choice to the Spaniards to remain with him or sail for home. Some of them decided to remain, and were amongst the most determined defenders of Dunboy in the subsequent siege. The rest, Donal sent to Spain, despatching at the same time envoys with letters to King Philip, urgently entreating speedy aid. Moreover, in charge of these messengers, he sent to the king, as guarantee of his good faith and perseverance, his oldest son, a boy of tender years.

Well knowing that soon he would have the foe upon him, Donal now set about preparing Dunboy for the

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\* "Among other places which were neither yielded nor taken to the end that they should be delivered to the English, Don Juan tied himself to deliver my castell and haven, the only key of mine inheritance, whereupon the living of many thousand persons doth rest that live some twenty leagues upon the sea coast, into the hands of my cruell, cursed, misbelieving enemies".—Letter of Donal O'Sullivan Beare to the King of Spain.—*Pacata Hibernia*.

† O'Sullivan's contingent, we are told, "was amongst those who made the most determined fight on the disastrous day of Kinsale, and when the battle was lost, it bravely protected some of the retreating troops of the northern chieftains, who but for such protection would have suffered more severely than they did".

tough and terrible trial before it. He had the outworks strengthened in every part; and another castle of his, on Dursey Island (at the uttermost extremity of the peninsula, dividing Bantry and Kenmare bays), garrisoned by a trusty band; designing this latter as a refuge for himself, his family, and clansmen, in the event of the worst befalling Dunboy.

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XLVI.—HOW THE QUEEN'S FORCES SET ABOUT "TRANQUILIZING" MUNSTER. HOW CAREW SENT EARL THOMOND ON A MISSION INTO CARBERY, BEAR, AND BANTRY.



MEANWHILE the detachments detailed by Carew were doing their savage and merciless work throughout Cork and Kerry. According to Carew's own version, the occupation of these troops, day by day, was the seeking out and murdering in cold blood of all the native inhabitants, men, women, and children; and when they were not murdering they were cow-stealing and corn-burning. How to *extirpate* the hapless people—how to blast and desolate the land, rather than it should afford sustenance to even a solitary fugitive of the doomed race—was the constant effort of the English commanders. Carew was not the first of his name to signalise himself in such work. It was the process by which Munster had been "pacified"—*i.e.*, desolated—barely thirty years before. It was that by which Cromwell, forty years subsequently, pursued the same end. It was a system, the infamy of which, amongst the nations of the world, pagan or Christian, is wholly monopolized by England. The impartial reader, be his nationality English or Irish, perusing the authentic documents stored in the State Paper Office, is forced to admit that it was not *war* in even its severest sense, but *murder* in its most hideous and heartless atrocity, that was waged upon the Irish people in the process of subjugating them. It was not that pro-

cess of conquest the wounds of which, though sharp and severe for the moment, soon cicatrise with time. Such conquests other countries have passed through, and time has either fused the conqueror and the conquered, or obliterated all bitterness or hate between them. Had Ireland, too, been conquered thus, like happy results might be looked for; but as the process was wofully different, so has the product been; so must it ever be, till the laws of nature are reversed and revolutionised, and grapes grow on thorns and figs on thistles. It was not war—which might be forgotten on both sides—but murder which to this day is remembered on one side with a terrible memory.

A thoroughly English historian—Froude—writing in our day on these events, has found the testimony of the State Paper Office too powerful to resist; and with all his natural and legitimate bias or sympathy in favour of his own country, his candour as a historian more than once constitutes him an accuser of the infamies to which I have been referring. “The English nation”, he says, “was shuddering over the atrocities of the Duke of Alva. The children in the nurseries were being inflamed to patriotic rage and madness by the tales of Spanish tyranny. Yet *Alva’s* bloody sword never touched *the young, the defenceless, or those who e sex even dogs can recognize and respect*”.\*

“Sir Peter Carew has been seen murdering women and children, and *babies that had scarcely left the breast*; but Sir Peter Carew was not called on to answer for his conduct, and remained in favour with the deputy. Gilbert, who was left in command at Kilmallock, was illustrating yet more signally the same tendency”.†

“Nor was Gilbert a bad man. As times went he passed for a brave and chivalrous gentleman; not the least distinguished in that high band of adventurers who carried the English flag into the western hemisphere, a founder of colonies, an explorer of unknown seas, a man of science, and, above all, a man of special piety. He regarded him-

\* Froude's *History of England*, vol. x. page 508.

† *Ibid.*, vol. x. page 509.

self as dealing rather with savage beasts than with human beings, and when he tracked them to their dens, he *strangled the cubs and rooted out the entire broods*".\*

"The Gilbert method of treatment", says Mr. Froude again, "has this disadvantage, that it must be carried out to the last extremity, or it ought not to be tried at all. The dead do not come back; and if the mothers and the babies are slaughtered with the men, the race gives no further trouble; but the work must be done thoroughly; partial and fitful cruelty lays up only a long debt of deserved and ever-deepening hate".

The work on this occasion happening not to be "done thoroughly", Mr. Froude immediately proceeds to explain:—

"In justice to the English soldiers, however, it must be said that it was no fault of theirs if any Irish child of that generation was allowed to live to manhood".†

The same historian frankly warns his readers against supposing that such work was exceptional on the part of the English forces. From the language of the official documents before him, he says "the inference is but too natural, that work of this kind was the road to preferment, and that this, or something like it, was the *ordinary* employment of the 'Saxon' garrisons in Ireland".‡

Such, then, was the work in which Carew the Second and his garrisons occupied themselves on the fall of Kinsale. Sir Charles Wilmot at the head of fifteen hundred men was despatched to desolate Kerry; and on the 9th March, Carew formally issued a commission to the Earl of Thomond "to assemble his forces together, consisting of two thousand and five hundred foot in list, and fifty horse", for the purpose of wasting Carbery, Bear, and Bantry, and making a *reconnaissance* of Dunboy.§ Thomond

\* Froude's *History of England*, vol. x. page 508.

† *Ibid.*, page 507.

‡ *Ibid.*, page 512.

§ "The service you are to performe is to doe all your endeavour to burne the rebels' Corne in Carbery, Bear, and Bantry, take their Cowes, and to use all hostile prosecution upon the persons of the

accordingly "marched as far as the abbey of Bantrie, and there had notice that Donnell O'Sullivan Beare and his people, by the advice of two Spaniards, an Italian, and a fryer called Dominicke Collins, did still continue their workes about the castle of Dunboy". "Hereupon the earl left seven hundred men in list in the Whiddy (an island lying within the Bay of Bantrie) very convenient for the service, and himself with the rest of his forces returned to Corke, where having made relation of the particulars of his journey, it was found necessary that the president, without any protractions or delay, should draw *all the forces in the province to a head against them*".\*

XLVII.—HOW THE LORD PRESIDENT GATHERED AN ARMY OF FOUR THOUSAND MEN TO CRUSH DOOMED DUNBOY, THE LAST HOPE OF THE NATIONAL CAUSE IN MUNSTER.

 AREW set out from Cork on the 20th April, at the head of his army; on the 30th they reached Dunamark, about a mile north of the town of Bantry, having on the way halted, on the 23rd at Owneboy, near Kinsale; 24th, at Timoleague; 25th, at Roscarbery; 26th, at Glenharahan, near Castlehaven; 27th, at Baltimore, where they spent two days, Carew visiting Innisherkin; 29th, "on the mountain, at a place called Recareneltaghe, neare unto Kilcoa, being a castel wherein the rebell Conoghor, eldest sonne to Sir Finnin O'Drischoll, knight, held a ward".

people, as in such cases of rebellion is accustomed. . . . When you are in Beare (if you may without any apparent perill), your lordship shall doe well to take a view of the Castle of Dunboy, whereby wee may be the better instructed how to proceed for the taking of it when time convenient shall be afforded".—Instructions given to the Earl of Thomond. 9th March. *Pacata Hibernia*.

\* *Pacata Hibernia*.

Carew spent a month in encampment at Dunamark, by the end of which time the fleet arrived at the same place, or in the bay close by, having come round the coast from Cork. Meantime his message for a war-muster against O'Sullivan had spread throughout Munster. On the other hand, such effort as was possible in their hapless plight, was made by the few patriot leaders in the province; all perceiving that upon Dunboy now hung the fate of the Irish cause, and seeing clearly enough that if they could not keep off from O'Sullivan the tremendous force ordered against him, it must inevitably overwhelm him. Accordingly, spreading themselves eastward around the base of the Beara promontory, and placing themselves on all the lines leading thereto, they desperately disputed the ground with the concentrating English contingents, beating them back or obstructing them as best they could. Above all, the endeavour was to keep Wilmot's Kerry contingent from coming up. Tyrrell was specially charged to watch Wilmot—to hold him in check at Killarney, and at all hazard and any cost to prevent his junction with Carew at Bantry. Tyrrell posted his force so advantageously in the passes leading southward from Killarney, and held them so firmly, that for weeks Wilmot's most vehement efforts to force or flank them were vain. At length, by a feat which merits for him, as a military achievement, everlasting praise—a night march over Mangerton mountain—Wilmot evaded Tyrrell; pushed on through a mountain district scarcely passable at this day for horsemen, until he reached Inchigeela; thence he marched through Ceam-an-eigh Pass (unaccountably left unguarded), and so onward till he reached Bantry. By this junction Carew's force was raised to nearly four thousand men. While waiting for Wilmot, the daily occupation of the army, according to the lord president's account, was sheep-stealing and cow-stealing.\* At Dunamark Carew was joined by the

\* "The first of May, Captaine Taffe's troop of Horse with certain light foote were sent from the Campe, who returned with *three hundred Cowes, many Sheepe, and a great number of Garrans* they got from the Rebels.

"The second Captaine John Barry brought into the Campe five

sons of Sir Owen Sullivan, uncle of Donal of Dunboy; and to the information and coöperation given his enemies by these perfidious cousins, Donal most largely owed the fate that subsequently befel him.

On the 14th of May a council of war was held in the English camp to determine their course to Bearhaven; whereat it was decided to march by the southern shore of the bay, called Muintervaria, to a point nearly opposite Bear Island; from this point, by means of the fleet, to transport the whole army across the bay to Bear Island; and thence across to the mainland close by Dunboy; this course being rendered necessary by the fact that Donal's forces defended the passes of Glengarriffe, through which alone Bearhaven could be reached by land from Bantry. On the 31st of May, accordingly, Carew marched from Dunamark to "Kilnamenghe on the sea side, in Mountervarry". The two next following days were occupied in transporting the army to Bear Island, upon which, eventually, the whole force was landed. A short march across the island brought them to its northern shore, in full view of Dunboy, barely a mile distant across the narrow entrance to Bearhaven harbour.

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hundred Cowes, *three hundred Sheepe, three hundred Garrans, and had the killing of five Rebels*; and the same day we procured skirmish in the edge of the Fastnesse with the rebels, but no hurt of our part.

"Thethird, Owen Osulevan and his brothers, sonnes to Sir Owen Osulevan (who stands firme, and deserved well of her Majestie, being Competitours with Osulevan Beare) brought some *fiftie Cowes and some sheepe* from the enemy into the Campe.

"The Rebels receiving also notice, that the President was marched so neere to the Countrey of Beare, withdrew themselves out of Desmond (as before) into Glangarve, whereby opportunitie was offered to the Governour of performing some good service. For Donnell Osulevan More, a malicious Rebel, remained with great store of cattell and certain Kerne in Iveragh; which being made known to Sir Charles, upon the fifth of May, hee secretly dispatched a partie of men, which burnt and *spoyled all the Countrey, and returned with foure thousand Cowes, besides Sheepe and Garrans*".

"A Sergeant of the Earle of Thomond's with a partie of his Company, drew to Down-Manus, whence hee brought a prey of *three-score and sixe Cowes, with a great many of Garrans*".—*Pacata Hibernia*.

## CLVIII.—THE LAST DAYS OF DUNBOY: A TALE OF HEROISM\



ELL might consternation fill the breasts of the Beara clansmen on beholding the resources now displayed against them; a well-appointed army of nearly four thousand men on the shore, and hostile war-ships encircling them by sea! Within

the castle O'Sullivan had, according to the English accounts, exactly one hundred and forty-three men; there being besides these not more than five or six hundred of his clansmen available at the moment for fighting purposes. But his was not a soul to be shaken by fears into abandonment of a cause which, failing or gaining, was sacred and holy in his eyes—the cause of religion and country. So Donal, who knew that a word of submission would purchase for him not only safety but reward, undisturbed possession of his ancestral rights, and English titles to wear if he

would, quailed not in this nor in still darker hours. He had "nailed his colours to the mast", and looked Fate calmly in the face.

It seems to have been a maxim with the lord president never to risk open fight until he had first tried to effect his purpose by secret treason. While staying at Bantry he had addressed a letter to the Spanish gunners in Dunboy, offering them all manner of inducements to betray O'Sullivan, to desert the castle, first taking care, as he says, "to cloy the ordnance or mayme their carriages, that when they shall have need of them they may prove useless; for the which I will forthwith liberally recompense you answerable to the qualities of your merit". The infamous proposition was scouted by the men to whom it was addressed. Carew, unabashed, now resolved to try whether he could not corrupt the Constable of Dunboy, O'Sullivan's most trusted friend, — a man whose memory is to this day held in worship by the people of Beara—Richard Mac Geoghegan, the impersonation of chivalrous fidelity, the very soul of truth, honour, and bravery! Thomond was commissioned to invite the Constable of Dunboy to a parley. Mac Geoghegan acceded to the invitation, came across to Bear Island (5th June), and met the earl, in presence of, but apart from, their respective guards, on the shore. Of that memorable interview Carew has left us a brief but characteristic description. "All the eloquence and artifice which the Earle could use avayled nothing: for Mac Geoghegan was resolved to persevere in his wayes; and, in the great love which he pretended to beare unto the Earle (Thomond), he advised him not to hazard his life in landing upon the Mayne. . . . The Earle disdainyng both his obstinacie and his vaine-glorious advice, broke off his speech, telling Mac Geoghegan that ere many days passed hee would repent that hee had not followed his (the Earl's) counsel".\*

Carew had at first designed to cross over and land on the main at what seemed to be the only feasible point, a smooth strand at a spot now called Caematrangan. Within a few perches of this spot reaches one end of a small island

\* *Pacata Hibernia.*

("Deenish") which stretches almost completely across the mouth of the inner harbour of (modern) Castletown Beare. Carew landed a portion of his army on this small island; but O'Sullivan had erected a battery faced with gabions at Caematrangan, and had, moreover, his small force drawn up at hand to meet the invaders at the shore. Whereupon Carew, while making a feint as if about to attempt the passage there, directed the remainder of his force quickly to pass to the other (or eastern) extremity of Deenish, and effect a landing on the main at that point. This they were able to accomplish unopposed, for the distance thereto, from O'Sullivan's strand battery, owing to the sweep of the shore and a narrow arm of the sea intervening, was two or three miles, whereas directly across, by water or on Deenish Island, was a reach of less than half a mile. Nevertheless, O'Sullivan, discerning, though all too late, the skilful use made by Carew of the natural advantages of the ground, hastened with all speed to confront the invaders, and, unawed by the disparity of numbers against him—thousands against hundreds—boldly gave them battle. Carew himself seems to have been quite struck with the daring courage or "audacity" of this proceeding. After marvelling at such foolhardiness, as he thought it, he owns "they came on bravely", and maintained a very determined attack. It was only when additional regiments were hurried up, and utterly overwhelmed them by numbers, that Donal's little force had to abandon the unequal strife, leaving their dead and wounded upon the field.

That night, however, there reached Dunboy news well calculated to compensate for the gloom of perils so great and so near at hand. A Spanish ship had arrived at O'Sullivan's castle of Ardea (in Kenmare bay, on the northern shore of the Beara promontory) bringing to Donal letters and envoys from King Philip, and aid for the Munster chiefs in money, arms, and ammunition, committed to his care for distribution. Moreover, there came by this ship the cheering intelligence that an expedition of some fifteen thousand men was being organized in Spain for Ireland when the vessel sailed! Here was glorious hope

indeed! It was instantly decided that the chief himself should proceed with all promptitude to meet the envoys landed at Ardea,\* and look to the important duties required of him by their messages; meanwhile entrusting the defence of Dunboy to Mac Geoghegan and a chosen garrison. Next morning Donal, with all his available force, exclusive of a garrison of one hundred and forty-three picked men left in the castle, set out for Ardea. The farewell cheers that rang out from the ramparts behind him, gave token of brave resolve to do or die, and doubtless helped to lighten the chieftain's heart with whispers of hope. But alas! Donal had taken his last farewell of Dunboy. When next he gazed upon the once proud home of his fathers, it was a smoking and blood-clotted ruin!—

The halls where mirth and minstrelsy  
Than Beara's wind rose louder,  
Were flung in masses loneliness,  
And black with English powder! -

For eleven days Mac Geoghegan fought Dunboy against Carew and his surrounding army of four thousand men! Eleven days, during which the thick white cloud of smoke never once lifted from battery and trench, and the deafening boom of cannon never once ceased to roll across the bay. By the 17th of June the castle had been knocked into a ruinous condition by an incessant bombardment from the well-appointed English batteries. The lord president devotes several pages of his journal to minute and copious descriptions of each day's labour in a siege which he declares to be unparalleled for obstinacy of defence; and his narrative

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\* These were the Most Rev. Dr. McEgan, Bishop of Ross, and Father Nealon. They brought, says Carew, "letters to sundry rebels, and twelve thousand pounds. The disposition of the money by appointment in Spaine was left principally to Donnall O'Sullivan Beare, Owen McEggan, James Archer, and some others". This same Bishop McEgan was subsequently killed near Bandon fighting gallantly, with his sword in one hand and his beads in the other. His remains were buried in the Abbey of Timoleague.— (See the *Pacata Hibernia*; also *Dunboy*, by T. D. Sullivan.

of the closing scenes of the struggle is told with painful particularity. Mr. Haverty condenses the tragic story very effectively as follows:—"The garrison consisted of only one hundred and forty-three chosen fighting men, who had but a few small cannon, while the comparatively large army which assailed them were well supplied with artillery and all the means of attack. At length, on the 17th of June, when the castle had been nearly shattered to pieces, the garrison offered to surrender if allowed to depart with their arms; but their messenger was immediately hanged and the order for the assault was given. Although the proportion of the assailants in point of numbers was overwhelming, the storming party were resisted with the most desperate bravery. From turret to turret, and in every part of the crumbling ruins, the struggle was successively maintained throughout the live-long day; thirty of the gallant defenders attempted to escape by swimming, but soldiers had been posted in boats, who killed them in the water; and at length the surviving portion of the garrison retreated into a cellar, into which the only access was by a narrow, winding flight of stone steps. Their leader, MacGeoghegan, being mortally wounded, the command was given to Thomas Taylor, the son of an Englishman, and the intimate friend of Captain Tyrrell, to whose niece he was married. Nine barrels of gunpowder were stowed away in the cellar, and with these Taylor declared that he would blow up all that remained of the castle, burying himself and his companions with their enemies in the ruins, unless they received a promise of life. This was refused by the savage Carew, who, placing a guard upon the entrance to the cellar, as it was then after sunset, returned to the work of slaughter next morning. Cannon balls were discharged among the Irish in their last dark retreat, and Taylor was forced by his companions to surrender unconditionally; but when some of the English officers descended into the cellar, they found the wounded Mac Geoghegan, with a lighted torch in his hand, staggering to throw it into the gunpowder. Captain Power thereupon seized him by the arms, and the others despatched him with their swords; but the work of death was not yet completed.

Fifty-eight of those who had surrendered were hanged that day in the English camp, and some others were hanged a few days after; so that not one of the one hundred and forty-three heroic defenders of Dunboy survived. On the 22nd of June the remains of the castle were blown up by Carew with the gunpowder found therein”.

Few episodes of Irish history have been more warmly eulogized than this heroic defence of Dunboy; nor would it be easy to find in the history of any country one more largely calculated to excite sympathy and admiration. Dr. Robert Dwyer Joyce, in his published volume of *Ballads, Romances, and Songs*, contributes a truly graphic poem on the subject. Subjoined are the concluding stanzas:—

THE SACK OF DUNBUI.

\* \* \* \* \*

Nearer yet they crowd and come,  
 With taunting and yelling and thundering drum,  
 With taunting and yelling the hold they environ,  
 And swear that its towers and defenders must fall,  
 While the cannon are set, and their death-hail of iron  
 Crash wildly on bastion and turret and wall;  
 And the ramparts are torn from their base to their brow;  
 Ho! will they not yield to the murderers now?  
 No! its huge towers shall float over Cleena's bright sea,  
 Ere the Gael prove a craven in lonely Dunbui.

Like the fierce god of battle, Mac Geoghegan goes  
 From rampart to wall, in the face of his foes;  
 Now his voice rises high o'er the cannon's fierce din,  
 Whilst the taunt of the Saxon is loud as before,  
 But a yell thunders up from his warriors within,  
 And they dash through the gateway, down, down to the shore  
 With their chief rushing on. Like a storm in its wrath,  
 They sweep the cowed Saxon to death in their path;  
 Ah! dearly he'll purchase the fall of the free,  
 Of the lion-souled warriors of lonely Dunbui!

Leaving terror behind them, and death in their train,  
 Now they stand on their walls 'mid the dying and slain,  
 And the night is around them—the battle is still—  
 That lone summer midnight, ah! short is its reign;  
 For the morn springeth upward, and valley and hill  
 Fling back the fierce echoes of conflict again.  
 And see! how the foe rushes up to the breach,  
 Towards the green waving banner he yet may not reach,

For look how the Gael flings him back to the sea,  
From the blood-reeking ramparts of lonely Dunbui!

Night cometh again, and the white stars look down,  
From the hold to the beach, where the batteries frown.

Night cometh again, but affrighted she lies,  
Like a black Indian queen from the fierce panther's roar,

And morning leaps up in the wide-spreading skies,  
To his welcome of thunder and flame evermore;  
For the guns of the Saxon crush fearfully there,  
Till the walls and the towers and ramparts are bare.  
And the foe make their last mighty swoop on the free,  
The brave hearted warriors of lonely Dunbui!

Within the red breach see Mac Geoghegan stand,  
With the blood of the foe on his arm and his brand,

And he turns to his warriors, and "fight we", says he,  
"For country, for freedom, religion, and all:

Better sink into death, and for ever be free,  
Than yield to the false Saxon's mercy and thrall!"

And they answer with brandish of sparth and of glaive:

"Let them come: we will give them a welcome and grave;  
Let them come: from their swords could we flinch, could we flee,  
When we fight for our country, our God, and Dunbui!"

They came, and the Gael met their merciless shock—  
Flung them backward like spray from the lone Skellig rock;

But they rally, as wolves springing up to the death  
Of their brother of famine, the bear of the snow—

He hurls them adown to the ice-fields beneath,  
Rushing back to his dark norland cave from the foe;—  
So up to the breaches they savagely bound,  
Thousands still thronging beneath and around,  
Till the firm Gael is driven—till the brave Gael must flee  
In, into the chambers of lonely Dunbui!

In chamber, in cellar, on stairway and tower,  
Evermore they resisted the false Saxon's power;

Through the noon, through the eve, and the darkness of night  
The clangour of battle rolls fearfully there,

Till the morning leaps upward in glory and light.

Then, where are the true-hearted warriors of Beare?

They have found them a refuge from torment and chain,  
They have died with their chief, save the few who remain,  
And that few—oh, fair Heaven! on the high gallows tree,  
They swing by the ruins of lonely Dunbui!

Long, long in the hearts of the brave and the free  
Live the warriors who died in the lonely Dunbui—

Down time's silent river their fair names shall go,  
 A light to our race towards the long coming day;  
 Till the billows of time shall be checked in their flow  
 Can we find names so sweet for remembrance as they!  
 And we will hold their memories for ever and aye,  
 A halo, a glory that ne'er shall decay,  
 We'll set them as stars o'er eternity's sea,  
 The names of the heroes who fell at Dunbui!

During the progress of the siege at Dunboy, Carew had despatched a force to Dursey island, which, landing in the night, succeeded in overpowering the small and indeed unwary garrison left there; "so that", as a historian remarks, "no roof now remained to the Lord of Bearhaven". Donal, collecting his people, one and all, men, women, and children, as well as all the herds and removable property of the clan, now retired eastward upon his great natural stronghold of Glengarriffe. Here he defied and defeated every attempt to dislodge him.\* For three months he awaited with increasing anxiety and suspense the daily-expected news from Spain. Alas! In the words of one of our historians, "the ill-news from Spain in September, threw a gloom over those mountains deeper than was ever east by equinoctial storm" But here we must pause for awhile to trace the movements of O'Donnell and O'Neill after the parting at Innishannon.

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\* On one occasion a fierce and protracted battle ensued between him and the combined forces of Wilmot, Selsby, and Slingsby: "A bitter fight", says Carew, "maintained without intermission for six hours; the Enemy not leaving their pursuit until they came in sight of the campe; for whose relieve two regiments were drawne forth to give countenance, and Downings was sent with one hundred and twenty choisse men to the succour of Barry and Selby, who in the reare were so hotly charged by the Rebels that they came to the Sword and Pike; and the skirmish continued *till night parted them*". Notwithstanding their immense superiority in numbers, night was a welcome relief to the English; for it not only saved them from a perilous position, but enabled them to get off an immense spoil of cattle, which early in the day they had taken from the Irish. Brilliant as was the victory for O'Sullivan in other respects, the loss thus sustained must have been most severe—two thousand cows, four thousand sheep, and one thousand horse, according to Carew; a store of sheep and kine which even in these days of "cattle shows" and "agricultural societies", it would be difficult to collect in the same locality.

The last struggle of the brave Mar Oroghegan.





**XLIX.**—HOW THE FALL OF DUNBOY CAUSED KING PHILIP TO CHANGE ALL HIS PLANS, AND RECALL THE EXPEDITION FOR IRELAND; AND HOW THE REVERSE BROKE THE BRAVE HEART OF RED HUGH. HOW THE "LION OF THE NORTH" STOOD AT BAY, AND MADE HIS FOES TREMBLE TO THE LAST.



THREE days after the defeat at Kinsale, O'Donnell—having deputed his brother Ruari to command the clan in his absence—accompanied by his confessor, his secretary, and some military *attaches* or *aides-de-camp*, sailed from Castlehaven for Corunna, where he arrived on the 14th of January. "He was received with high distinction by the Marquis of Caracena and other nobles, 'who evermore gave O'Donnell the right hand; which within his government', says Carew, 'he would not have done to the greatest duke in Spain'. He travelled through Galicia, and at Santiago de Compostella was royally entertained by the archbishop and citizens; but in bull-fighting on the stately Alameda he had small pleasure. With teeth set and heart on fire, the chieftain hurried on, traversed the mountains of Galicia and Leon, and drew not bridle until he reached Zamora, where King Philip was then holding his court. With passionate zeal he pleaded his country's cause; entreated that a greater fleet and a stronger army might be sent to Ireland without delay, unless his Catholic majesty desired to see his ancient Milesian kinsmen and allies utterly destroyed and trodden into earth by the tyrant Elizabeth; and above all, whatever was to be done he prayed it might be done instantly, while O'Neill still held his army on foot and his banner flying; while it was not yet too late to rescue poor Erin from the deadly fangs of those dogs of England. The king received him affectionately, treated him with high consideration, and actually gave orders for a powerful force to be drawn together at Corunna for another descent upon Ireland".\*

\* Mitchel.

“ He returned to that port, from which he could every day look out across the western waves that lay between him and home, and where he could be kept constantly informed of what was passing in Ireland. Spring was over and gone, and summer too had passed away, but still the exigencies of Spanish policy delayed the promised expedition”.\* “That armament never sailed; and poor O'Donnell never saw Ireland more; for news arrived in Spain, a few months after, that Dun-baoi Castle, the last stronghold in Munster that held out for King Philip, was taken; and Beare-haven, the last harbour in the south that was open to his ships, effectually guarded by the English. The Spanish preparations were countermanded, and Red Hugh was once more on his journey to the court, to renew his almost hopeless suit, and had arrived at Simancas, two leagues from Valladolid, when he suddenly fell sick; his gallant heart was broken, and he died there on the 10th of September, 1602. He was buried by order of the king with royal honours, as befitted a prince of the Kinel-Conal; and the chapter of the cathedral of St. Francis, in the stately city of Valladolid, holds the bones of as noble a chief and as stout a warrior as ever bore the wand of chieftaincy, or led a clan to battle”.†

“ Thus”, says another writer, “closed the career of one of the brightest and noblest characters in any history. His youth, his early captivity, his princely generosity, his daring courage, his sincere piety, won the hearts of all who came in contact with him. He was the sword, as O'Neill was the brain, of the Ulster confederacy: the Ulysses and Achilles of the war, they fought side by side without jealousy or envy, for almost as long a period as their prototypes had spent in besieging Troy”.

One cannot peruse unmoved the quaint and singular recital of O'Donnell's characteristic merits and virtues given by the Four Masters. Of him it can with scrupulous truth be said that—unlike not a few others, famed as soldiers, or rulers, or statesmen—his character, in every

\* M'Geo.

† Mitchel.

phase, was pure and noble; and that his private life as well as his public career was worthy of admiration, without stain and without reproach.

Meanwhile O'Neill had set out homeward at the head of the shattered Ulster contingent; and now the lord deputy felt that the moment had come for a supreme effort to pour down upon and overwhelm him. The "Lion of the North" was struck, and, badly wounded, was retreating to his lair. This was surely the time for pressing him to the death—for surrounding, capturing, or slaying the once dreaded foe. So throughout Leinster, Connacht, and Ulster, the cry was spread for the English garrisons, and all natives who would mark themselves for favour and consideration, to rise simultaneously and burst in upon the territories of the confederate chiefs; while the deputy swiftly assembled troops to intercept, capture, or destroy them on their homeward way from the south. The Irish cause was down—disastrously and hopelessly. Now, therefore, was the time for all who "bow the knee and worship the rising sun" to show their zeal on the winning side. Tyrconnell and Tyrowen, as well as the territories of O'Rorke and Maguire, were inundated by converging streams of regular troops and volunteer raiders; while O'Neill, like a "lion", indeed, who finds that the hunter is rifling his home, made the earth tremble in his path to the rescue! With the concentrated passion of desperation he tore through every obstacle, routed every opposing army, and marched—strode—to the succour of his people, as if a thunderbolt cleared the way. Soon his enemies were made to understand that the "Lion of the North" was still alive and unsubdued. But it was, in sooth, a desperate cause that now taxed to its uttermost the genius of Hugh. The lord deputy, Mountjoy, proceeded to the north to take command in person against him; while "Dowcra, marching out of Derry, pressed O'Neill from the north and north-east". Mountjoy advanced on Hugh's family seat, Dungannon; but O'Neill could ever better bear to see his ancestral home in ashes than to have it become the shelter of his foes. The lord deputy "discovered it in the distance, as Norris had once

before done, in flames, kindled by the hand of its straitened proprietor". With vigour and skill undiminished and spirit undaunted, Hugh rapidly planned and carried out his measures of defensive operations. In fine, it was in this moment of apparent wreck and ruin and despair, that O'Neill's character rose into positive grandeur and sublimity, and that his glorious talents shone forth in their greatest splendour. "Never", says one of our historians, "did the genius of Hugh O'Neill shine out brighter than in these last defensive operations. In July, Mountjoy writes apologetically to the council, that 'notwithstanding her Majesty's great forces O'Neil doth still live'. He bitterly complains of his consummate caution, his 'pestilent judgment to spread and to nourish his own infection', and of the reverence entertained for his person by the native population. Early in August, Mountjoy had arranged what he hoped might prove the finishing stroke in the struggle; Dowra from Derry, Chichester from Carrickfergus, Danvers from Armagh, and all who could be spared from Mountjoy, Charlemont, and Mountnorris, were gathered under his command, to the number of eight thousand men, for a foray into the interior of Tyrone. Inisloghlin, on the borders of Down and Antrim, which contained a great quantity of valuables belonging to O'Neill, was captured, Magherlowney and Tulloghoge were next taken. At the latter place stood the ancient stone chair on which the O'Neills were inaugurated, time out of mind; it was now broken into atoms by Mountjoy's orders. But the most effective warfare was made on the growing crops. The eight thousand men spread themselves over the fertile fields, along the valleys of the Bann and the Roe, destroying the standing grain with fire, where it would burn, or with the *praca*, a peculiar kind of harrow, tearing it up by the roots. The horsemen trampled crops into the earth which had generously nourished them; the infantry shored them down with their sabres; and the sword, though in a very different sense from that of Holy Scripture, was, indeed, converted into a sickle. The harvest moon never shone upon such fields in any Christian land. In September, Mountjoy reported to Cecil, 'that between Tullaghoge

and Toome there lay unburied a thousand dead', and that since his arrival on the Blackwater—a period of a couple of months—there were three thousand starved in Tyrone. In O'Cane's country, the misery of his clansmen drove the chief to surrender to Dowcra, and the news of Hugh Roe's death having reached Donegal, his brother repaired to Athlone, and made his submission to Mountjoy. Early in December, O'Neill, unable to maintain himself on the river Roe, retired with six hundred foot and sixty horse to Glencancean, near Lough Neagh, the most secure of his fastnesses. His brother Cormac, McMahan, and Art O'Neil, of Clandeboy, shared with him the wintry hardships of that asylum, while Tyrone, Clandeboy, and Monaghan, were given up to horrors, surpassing any that had been known or dreamt of in former wars".

By this time O'Sullivan had bravely held his position in Glengarriffe for full six months against all the efforts of the Munster army. That picturesque glen, whose beauty is of world-wide fame, was for Donal a camp formed by nature, within which the old and helpless, the women and children of his clan, with their kine and sheep, were safely placed, while the fighting force, which, with Tyrrell's contingent, did not exceed 800 men, guarded the few passes through which alone the alpine barriers of the glen could be penetrated. Here the little community, as we might call them, housed in tents of evergreen boughs, lived throughout the summer and autumn months, "waiting for the news from Spain". They fished the "fishful river" that winds through that elysian vale, and the myriad confluent streams that pour down from the "hundred lakes" of Caha. They hunted the deer that in those days, as in our own, roamed wild and free through the densely wooded craggy dells. Each morning the guards were told off for the mountain watches; and each evening the bugles of the chief, returning from his daily inspection, or the joyous shouts of victory that proclaimed some new assault of the enemy repulsed, woke the echoes of the hills. And perhaps in the calm summer twilight, the laugh and the song went round; the minstrels touched their harps, and the clansmen improvised their simple rustic sports, while the

Chief and Lady Aileen moved through the groups with a gracious smile for all! For they nothing doubted that soon would come the glad tidings that king Philip's ships were in the bay; and then!—Beara would be swept of the hated foe, and their loved Dunboy

————— again would rise  
And mock the English rover!

Alas! this happy dream was to fade in sorrow, and die out in bitterest reality of despair! News came indeed from Spain at length; but it was news that sounded the knell of all their hopes to O'Sullivan and his people! O'Donnell was dead, and on hearing of the fall of Dunboy the Spanish government had countermanded the expedition assembled and on the point of sailing for Ireland! This was heart-crushing intelligence for Donal and his confederates. Nevertheless they held out still. There remained one faint glimmer in the north; and while there was a sword unsheathed anywhere in the sacred cause of fatherland, they would not put up theirs. They gave Carew's captains hot work throughout Desmond for the remainder of the autumn, capturing several strong positions, and driving in his outlying garrisons in Muskerry and the Carberies. But soon even the northern ray went out, and the skies all around were wrapt in cimmerian gloom. There was room for hope no more!

What was now Donal's position? It is difficult adequately to realise it! Winter was upon him; the mountains were deep in snow; his resources were exhausted; he was cooped up in a remote glen, with a crowd of helpless people, the aged and infirm, women and children, and with barely a few hundred fighting men to guard them. He was environed by foes on all hands. The nearest point where an ally could be reached was in Ulster, at the other extremity of Ireland—two or three hundred miles away—and the country between him and any such friendly ground was all in the hands of the English, and swarmed with their garrisons and scouring parties.

The resolution taken by O'Sullivan under these circumstances was one which has ever since excited amongst his-

torical writers and military critics the liveliest sentiments of astonishment and admiration. It was to pierce through his surrounding foes, and fight his way northward inch by inch to Ulster; *convoying meantime the women and children, the aged, sick, and wounded of his clan*—in fine, all who might elect to claim his protection and share his retreat rather than trust the perils of remaining. It was this latter feature which preëminently stamped the enterprise as almost without precedent. For four hundred men, under such circumstances, to cut their way from Glengarriffe to Leitrim, even if divested of every other charge or duty save the clearing of their own path, would be sufficiently daring to form an episode of romance; and had Donal more regard for his own safety than for his "poor people", this would have been the utmost attempted by him. But he was resolved, let what might befall, not to abandon even the humblest or the weakest amongst them. While he had a sword to draw, he would defend them; and he would seek no safety or protection for himself that was not shared by them. His own wife and, at least, the youngest of his children, he left behind in charge of his devoted foster-brother, Mac Swiney, who successfully concealed them until the chief's return, nearly eight months subsequently, in an almost inaccessible spot at the foot of an immense precipice in the Glengarriffe mountains, now known as the Eagle's Nest. Many other families also elected to try the chance of escape from Carew's scouring parties, and remained behind, hidden in the fastnesses of that wild region.

L.—THE RETREAT TO LEITRIM; “THE MOST ROMANTIC AND GALLANT ACHIEVEMENT OF THE AGE”.



ON the last day of December, 1602, was commenced this memorable retreat, which every writer or commentator, whether of that period or of our own, civil or military, English or Irish, has concurred in characterising as scarcely to be paralleled in history.\* Tyrrell and other of the confederates had drawn off some time previously, when *saue qui peut* evidently became the maxim with the despair-stricken band; so that O'Sullivan's force when setting out from Glengarriffe consisted exactly of four hundred fighting men, and about six hundred non-combatants, women, children, aged and infirm people, and servants.† Even in our own day, and in time of peace, with full facilities of transport and supply, the commissariat arrangements necessary to be made beforehand along the route of such a body—a thousand souls—would require some skill and organization. But O'Sullivan could on no day tell where or how his people were to find sustenance for the morrow. He had money enough,‡ it is true, to purchase supplies; but no one durst sell them to him, or permit him to take them. Word was sent through the country by the lord president for all, *on peril of being treated as O'Sullivan's covert or open abettors*, to fall upon him, to cross his road, to bar his way, to watch him at the fords, to come upon him by night; and, above all,

\* “We read of nothing more like to the expedition of Young Cyrus and the Ten Thousand Greeks, than this retreat of O'Sullivan Beare”—*Abbe Mac Geoghegan*.

“One of the most extraordinary retreats recorded in history”—*Haverty*.

“A retreat almost unparalleled”—*M'Gee*.

“The most romantic and gallant achievement of the age”—*Davis*.

† *Historiæ Catholicæ Hiberniæ*, Haverty, M'Gee, Mac Geoghegan.

‡ Even on the last day of his terrible retreat, we find him able to pay a guide very liberally in gold pieces.

to drive off or destroy all cattle or other possible means of sustenance, so that of sheer necessity his party must perish on the way. Whose lands soever O'Sullivan would be found to have passed through unresisted, or whereupon he was allowed to find food of any kind, the government would consider forfeited. Such were the circumstances under which the Lord of Beara and his immortal Four Hundred set out on their mid-winter retreat on the 31st December, 1602.

That evening, Don Philip tells us, they reached and encamped at "a place on the borders of Muskerry, called by the natives Acharis".\* Next day, 1st January, 1603, they reached "before noon", "Balebrunia" (Ballyvourney), famed as the retreat of St. Gubeneta, whose ruined church and penitential stations are still frequented by pious pilgrims. Here O'Sullivan and his entire force halted, that they might begin their journey by offering all their sufferings to God, and supplicating the powerful prayers of His saint. Donal and several members of his family made gifts to the altar, and the little army, having prayed for some time, resumed their weary march. The ordeal commenced for them soon. They were assailed and harassed all the way "by the sons of Thadeus Mac Carthy", several being wounded on both sides. They cleared their road, however, and that night encamped in "O'Kimbhi" (O'Keefe's country: Duhallow); "but", says Philip, "they had little rest at night after such a toilsome day, for they were constantly molested by the people of that place, and suffered most painfully from

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\* I am not aware that any one hitherto has identified this spot; but it is, nevertheless, plainly to be found. The place is the junction of some mountain roads, in a truly wild and solitary locality, about a mile north of the present village of Bealnageary, which is between Gougane Barra and Macroom. In a little grove the ruined church of *Agharis* (marked on the Ordnance maps) identifies for us the locality of "Acharis". It is on the road to Ballyvourney by O'Sullivan's route, which was from Glengarriffe eastward by his castle of the Fawn's Rock ("Carrick-an Asa"), where he left a ward; thence through the Pass of the Deer ("Ceam-an-eih") northward to Agharis.

hunger. For they had been able to bring with them but one day's provisions, and these they had consumed on the first day's march". Next morning they pushed forward towards the confines of Limerick, designing to reach that ancient refuge of the oppressed and vanquished, the historic Glen of Aherlow, where at least they hoped for rest in safety during a few days' halt, but their path now lay through the midst of their foes—right between the garrisons of Charleville and Buttevant, and they scarcely hoped to cross the river in their front without a heavy penalty. And truly enough, as the faint and weary cavalcade reached the bank, a strong force under the brother of Viscount Barry encountered them at Bellaghy Ford. The women and children were at once put to the rear, and the hunger-wasted company, nevertheless, all unflinching, came up to the conflict like heroes. It was a bitter fight but despair gave energy to that desperate fugitive band. They literally swept their foes before them, and would not have suffered a man to escape them had not hunger and terrible privation told upon them too severely to allow of a pursuit. Dr. Joyce chronicles this combat for us in one of his ballads:

We stood so steady,  
 All under fire,  
 We stood so steady,  
 Our long spears ready  
 To vent our ire—  
 To dash on the Saxon,  
 Our mortal foe,  
 And lay him low  
 In the bloody mire!

'T was by Blackwater,  
 When snows were white,  
 'T was by Blackwater,  
 Our foes for the slaughter  
 Stood full in sight;  
 But we were ready  
 With our long spears;  
 And we had no fears  
 But we 'd win the fight.

Their bullets came whistling  
 Upon our rank,  
 Their bullets came whistling,

Their bay'nets were bristling  
 On th' other bank.  
 Yet we stood steady,  
 And each good blade  
 Ere the morn did fade  
 At their life-blood drank.

"Hurra! for Freedom!"  
 Came from our van;  
 "Hurra! for Freedom!"  
 Our swords—we 'll feed 'em  
 As but we can—  
 With vengeance we 'll feed 'em!"  
 Then down we crashed,  
 Through the wild ford dashed,  
 And the fray began!

Horses to horses  
 And man to man—  
 O'er dying horses  
 And blood and corpses  
 O'Sullivan,  
 Our general, thundered;  
 And we were not slack  
 To slay at his back  
 Till the flight began.

Oh! how we scattered  
 The foemen then—  
 Slaughtered and scattered  
 And chased and shattered,  
 By shore and glen;—  
 To the wall of Moyallo,  
 Few fled that day,—  
 Will they bar our way  
 When we come again?

Our dead freres we buried,—  
 They were but few,—  
 Our dead freres we buried  
 Where the dark waves hurried  
 And flashed and flew:  
 Oh! sweet be their slumber  
 Who thus have died  
 In the battle's tide,  
 Innisfail for you!

Pushing on for Aherlow—the unwounded of the soldiers  
 carrying between them the wounded of the past three days'  
 conflict—after a march of thirty miles they reached at

length that "vast solitude", as Don Philip calls it. They were so worn-out by travel and hunger, toil and suffering, that the night sentinels posted around the little camp could scarcely perform their duty.\* The prospect of recruiting strength by a few days' repose here had to be abandoned, lest the foes now gathering around them might bar all way to the Shannon. So next morning, at dawn, having refreshed themselves with the only food available, *herbs and water*,† they set out northward. On this day one of their severest battles had to be fought—a conflict of eight hours' duration. O'Sullivan says that, though the enemy exceeded greatly in numbers, they were deficient in military skill, otherwise the men of Beara must have been overpowered. From this forward the march grew every day more painful. Nature itself could not continue to endure such suffering. The fugitives dropped on the road from utter exhaustion, or strayed away in the wild delirious search for food. In many instances the sentries at night died at their posts from sheer privation. Arriving at Dunnohill, the starving soldiery at once occupy the place. The first who arrived ravenously devoured all the food; those who came next greedily ate everything in the way of corn, etc. On by Ballynakill, Sleive Felim, and Lateragh; each day a prolonged strife with foes on all sides. "It was not only", says Don Philip, "that they had to fight against superior numbers; but every day O'Sullivan had fresh enemies, while his soldiers were being worn out by cold, hunger, and incessant fighting". Still they guarded faithfully the women and children, and such of the aged as could walk without assistance; and maintained, though only by the utmost exertion, that strict discipline and precaution to which O'Sullivan largely owed his safety on this march. A vanguard of forty men always went in front; next came the sick and wounded, the women and children; next, the baggage and the ammunition; and, last of all, protecting the rear, Donal himself with the bulk of his little force. On the 6th January, they reached the wood

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\* *Historiæ Catholicæ Iberniæ.*

† *Ibid.*

of Brosna (now Portland, in the parish of Lorha); and here Donal orders the little force to entrench themselves. Their greatest peril is now at hand. The "lordly Shannon", wide and deep, is in their front; they have no boats; and the foe is crowding behind and around them. Donal's resort in this extremity was one worthy of his reputation as a skilful captain. Of the few horses now remaining in his cavalcade, he directed eleven to be killed. The skins he strained upon a firmly bound boat-frame which he had his soldiers to construct in the wood close by; the flesh was cooked as a luxury for the sick and wounded. In this boat, on the morning of the 8th January, he commenced to transport his little force across the Shannon, from Redwood. As he was in the act of so doing, there arrived on the southern bank, where the women and children, and only a portion of the rear-guard remained, the queen's sheriff of Tipperary and a strong force, who instantly "began to plunder the baggage, slaughter the camp followers, and throw the women and children into the river". One of O'Sullivan's lieutenants, in charge of the small guard which, however, yet remained, fell upon them with such vehemence, that they retired, and the last of the fugitives crossed to the Connacht shore.

But there was still no rest for that hapless company. "The soldiers pressed by hunger divide themselves into two bands, and alternately sustain the attacks of the enemy and collect provisions". Arriving at Aughrim-Hy-Maine a powerful and well ordered army under Sir Thomas Burke, Lord Clanricarde's brother, and Colonel Henry Malby, lay across their route. Even Carew himself informs us that the English force vastly exceeded the gaunt and famished band of O'Sullivan; though he does not venture into particulars. In truth Donal found himself compelled to face a pitched battle against a force of some eight hundred men with his wasted party, now reduced to less than three hundred. Carew briefly tells the story, so bitter for him to tell. "Nevertheless, when they saw that either they must

make their way by the sword or perish, they gave a brave charge upon our men, in which Captain Malby was slain; upon whose fall Sir Thomas and his troops fainting, with the loss of many men, studied their safety by flight".\* The quaint record in the *Annals of the Four Masters* is as follows:—"O'Sullivan, O'Conor-Kerry, and William Burke, with their small party, were obliged to remain at Aughrim-Hy-Many to engage, fight, and sustain a battle-field, and test their true valour against the many hundreds oppressing and pursuing them. O'Sullivan, with rage, heroism, fury, and ferocity, rushed to the place where he saw the English, for it was against them that he cherished most animosity and hatred; and made no delay until he reached the spot where he saw their chief; so that he quickly and dexterously beheaded that noble Englishman, the son of Captain Malby. The forces there collected were then routed and a countless number of them slain".† Beside Malby and Burke there were left on the field by the English "three standard bearers and several officers". It was a decisive victory for the Prince of Beare; but it only purchased for him a day's respite. That night, for the first time—terrible affliction—he had to march forward, unable to bring with him his sick or wounded! Next day the English (who could not win the fight) came up and butchered these helpless ones in cold blood! I summarise from the *Historiæ Catholicæ* the following narrative of the last days of this memorable retreat:—

"Next day at dawn he crossed Slieve Muire (Mount Mary) and came down on some villages where he hoped to procure provisions. But he found all the cattle and provisions carried away, and the people of the district arrayed against him, under the command of Mac David,

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\* *Pacata Hibernia*. In the next following sentence Carew gives with horrid candour and equanimity, a picture, hardly to be paralleled in the records of savagery:—"Next morning Sir Charles (Wilmot) coming to seeke the enemy in their campe, hee entered into their quarter without resistance, where he found nothing but hurt and sick men, whose pains and lives by the soldiers were both determined".

† *Annals of the Four Masters*, page 2319.

the lord of the place. He withdrew at dusk to some thick woods at Sliebh Iphlinn. But in the night he received information that the people intended to surround him and cut him off. Large fires were lighted to deceive his enemies, and he at once set off on a night march. The soldiers suffered exceedingly. They fell into deep snow drifts, whence they dragged each other out with great difficulty.

“Next day they were overtaken by Mac David. But their determined attitude made their foes retire; and so they were allowed to betake themselves to another wood called Diamhbhrach, or the Solitude. Upon entering this refuge, the men, overpowered with fatigue, lay down and fell asleep. When O’Sullivan halted, finding only twelve companions with himself, he ordered fires to be lighted, in order that his scattered followers might know whither to turn upon waking.

“At dawn of next day numbers of the inhabitants flocked to O’Sullivan’s bivouac, attracted by the unprecedented spectacle of so many fires in such a lonely solitude. They furnished him gratuitously with food, and subsequently informed Oliver Lombard, the governor of Connaught, that the fires had been kindled by the herdsmen. Many of the Catholics were found to suffer very much in their feet, by reason of the severity of the weather and the length of the march. O’Connor, especially, suffered grievously. To give as long a rest as possible, they remained all this day in the wood; but a night march was necessary for all. This was especially severe on O’Connor, as it was not possible that he could proceed on horseback. For, since the enemy occupied all the public routes and the paths practicable for a horse, they were obliged to creep along by out-of-the-way paths, and frequently to help each other in places where alone they could not move.

“A guide was wanted; but God provided one. A stranger presented himself, clad in a linen garment. with bare feet, having his head bound with a white cloth, and bearing a long pole shod with iron, and presenting an appearance well calculated to strike terror into the beholders. Having saluted O’Sullivan and the others, he thus addressed them: ‘I know that you Catholics have been

overwhelmed by various calamities, that you are fleeing from the tyranny of heretics, that at the hill of Aughrim you routed the queen's troops, and that you are now going to O'Ruarke, who is only fifteen miles off; but you want a guide. Therefore, a strong desire has come upon me of leading you thither'. After some hesitation O'Sullivan accepted his offer, and ordered him to receive two hundred gold pieces. These he took, 'not as a reward, but as a mark of our mutually grateful feelings for each other'. The darkness of the night, their ignorance of the country, and their unavoidable suspicion of their guide multiplied their fears. The slippery condition of the rocks over which they had to climb, the snow piled up by the wind, their fatigue and weakness, the swelling of their feet, tormented the unfortunate walkers. But O'Connor suffered most of all. His feet and legs were inflamed, and rapidly broke into ulcers. He suffered excruciating pain; but he bore it patiently for Jesus Christ. In the dead of the night they reached a hamlet, Knock Vicar (*Mons Vicarii*), where they refreshed themselves with fire and food. But when they were again about to proceed, O'Connor could not stand, much less walk. Then his fellow soldiers carried him in their arms in alternate batches of four, until they found a wretched horse, upon the back of which they placed him. At length, when they had passed Cor Sliebh, the sun having risen, their guide pointed out O'Ruarke's castle in the distance, and having assured them that all danger was now passed, he bade them farewell".

Not unlike the survivors of the Greek Ten Thousand, to whom they have been so often compared, who, when they first descried the sea, broke from the ranks and rushed forward wildly shouting "Thalatta! Thalatta!" that group of mangled and bleeding fugitives—for now, alas! they were no more—when they saw through the trees in the distance the towers of Leitrim Castle, sank upon the earth, and for the first time since they had quitted Beara, gave way to passionate weeping, overpowered by strange paroxysms of joy, grief, suffering, and exultation. At last—at last!—they were safe! No more days of bloody

combat, and nights of terror and unrest! No more of hunger's maddening pangs! No more of flight for life, with bleeding feet, over rugged roads, with murderous foes behind! Relief is at hand! They can sleep—they can rest. They are saved—they are saved! Then, kneeling on the sward, from their bursting hearts they cried aloud to the God of their fathers, who through an ordeal so awful had brought them, few as they were, at last to a haven of refuge!

They pushed forward, and about eleven o'clock in the forenoon reached O'Rorke's castle. Here they were gazed upon as if they were objects of miraculous wonder. All that generous kindness and tender sympathy could devise, was quickly called to their aid. Their wounds and bruises were tended by a hundred eager hands. Their every want was anticipated. Alas! how few of them now remained to claim these kindly offices. Of the thousand souls who had set out from Glengarriffe, not one hundred entered the friendly portals of Brefsny Hall. Only thirty-five came in with O'Sullivan that morning. Of these, but one was a woman—the aged mother of Don Philip, the historian; eighteen were attendants or camp-followers, and only sixteen were armed men! About fifty more came in next day, in twos and threes, or were found by searching parties sent out by O'Rorke. All the rest, except some three hundred in all, who had strayed, perished on the way, by the sword, or by the terrible privations of the journey. This retreat was the last military achievement of Donal O'Sullivan. Some of the greatest commanders in history might be proud to claim an enterprise so heroic as their best title to the immortality of fame.

LI.—HOW THE GOVERNMENT AND HUGH MADE A TREATY OF PEACE. HOW ENGLAND CAME UNDER THE SCOTTISH MONARCHY; AND HOW IRELAND HOPEFULLY HAILED THE GAELIC SOVEREIGN.



HE succeeding year (1603) opened upon a state of gloom and incertitude on all hands in Ireland. Like a strong man overpowered, wounded, and cast down, after a protracted and exhausting struggle, yet still unsubmitting and not totally reft of strength, the hapless Irish nation lay prostrate—fallen but unsubdued—unwilling to yield, but too weak to rise. The English power, on the other hand, was not without its sense of exhaustion also. It had passed through an awful crisis; and had come out of the ordeal victorious, it is true, but greatly by happy chance, and at best only by purchasing victory most dearly. O'Neill was still unconquered; and though the vast majority of the lesser chiefs confederated with him in the recent struggle, had been compelled to submit and sue for pardon, O'Donnell, O'Ruark, Maguire, and O'Sullivan, remained to him;\* and, on the whole, he was still master of elements capable of being organized into a formidable power, perhaps to renew the conflict at some future favourable opportunity. Elizabeth and her ministers were too wise and prudent to allow exultation over their success to blind them to the fact that so much of it had been due to fortuitous circumstances, and that 'twere decidedly better, if possible, to avoid having the combat tried over again. Mountjoy was instructed to "sound" the defeated, but unsubdued and still dangerous Tyrone as to terms of peace and submission, lest, being hopeless of "pardon" (as they put it), he might

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\* "All that are out doe seeke for mercy excepting O'Rorke and O'Sullivan, who is now with O'Rorke"—*Lord Deputy Mountjoy to the Privy Council*. Feb. 26, 1603.

continue to stand out. Negotiations were accordingly opened with O'Neill. "Sir William Godolphin and Sir Garrett Moore were sent as commissioners to arrange with him the terms of peace", the latter (ancestor of the present Marquis of Drogheda) being a warm personal friend of O'Neill's. "They found him", we are told, "in his retreat near Lough Neagh, early in March, and obtained his promise to give the deputy an early meeting at Mellifont". "The negotiations", according to another writer, "were hurried on the deputy's part by private information which he had received of the queen's death; and fearing that O'Neill's views might be altered by that circumstance, he immediately desired the commissioners to close the agreement, and invite O'Neill under safe conduct to Drogheda to have it ratified without delay". On the 30th of March, 1603, Hugh met Mountjoy by appointment at Mellifont Abbey, where the terms of peace were duly ratified on each side, O'Neill having on his part gone through the necessary forms and declarations of submission. The singularly favourable conditions conceded to O'Neill show conclusively the estimate held by the English council of their victory over him, and of his still formidable influence. He was to have complete amnesty for the past; he was to be restored in blood, notwithstanding his attainder and outlawry; he was to be reinstated in his dignity of Earl of Tyrone; he and his people were to enjoy *full and free exercise of their religion*; new "letters-patent" were to issue, regranting to him and other northern chiefs very nearly the whole of the lands occupied by their respective clans. On the other hand, Hugh was to renounce once and for ever the title of "The O'Neill", should accept the English title of "Earl", and should allow English law to run through his territories.\* Truly liberal terms,—generous, indeed, they might under all circumstances be called,—if meant to be faithfully kept! It is hard to think O'Neill believed in the good faith of men whose subtle policy he knew so well. It may be that he doubted it thoroughly, but was powerless to

accomplish more than to obtain such terms, whatever their worth for the present, trusting to the future for the rest.

Yet it seemed as if, for the first time, a real and lasting peace was at hand. James the Sixth of Scotland, son of the beautiful and ill-fated Mary Queen of Scots, succeeded Elizabeth on the English throne; and even before his express declaration of a conciliatory policy was put forth, there ran through Ireland, as if intuitively, a belief in his friendly dispositions. And, in truth, never before did such a happy opportunity offer for adjusting, at long last and for ever, peacefully and amicably, the questions at issue between Ireland and England. In James the Irish—always so peculiarly swayed by considerations of race or kinship—beheld a Gaelic prince, a king of the sister kingdom, Scotland, to whom had reverted the kingdom and crown of England. Kings of England of the now extinct line had done them grievous wrong; but no king of friendly Scotland had broken the traditional kindly relations between Hibernia and Caledonia. Taking King James the Gael for a sovereign was not like bowing the neck to the yoke of the invading Normans or Tudors. As the son of his persecuted mother, he was peculiarly recommended to the friendly feelings of the Irish people. Mary of Scotland had much to entitle her to Irish sympathy. She was a princess of the royal line of Malcolm, tracing direct descent from the Milesian princes of Dal-*radia*. She was the representative of many a Scottish sovereign who had aided Ireland against the Normans. Moreover, she had just fallen a victim to the tigress Elizabeth of England, the same who had so deeply reddened with blood the soil of Ireland. She had suffered for the Catholic faith too; and if aught else were required to touch the Gaels of Ireland with compassion and sympathy, it was to be found in her youth and beauty, qualities which, when allied with innocence and misfortune, never fail to win the Irish heart. It was to the son of such a woman—the martyred Mary Queen of Scots—that the English crown and kingdom had lapsed, and with these, such claim as England might be held to have upon the Irish kingdom.

What wonder if amongst the Irish the idea prevailed that now at last they could heartily offer loyalty to the sovereign on the English throne, and feel that he was neither a stranger nor a subjugator?

It was indeed a great opportunity, apparently—the first that had ever offered—for uniting the three kingdoms under one crown, without enforcing between any of them the humiliating relations of conqueror and conquered. There can be no doubt whatever, that, had James and his government appreciated the peculiar opportunity, and availed of it in a humane, wise, and generous spirit,

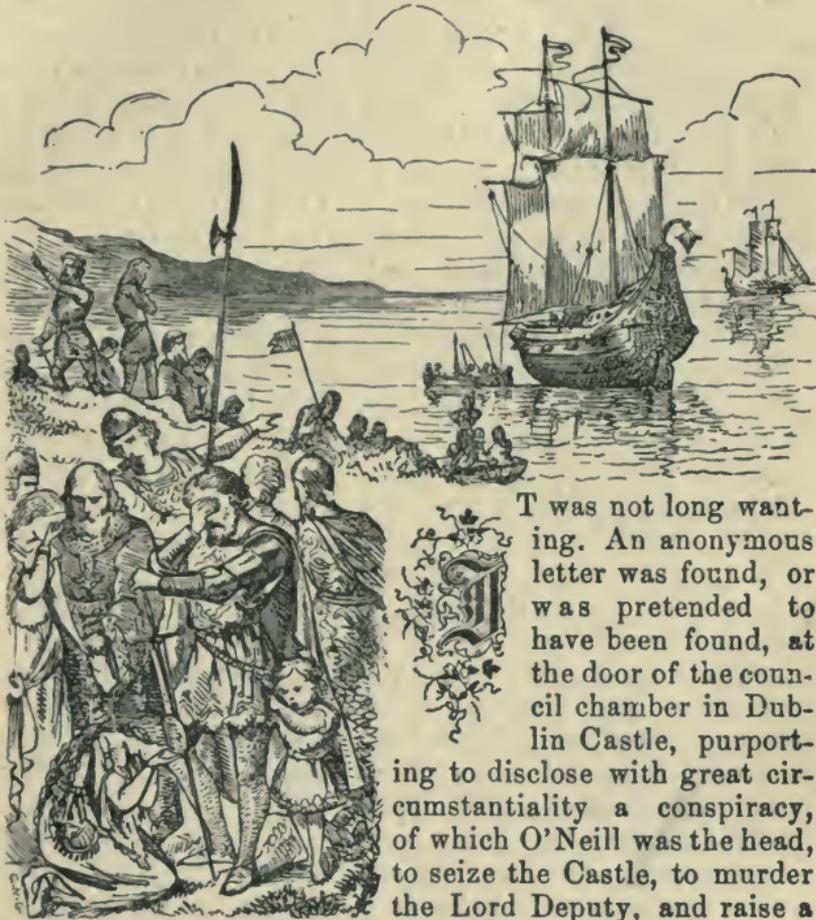
“—an end was made, and nobly,  
Of the old centennial feud”.

The Irish nation, there is every ground for concluding, would cheerfully and happily have come in to the arrangement; and the simplest measure of justice from the government, a reasonable consideration for the national feelings, rights, and interests, might have realised that dream of a union between the kingdoms, which the compulsion of conquest could never—can never—accomplish. But that accursed greed of plunder—that unholy passion for Irish spoil—which from the first characterised the English adventurers in Ireland, and which, unhappily, ever proved potential to mar any comparatively humane designs of the king, whenever, if ever, such designs were entertained, was now at hand to demand that Ireland should be given up to “settlers”, by fair means or by foul, as a stranded ship might be abandoned to wreckers, or as a captured town might be given up to sack and pillage by the assaulting soldiery. There is, however, slight reason, if any, for thinking that the most unworthy and unnatural son of Mary Queen of Scots—the pedantic and pompous James—entertained any statesmanlike generosity or justice of design in reference to Ireland. The Irish expectations about him were doomed to be wofully disappointed. He became the mere creature of English policy; and the Anglo-Irish adventurers and “settlers”

yelling for plunder, were able to force that policy in their own direction. They grumbled outright at the favourable terms of Mountjoy's treaty with O'Neill. It yielded not one acre of plunder; whereas, the teeth of thousands of those worthies had been set on edge by the anticipation of the rich spoils of the "confiscated" north, which they made sure would follow upon O'Neill's subjection. "It now seemed as if the entire object of that tremendous war had been, on the part of England, to force a coronet upon the unwilling brows of an Irish chieftain, and oblige him in his own despite to accept 'letters patent' and broad lands 'in fee'. Surely, if this were to be the 'conquest of Ulster', if the rich valleys of the north, with all their woods and waters, mills and fishings, were to be given up to these O'Neills and O'Donnells, on whose heads a price had so lately been set for traitors; if, worse than all, their very religion was to be tolerated, and Ulster, with its verdant abbey-lands, and livings, and termon-lands, were still to set 'Reformation' at defiance; surely, in this case, the crowd of esurient undertakers, lay and clerical, had ground of complaint. It was not for this they left their homes, and felled forests, and camped on the mountains, and plucked down the Red Hand from many a castle wall. Not for this they 'preached before the State in Christ Church', and censured the backsliding of the times, and pointed out the mortal sin of a compromise with Jezabel!"

Notwithstanding that for a year or two subsequent to James's accession, the terms of the treaty of Mellifont were in most part observed by the government, O'Neill noted well the gathering storm of discontent, to which he saw but too clearly the government would succumb at an early opportunity. By degrees the skies began to lour, and unerring indications foretold that a pretext was being sought for his immolation.

LII.—“THE FLIGHT OF THE EARLS”. HOW THE PRINCES OF IRELAND WENT INTO EXILE, MENACED BY DESTRUCTION AT HOME.



It was not long wanting. An anonymous letter was found, or was pretended to have been found, at the door of the council chamber in Dublin Castle, purporting to disclose with great circumstantiality a conspiracy, of which O'Neill was the head, to seize the Castle, to murder the Lord Deputy, and raise a general revolt.\* The most artful means were resorted to by all whose interest it was to procure the ruin of the northern

\* There seems to have been a plot of some kind; but it was one got up by the secretary of state, Cecil himself: Lord Howth, his agent in this shocking business, inveigling O'Neill and O'Donnell into attendance at some of the meetings. "Artful Cecil", says Rev. Dr. Anderson, a Protestant divine, in his *Royal Genea-*

chiefs, to get up a wild panic of real or affected terror on this most opportune discovery! O'Neill well knew the nature of the transaction, and the design behind it. The vultures must have prey—his ruin had become a state-necessity. In the month of May, he and the other northern chiefs were cited to answer the capital charge thus preferred against them. This they were ready to do; but the government plotters were not just yet ready to carry out their own schemes, so the investigation was on some slight pretext postponed, and O'Neill and O'Donnell were ordered to appear in London on their defence at Michaelmas. There is little doubt that hereupon, or about this time, O'Neill formed and communicated to his northern kinsmen and fellow-victims, the resolution of going into exile, and seeking on some friendly shore that safety which it was plain he could hope for in Ireland no longer. They at once determined to share his fortunes, and to take with them into exile their wives, children, relatives, and household attendants; in fine, to bid an eternal farewell to the "fair hills of holy Ireland." The sad sequel forms the subject of that remarkable work—"The Flight of the Earls; or the Fate and Fortunes of Tyrone and Tyrconnell," by the Rev. C. P. Meehan, of Dublin; a work full of deep and sorrowful interest to every student of Irish history. We can but briefly summarize here, as closely as possible from various authorities, that mournful chapter in our national annals. "In the beginning of September, 1607, nearly four months after the pretended discovery of St. Lawrence's plot, O'Neill was at Slane with the Lord Deputy, Sir Arthur Chichester; and they conferred relative to a journey, which the for-

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*logies*, a work printed in London in 1736, "employed one St. Lawrence to entrap the Earls of Tyrone and Tyrconnell, the Lord of Delvin, and other Irish chiefs, into a sham plot which had no evidence but his. But these chiefs being informed that witnesses were to be heard against them, foolishly fled from Dublin; and so taking their guilt upon them, they were declared rebels, and six entire counties in Ulster were at once forfeited to the crown, *which was what their enervies wanted*".

ner was to make to London before Michaelmas, in compliance with a summons from the king. While here a letter was delivered to O'Neill from one John Bath, informing him that Maguire had arrived in a French ship in Lough Swilly". Sir John Davis, the attorney-general of that day, says: "He, O'Neill, took leave of the lord deputy, in a more sad and passionate manner than was usual with him. From thence he went to Mellifont, and Sir Garrett Moore's house, where he wept abundantly when he took his leave, giving a solemn farewell to every child and every servant in the house, which made them all marvel, because in general it was not his manner to use such compliments". On his way northwards, we are told, he remained two days at his own residence in Dunganon—it was hard to quit the old rooftree for ever! Thence he proceeded hastily (travelling all night) to Rathmullen, on the shore of Lough Swilly, where he found O'Donnell and several of his friends waiting, and laying up stores in the French ship. Amidst a scene of bitter anguish the illustrious party soon embarked; numbering fifty persons in all, including attendants and domestics. With O'Neill, in that sorrowful company, we are told, went—his last countess, Catherina, daughter of Maginnis; his three sons, Hugh, Baron of Dungannon, John, and Brian; Art Oge, the son of his brother Cormac, and others of his relatives; Ruari, or Roderic O'Donnell, Earl of Tyrconnell; Caffa or Cathbar, his brother, and his sister Nuala, who was married to Niall Garve O'Donnell, but who abandoned her husband when he became a traitor to his country; Hugh O'Donnell, the Earl's son, and other members of his family; Cuconnaught Maguire, and Owen Roe Mac Ward, chief bard of Tyrconnell". "It is certain", say the Four Masters, "that the sea has not borne, and the wind has not wafted in modern times, a number of persons in one ship, more eminent, illustrious, or noble in point of genealogy, heroic deeds, valour, feats of arms, and brave achievements, than they. Would that God had but permitted them", continue the old annalists, "to remain in their patrimonial inheritances until the children should arrive at the age of manhood! Woe to the heart

that meditated—woe to the mind that conceived—woe to the council that recommended the project of this expedition, without knowing whether they should to the end of their lives be able to return to their ancient principalities and patrimonies”. “With gloomy looks and sad forebodings, the clansmen of Tyrconnell gazed upon that fated ship, ‘built in th’ eclipse and rigged with curses dark’, as she dropped down Lough Swilly, and was hidden behind the cliffs of Farad land. They never saw their chieftains more”.\*

They sailed direct to Normandy. On their arrival in France, the English minister demanded their surrender as “rebels”; but Henry the Fourth would not give them up. Passing from France through the Netherlands, they were received with marked honours by the Archduke Albert. In all the courts of Europe, as they passed on their way to the eternal city, they were objects of attention, respect, and honour, from the various princes and potentates. But it was in that Rome to which from the earliest date their hearts fondly turned—the common asylum of all Catholics”, as it is called in the epitaph on young Hugh O’Neill’s tomb—that the illustrious fugitives were received with truest, warmest, and tenderest welcome. Every mark of affection, every honourable distinction, was conferred upon them by the venerable Pope, Pius the Fifth, who, in common with all the prelates and princes of Christendom, regarded them as confessors of the faith. In conjunction with the king of Spain, the Holy Father assigned to each of them a liberal annual pension for their support in a manner befitting their royal birth and princely state in their lost country. Through many a year, to them, or to other distinguished Irish exiles, the Papal treasury afforded a generous and princely bounty.

But those illustrious exiles drooped in the foreign climes, and soon, one by one, were laid in foreign graves. Ruari, Earl of Tyrconnell, died on the 28th July, 1608. His brother, Caffar, died on the 17th of the following Sep-

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\* Mitchel.

tember. Magnire died at Genoa on his way to Spain, on the 12th of the previous month—August, 1608. Young Hugh O'Neill, Baron of Dungannon (son of O'Neill), died about a year afterwards, on the 23rd September, 1609, in the twenty-fourth year of his age. Thus, in the short space of two years after the flight from Ireland, the aged Prince of Ulster found himself almost the last of that illustrious company now left on earth.\* Bowed down with years and sorrows, his soul wrung with anguish as each day's tidings from distant Ireland brought news of the unparalleled miseries and oppressions scourging his faithful people, he wandered from court to court, "eating his heart", for eight years. Who can imagine or describe with what earnest passion he pleaded with prelates and princes, and besought them to think upon the wrongs of Ireland! "Ha!" (exclaims one of the writers from whom I have been summarizing), "if he had sped in that mission of vengeance—if he had persuaded Paul or Philip to give him some ten thousand Italians or Spaniards, how would it have fluttered those English in their dove-cots to behold his ships standing up Lough Foyle with the Bloody Hand displayed.† But not so was it written in the Book

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\* Of all his sons, but two now survived, Conn and Henry. The latter was page to the Archduke Albert in the Low Countries, and, like his father, was beset by English spies. When the old chieftain died at Rome, it was quickly perceived the removal of Henry would greatly free England from her nightmare apprehensions about the O'Neills. So the youthful prince was one morning found strangled in his bed at Brussels. The murder was enveloped in the profoundest mystery; but no one was at a loss to divine its cause and design. Henry had already, by his singular ability, and by certain movements duly reported by the spies, given but too much ground for concluding that if he lived he would yet be dangerous in Ireland.

† In all his movements on the continent he was surrounded by a crowd of English spies, whose letters and reports, now in the State Paper Office, give minute and singularly interesting information respecting his manners, habits, conversations, etc. One of them mentions that in the evenings, after dining, if the aged prince were "warm with wine", he had but one topic; his face would glow, and striking the table, he would assert that they would "have a good day yet in Ireland". Alas!

No potentate in Europe was willing to risk such a force as was needed". To deepen the gloom that shrouded the evening of his life, he lost his sight, became totally blind and, like another Belisarius, tottered mournfully to the grave; the world on this side of which was now in every sense all dark to him. On the 20th July, 1616, the aged and heart-crushed prince passed from this earthly scene to realms

“ —where souls are free;  
Where tyrants taint not nature's bliss”.

It was at Rome he died, and the Holy Father ordered him a public funeral; directing arrangements to be forthwith made for celebrating his obsequies on a scale of grandeur such as is accorded only to royal princes and kings. The world, that bows in worship before the altar of Success, turns from the falling and the fallen; but Rome, the friend of the weak and the unfortunate, never measured its honours to nations or princes by the standard of their worldly fortunes. So the English, who would fain have stricken those illustrious fugitives of Ireland from fame and memory, as they had driven them from home and country, gnashed their teeth in rage, as they saw all Christendom assigning to the fallen Irish princes an exalted place amongst the martyr-heroes of Christian patriotism! On the hill of the Janiculum, in the Franciscan church of San Pietro di Montorio, they laid the Prince of Ulster in the grave which, a few years before, had been opened for his son, beside the last resting place of the Tyrconnell chiefs. Side by side they had fought through life; side by side they now sleep in death. Above the grave where rest the ashes of those heroes, many an Irish pilgrim has knelt, and prayed, and wept. In the calm evening, when the sunbeams slant upon the stones below, the Fathers of St. Francis often see some figure prostrate upon the tomb, which as often they find wetted by the tears of the mourner. Then they know that some exiled child of Ireland has sought and found the spot made sacred and holy for him

and all his nation by ten thousand memories of mingled grief and glory.\*

There is not perhaps in the elegiac poetry of any language anything worthy of comparison with the "Lament for the Princes of Tyrone and Tyrconnell", composed by the aged and venerable bard of O'Donnell, Owen Roe Mac Ward. In this noble burst of sorrow, rich in plaintive eloquence and in all the beauty of true poesy, the bard addresses himself to Lady Nuala O'Donnell and her attendant mourners at the grave of the princes. Happily, of this peerless poem we possess a translation into English, of which it is not too much to say that it is in every sense worthy of the original, to which it adheres with great fidelity, while preserving all the spirit and tenderness of the Gaelic idiom. I allude to Mangan's admirable translation, from which I take the following passages:—

O woman of the piercing wail!  
 Who mournest o'er yon mound of clay  
     With sigh and groan,  
 Would God thou wert among the Gael!  
 Thou wouldst not then from day to day  
     Weep thus alone.

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\* Some eighteen years ago a horrible desecration well nigh destroyed for ever all identification of the grave so dear to Irishmen. The Eternal City—the sanctuary of Christendom—was sacrilegiously violated by invaders as lawless and abhorrent as Alaric and his followers—the Carbonari of modern Europe, led by Mazzini and Garibaldi. The churches were profaned, the tombs were rifled, and *the church of San Pietro di Montorio was converted by Garibaldi into cavalry stables!* The trampling of the horses destroyed or effaced many of the tombstones, and the Irish in the city gave up all hope of safety for the one so sacred in their eyes. Happily, however, when Rome had been rescued by France on behalf of the Christian world, and when the filth and litter had been cleared away from the desecrated church, the tomb of the Irish princes was found to have escaped with very little permanent injury. Some there are, who, perhaps, do not understand the sentiment—the principle—which claims Rome as belonging to Christendom—not to "Italy", or France, or Austria, or Naples. But in truth and fact, Rome represents not only "God's acre" of the world, but is the repository of priceless treasures, gifts, and relics, which belong in common to all Christian peoples, and which they are bound to guard.

'T were long before, around a grave  
 In green Tyrconnell, one would find  
 This loneliness;  
 Near where Beann-Boirche's banners wave,  
 Such grief as thine could ne'er have pined  
 Companionless.

Beside the wave, in Donegal,  
 In Antrin's glens, or fair Dromore,  
 Or Killilee,  
 Or where the sunny waters fall  
 At Assaroe, near Erna's shore,  
 This could not be.  
 On Derry's plains,—in rich Drumolieff,—  
 Throughout Armagh the Great, renowned  
 In olden years,  
 No day could pass, but woman's grief  
 Would rain upon the burial-ground  
 Fresh floods of tears!

O no!—from Shannon, Boyne, and Suir,  
 From high Dunluce's castle walls,  
 From Lissadill,  
 Would flock alike both rich and poor.  
 One wail would rise from Cruachan's halls  
 To Tara's hill;  
 And some would come from Barrow side,  
 And many a maid would leave her home  
 On Leitrim's plains,  
 And by melodious Banna's tide,  
 And by the Mourne and Erne, to come  
 And swell thy strains!

•   \*   \*   \*   \*   \*   •

Two princes of the line of Conn  
 Sleep in their cells of clay beside  
 O'Donnell Roe;  
 Three royal youths, alas! are gone,  
 Who lived for Erin's weal, but died  
 For Erin's woe!  
 Ah! could the men of Ireland read  
 The names these noteless burial stones  
 Display to view,  
 Their wounded hearts afresh would bleed,  
 Their tears gush forth again, their groans  
 Resound anew!

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The Irish Privileges received by the Sovereign Pontiff.



See page 352



And who can marvel o'er thy grief,  
 Or who can blame thy flowing tears,  
     That knows their source?  
 O'Donnell, Dunnasava's chief,  
 Cut off amid his vernal years,  
     Lies here a corse,  
 Beside his brother Cathbar, whom  
 Tirconnell of the Helmets mourns  
     In deep despair—  
 For valour, truth, and comely bloom,  
 For all that greatens and adorns,  
     A peerless pair.

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When high the shout of battle rose  
 On fields where Freedom's torch still burned  
     Through Erin's gloom,  
 If one—if barely *one*—of those  
 Were slain, all Ulster would have mourned  
     The hero's doom!  
 If at Athboy, where hosts of brave  
 Ulidian horsemen sank beneath  
     The shock of spears,  
 Young Hugh O'Neill had found a grave,  
 Long must the North have wept his death  
     With heart-wrung tears!

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What do I say? Ah, woe is me!  
 Already we bewail in vain  
     Their fatal fall!  
 And Erin, once the Great and Free,  
 Now vainly mourns her breakless chain  
     And iron thrall!  
 Then, daughter of O'Donnell, dry  
 Thine overflowing eyes, and turn  
     Thy heart aside,  
 For Adam's race is born to die,  
 And sternly the sepulchral urn  
     Mocks human pride!

Look not, nor sigh, for earthly throne,  
 Nor place thy trust in arm of clay;  
     But on thy knees  
 Uplift thy soul to God alone,  
 For all things go their destined way  
     As He decrees.

Embrace the faithful crucifix,  
 And seek the path of pain and prayer  
 Thy Saviour trod;  
 Nor let thy spirit intermix  
 With earthly hope and worldly care  
 Its groans to God!

And Thou, O mighty Lord! whose ways  
 Are far above our feeble minds  
 To understand;  
 Sustain us in those doleful days,  
 And render light the chain that binds  
 Our fallen land!  
 Look down upon our dreary state,  
 And through the ages that may still  
 Roll sadly on,  
 Watch Thou o'er hapless Erin's fate,  
 And shield at last from darker ill  
 The blood of Conn!

There remains now but to trace the fortunes of O'Sullivan, the last of O'Neill's illustrious companions in arms. The special vengeance of England marked Donal for a fatal distinction among his fellow chiefs of the ruined confederacy. He was not included in the amnesty settled by the treaty of Mellifont. We may be sure it was a sore thought for O'Neill that he could not obtain for a friend so true and tried as O'Sullivan, participation in the terms granted to himself and other of the Northern chieftains. But the government was inexorable. The Northerners had yet some power left; from the Southern chiefs there now was nought to fear. So, we are told, "there was no pardon for O'Sullivan". Donal accompanied O'Neill to London the year succeeding James's accession; but he could obtain no relaxation of the policy decreed against him. He returned to Ireland only to bid it an eternal farewell! Assembling all that now remained to him of family and kindred, he sailed for Spain A.D. 1604. He was received with all honour, by king Philip, who forthwith created him a grandee of Spain, knight of the military order of St. Iago, and subsequently Earl of Bearhaven. The king, moreover, assigned to him a pension of "three hundred pieces of gold monthly". The end of this illustrious exile was truly tragic. His young son,

Donal, had a quarrel with an ungrateful Anglo-Irishman named Bath, to whom the old chief had been a kind benefactor. Young Donal's cousin, Philip—the author of the *Historiæ Catholicæ Ibernæ*—interfered with mediative intentions, when Bath drew his sword, uttering some grossly insulting observations against the O'Sullivans. Philip and he at once attacked each other, but the former soon overpowered Bath, and would have slain him but for the interposition of friends; for all this had occurred at a royal monastery in the suburbs of Madrid, within the precincts of which it was a capital offence to engage in such a combat. The parties were separated. Bath was drawn off, wounded in the face, when he espied not far off the old chieftain, O'Sullivan Beare, returning from Mass, at which that morning, as was his wont, he had received Holy Communion. He was pacing slowly along, unaware of what had happened. His head was bent upon his breast, he held in his hands his gloves and his rosary beads, and appeared to be engaged in mental prayer. Bath, filled with fury, rushed suddenly behind the aged lord of Beare, and ran him through the body. O'Sullivan fell to earth; they raised him up—he was dead. Thus mournfully perished, in the fifty-seventh year of his age, Donal, the "Last Lord of Beare", as he is most frequently styled, a man whose personal virtues and public worth won for him the esteem and affection of all his contemporaries.

His nephew Philip became an officer in the Spanish navy, and is known to literary fame as the author of the standard work of history which bears his name, as well as of several publications of lesser note. Young Donal, son of the murdered chieftain, entered the army and fell at Belgrade, fighting against the Turks. The father of Philip the historian (Dermod, brother of Donal Prince of Beare), died at Corunna, at the advanced age of a hundred years, and was followed to the grave soon after by his long-wedded wife,

"Two pillars of a ruined aisle—two old trees of the land;  
Two voyagers on a sea of grief; long sufferers hand in hand".

LIII.—A MEMORABLE EPOCH. HOW MILESIAK IRELAND FINALLY DISAPPEARED FROM HISTORY; AND HOW A NEW IRELAND—IRELAND IN EXILE—APPEARED FOR THE FIRST TIME. HOW “PLANTATIONS” OF FOREIGNERS WERE DESIGNED FOR THE “COLONISATION” OF IRELAND, AND THE EXTIRPATION OF THE NATIVE RACE.



HAVE narrated at very considerable length the events of that period of Irish history with which the name of Hugh O'Neill is identified. I have done so, because that era was one of most peculiar importance to Ireland; and it is greatly necessary for Irishmen to fully understand and appreciate the momentous meaning of its results. The war of 1599–1602 was *the last struggle of the ancient native rule* to sustain itself against the conquerors and the jurisdiction of their civil and religious code. Thenceforth—at least for two hundred years subsequently—the wars in Ireland which eventuated in completing the spoliation, ruin, and extinction of the native nobility, were *wars in behalf of the English sovereign as the rightful sovereign of Ireland also*. Never more in Irish history do we find the authority of the ancient native dynasties set up, recognized, and obeyed. Never more do we find the ancient laws and judicature undisturbedly prevailing in any portion of the land. With the flight of the northern chieftains all claims of ancient native dynasties to sovereignty of power, rights, or privileges disappeared, never once to re-appear; and the ancient laws and constitution of Ireland, the venerable code that had come down inviolate through the space of fifteen hundred years, vanished totally and for ever! Taking leave, therefore, of the chapter of history to which I have devoted so much space, we bid farewell to Milesian Ireland—Ireland claiming to be ruled by its own native princes, and henceforth have to deal with Ireland as a kingdom subject to the Scoto-English sovereign.

The date at which we have arrived is one most remark-

able in our history in other respects also. If it witnessed the disappearance of Milesian Ireland, it witnessed the first appearance in history of that other Ireland, which from that day to the present has been in so great a degree the hope and the glory of the parent nation—a rainbow set in the tearful sky of its captivity—*Ireland in exile!* In the beginning of the seventeenth century “the Irish abroad” are first heard of as a distinct political element. The new power thus born into the world was fated to perform a great and marvellous part in the designs of Providence. It has endured through the shock of centuries—has outlived the rise and fall of dynasties and states—has grown into gigantic size and shape; and in the influence it exercises at this moment on the course and policy of England, affords, perhaps, the most remarkable illustration recorded outside Holy Writ, of the inevitability of retributive justice. To expel the people of Ireland from their own country, to thrust them out as outcast wanderers and exiles all over the world—to seize their homes and possess their heritage, will be found to have been for centuries the policy, the aim, and untiring endeavour of the English government. The scheme which we are about to see King James prosecuting (Munster witnessed its inauguration in the previous reign) has ever since haunted the English mind; namely, the expulsion of the native Irish race, and the “planting” or “colonizing” of their country by English settlers. The history of the world has no parallel for such a design, pursued so relentlessly through such a great space of time. But God did not more signally preserve His chosen people of the Old Law than He has preserved the Irish nation in captivity and in exile. They have not melted away, as the calculations of their evictors anticipated. They have not become fused or transformed by time or change. They have not perished where all ordinary probabilities threatened to the human race impossibility of existence. Prosperity and adversity in their new homes have alike failed to kill in their hearts the sentiment of nationality, the holy love of Ireland, the resolution of fulfilling their destiny as the Heraclidæ of modern history. They preserve to-day, all

over the world, their individuality as markedly as the children of Israel did theirs in Babylon or in Egypt.

The flight of the earls threw all the hungry adventurers into ecstasies! Now, at least, there would be plunder. The vultures flapped their wings and whetted their beaks. Prey in abundance was about to be flung them by the royal hand. To help still further the schemes of confiscation now being matured in Dublin Castle, Sir Cahir O'Doherty—who had been a queen's man most dutifully so far—was skilfully pushed into a revolt which afforded the necessary pretext for adding the entire peninsula of Innishowen to the area of "plantation". Ulster was now parcelled out into lots, and divided among court favourites and clamouring "undertakers"; the owners and occupiers, the native inhabitants, being as little regarded as the wild grouse on the hills! The guilds, or trade companies of London, got a vast share of plunder; something like one hundred and ten thousand acres of the richest lands of the O'Neills and O'Donnells—lands which the said London companies hold to this day. To encourage and maintain these "plantations", various privileges were conferred upon or offered to the "colonists"; the conditions required of them on the other hand being simply to exclude or kill off the owners, to hunt down the native population as they would any other wild game; and, above all, to banish and keep out "Popery". In fine, they and their "heirs, executors, administrators, and assigns", were to garrison the country—to consider themselves a standing army of occupation in the English Protestant interest.

For two hundred years of history we shall find that "colonised" province, and the "colonists" generally, endowed, nursed, petted, protected, privileged—the especial care of the English government—whilst the hapless native population were, during the same period, proscribed, "dead in law", forbidden to trade, forbidden to educate, forbidden to own property; for each which prohibition, and many besides to a like intent, acts of parliament, with "day and date, word and letter", may be cited.

So great was the excitement created amongst the needy

and greedy of all classes in England by the profuse dispensations of splendid estates, rich, fertile, and almost at their own doors, that the millions of acres in Ulster were soon all gone; and still there were crowds of hungry adventurers yelling for "more, more!" James soon found a way for providing "more". He constituted a roving commission of inquiry into "defective titles", as he was pleased to phrase it—a peripatetic inquisition on the hunt for spoil. The commissioners soon reported 385,000 acres in Leinster as "discovered", inasmuch as the "titles" were not such as ought (in their judgment) to stand in the way of his majesty's designs. The working of this commission need scarcely be described. Even the historian, Leland, who would have been its apologist if he could, tells us there were not wanting "proofs of the most iniquitous practices, of hardened cruelty, of vile perjury, and scandalous subornation, employed to despoil the unfortunate proprietor of his inheritance". Old and obsolete claims, we are told, some of them dating as far back as Henry the Second, were revived, and advantage was taken of the most trivial flaws and minute informalities. In the midst of his plundering and colonizing James died, 27th March, 1625, and was succeeded by his son, Charles. Bitterly as the Irish Catholics had been undeceived as to James's friendly dispositions, they gave themselves up more warmly than ever to the belief that the young prince now just come to the throne would afford them justice, tolerance, and protection. And here we have to trace a chapter of cruelest deceit, fraud, and betrayal of a too confiding people. The king and his favourite ministers secretly encouraged these expectations. Charles needed money sorely, and his Irish representative, Lord Faulkland, told the Catholic lords that if they would present to his majesty, as a voluntary subsidy, a good round sum of money, he would grant them certain protections or immunities, called "royal graces" in the records of the time. "The more important were those which provided 'that recusants should be allowed to practise in the courts of law, and to sue out the livery of their lands on taking an oath of civil allegiance in lieu of the oath of supremacy;

that the undertakers in the several plantations should have time allowed them to fulfil the condition of their tenures; that the claims of the crown should be limited to the last sixty years; and that the inhabitants of Connaught should be permitted to make a new enrolment of their estates'. The contract was duly ratified by a royal proclamation, in which the concessions were accompanied by a promise that a parliament should be held to confirm them. The first instalment of the money was paid, and the Irish agents returned home, but only to learn that an order had been issued against 'the Popish regular clergy', and that the royal promise was to be evaded in the most shameful manner. When the Catholics pressed for the fulfilment of the compact, the essential formalities for calling an Irish parliament were found to have been omitted by the officials, and thus the matter fell to the ground for the present".\*

In other words, the Irish Catholics were royally swindled. The miserable Charles pocketed the money, and then pleaded that certain of the "graces" were very "unreasonable". He found that already the mere suspicion of an inclination on his part to arrest the progress of persecution and plunder, was arousing and inflaming against him the fanatical Calvinistic section of English Protestantism, while his high-handed assertions of royal prerogative were daily bringing him into more dangerous conflict with his English parliament. To complete the complications surrounding him, the attempts to force Episcopalian Protestantism on the Calvinistic Scots led to open revolt. A Scottish rebel army† took the field, demanding that the attempt to extend Episcopacy into Scotland should be given up, and that Calvinistic Presbyterianism should be acknowledged as the established religion of that kingdom. Charles marshalled an army to march against them. The parliament would not vote him sup-

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\* M'Gee.

† Often called "Covenanters", from their demands or articles of confederation in the rebellion being called their "solemn league and covenant".

plies—indeed the now dominant party in parliament sympathised with and encouraged the rebels; but Charles, raising money as best he could, proceeded northward. Nevertheless, he appears to have recoiled from the idea of spilling the blood of his countrymen for a consideration of spiritual supremacy. He came to an arrangement with the rebel “Covenanters” granting to them the liberty of conscience—nay, religious supremacy—which they demanded, and even *paying* their army for a portion of the time it was under service in the rebellion.

All this could not fail to attract the deepest attention of the Irish Catholic nobility and gentry, who found themselves in far worse plight than that which had moved the Calvinistic Scots to successful rebellion. Much less indeed than had been conceded to the rebel Covenanters would satisfy them. They did not demand that the Catholic religion should be set up as the established creed in Ireland; they merely asked that the sword of persecution should not be bared against it; and for themselves they sought nothing beyond protection as good citizens in person and property, and simple equality of civil rights. Wentworth, Charles’s representative in Ireland, had been pursuing against them a course of the most scandalous and heartless robbery, pushing on the operations of the commission of inquiry into defective titles. “He commenced the work of plunder with Roscommon, and as a preliminary step, directed the sheriff to select such jurors as might be made amenable, ‘in case they should prevaricate’; or, in other words, they might be ruined by *enormous fines, if they refused to find a verdict for the king.* The jurors were told that the object of the commission was to find ‘a clear and undoubted title in the crown to the province of Connaught’, and to make them ‘a civil and rich people’ by means of a plantation; for which purpose his majesty should, of course, have the lands in his own hands to distribute to fit and proper persons. Under threats which could not be misunderstood, the jury found for the king, whereupon Wentworth commended the foreman, Sir Lucas Dillon, to his majesty, that ‘he might be remembered upon the dividing of the

lands', and also obtained a competent reward for the judges.

"Similar means had a like success in Mayo and Sligo; but when it came to the turn of the more wealthy and populous county of Galway, the jury refused to sanction the nefarious robbery by their verdict. Wentworth was furious at this rebuff, and the unhappy jurors were punished without mercy for their 'contumacy'. They were compelled to appear in the castle chamber, where each of them was fined four thousand pounds, and their estates were seized and they themselves imprisoned until these fines should be paid, while the sheriff was fined four thousand pounds, and being unable to pay that sum died in prison. Wentworth proposed to seize the lands, not only of the jurors, but of all the gentry who neglected 'to lay hold on his majesty's grace'; he called for an increase of the army 'until the intended plantation should be settled', and recommended that the counsel who argued the cases against the king before the commissioners should be silenced until they took the oath of supremacy, which was accordingly done. 'The gentlemen of Connaught', says Carte (*Life of Ormond*, vol. i.), 'laboured under a particular hardship on this occasion; for their not having enrolled their patents and surrenders of the 13th Jacobi (which was what alone rendered their titles defective) was not their fault, but the neglect of a clerk entrusted by them. For they had paid near three thousand pounds to the officers in Dublin for the enrolment of these surrenders and patents, which was never made'".\*

Meanwhile, as I have already described, the Scots, whose "grievances" were in nowise to be compared with these, had obtained full redress by an armed demonstration. It was not to be expected in the nature of things, that events so suggestive would be thrown away on the spoliated Catholic nobles and gentry of Ireland. Accordingly, we find them about this period conferring, con-

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\* Haverty.

federating, or conspiring, on the basis of an Irish and Catholic "solemn league and covenant"—of much more modest pretensions, however, than the Scottish Calvinistic original. Their movement too was still more notably distinguished from that demonstration by the most emphatic and explicit loyalty to the king, whom indeed they still credited with just and tolerant dispositions, if freed from the restraint of the persecuting Puritan faction. They saw too that the king and the parliament were at utter issue, and judged that by a bold *coup* they might secure for themselves royal recognition and support, and turn the scale against their bitter foes and the king's.

Moreover, by this time the "other Irish nation"—"the Irish abroad", had grown to be a power. Already the exiles on the continent possessed ready to hand a considerable military force, and a goodly store of money, arms, and ammunition. For they had "not forgotten Jerusalem", and wherever they served or fought, they never gave up that hope of "a good day yet in Ireland". The English state-paper office holds several of the letters or reports of the spies retained by the government at this time to watch their movements; and, singularly enough, these documents describe to us a state of things not unlike that existing at this day, towards the close of the nineteenth century!—the Irish in exile, organised in the design of returning and liberating their native land, *assessing themselves out of their scanty pay for contributions to the general fund!*\* The Irish abroad had moreover,

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\* Mr. Haverty the historian quotes one of these "reports" which, as he says, was first brought to light in the *Nation* newspaper of 5th February, 1859, having been copied from the original in the state paper office. It is a list or return of the names of the "dangerous" Irish abroad, supplied by one of the English spies. "The list begins with Don Richardo Burke, 'a man much experienced in martial affairs', and 'a good inginiere'. He served many years under the Spaniards in Naples and the West Indies, and was the governor of Leghorn for the Duke of Florence. Next, 'Phellomy O'Neill, nephew unto old Tyrone, liveth in great respect (in Milan), and is a captain of a troop of horse'. Then come James Rowthe or Rothe, an alfaros or standard-bearer in the Spanish army, and his brother Captain John Rothe, 'a pensioner

what greatly enhanced their military influence—*prestige*. Already, they had become honourably known as “bravest of the brave” on the battlefields of Spain, France, and the Netherlands.

In Naples, who carried Tyrone out of Ireland’. One Captain Solomon Mac Da, a Geraldine, resided at Florence, and Sir Thomas Talbot, a knight of Malta, and ‘a resolute and well-beloved man’, lived at Naples, in which latter city ‘there were some other Irish captains and officers’. The list then proceeds. ‘In Spain Captain Phellomy Cavanagh, son-in-law to Donell Spaniagh, serveth under the king by sea; Captain Somlevayne (O’Sullivan), a man of noted courage. These live commonly at Lisbonne, and are sea-captains. Besides others of the Irish, Captain Driscoll, the younger, sonne to old Captain Driscoll; both men reckoned valourous. In the court of Spaine liveth the sonne of Richard Burke, which was nephew untoe William, who died at Valladolid . . . he is in high favour with the king, and (as it is reported) is to be made a marquis; Captain Toby Bourke, a pensioner in the court of Spain, another nephew of the said William, deceased; Captain John Bourke M’Shane, who served long time in Flanders, and now liveth on his pension assigned on the Groyne. Captain Daniell, a pensioner at Antwerp. In the Low Countries, under the Archduke, John O’Neill, sonne of the arch-traitor Tyrone, colonel of the Irish regiment. Young O’Donnell, sonne of the late traitorous Earl of Tirconnell. Owen O’Neill (Owen Roe), serjeant-major (equivalent to the present lieutenant-colonel) of the Irish regiment. Captain Art O’Neill, Captain Cormac O’Neill, Captain Donel O’Donel, Captain Thady O’Sullivan, Captain Preston, Captain Fitz Gerrott; old Captain Fitz Gerrott continues serjeant-major, now a pensioner; Captain Edmond O’Mor, Captain Bryan O’Kelly, Captain Stanihurst, Captain Corton, Captain Daniell, Captain Walshe. There are diverse other captaines and officers of the Irish under the Archduchess (Isabella), some of whose companies are cast, and they made pensioners. Of these serving under the Archduchess, there are about one hundred able to command companies, and twenty fit to be colonels. Many of them are descended of gentlemen’s families and some of noblemen. These Irish soldiers and pensioners doe stay their resolutions until they see whether England makes peace or war with Spaine. If peace, they have practised already with other souveraine princes, from whom they have received hopes of assistance; if war doe ensue, they are confident of greater ayd . . . they have been long providing of arms for any attempt against Ireland, and had in readiness five or six thousand arms laid up in Antwerp for that purpose, bought out of the deduction of their monthly pay, as will be proved, and it is thought they have doubled that proportion by these means’”.

Communications were at once opened between the exiles and the confederates at home, the chief agent or promoter of the movement being a private gentleman, Mr. Roger O'More, or O'Moore, a member of the ancient family of that name, chiefs of Leix. With him there soon became associated Lord Maguire, an Irish nobleman who retained a small fragment of the ancient patrimony of his family in Fermanagh; his brother Roger Maguire, Sir Felim O'Neill of Kinnard, Sir Con Magennis, Colonel Hugh Oge Mac Mahon, Very Rev. Heber Mac Mahon, Vicar-General of Clogher, and a number of others.

About May, Nial O'Neill arrived in Ireland from the titular Earl of Tyrone (John, son of Hugh O'Neill), in Spain, to inform his friends that he had obtained from Cardinal Richelieu a promise of arms, ammunition, and money for Ireland when required, and desiring them to hold themselves in readiness. The confederates sent back the messenger with information as to their proceedings, and to announce that they would be prepared to rise a few days before or after All-Hallowtide, according as opportunity answered. But scarcely was the messenger despatched when news was received that the Earl of Tyrone was killed, and another messenger was sent with all speed into the Low Countries to (his cousin) Colonel Owen (Roe) O'Neill, who was the next entitled to be their leader. "In the course of September their plans were matured; and, after some changes as to the day, the 23rd of October was finally fixed upon for the rising".\*

The plan agreed upon by the confederates included four main features. I. A rising after the harvest was gathered in, and a campaign during the winter months. II. A simultaneous attack on one and the same day or night on all the fortresses within reach of their friends. III. To surprise the Castle of Dublin, which was said to contain arms for 12,000 men. "All the details of this project were carried successfully into effect, except the seizure of Dub-

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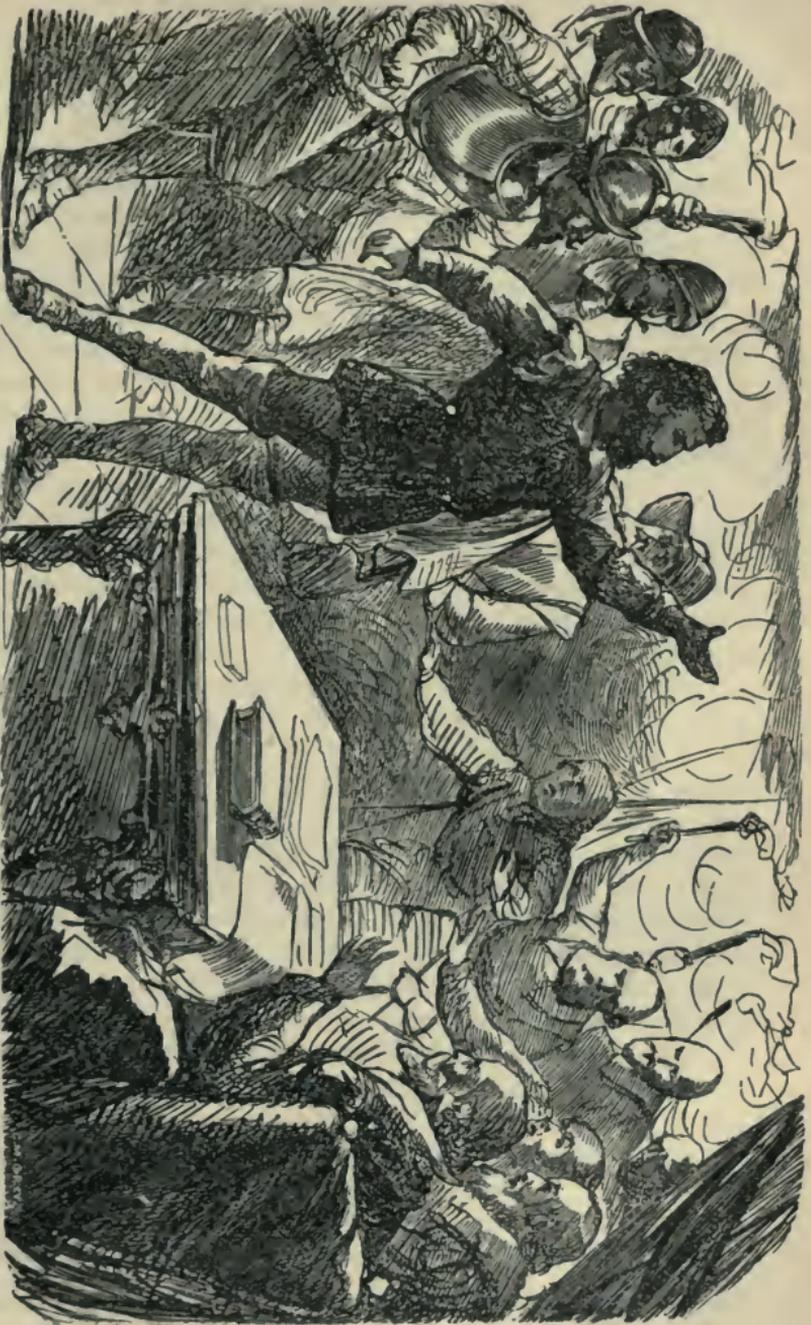
\* Haverty.

lin Castle—the most difficult, as it would have been the most decisive blow to strike”.\* The government, which at this time had a cloud of spies on the Continent watching the exiles, seems to have been in utter ignorance of this vast conspiracy at home, wrapping nearly the entire of three provinces, and which perfected all its arrangements throughout several months of preparation, to the knowledge of thousands of the population, without one traitorous Irishman being found, up to the night fixed for the simultaneous movement, to disclose the fact of its existence.

On the night appointed, without failure or miscarriage at any point, save *one*, out of all at which simultaneousness of action was designed, the confederate rising was accomplished. *In one night* the people had swept out of sight, if not from existence, almost every vestige of English rule throughout three provinces. The forts of Charlemont and Mountjoy, and the town of Dungannon, were seized on the night of the 22nd, by Phelim O'Neill or his lieutenants. On the next day, Sir Connor Magennis took the town of Newry; the M'Mahons possessed themselves of Carrickmacross and Castleblayney; the O'Hanlons, Tandragee; while Philip O'Reilly and Roger Maguire raised Cavan and Fermanagh. A proclamation of the northern leaders appeared the same day, dated from Dungannon, setting forth their “true intent and meaning” to be, “*not hostility to his majesty the king, nor to any of his subjects, neither English or Scotch; but only for the defence and liberty of ourselves and the Irish natives of this kingdom*”. “A more elaborate manifesto appeared shortly afterwards from the pen of O'Moore, in which the oppressions of the Catholics for conscience sake were detailed, the king's intended graces acknowledged, and their frustration by the malice of the Puritan party exhibited: it also endeavoured to show that a common danger threatened the Protestants of the Episcopal Church with Roman Catholics, and asserted in the strongest terms the devotion of the Catholics to the crown. In the same politic and tolerant

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\* M'Gee.



Mr. Mahon before the Lord's Justices.

See page 308.



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spirit, Sir Connor Magennis wrote from Newry on the 25th to the officers commanding at Down. 'We are', he wrote, 'for our lives and liberties. *We desire no blood to be shed; but if you mean to shed our blood, be sure we shall be as ready as you for that purpose*'. This threat of retaliation, so customary in all wars, was made on the third day of the rising, and refers wholly to future contingencies; the monstrous fictions which were afterwards circulated of a wholesale massacre committed on the 23rd, were not as yet invented, nor does any public document or private letter written in Ireland in the last week of October, or during the first days of November, so much as allude to those tales of blood and horror afterwards so industriously circulated and so greedily swallowed".\*

The one point at which miscarriage occurred was, unfortunately for the conspirators, the chief one in their scheme—Dublin; and here the escape of the government was narrow and close indeed. On the night fixed for the rising, 23rd October, one of the Irish leaders, Colonel Hugh MacMahon, confided the design to one Owen Connolly, whom he thought to be worthy of trust, but who, however, happened to be a follower of Sir John Clotworthy, one of the most rabid of the Puritanical party. Connolly, who, by the way, was drunk at the time, instantly hurried to the private residence of one of the lords justices, and excitedly proclaimed to him that that night the castle was to be seized, as part of a vast simultaneous movement all over the country. Sir W. Parsons, the lord justice, judging the story to be merely the raving of a half-drunken man, was on the point of turning Connolly out of doors, when, fortunately for him, he thought it better to test the matter. He hurriedly consulted his colleague, Sir John Borlase; they decided to double the guards, shut the city gates, and search the houses wherein, according to Connolly's story, the leaders of the conspiracy were at that moment awaiting the hour of action. Colonel Mac Mahon was seized at his lodgings, near the

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\* M'Gee.

King's Inns; Lord Maguire was captured next morning in a house in Cooke Street; but O'Moore, Plunkett, and Byrne, succeeded in making good their escape out of the city. Mac Mahon, on being put to question before the lords justices in the Castle, boldly avowed his part in the national movement; nay, proudly gloried in it, telling his questioners, that let them do what they might, their best or their worst, with him, "the rising was now beyond all human power to arrest". While the lords justices looked astounded, haggard, and aghast, Mac Mahon, his face radiant with exultation, his form appearing to dilate with proud defiance of the bloody fate he knew to be inevitable for himself, told them to bear him as soon as they pleased to the block, but that already Ireland had burst her chains! Next day, they found to their dismay that this was no empty vaunt. Before forty-eight hours the whole structure of British "colonization" in the North was a wreck. The "plantation" system vanished "like the baseless fabric of a vision"; and while the ship was bearing away to England the gallant Mac Mahon and his hapless colleague, Lord Maguire—that an impotent vengeance might glut itself with their blood upon the scaffold—from all the towers and steeples in the north joy bells were ringing merry peals, and bonfires blazed, proclaiming that the spoliators had been swept away, and that the rightful owners enjoyed their own again! The people, with the characteristic exuberance of their nature, gave themselves up to the most demonstrative joy and exultation. No words can better enable us to realise the popular feeling at this moment than Mr. Gavan Duffy's celebrated poem, "The Muster of the North":

Joy! joy! the day is come at last, the day of hope and pride,  
 And, see! our crackling bonfires light old Bann's rejoicing tide!  
 And gladsome bell and bugle-horn, from Newry's captured tow'rs,  
 Hark! how they tell the Saxon swine, this land is ours—is OURS!

Glory to God! my eyes have seen the ransomed fields of Down,  
 My ears have drunk the joyful news "Stout Phelim hath his own".  
 Oh! may they see and hear no more, oh! may they rot to clay,  
 When they forget to triumph in the conquest of to-day.

Now, now, we'll teach the shameless Scot to purge his thievish maw,  
 Now, now, the courts may fall to pray, for Justice is the Law;  
 Now shall the undertaker square for once his loose accounts,  
 We'll strike, brave boys, a fair result from all his false amounts.

Come, trample down their robber rule, and smite its venal spawn,  
 Their foreign laws, their foreign church, their ermine and their lawn,  
 With all the specious fry of fraud that robbed us of our own,  
 And plant our ancient laws again beneath our lineal throne.

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Down from the sacred hills whereon a saint commun'd with God,  
 Up from the vale where Bagnal's blood manured the reeking sod,  
 Out from the stately woods of Truagh, M'Kenna's plundered home,  
 Like Malin's waves, as fierce and fast, our faithful clansmen come.

Then, brethren, on!—O'Neill's dear shade would frown to see you  
 pause—

Our banished Hugh, our martyred Hugh, is watching o'er your  
 cause—

His generous error lost the land—he deemed the Norman true,  
 Oh! forward, friends! it must not lose the land again in you!

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LIV.—HOW THE LORDS JUSTICES GOT UP THE NEEDFUL  
 BLOODY FURY IN ENGLAND BY A "DREADFUL MASSACRE"  
 STORY. HOW THE CONFEDERATION OF KILKENNY CAME  
 ABOUT.

 HE Puritanical party, which ever since Wentworth's execution had the government of Ireland in their hands, began to consider that this desperate condition of their affairs rendered some extraordinary resort necessary, if the island was not to slip totally and for ever from their grasp. The situation was evidently one full of peculiar difficulty and embarrassment for them. The national confederacy, which by this time had most of the kingdom in its hands, declared utmost loyalty to the king, and in truth, as time subsequently showed, meant him more honest and loyal service than those who now surrounded him as ministers and officials.

Hence it was more than likely to be extremely difficult

to arouse against the Irish movement that strong and general effusion of public feeling in England which would result in vigorous action against it. For obviously enough (so reasoned the Puritanical executive in Dublin Castle) that section of the English nation which supports the king will be inclined to side with this Irish movement; they will call it far more justifiable and far more loyal than that of the rebel Scotch covenanters; they will counsel negotiation with its leaders, perhaps the concession of their demands; in any event they will reprehend and prevent any extreme measures against them. In which case, of course, the result must be fatal to the pious project of robbing the native Irish, and "planting" the country with "colonies" of saintly plunderers.

In this extremity it was discerned that there was barely one way of averting all these dangers and disasters—just one way of preventing any favourable opinion of the Irish movement taking root in England—one sure way for arousing against it such a cry as must render it impossible for even the king himself to resist or refrain from joining in the demand for its suppression at all hazards. This happy idea was to start the story of an "awful, bloody, and altogether tremendous massacre of Protestants."

To be sure they knew there had been no massacre—quite the contrary; but this made little matter. With proper vehemence of assertion, and sufficient construction of circumstantial stories to that effect, no difficulty was apprehended on this score. But the real embarrassment lay in the fact that it was *rather late* to start the thing. Several days or weeks had elapsed, and several accounts of the rising had been transmitted without any mention of such a proceeding as a "wholesale massacre," which ordinarily should have been the first thing proclaimed with all horror. The Lords Justices and their advisers, who were all most pious men, long and with grave trouble of mind considered this stumbling block; for it was truly distressing that such a promising project should be thwarted. Eventually they decided to chance the story any way, and trust to extra zeal in the use of horror

narratives, to get up such a bloody fury in England as would render close scrutiny of the facts out of the question.\*

\* Several of our recent historians have gone to great pains, citing original documents, state papers, and letters of Protestant witnesses, to expose the baseness and wickedness of this massacre story; but at this time of day one might as well occupy himself in gravely demonstrating the villany of Titus Oates's "informations". The great Popish Massacre story has had its day, but it is now dead and gone. The fact that there were excesses committed by the insurgents in a few cases—instantly denounced and punished as violations of the emphatic orders of their leaders promulgated to the contrary—has nothing to say to this question of *massacre*. Let it always be said that even *one* case of lawless violence or life-taking—even *one* excess of the laws of honourable warfare—is a thing to abominate and deplore; as the Irish confederate leaders denounced and deplored the cases reported to them of excesses by some of Sir Phelim O'Neill's armed bands. Not only did the Irish leaders vehemently inculcate moderation, but the Protestant chroniclers of the time abundantly testify that those leaders and the Catholic clergy went about putting those instructions *into practice*. Leland, the Protestant historian, declares that the Catholic priests "laboured zealously to moderate the excesses of war", and frequently protected the English where danger threatened them, *by concealing them in their places of worship and even under their altars!* The Protestant Bishop Burnet, in his life of Dr. Bedel, who was titular Protestant Bishop of Dromore at the time, tells us that Dr. Bedel, with the tumultuous sea of the "rising" foaming around him on all sides in Cavan, enjoyed, both himself and all who sought the shelter of his house, "to a miracle perfect quiet", though he had neither guard nor defence, save the respect and forbearance of the "insurgents". One fact alone, recorded by the Protestant historians themselves, affords eloquent testimony on this point. This bishop Bedel died while the "rising" was in full rush around him. He was very ardent as a Protestant; but he refused to join in, and, indeed, reprobated the scandalous robberies and persecutions pursued against the Catholic Irish. The natives—the insurgents—the Catholic nobles and peasants—*en masse*, attended his funeral, and one of Sir Phelim O'Neill's regiments, with reversed arms, followed the bier. When the grave was closed (says the Protestant historian whom I am quoting), they fired a farewell volley over it, the leaders crying out: "*Requiescat in pace, ultimus Anglorum!*" ("Rest in peace, last of the English"). For they had often said that, as he was the best man of the English religion, he ought to be the last! Such was the conduct of the Irish insurgents. In no country, unfortunately, are popular risings unaccompanied by excesses; never in any country probably, did a

So—albeit long after date—suddenly a terrific outcry arose about the awful “massacre” in Ireland; the great wholesale and simultaneous massacre of Protestants. Horrors were piled on horrors, as each succeeding mail brought from the government officials in Dublin “further particulars” of the dreadful massacre which had, they declared, taken place all over Ulster on the night of the rising. Several of the ministers in London were in the secret of this massacre story; but there is no doubt it was sincerely credited by the bulk of the English people at the time; and, as might be expected, a sort of frenzy seized the populace. A cry arose against the bloody Irish Popish rebels. Everywhere the shout was to “stamp them out”. The wisdom and sagacity of the venerable Lord Justices—the pre-eminent merits of their device—were triumphantly attested!

For a time there was a danger that the whole scheme might be spoiled—shaken in public credulity—by the injudicious zeal of some of the furnishers of “further particulars”, by whom the thing was a little over-done. Some thought twenty thousand would suffice for the number of massacred Protestants; others would go for a hundred thousand; while the more bold and energetic still stood out for putting it at two or three hundred thousand, though there were not that number of Protestants in all Ireland at the time. As a consequence, there were some most awkward contradictions and inconsistencies; but so great was the fury aroused in England, that happily these little dangers passed away smoothly, and King Charles himself joined in the shout against the horrid Popish rebellion! The English soldiers in Ireland were exhorted to slay and spare not; additional regiments were quickly sent over—the men maddened by the massacre stories—to join in the work of “revenge”. And, just as might be expected,

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people rising against diabolical oppression, sweep away their plunderers with *so few* excesses as did the Irish in 1641. But all this, in any event, has naught to say to such a proceeding as a massacre. That was an afterthought of the lords justices, as has already shown.

then indeed massacre in earnest appeared upon the scene. The Irish had in the very first hour of their movement—in the very flush of victory—humanely and generously proclaimed that they would seek righteous ends by righteous means; that they would fight their cause, if fight they must, by fair and honourable warfare. They had, with exceptions so rare as truly to “prove the rule”, exhibited marvellous forbearance and magnanimity. But now the English Puritan soldiery, infuriated to the fiercest pitch, were set upon them, and atrocities that sicken the heart to contemplate made the land reek from shore to shore. The Covenanters of Scotland also, who had just previously secured by rebellion all they demanded for themselves, were filled with a holy desire to bear a part in the pious work of stamping out the Irish Popish rebellion. King Charles, who was at the time in Edinburgh endeavouring to conciliate the Scottish parliament, was quite ready to gratify them; and accordingly a force of some two thousand Scots were despatched across the channel, landing at Antrim, where they were reinforced by a recruitment from the remnant of the “colonies” planted by James the First. It was this force which inaugurated what may be called “massacres”. Before their arrival the Puritan commanders in the south had, it is true, left no atrocity untried; but the Scots went at the work wholesale. They drove all the native population of one vast district—(or rather all the aged and infirm, the women and children; for the adult males were away serving in the confederate armies)—into a promontory, almost an island, on the coast, called Island Magee. Here, when the helpless crowd were hemmed in, the Scots fell upon them sword in hand, and drove them over the cliffs into the sea, or butchered them to the last, irrespective of age or sex. ‘From this day forward until the accession of Owen Roe O’Neill to the command, the northern war assumed a ferocity of character foreign to the nature of O’Moore, O’Kelly, and Magennis’. Horrors and barbarities on each side made humanity shudder. The confederate leaders had proposed, hoped for, and on their part had done everything to insure the conducting of

the war according to the usages of fair and honourable warfare. The government, on the other hand, so far from reciprocating this spirit, in all their proclamations breathed savage and merciless fury against the Irish; and every exhortation of their commanders (in strange contrast with the humane and honourable manifestoes of the confederates) called upon the soldiery to glut their swords and spare neither young nor old, child or woman.

The conduct of the government armies soon widened the area of revolt. So far the native Irish alone, or almost exclusively, had participated in it, the Anglo-Irish Catholic Lords and Pale gentry holding aloof. But these latter could not fail to see that the Puritan faction, which now constituted the local government, were resolved not to spare Catholics whether of Celtic or Anglo-Irish race, and were moreover bent on strengthening their own hands to league with the English parliamentarians against the king. Loyalty to the king, and considerations for their own safety, alike counselled them to take some decisive step. Everything rendered hesitation more perilous. Although they had in no way encouraged, or, so far, sympathised with, the northern rising, their possessions were ravaged by the Puritan armies. Fingal, Santry, and Swords—districts in profound peace—were the scenes of bloody excesses on the part of the government soldiery. The Anglo-Irish Catholic nobility and gentry of these districts in vain remonstrated. They drew up a memorial to the throne, and forwarded it by one of their number, Sir John Read. He was instantly seized, imprisoned, and put to the rack in Dublin Castle; “one of the questions which he was pressed to answer being whether the king and queen were privy to the Irish rebellion”. In fine the English or Anglo-Irish Catholic families of the Pale for the first time in history began to feel that with the native Irish, between whom and them hitherto so wide a gulph had yawned, their side must be taken. After some negotiation between them and the Irish leaders, “on the invitation of Lord Gormanstown a meeting of Catholic noblemen and gentry was held on the hill of Crofty, in Meath. Among those

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who attended were the Earl of Fingal, Lords Gormanstown, Slane, Louth, Dunsany, Trimleston, and Netterville; Sir Patrick Barnwell, Sir Christopher Bellew, Patrick Barnwell of Kilbrew, Nicholas Darcy of Platten, James Bath, Gerald Aylmer, Cusack of Gormanstown, Malone of Lismullen, Segrave of Kileglan, etc. After being there a few hours a party of armed men on horseback, with a guard of musketeers, were seen to approach. The former were the insurgent leaders, Roger O'More, Philip O'Reilly, Mac Mahon, Captains Byrne and Fox, etc. The lords and gentry rode towards them, and Lord Gormanstown as spokesman demanded, 'for what reason they came armed into the Pale?' O'More answered, 'that the ground of their coming thither and taking up arms, was for the freedom and liberty of their consciences, the maintenance of his majesty's prerogative, in which they understood he was abridged, and the making the subjects of this kingdom as free as those of England'".\* "The leaders then embraced amid the acclamations of their followers, and the general conditions of their union having been unanimously agreed upon, a warrant was drawn out authorising the Sheriff of Meath to summon the gentry of the county to a final meeting at the Hill of Tara on the 24th December".†

From this meeting sprang the Irish Confederation of 1642, formally and solemnly inaugurated three months subsequently at Kilkenny.

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\* Haverty.

† M'Gee.

LV.—SOMETHING ABOUT THE CONFLICTING ELEMENTS OF THE CIVIL WAR IN 1642-9. HOW THE CONFEDERATE CATHOLICS MADE GOOD THEIR POSITION, AND ESTABLISHED A NATIONAL GOVERNMENT IN IRELAND.



EW chapters of Irish history are more important, none have been more momentous in their results, than that which chronicles the career of the Confederation of 1642. But it is of all, the most intricate and involved, and the most difficult to summarise with fitting brevity and clearness for young readers. In that struggle there were not two but at least *four or five* distinct parties, with distinct, separate, and to a greater or lesser degree conflicting, interests and views; partially and momentarily combining, shifting positions, and changing alliances; so that the conflict as it proceeded was, in its character and component parts, truly "chameleonic". As for the unfortunate king, if he was greatly to be blamed, he was also greatly to be pitied. He was not a man of passion, malice, or injustice. He was mild, kindly, and justly disposed; but weak, vacillating, and self-willed; and, under the pressure of necessity and danger, his weakness degenerated into miserable duplicity at times. In the storm gathering against him in England, his enemies found great advantage in accusing him of "Popish leanings", and insinuating that he was secretly authorising and encouraging the Irish Popish rebels—the same who had just massacred all the Protestants that were and were not in the newly planted province of Ulster. To rid himself of this suspicion, Charles went into the extreme of anxiety to crush those hated Irish Papists. He denounced them in proclamations and applied to parliament for leave to cross over and head an army against them himself. The parliament replied, by maliciously insinuating a belief that his real object was to get to the head of the Irish Popish rebellion, which (they would have it) he only hypocritically affected to denounce.

The newly-settled Anglo-Irish Protestants became from the outset of this struggle bitter Puritans; the old families of the Pale mostly remaining royalists. The former sided with the parliamentarians and against the king, because they mistrusted his declarations of intolerance against the Catholics, and secretly feared he would allow them to live and hold possession of lands in Ireland; in which case there would be no plunder, no "plantations". The Covenanting Scots—the classes from whom in James's reign the Ulster colonists had largely been drawn, had just the same cause of quarrel against the Irish, whom the English parliamentarians hated with a fierceness for which there could be no parallel. This latter party combined religious fanaticism with revolutionary passion, and to one and the other the Irish were intolerably obnoxious; to the one, because they were Papists, idolaters, followers of Antichrist, whom to slay was work good and holy; to the other, because they had sided with the "tyrant" Charles.

The Catholic prelates and clergy could not be expected to look on idly while a fierce struggle in defence of the Catholic religion, and in sustainment of the sovereign against rebellious foes, was raging in the land. In such a war they could not be neutral. A provincial synod was held at Kells, 22nd March, 1642, whereat, after full examination and deliberation, the cause of the confederates—"God and the King", freedom of worship and loyalty to the sovereign—was declared just and holy. The assembled prelates issued an address vehemently denouncing excesses or severities of any kind, and finally took steps to convoke a national synod at Kilkenny on the 10th of May following.

On that day accordingly (10th of May, 1643), the national synod met in the city of St. Canice. "The occasion was most solemn, and the proceedings were characterised by calm dignity and an enlightened tone. An oath of association, which all Catholics throughout the land were enjoined to take, was framed; and those who were bound together by this solemn tie were called the 'Confederate Catholics of Ireland'. A manifesto explana-

tory of their motives, and containing rules to guide the confederation, and an admirable plan of provisional government, was issued. It was ordained that a general assembly, comprising all the lords spiritual and temporal, and the gentry of their party, should be held; and that the assembly should select members from its body, to represent the different provinces and principal cities, and to be called the Supreme Council, which should sit from day to day, dispense justice, appoint to offices, and carry on as it were the executive government of the country. Severe penalties were pronounced against all who made the war an excuse for the commission of crime; and after three days' sittings this important conference brought its labours to a close".\*

"The national synod did not break up till about the end of May, and long before that period the proclamations issued by the prelates and lay-lords, calling on the people to take the oath of association, had the happiest results. Agents from the synod crossed over into France, Spain, and Italy, to solicit support and sympathy from the Catholic princes. Father Lake Wadding was indefatigably employed collecting moneys and inciting the Irish officers serving in the continental armies to return and give their services to their own land. Lord Mountgarret was appointed president of the council, and the October following was fixed for a general assembly of the whole kingdom".†

On the 23rd October following the general assembly thus convoked, assembled in Kilkenny; "eleven bishops and fourteen lay lords represented the Irish peerage; two hundred and twenty-six commoners, the large majority of the constituencies. The celebrated lawyer Patrick Darcy, a member of the commons house, was chosen as chancellor, and everything was conducted with the gravity and deliberation befitting so venerable an assembly and so great an occasion". A Supreme Council of six members for each province was elected. The archbishops of Armagh, Dublin, and Tuam, the bishops of Down and of Clonfert, Lord Gormanstown, Lord Mountgarret, Lord Roche, and

\* Haverty.

† Rev. C. P. Meehan's *Confed. Kilkenny*.

Lord Mayo, with fifteen of the most eminent commoners, composed this council.

Such was the national government and legislature under which Ireland fought a formidable struggle for three years. It was loyally obeyed and served throughout the land; in fact it was the only sovereign ruling power recognized at all outside of two or three walled cities for the greater part of that time. It undertook all the functions properly appertaining to its high office; coined money at a national mint; appointed judges who went circuit and held assizes; sent ambassadors or agents abroad, and commissioned officers to the national armies—amongst the latter being Owen Roe O'Neill, who had landed at Doe Castle in Donegal in July of that year, and now formally assumed command of the army of Ulster



Owen Roe O'Neill.

From a portrait in Flanders, painted from life.

While that governing body held together, unrent by treason or division, the Irish nation was able to hold its crowding foes at bay, and was in fact practically free.

LVI.—HOW KING CHARLES OPENED NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE CONFEDERATE COUNCIL. HOW THE ANGLO-IRISH PARTY WOULD “HAVE PEACE AT ANY PRICE”, AND THE “NATIVE IRISH” PARTY STOOD OUT FOR PEACE WITH HONOUR. HOW POPE INNOCENT THE TENTH SENT AN ENVOY—“NOT EMPTY-HANDED”—TO AID THE IRISH CAUSE.



HE very power of the confederates”, says one of our historians, “now became the root of their misfortunes. *It led the king to desire to come to terms with them, not from any intention to do them justice, but with the hope of deriving assistance from them in his difficulties; and it exposed them to all those assaults of diplomatic craft, and that policy of fomenting internal division, which ultimately proved their ruin*”.

The mere idea of the king desiring to treat with them, unsettled the whole body of the Anglo-Irish lords and nobles. They would have peace with the king on almost any terms—they would trust everything to him. The old Irish, the native or national party, on the other hand, were for holding firmly by the power that had caused the king to value and respect them; yielding in nowise unless the demands specifically laid down in the articles of confederation were efficiently secured. On this fatal issue the supreme council and the confederation were surely split from the first hour. Two parties were on the instant created—two bitter factions they became—the “peace party” or “Ormondists”; and the “national party”, subsequently designated the “Nuncionist”, from the circumstance of the Papal nuncio being its firmest supporter, if not its leader.

The first negotiations were conducted on the royal side by a plenipotentiary whom the Anglo-Irish lords not only regarded as a friend of the king, but knew to be as much opposed as they were themselves to the rebel Puritans—the Marquis of Ormond, a man of profound ability, of winning manners, and deeply skilled in diplomacy. To induce the

confederates to lay down their arms, to abandon their vantage ground in Ireland, and send their troops across to Scotland or England to fight for Charles, was his great aim. In return he would offer little more than "trust to the king, when he shall have put his enemies down". In the very first negotiation the compromise party prevailed. On the 15th September, 1643, a cessation of arms was signed in Ormond's tent at Sigginstown, near Naas. In this the confederates were completely outwitted. *They* kept the truce; but they found Ormond either unable or unwilling to compel to obedience of its provisions the Puritan government generals, foremost amongst whom in savagery were Munroe in the north, leader of the covenanting Scotch army, and Morrrough O'Brien, Lord Inchiquin (son-in-law of Sentleger, lord president of Munster), in the south. Meanwhile Ormond, as we are told, "amused the confederates with negotiations for a *permanent* peace and settlement from spring till midsummer"; time working all against the confederates, inasmuch as internal division was widening every day. It turned out that the marquis, whose prejudices against the Catholics were stronger than his loyalty to the waning fortunes of the king, was deceiving both parties; for while he was skilfully procrastinating and baffling any decisive action, Charles was really importuning him to hasten the peace, and come to terms with the Irish, whose aid was every day becoming more necessary. At this stage, the king privately sent over Lord Glamorgan to conclude a secret treaty with the confederates. Lords Mountgarret and Muskerry met the royal commissioner on the part of the confederation, and the terms of a treaty fully acceptable were duly agreed upon. I. The Catholics of Ireland were to enjoy the free and public exercise of their religion. II. They were to hold and have secured for their use all the Catholic churches not then in actual possession of the Protestants. III. They were to be exempt from the jurisdiction of the Protestant clergy. IV. The confederates (as the price of being allowed to hold their own churches and to worship in their own faith) were to send 10,000 men fully armed to the relief of Chester and the general

succour of the king. Lastly, on the king's part it was stipulated that this treaty should be kept secret while his troubles with English malcontents were pending. The pretence was that Ormond (by this time lord lieutenant) knew nothing of this secret negotiation; but he and Glamorgan and the king understood each other well. On his way to Kilkenny the royal agent called upon and had a long sitting with Ormond; and from Kilkenny, Glamorgan and the confederate plenipotentiaries went to Dublin, where, during several private interviews, the lord lieutenant argued over all the points of the treaty with them. He evidently thought the 10,000 men might be had of the confederates for less concessions. Meanwhile Charles's fortunes were in the balance. Ormond was well-disposed to serve the king, but not at the risk of danger to himself. After having fully reasoned over all the points of the treaty for several days with Glamorgan and the confederate lords, suddenly, one afternoon, Ormond arrested Glamorgan with every show of excitement and panic, and flung him into prison on a charge of high treason, in having improperly treated in the king's name with the confederates! A tremendous sensation was created in Dublin by the event; Ormond feigning that only by accident that day had Glamorgan's conduct been discovered! The meaning of all this was, that on the person of the archbishop of Tuam, who had been killed a few days previously, bravely fighting against some of the marauding murderers in the west, there was found a copy of the treaty, which thus became public. Ormond saw that as the affair was prematurely disclosed, he must needs affect surprise and indignation at, and disavow it. Of course Glamorgan was softly whispered to lie still, if he would save the king, and offer no contradiction of the viceregal falsehoods. With which Glamorgan duly complied. The duped confederates were to bear all the odium and discomfiture!

It was during the Glamorgan negotiation—towards its close—that there arrived in Kilkenny a man whose name is indelibly written on the history of this period, and is deeply engraved in Irish memory—John Baptist Rinucini, archbishop of Fermo, in the marches of Ancona,

chosen by the new pope, Innocent the Tenth, as nuncio to the confederated Catholics of Ireland. As the pope, from the first hour when the Irish were driven into a war in defence of religion, never sent an envoy empty-handed, Rinuccini brought with him, purchased by moneys contributed by the Holy Father, besides 36,000 dollars forwarded by Father Luke Wadding, "2,000 muskets, 2,000 cartouche belts, 4,000 swords, 2,000 pike-heads, 400 brace of pistols, 20,000 pounds of powder, with match, shot, and other stores". He landed from his frigate, the *San Pietro*, at Ardtully, in Kenmare Bay. He then proceeded by way of Kilgarvan to Macroom, whither the supreme council sent some troops of cavalry to meet him as a guard of honour. Thence by way of Kilmallock and Limerick, as rapidly as his feeble health admitted—he had to be borne on a litter or palanquin—he proceeded to Kilkenny, now practically the capital of the kingdom—the seat of the national government—where there awaited him a reception such as a monarch might envy. It was Catholic Ireland's salutation to the "royal pope".

That memorable scene is described for us as follows by a writer to whom we owe the only succinct account which we possess in the English language of the great events of the period now before us: "At a short distance from the gate, he descended from the litter, and having put on the cope and pontifical hat, the insignia of his office, he mounted a horse caparisoned for the occasion. The secular and regular clergy had assembled in the church of St. Patrick, close by the gate, and when it was announced that the nuncio was in readiness, they advanced into the city in processional array, preceded by the standard-bearers of their respective orders. Under the old arch, called St. Patrick's gate, he was met by the vicar-general of the diocese of Ossory, and the magistrates of the city and county, who joined in the procession. The streets were lined by regiments of infantry, and the bells of the Black Abbey and the church of St. Francis pealed a gladsome chime. The procession then moved on till it ascended the gentle eminence on which the splendid old fane, sacred to St. Canice, is erected. At the grand entrance he was

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received by the venerable bishop of Ossory, whose feebleness prevented his walking in procession. After mutual salutations, the bishop handed him the aspersorium and incense, and then both entered the cathedral, which, even in the palmiest days of Catholicity, had never held within its precincts a more solemn or gorgeous assemblage. The nuncio ascended the steps of the grand altar, intoned the *Te Deum*, which was caught up by a thousand voices, till crypt and chancel resounded with the psalmody, and when it ceased, he pronounced a blessing on the immense multitude which crowded the aisles and nave. . . . These ceremonies concluded, he retired for a while to the residence prepared for him in the city, and shortly afterwards was waited on by General Preston and Lord Muskerry. He then proceeded on foot to visit Lord Mountgarret, the president of the assembly. The reception took place in the castle. At the foot of the grand staircase he was met by Thomas Fleming, archbishop of Dublin, and Walsh, archbishop of Cashel. At the end of the great gallery, Lord Mountgarret was seated, waiting his arrival, and when the nuncio approached, he got up from his chair, without moving a single inch in advance. The seat designed for Rinuccini was of damask and gold, with a little more ornament than that occupied by the president. . . . The nuncio immediately addressed the president in Latin, and declared that the object of his mission was to sustain the king, then so perilously circumstanced; but, above all, to rescue from pains and penalties the people of Ireland, and to assist them in securing the free and public exercise of the Catholic religion, and the restoration of the churches and church property of which fraud and violence had so long deprived their rightful inheritors”.\*

From the very first the nuncio discerned the pernicious workings of the “compromise” idea in paralysing the power of the confederacy; and perceiving all its bitter mischief, he seems to have had little patience with it. He saw that the old English of the Pale were more than anxious

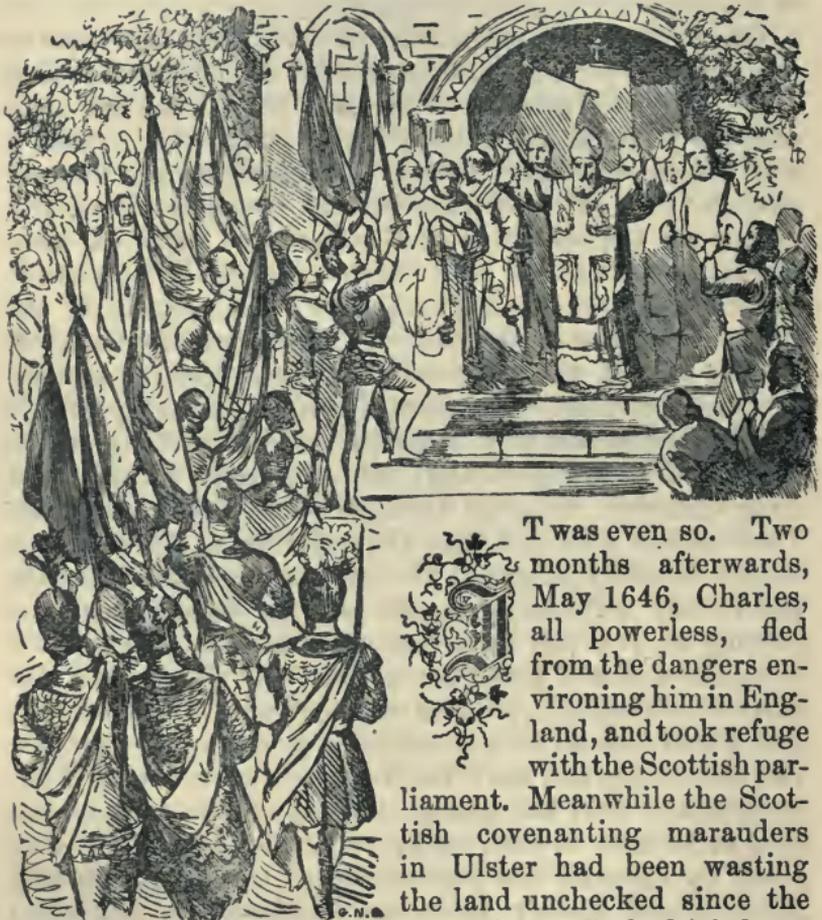
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\* Rev C P Meehan's *Confederation of Kilkenny*.

for a compromise, and to this end would allow the astute Ormond to fool them to the last, to the utter ruin of the confederate cause. They were, however, the majority, and eventually, on the 28th of March, 1646, concluded with Ormond a treaty of peace which was a modification of Glamorgan's original propositions.

On the character and merits of this treaty turns one of the most injurious and mournful controversies that ever agitated Ireland. "A base peace" the populace called it when made public; but it might have been a wise one for all that. In the denunciations put forward against it by all who followed the nuncio's views, full justice has not been done this memorable pact. It contained one patent and fatal defect—it failed to make such express and adequate stipulations for the security of the Catholic religion as the oath of Confederation demanded. Failing this, it was substantially a good treaty under all the circumstances. It secured (as far as a treaty with a double-dealing and now virtually discrowned king might be held to secure anything) all, or nearly all, that the Irish Catholics expected then, or have since demanded. There can be no doubt that the majority of the supreme council honestly judged it the best peace attainable, nay wondrously advantageous, all things considered; and judging so, it is not to be marvelled at that they bitterly complained of and inveighed against the nuncio and the party following him, as mad and culpable "extremists", who would lose all by unreasonably grasping at too much. But the nuncio and the "native" party argued, that if the confederates were but true to themselves, they would not need to be false to their oaths—that they had it in their power by vigorous and patriotic effort to win equality and freedom, not merely tolerance. Above all, Rinuccini pointed out that dealing with men like Charles the king and Ormond the viceroy, circumstanced as the royalist cause then was, the confederates were utterly without security. They were selling their whole power and position for the "promise to pay" of a bankrupt.

IVIL.—HOW THE NUNCIO FREED AND ARMED THE HAND OF OWEN ROE, AND BADE HIM STRIKE AT LEAST ONE WORTHY BLOW FOR GOD AND IRELAND. HOW GLORIOUSLY OWEN STRUCK THAT BLOW AT BEINBURB.



It was even so. Two months afterwards, May 1646, Charles, all powerless, fled from the dangers environing him in England, and took refuge with the Scottish parliament. Meanwhile the Scottish covenanting marauders in Ulster had been wasting the land unchecked since the fatal "truce" and "peace negotiations" had tied up the hands of the confederates. The nuncio had early discerned the supreme abilities of Owen Roe O'Neill (the favourite general of the national party, or "old Irish faction" in the council), and now he resolved to strike a blow which might show the country what was

possible to brave men resolved to conquer or die. He sent northward to O'Neill the greater part of the supplies which he had brought with from abroad, and told the Ulster commander that on him it now lay to open the eyes alike of Puritan rebels, English loyalists, and half-hearted confederates.

O'Neill was not slow to respond to this summons. For three long years, like a chained eagle, he had pined in weary idleness, ignoble "truces" fettering him. At last he was free; and now he resolved to show weak friend and arrogant foe how he who had defended Arras, could strike for God and liberty at home.

With the first days of June he was on the march from his late "truce" station on the borders of Leinster, at the head of five thousand foot and four hundred horse, to attack Monroe. "The Scottish general received timely notice of this movement, and setting out with six thousand infantry and eight hundred horse, encamped about ten miles from Armagh. His army was thus considerably superior to that of O'Neill in point of numbers, as it must also have been in equipments; yet he sent word to his brother, Colonel George Monroe, to hasten from Coleraine to reinforce him with his cavalry. He appointed Glasslough, in the south of Monaghan, as their rendezvous; but the march of the Irish was quicker than he expected, and he learned on the 4th of June that O'Neill had not only reached that point, but had crossed the Blackwater into Tyrone, and encamped at Benburb. O'Neill drew up his army between two small hills, protected in the rear by a wood, with the river Blackwater on his right and a bog on his left, and occupied some brushwood in front with musketeers, so that his position was admirably selected. He was well informed of Monroe's plans, and despatched two regiments to prevent the junction of Colonel George Monroe's forces with those of his brother. Finding that the Irish were in possession of the ford at Benburb, Monroe crossed the river at Kinard, a considerable distance in O'Neill's rear, and then by a circuitous march approached him in front from the east and south. The manner in which the 5th of June was passed in the Irish camp was singularly solemn. "The whole

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army', says Rinuccini, 'having confessed, and the general, with the other officers, having received the holy communion with the greatest piety, made a profession of faith, and the chaplain deputed by the nuncio for the spiritual care of the army, after a brief exhortation, gave them his blessing. On the other hand the Scots were inflamed with fierce animosity against their foe, and an ardent desire for battle'".\*

"As they advanced", says another writer, "they were met by Colonel Richard O'Ferral, who occupied a narrow defile through which it was necessary for the Scotch troops to pass in order to face the Irish. The fire of Monroe's guns, however, compelled O'Neill's officer to retire". Lieutenant-Colonel Cunningham having thus cleared the pass for the Scotch horse, who were commanded by the Lord Viscount of Ardes, in the absence of Colonel Monroe, "the whole army advanced to dislodge Owen Roe; but a shower of bullets from the 'scrogs and bushes', which covered O'Neill's infantry, checked him; and then the Scotch cannon opened its fire with little effect; as, owing to the admirable position of the Catholic troops, only one man was struck by the shot. In vain did Monroe's cavalry charge; with the river on their right and 'a marish bog' on the left, it was hopeless to think of stirring the confederates. For four hours did the Fabius of his country amuse the enemy with skirmishing. During all that time the wind rolling the smoke of Monroe's musketry and cannon in the face of the Irish ranks, concealed the adverse ranks from their sight, and the sun had shone all day in their eyes, blinding them with its dazzling glare; but that sun was now descending, and producing the same effect on the Scotch, when Monroe perceived the entire of the Irish army making ready for a general assault with horse and foot.

"It was the decisive moment. The Irish general, throwing himself into the midst of his men, and pointing out to them that retreat must be fatal to the enemy, ordered

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\* Haverty.

them to pursue vigorously, assuring them of victory. 'I myself', said he, 'with the aid of heaven, will lead the way; let those who fail to follow me remember that they abandon their general' This address was received with one unanimous shout by the army. The colonels threw themselves from their horses, to cut themselves off from every chance of retreat, and 'charged with incredible impetuosity'.

"Monroe had given orders to a squadron of horse to break through the columns of the Irish foot as they advanced; but that squadron became panic-stricken, and retreated disorderly through their own foot, pursued by O'Neill's cavalry. Nevertheless, Monroe's infantry stood firm, and received the Irish, body to body, with push of pike, till at last the cavalry reserve, being routed in a second charge, fell pell mell amongst his infantry, which, being now broken and disordered, had no way to retreat but over the river which lay in their front".

"The Scots now fled to the river", says another historian; "but O'Neill held possession of the ford, and the flying masses were driven into the deep water, where such numbers perished that tradition says, one might have crossed over dry-shod on the bodies. Monroe himself fled so precipitately that his hat, sword, and cloak, were among the spoils, and he halted not till he reached Lisburn. Lord Montgomery was taken prisoner, with twenty-one officers and about one hundred and fifty soldiers; and over three thousand of the Scots were left on the field besides those killed in the pursuit, which was resumed next morning. All the Scotch artillery, tents, and provisions, with a vast quantity of arms and ammunition, and thirty-two colours, fell into the hands of the Irish, who, on their side, had only seventy men killed and two hundred wounded".

Father Hartigan, one of the army chaplains, was sent to bear the glad news of this victory to the nuncio at Limerick, taking with him the trophies captured from the

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\* Re: C. P. Meehan's *Confederation of Kilkenny*.

enemy. He arrived on Saturday, 13th June, and his tidings flung the queen city of the Shannon into ecstasies of jubilation. "On the following day (Sunday) at four o'clock, p.m., all the troops in garrison at Limerick assembled before the church of St. Francis, where the nuncio had deposited thirty-two standards taken by the Irish general from the Scotch. These trophies were then borne in solemn procession by the chiefs of the nobility, followed by the nuncio, the archbishop of Cashel, and the bishops of Limerick, Clonfert, and Ardfert. After these came the supreme council, the mayor and the magistrates, with the entire population of the city. The procession moved on till it reached St. Mary's cathedral, where the *Te Deum* was chanted, and on the next day a mass of thanksgiving was offered to the Lord, 'who fought among the valiant ones, and overthrew the nations that were assembled against them to destroy the sanctuary'".

Mr. Aubrey de Vere, who is never truer poet, never more nobly inspired, than when the victory of an O'Neill is to be sung, gives us the following splendid chant of Beinburb:

At midnight I gazed on the moonless skies;  
 There glisten'd, 'mid other star blazonries,  
 A sword all stars; then heaven, I knew,  
 Hath holy work for a sword to do.  
 Be true, ye clansmen of Nial! Be true!

At morning I look'd as the sun uprose  
 On the fair hills of Antrim, late white with snows;  
 Was it morning only that dyed them red?  
 Martyr'd hosts methought had bled  
 On their sanguine ridges for years not few!  
 Ye clansmen of Conn, this day be true!

There is felt once more on the earth  
 The step of a kingly man:  
 Like a dead man hidden he lay from his birth  
 Exiled from his country and clan.

This day his standard he flingeth forth;  
 He tramples the bond and ban:  
 Let them look in his face that usurp'd his hearth;  
 Let them vanquish him, they who can!

Owen Roe, our own O'Neill!  
 He treads once more our land!  
 The sword in his hand is of Spanish steel!  
 But the hand is an Irish hand!

Montgomery, Conway! base-born crew!  
 This day ye shall learn an old lesson anew!  
 Thou art red with sunset this hour, Blackwater;  
 But twice ere now thou wert red with slaughter!  
 Another O'Neill by the ford they met;  
 And "the bloody loaming" men name it yet!

Owen Roe, our own O'Neill—  
 He treads once more our land!  
 The sword in his hand is of Spanish steel,  
 But the hand is an Irish hand!

The storm of battle rings out! On! on!  
 Shine well in their faces, thou setting sun!  
 The smoke grows crimson: from left to right  
 Swift flashes the spleenful and racing light;  
 The horses stretched forward with belly to ground.  
 On! on! like a lake which has burst its bound.  
 Through the clangour of brands rolls the laughter of cannon  
 Wind-borne it shall reach thine old walls, Dungannon.  
 Our widow'd cathedrals an ancient strain  
 To-morrow triumphant shall chaunt again.  
 On! on! This night on thy banks, Lough Neagh,  
 Men born in bondage shall couch them free.  
 On, warriors, launch'd by a warrior's hand!  
 Four years ye were leash'd in a brazen band;  
 He counted your bones, and he meted your might,  
 This hour he dashes you into the fight!  
 Strong Sun of the Battle!—great chief, whose eye  
 Wherever it gazes makes victory—  
 This hour thou shalt see them do or die!

Owen Roe, our own O'Neill—  
 He treads once more our land!  
 The sword in his hand is of Spanish steel.  
 But the hand is an Irish hand!

Through the dust and the mist of the golden West,  
 New hosts draw nigh:—is it friend or foe?  
 They come! They are ours! Like a cloud their vanguard lours!  
 No help from thy brother this day, Monro!

They form: there stand they one moment, still—

Now, now they charge under banner and sign:  
They breast, unbroken, the slope of the hill:

It breaks before them, the invader's line!  
Their horse and their foot are crushed together  
Like harbour-locked ships in the winter weather,  
Each dash'd upon each, the churn'd wave strewing  
With wreck upon wreck, and ruin on ruin.  
The spine of their battle gave way with a yell:  
Down drop their standards! that cry was their knell!  
Some on the bank, and some in the river,  
Struggling they lie that shall rally never.

'T was God fought for us! with hands of might  
From on high He kneaded and shaped the fight.  
To Him be the praise; what He wills must be:  
With Him is the future: for blind are we.  
Let Ormond at will make terms or refuse them;  
Let Charles the confederates win or lose them;  
Uplift the old faith, and annul the old strife,  
Or cheat us, and forfeit his kingdom and life;  
Come hereafter what must or may,  
Ulster, thy cause is avenged to day!  
What fraud took from us and force, the sword  
That strikes in daylight makes ours restored.

Owen Roe, our own O'Neill—

He treads once more our land!  
The sword in his hand is of Spanish steel,  
But the hand is an Irish hand!

LVIII.—HOW THE KING DISAVOWED THE TREATY, AND THE IRISH REPUDIATED IT. HOW THE COUNCIL BY A WORSE BLUNDER CLASPED HANDS WITH A SACRILEGIOUS MURDERER, AND INCURRED EXCOMMUNICATION. HOW AT LENGTH THE ROYALISTS AND CONFEDERATES CONCLUDED AN HONOURABLE PEACE.



LATED by this great victory, that party in the confederation of which O'Neill was the military favourite, and the nuncio the head, now became outspoken and vehement in their denunciations of the temporisers. And opportunely for them came the news from England that the miserable Charles, on finding that his commission to Glamorgan had been discovered, repudiated and denied the whole transaction, notwithstanding the formal

commission duly signed and sealed by him, exhibited to the confederate council by his envoy! Ormond, nevertheless, as strongly exhorted the "peace party" to hold firm, and to consider for the hard position of the king, which compelled him to prevaricate! But the popular spirit was aroused, and Rinuccini, finding the tide with him, acted with a high hand against the "Ormondists", treating them as malcontents, even arresting and imprisoning them as half-traitors, whereas, howsoever wrong their judgment and halting their action, they were the (majority of the) lawfully elected government of the confederation.

New elections were ordered throughout the country for a new general assembly, which accordingly met at Kilkenny, 10th January, 1647. This body by an overwhelming majority condemned the peace as invalid *ab initio*, inasmuch as it notably fell short of the oath of federation; but the conduct of the commissioners and majority of the council was generously, and indeed justly, declared to have been animated by good faith and right intentions. The feuds, however, were but superficially healed; discord and suspicion caused the confederate generals, according as they belonged to the conflicting parties—the "Pale English" or the "native Irish"—to fear each other as much as the Puritan enemy. Meanwhile an Irish Attila was drenching Munster in blood—Morrrough O'Brien, Lord Inchiquin, called to this day in popular traditions "Morrrough of the Burnings", from the fact that the firmament over his line of march was usually blackened by the smoke of his burnings and devastations.\* One mon-

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\* This dreadful man was one of the first and bitterest fruits of the "Court of Wards" scheme, which in the previous reign was appointed for the purpose of seizing the infant children of the Catholic nobility, and bringing them up in hatred and horror of the faith of their fathers. O'Brien had been thus seized when a child, and thus brought up by the "Court of Wards"—to what purpose has just been illustrated. It would hardly be fair to the English to say such a scheme had no parallel; for history records that *the Turks* used to seize the children of the subject Christians, and train them up to be the bloodiest in fury against their own race and creed!

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ster massacre on his part filled all the land with horror. He besieged and stormed Cashel. The women and children took refuge in the grand cathedral on the rock, the ruins of which still excite the tourist's admiration. "Inchiquin poured in volleys of musket balls through the doors and windows, unmoved by the piercing shrieks of the crowded victims within, and then sent in his troopers to finish with pike and sabre the work which the bullets had left incomplete. The floor was encumbered with piles of mangled bodies, and *twenty priests* who had sought shelter *under the altars* were dragged forth and slaughtered with a fury which the mere extinction of life could not half appease".\* Ere the horror excited by this hideous butchery had died away, the country heard with consternation that the Supreme Council of the Confederation had concluded a treaty with Inchiquin, as a first step towards securing his alliance. In vain the nuncio and the bishops protested against alliance or union with the man whose hands were still wet and red with the blood of anointed priests, massacred at the altar! The majority of the council evidently judged—sincerely, it may be credited—that under all the circumstances it was a substantial good to make terms with, and possibly draw over to the royal cause, a foe so powerful. The bishops did not look on the question thus; nor did the lay (native) Irish leaders. The former recoiled in horror from communion with a sacrilegious murderer; the latter, to like aversion joined an absolute suspicion of his treachery, and time justified their suspicions. The truce nevertheless was signed at Dungarvan on the 20th of May, 1648. Fully conscious that the nuncio and the national party would resist such an unholy pact, the contracting parties bound themselves to unite their forces against whomsoever would assail it. Accordingly Preston, the favourite general of the "Ormondist" Confederates, joined his troops to those of Inchiquin to crush O'Neill, whom with good cause they feared most. Five days after the "league

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with sacrilege and murder" was signed, the nuncio published a sentence of excommunication against its abettors, and an interdict against all cities and towns receiving it. Having posted this proclamation on the gates of the cathedral, he made his escape from the city, and repaired to the camp of O'Neill at Maryboro'. Four months of wild confused conflict—all the old actors, with barely a few exceptions, having changed sides or allies—were ended in September, by the arrival of Ormond at Cork—(he had fled to France after an unaccountable if not traitorous surrender of Dublin to the Puritans)—expressing willingness to negotiate anew with the confederation on the part of the king and his friends, on the basis of Glamorgan's *first* treaty. Four months subsequently—on the 17th January, 1649—this treaty, fully acceptable to all parties, was finally ratified and published amidst great rejoicings; and the seven years' war was brought to an end!

Ormond and his royal master had wasted four years in vain, hesitating over the one clause which alone it may be said was at issue between them and the Irish national party—that one simply securing the Catholic religion against proscription and persecution, and stipulating the restriction of further spoliation of the churches. Its simple justice was fully conceded in the end. *Too late!* Scarcely had the rejoicings over the happy peace, or rather the alliance between the English, Scotch, and Irish royalists, Catholic and Protestant, ceased in Ireland, when the news of the king's death in London shocked the land. Charles, as already mentioned, had flung himself upon the loyalty of the Scottish parliament, in which the Lowland covenanting element predominated. His rebellious subjects on the southern side of the border, thirsting for his blood, offered to buy him from the Scots. After a short time spent in haggling over the bargain, those canny saints sold the unfortunate Charles for a money price of four hundred thousand pounds—an infamy for which the world has not a parallel. The blood-money was duly paid, and the English bore their king to London, where they murdered him publicly at Whitehall on the 30th January, 1649.

A few weeks after this event the uncompromising and true-hearted, but impetuous and imperious nuncio, Rinuccini, bade adieu to the hapless land into whose cause he had entered heart and soul, but whose distractions prostrated his warm hopes. He sailed from Galway for home, in his ship the *San Pietro*, on the 23rd February, 1649.

And now, while the at-length united confederates and royalists are proclaiming the young Prince of Wales as king throughout Ireland, lo! the huge black shadow of a giant destroyer near at hand is flung across the scene!

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LIX.—HOW CROMWELL LED THE PURITAN REBELS INTO IRELAND. HOW IRELAND BY A LESSON TOO TERRIBLE TO BE FORGOTTEN WAS TAUGHT THE DANGER OF TOO MUCH LOYALTY TO AN ENGLISH SOVEREIGN.



T is the figure of the great Regicide that looms up at this period, like a huge colossus of power and wrath. The English nation caused Oliver Cromwell's body to be disinterred and hung in chains, and buried at the gallows foot. Even in our own day that nation, I believe, refuses to him a place amidst the statues of its famous public men, set up in the legislative palace at Westminster. If England honoured none of her heroes who were not *good* as well as *great*, this would be more intelligible and less inconsistent. She gave birth to few greater men, whose greatness is judged apart from virtue; and, if she honours as her greatest philosopher and moralist the corrupt and venal lord chancellor Bacon, degraded for selling his decisions to the highest bribe, it is the merest squeamishness to ostracise the "Great Protector", because one king was amongst his murdered victims.

England has had for half a thousand years few sovereign rulers to compare in intellect with this "bankrupt brewer of Huntingdon". She owes much of her latter-day European *prestige* to his undoubted national spirit; for,

though a despot, a bigot, and a canting hypocrite, he was a thorough nationalist as an Englishman. And she owes not a little of her constitutional liberty to the democratic principles with which the republican party, on whose shoulders he mounted to power, leavened the nation.

In 1649, the Puritan revolution had consumed all opposition in England; but Ireland presented an inviting field for what the Protector and his soldiery called "the work of the Lord". *There* their passions would be *fully* aroused; and there their vengeance would have full scope. To pull down the throne, and cut off Charles' head, was, after all (according to their ideas), overthrowing only a political tyranny and an episcopal dominance amongst their own fellow countrymen and fellow Protestants. But in Ireland there was an idolatrous people to be put to the sword, and their fertile country to be possessed. Glory, halleluja! The bare prospect of a campaign *there* threw all the Puritan regiments into ecstasies. It was the summons of the Lord to His chosen people to cross the Jordan and enter the promised land!

In this spirit Cromwell came to Ireland, landing at Dublin on the 14th August, 1649. He remained nine months. Never, perhaps, in the same space of time, had one man more of horror and desolation to show for himself. It is not for any of the ordinary severities of war that Cromwell's name is infamous in Ireland. War is no child's play, and those who take to it must not wail if its fair penalties fall upon them ever so hard and heavy. If Cromwell, therefore, was merely a vigorous and "thorough" soldier, it would be unjust to cast special odium upon him. To call him "savage" because the slain of his enemies in battle might have been enormous in amount, would be simply contemptible. But it is for a far different reason Cromwell is execrated in Ireland. It is for such butcheries of the unarmed and defenceless non-combatants—the ruthless slaughter of inoffensive women and children—as Drogheda and Wexford witnessed, that he is justly regarded as a bloody and brutal tyrant. Bitterly, bitterly, did the Irish people pay for their loyalty to the English sovereign; an error they had just barely learned to com-

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mit, although scourged for centuries by England compelling them thereto! I spare myself recital of the horrors of that time. Yet it is meet to record the fact that not even before the terrors of such a man did the Irish exhibit a craven or cowardly spirit. Unhappily for their worldly fortunes, if not for their fame, they were high-spirited and unfeared, where pusillanimity would certainly have been safety, and might have been only prudence. Owen Roe O'Neill was struck down by death early in the struggle, and by the common testimony of friend and foe, in him the Irish lost the only military leader capable of coping with Cromwell.\* Nevertheless, with that courage which unflinchingly looks ruin in the face, and chooses death before dishonour, the Irish fought the issue out. At length, after a fearful and bloody struggle of nearly three years' duration, "on the 12th May, 1652, the Leinster army of the Irish surrendered on terms signed at Kilkenny, which were adopted successively by the other principal armies between that time and the September following, when the Ulster forces surrendered".

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\* He died 6th November, 1649, at Cloughoughter Castle, county Cavan, on his way southward to effect a junction with Ormond for a campaign against Cromwell. He was buried in the cemetery of the Franciscan convent in the town of Cavan. A popular tradition, absurdly erroneous, to the effect that he died by poison—"having danced in poisoned slippers"—has been adopted by Davis in his "Lament for the death of Owen Roe". The story, however, is quite apocryphal.

## LX.—THE AGONY OF A NATION.



HAT ensued upon the Cromwellian conquest of Ireland has been told recently in a book written under most singular circumstances—a compilation from state records and official documents—a book which the reader may take in his hand, and challenge the wide world for another such true story.

About one-and-twenty years ago an Irish professional gentleman, a member of the bar, a Protestant, educated in England, belonging to one of those noble Anglo-Norman families, who early identified themselves in sympathy with Ireland as the country of their adoption, “received a commission from England to make some pedigree researches in Tipperary”. He was well qualified for a task which enlisted at once the abilities of a jurist and the attainments of an archaeologist. By inclination and habit far removed from the stormy atmosphere of politics, his life had been largely devoted to the tranquil pursuits of study at home or in other lands. His literary and philosophic tastes, his legal schooling, and above all his professional experience, which in various occupations had brought him largely into contact with the practical realities of life in Ireland, all tended to give him an interest in the subject thus committed to his investigations. His client little thought however—for a long time he little dreamt himself—that to the accident of such a commission would be traceable the existence subsequently of one of the most remarkable books ever printed in the English language—“The Cromwellian Settlement of Ireland”, by Mr. John P. Prendergast.

It would be hopeless to attempt to abbreviate or summarise the startling romance, the mournful tragedy of history—“the record of a nation’s woes”—which Mr. Prendergast, as he tells us, discovered in the dust-covered cell of that gloomy tower in Dublin Castle yard, apparently the same that once was the dungeon of Hugh Roe O’Don-

nell.\* I therefore relinquish all idea of following in detail the transactions which immediately followed upon the capitulation of the Irish armies; "when", says Mr. Prendergast, "there took place a scene not witnessed in Europe since the conquest of Spain by the Vandals". "Indeed", he continues, "it is injustice to the Vandals to equal them with the English of 1652; for the Vandals came as strangers and conquerors in an age of force and barbarism; nor

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\* "I now thought of searching the Record Commissioners' Reports, and found there were several volumes of the very date required, 1650—1659, in the custody of the clerk of the privy council, preserved in the heavily embattled tower which forms the most striking feature of the Castle of Dublin. They were only accessible at that day through the order of the lord lieutenant or chief secretary for Ireland. I obtained, at length, in the month of September, 1849, an order. It may be easily imagined with what interest I followed the porter up the dark winding stone staircase of this gloomy tower, once the prison of the castle, and was ushered into a small central space that seemed dark, even after the dark stairs we had just left. As the eye became accustomed to the spot, it appeared that the doors of five cells made in the prodigious thickness of the tower walls, opened on the central space. From one of them Hugh Roe O'Donel is said to have escaped, by getting down the privy of his cell to the Poddle River that runs around the base of the tower. The place was covered with the dust of twenty years; but opening a couple of volumes of the statutes—one as a clean spot to place my coat upon, the other to sit on—I took my seat in the cell exactly opposite to the one just mentioned, as it looked to the south over the castle garden, and had better light. In this tower I found a series of Order Books of the Commissioners of the Parliament of the Commonwealth of England for the affairs of Ireland, together with domestic correspondence and Books of Establishments from 1650 to 1659. They were marked on the back by the letter A over a number, as will be observed in the various references in the notes to the present sketch. Here I found the records of a nation's woes. I felt that I had at last reached the haven I had been so long seeking. There I sat, extracting, for many weeks, until I began to know the voices of many of the corporals that came with the guard to relieve the sentry in the castle yard below, and every drum and bugle call of the regiment quartered in the Ship Street barracks. At length, between the labour of copying and excitement at the astonishing drama performing, as it were, before my eyes, my heart by some strange movements warned me it was necessary to retire for a time. But I again and again returned at intervals, sometimes of months, sometimes of years" —Preface to the *Cromwellian Settlement of Ireland*.

did they banish the people, though they seized and divided their lands by lot; but the English of 1652 were of the same nation as half of the chief families in Ireland, and had at that time had the island under their sway for five hundred years.

“The captains and men of war of the Irish, amounting to forty thousand men and upwards, they banished into Spain, where they took service under that king; others of them with a crowd of orphan girls were transported to serve the English planters in the West Indies; and the remnant of the nation not banished or transported were to be transplanted into Connaught, while the conquering army divided the ancient inheritances of the Irish amongst them by lot”.

James essayed the plantation of Ulster, as Henry and Elizabeth had the colonisation of Munster. The republican parliament went much farther, “improving” to the full their dreadful “opportunity”. They decided to colonise *three* provinces—Leinster, Munster, and Ulster—converting the fourth (Connaught) into a vast encircled prison, into which such of the doomed natives as were not either transported as white slaves to Barbadoes, kept for servitude by the new settlers, or allowed to expatriate themselves as a privilege, might be driven on pain of immediate death; the calculation being, that in the desolate tracts assigned as their unsheltered prison they must inevitably perish ere long.

The American poet, Longfellow, has, in the poem of “Evangeline”, immortalised the story of Acadia. How many a heart has melted into pity, how many an eye has filled with tears, perusing his metrical relation of the “transplanting” and dispersion of that *one* little community “on the shore of the basin of Minas”! But alas! how few recall or realise the fact—if, indeed, aware of it *at all*—that not *one* but *hundreds* of such dispersions, infinitely more tragical and more romantic, were witnessed in Ireland in the year 1654, when in every hamlet throughout three provinces “the sentence of expulsion was sped from door to door!” Longfellow describes to us how the English captain read aloud to the dismayed and grief-

stricken villagers of Grand Pre the decree for their dispersion. Unconsciously, the poet merely described the form directed by an act of the English parliament to be adopted all over Ireland, when, "*by beat of drumme and sound of trumpett, on some markt day, within tenn days after the same shall come unto them within their respective precincts*", "the governor and commissioners of revenue, or any two or more of them within every precinct", were ordered to publish and proclaim "this present declaration": to wit, that "all the ancient estates and farms of the people of Ireland were to belong to the adventurers and the army of England, and that the parliament had assigned Connaught (America was not then accessible) for the habitation of the Irish nation, *whither they must transplant with their wives and daughters and children before the 1st May following (1654), under penalty of death, if found on this side of the Shannon after that day*".

"Connaught was selected for the habitation of all the Irish nation", we are reminded, "by reason of its being surrounded by the sea and the Shannon all but ten miles, and the whole easily made into line by a few forts.\* To further secure the imprisonment of the nation, and to cut them off from relief by the sea. a belt four miles wide, commencing one mile west of Sligo, and so winding along the sea coast and the Shannon, was reserved by the act (27th September, 1653) from being set out to the Irish, and was to be given to the soldiery to plant". The Irish were not to attempt to pass "the four mile line", as it was called, or to enter a walled town (or to come within five miles of certain specified towns) "*on pain of death*".†

\* "9th March, 1654-5.—Order—Passes over the Shannon between Jamestown and Sligo to be closed, so as to make one entire line between Connaught and the adjacent parts of Leinster and Ulster".

† "How strict was the imprisonment of the transplanted in Connaught may be judged when it required a special order for Lord Trimbleston, Sir Richard Barnwall, Mr. Patrick Netterville, and others, then dwelling in the suburbs of Athlone on the Connaught side, to pass and repass the bridge into the part of the town on the Leinster side on their business; and only on giving security not to pass without special leave of the governor"—*Cromwellian Settlement*; with a reference to the State Record.

Need we marvel that all over the land the loud wail of grief and despair resounded for days together? It was one universal scene of distracted leave-taking, and then along every road that led towards Connaught, each a *via dolorosa*, the sorrowing cavalcades streamed, weary, fainting, and foot-sore, weeping aloud!

Towards the seaports moved other processions; alas! of not less mournful character—the Irish regiments marching to embark for exile; or the gangs in charge to be transported and sold into slavery in the pestilential settlements of the West Indies! Of young boys and girls alone Sir William Petty confesses six thousand were thus transported; “but the total number of Irish sent to perish in the tobacco islands, as they were called, were estimated in some Irish accounts at one hundred thousand”. Force was necessary to collect them; but vain was all resistance. Bands of soldiery went about tearing from the arms of their shrieking parents, young children of ten or twelve years, then chaining them in gangs, they marched them to the nearest port! “Henry Cromwell (Oliver’s son), who was most active in the kidnapping of Irish ‘white slaves’, writing from Ireland to Secretary Thurloe, says: ‘I think it might be of like advantage to your affairs there, and ours here, if you should think to send one thousand five hundred or two thousand young boys of twelve or fourteen years of age to the place aforementioned (West Indies). Who knows but it may be the means to make them Englishmen—I mean, rather, Christians’. Thurloe answers: ‘The committee of the council have voted one thousand girls and as many youths to be *taken up* for that purpose’”.

The *piety* of the amiable kidnapper will be noted. But it was always so with his class; whether confiscating or transplanting, whether robbing the Irish, or selling them into slavery, it was always for their spiritual or temporal good—to sanctify or to civilize them. Accordingly we read that at this period “the parliamentary commissioners in Dublin published a proclamation by which and other edicts any Catholic priest found in Ireland after twenty days, was guilty of high treason, and liable to be hanged, drawn, and quartered; any person harbouring

such clergyman was liable to the penalty of death, and loss of goods and chattels; and any person knowing the place of concealment of a priest and not disclosing it to the authorities, might be publicly whipped, and further punished with amputation of ears.

“Any person absent from the parish church on a Sunday was liable to a fine of thirty pence; magistrates might take away the children of Catholics and send them to England for education, and might tender the oath of abjuration to all persons at the age of twenty-one years, who, on refusal, were liable to imprisonment during pleasure, and the forfeiture of two-thirds of their real and personal estates.

“The same price of five pounds was set on the head of a priest and on that of a wolf, and the production of either head was a sufficient claim for the reward. The military being distributed in small parties over the country, and their vigilance kept alive by sectarian rancour and the promise of reward, it must have been difficult for a priest to escape detection; but many of them, nevertheless, braved the danger for their poor scattered flocks; and, residing in caverns in the mountains, or in lonely hovels in the bogs, they issued forth at night to carry the consolations of religion to the huts of their oppressed and suffering countrymen”.\*

“Ludlow”, continues the same author, “relates in his *Memoirs* (vol. i., page 422 de Vevay, 1691) how, when marching from Dundalk to Castleblaney, probably near the close of 1652, he discovered a few of the Irish in a cave, and how his party spent two days in endeavouring to smother them by smoke. It appears that the poor fugitives preserved themselves from suffocation during this operation, by holding their faces close to the surface of some running water in the cavern, and that one of this party was armed with a pistol, with which he shot the foremost of the troopers who were entering the mouth of the cave after the first day’s smoking. Ludlow caused the

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\* Haverty.

Seizing the Fresh Children for Slave-gangs in Barbadoes.





trial to be repeated, and the crevices through which the smoke escaped having been closed, 'another smoke was made'. The next time the soldiers entered with helmets and breast-plates, but they found the only armed man dead, inside the entrance, where he was suffocated at his post; while the other fugitives still preserved life at the little brook. Fifteen were put to the sword within the cave, and four dragged out alive; but Ludlow does not mention whether he hanged these then or not; but one at least of the original number was a Catholic priest, for the soldiers found a crucifix, chalice, and priest's robes in the cavern".

Of our kindred, old or young, sold into slavery in the "tobacco islands", we hear no more in history, and shall hear no more until the last great accounting day. Of those little ones—just old enough to feel all the pangs of such a ruthless and eternal severance from loving mother, from fond father, from brothers and playmates, from all of happiness on earth—no record tells the fate. We only knew that a few years subsequently there survived of them in the islands barely the remembrance that they came in shiploads and perished soon—too young to stand the climate or endure the toil! But at home—in the rifled nest of the parent's heart—what a memory of them was kept! There the image of each little victim was enshrined; and father and mother, bowed with years and suffering, went down to the grave "still thinking, ever thinking" of the absent, the cherished one, whom they were never to see on earth again, now writhing beneath a planter's lash, or filling a nameless grave in Jamaican soil! Yes, that army of innocents vanish from the record here; but the great God who marked the slaughters of Herod, has kept a reckoning of the crime that in that hour so notably likened Ireland to Rachel weeping for her children.

But there was another army—other of the expatriated—of whom we are not to lose sight, the "Irish swordmen", so-called in the European writings of the time; the Irish regiments who elected to go into exile, preferring to

"roam  
Where freedom and their God might lead".

rather than be bondsmen under a bigot-yoke at home. "Foreign nations were apprised by the Kilkenny Articles that the Irish were to be allowed to engage in the service of any state in amity with the Commonwealth. The valour of the Irish soldier was well known abroad. From the time of the Munster plantation by Queen Elizabeth, numerous exiles had taken service in the Spanish army. There were Irish regiments serving in the Low Countries. The Prince of Orange declared they were 'born soldiers'; and Henry the Fourth of France publicly called Hugh O'Neill 'the third soldier of the age', and he said there was no nation made better troops than the Irish when drilled. Agents from the King of Spain, the King of Poland, and the Prince de Condé, were now contending for the services of Irish troops. Don Ricardo White, in May, 1652, shipped seven thousand in batches from Waterford, Kinsale, Galway, Limerick, and Bantry, for the King of Spain. Colonel Christopher Mayo got liberty in September, 1652, to beat his drums to raise three thousand for the same king. Lord Muskerry took five thousand to the King of Poland. In July, 1654, three thousand five hundred, commanded by Colonel Edmund Droyer, went to serve the Prince de Condé. Sir Walter Dungan and others got liberty to beat their drums in different garrisons, to a rallying of their men that laid down arms with them in order to a rendezvous, and to depart for Spain. They got permission to march their men together to the different ports, their pipers perhaps playing 'Ha til, Ha til, Ha til, mi tulidh'—'We return, we return no more!'"\* Between 1651 and 1664, thirty-four thousand (of whom few ever saw their loved native land again) were transported into foreign parts".†

While the roads to Connaught were as I have described witnessing a stream of hapless fugitives—prisoners rather,

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\* "The tune with which the departing Highlanders usually bid farewell to their native shores".—Preface to Sir Walter Scott's *Legend of Montrose*.

† Prendergast's *Crom. Settlement*.

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plodding wearily to their dungeon and grave—a singular scene was going on in London. At an office or bureau appointed for the purpose by government, a *lottery* was held, whereat the farms, houses, and estates from which the owners had thus been driven, were being “drawn” by or on behalf of the soldiers and officers of the army, and the “adventurers”—*i.e.* petty shopkeepers in London, and others who had lent money for the war on the Irish. The mode of conducting the lottery or drawing was regulated by public ordinance. Not unfrequently a vulgar and illiterate trooper “drew” the mansion and estate of an Irish nobleman, who was glad to accept permission to inhabit, for a few weeks merely, the stable or the cowshed\* with his lady and children, pending their setting-out for Connaught! This same lottery was the “settlement” (varied a little by further confiscations to the same end forty years subsequently) by which the now existing landed proprietary was “planted” upon Ireland. Between a proprietary thus planted and the bulk of the population, as well as the tenantry under them, it is not to be marvelled that feelings the reverse of cordial prevailed. From the first they scowled at each other. The plundered and trampled people despised and hated the “Cromwellian brood”, as they were called, never regarding them as more than vulgar and violent usurpers of other men’s estates. The Cromwellians, on the other hand, feared and hated the serf-peasantry, whose secret sentiments and desires of hostility they well knew. Nothing but the fusing spirit of nationality obliterates such feelings as these; but no such spirit was allowed to ruse the Cromwellian “landlords” and the Irish tenantry. The former were taught to consider themselves as a foreign garrison, endowed to watch and keep down, and levy a land-tribute off the native tillers of the soil; moreover “the salt of the land”, the “elect of the Lord”, the ruling class, alone entitled to be ranked as saints or citizens. So they

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\* See the case of the then proprietor of the magnificent place now called Woodlands, county Dublin.—*Crom. Set. Ire.*

looked to and leaned all on England, without whom they thought they must be massacred. "Aliens in race, in language, and in religion", they had not one tie in common with the subject population; and so both classes unhappily grew up to be what they remain very much in our own day—more of taskmasters and bondsmen than landlords and tenants.

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LXI.—HOW KING CHARLES THE SECOND CAME BACK ON A COMPROMISE. HOW A NEW MASSACRE STORY WAS SET TO WORK. THE MARTYRDOM OF PRIMATE PLUNKETT.



OSSESSED of supreme power, Cromwell, by a bold stroke of usurpation, now changed the republic to what he called a "protectorate", with himself as "Protector"; in other words, a kingdom, with Oliver as king, *vice* Charles, decapitated. This *coup d'etat* completely disgusted the sincere republicans of the Pym and Ludlow school; and on the death of the iron-willed Protector, 3rd September, 1658, the whole structure set up by the revolution on the ruins of the monarchy in England tottered and fell.

Communication had been opened with the second Charles, a worthless, empty-headed creature, and it was made clear to him, that if he would only undertake not to disturb too much the "vested interests" created during the revolution—that is, if he would undertake to let the "settlement of property" (as they were pleased to call their stealing of other men's estates) alone—his return to the throne might be made easy. Charles was delighted. This proposal only asked of him to sacrifice his friends, now no longer powerful, since they had lost all in his behalf. He acquiesced, and the monarchy was restored. The Irish nobility and gentry, native and Anglo-Irish, who had been so fearfully scourged for the sin of loyalty to his father, now joyfully expected that right would be done, and that they would en-

joy their own once more. They were soon undeceived. Such of the "lottery" speculators, or army officers and soldiers as were actually in possession of the estates of royalist owners, were not to be disturbed. Such estates only as had not actually been "taken up" were to be restored to the owners. There was one class, however, whom all the others readily agreed might be robbed without any danger—nay, whom it was loudly declared to be a crime to desist from robbing to the last—namely, the Catholics—especially the "*Irish Papists*". The reason why, was not clear. Everybody, on the contrary, saw that they had suffered most of all for their devoted loyalty to the murdered king. After a while a low murmur of compassion—muttering even of justice for them—began to be heard about the court. This danger created great alarm. The monstrous idea of justice to the Catholics was surely not to be endured; but what was to be done? "Happy thought!"—imitate the skilful ruse of the Irish Puritans in starting the massacre story of 1641. But where was the scene of massacre to be laid this time, and when must they say it had taken place? This was found to be an irresistible stopper on a new massacre story in the past, but then the great boundless future was open to them: could they not say it was *yet to take place*? A blessed inspiration the saintly people called this. Yes; they could get up an anti-Catholic frenzy with a massacre-story about the future, as well as with one relating to the past!

Accordingly, in 1678 the diabolical fabrication known as the "Great Popish Plot" made its appearance. The great Protestant historian, Charles James Fox, declared that the Popish plot story "must always be considered an indelible disgrace upon the English nation". Macaulay more recently has still more vehemently denounced the infamy of that concoction; and indeed, even a year or two after it had done its work, all England rang with execrations of its concoctors—several of whom, Titus Oates, the chief swearer, especially, suffered the penalty of their discovered perjuries.

But the plot-story did its appointed work splendidly and completely, and all the sentimental horror of a thousand

Macaulays could nought avail, once that work was done. A proper fury had been got up against the Catholics, arresting the idea of compassionating them, giving full impetus to a merciless persecution of Popish priests, and, above all (crowning merit!) effectually silencing all suggestions about restoring to Irish Catholic royalists their estates and possessions. Shaftesbury, one of the chief promoters of the plot-story, was indeed dragged to the tower as an abominable and perjured miscreant, but not until the scaffold had drunk deep of Catholic blood, and Tyburn had been the scene of that mournful tragedy—that foul and heartless murder—of which Oliver Plunkett, the sainted martyr-primate of Ireland, was the victim.\*

This venerable man was at Rome when the Pope selected him for the primacy. A bloody persecution was at the moment raging in Ireland; and Dr. Plunkett felt that the appointment was a summons to martyrdom. Nevertheless he hastened to Ireland, and assumed the duties of his position. Such was his gentleness and purity of character, his profound learning, the piety, and indeed sanctity, of his life, that even the Protestant officials and gentry round about came to entertain for him the highest respect and personal regard. Prudent and circumspect, he rigidly abstained from interference in the troubled politics of the period, and devoted himself exclusively to rigorous reforms of such irregularities and abuses as had crept into parochial or diocesan affairs during the past century of

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\* Few episodes in Irish history are more tragic and touching than that with which the name of the Martyr-Primate is associated, and there have been few more valuable contributions to Irish Catholic or historical literature in our generation than the "Memoir" of this illustrious prelate by the Rev. Dr. Moran. In it the learned reverend author has utilised the rich stores of original manuscripts relating to the period—many of them letters in the Martyr-Primate's handwriting—preserved in Rome, and has made his book not only a "memoir" of the murdered archbishop, but an authentic history of a period momentous in its importance and interest for Irishmen. A much briefer work is the *Life and Death of Oliver Plunkett*, by the Rev. George Crolly, a little book which tells a sad story in language full of simple pathos and true eloquence.

civil war and social chaos. For the support of the "intended massacre" story it was clearly necessary to extend the scene of the plot to Ireland (so much more Popish than England), and casting about for some one to put down as chief conspirator, the constructors of the story thought the head of the Popish prelates ought to be the man, *ex officio*. The London government accordingly wrote to the Irish lord lieutenant to announce that the "Popish plot" existed in Ireland also. He complied. Next he was to resume energetically the statutory persecutions of the Papists. This also he obeyed. Next he was directed to arrest the Popish primate for complicity in the plot. Here he halted. From the correspondence it would appear that he wrote back to the effect that this was rather too strong, inasmuch as even amongst the ultra-Protestants, the idea of Dr. Plunkett being concerned in any such business would be scouted. Besides, he pointed out there was *no evidence*. He was told that this made no matter; to obey his orders, and arrest the Primate. He complied reluctantly. An agent of the Oates and Shaftesbury gang in London, Hetherington by name, was now sent over to Dublin to get up evidence, and soon proclamations were circulated through all the jails, offering pardon to any criminal—murderer, robber, tory, or traitor—who could (would) give the necessary evidence against the Primate; and accordingly crown witnesses by the dozen competed in willingness to swear anything that was required. The Primate was brought to trial at Drogheda, but the grand jury, though ultra-Protestant to a man, threw out the bill; the perjury of the crown witnesses was too gross, the innocence of the meek and venerable man before them too apparent. When the news reached London, great was the indignation there. The lord lieutenant was at once directed to send the Primate thither, where no such squeamishness of jurors would unar the ends of injustice. The hapless prelate was shipped to London and brought to trial there. Macaulay himself has described for us from original authorities the manner in which those "trials" were conducted. Here is his description of the witnesses, the judges, the juries, and the audience in court:

“ A wretch named Carstairs, who had earned a living in Scotland by going disguised to conventicles, and then informing against the preachers, led the way; Bedloe, a noted swindler, followed; and soon from all the brothels, gambling-houses, and sponging-houses of London, false witnesses poured forth to swear away the lives of Roman Catholics. . . . Oates, that he might not be eclipsed by his imitators, soon added a large supplement to his original narrative. The vulgar believed, and the highest magistrates *pretended* to believe, even such fictions as these. The chief judges of the kingdom were corrupt, cruel, and timid. . . . The juries partook of the feelings then common throughout the nation, and were encouraged by the bench to indulge those feelings without restraint. The multitude applauded Oates and his confederates, hooted and pelted the witnesses who appeared on behalf of the accused, and shouted with joy when the verdict of guilty was pronounced”.

Before such a tribunal, on the 8th of June, 1681, the aged and venerable Primate was arraigned, and of course convicted. The scene in court was ineffably brutal. In accordance with the law in that time, the accused was allowed no counsel, whereas the crown was represented by the Attorney-General and Sergeant Maynard; the judges being fully as ferocious as the official prosecutors. Every attempt made by the venerable victim at the bar to defend himself, only elicited a roar of anger or a malignant taunt from one side or the other. The scene has not inappropriately been likened, rather to the torturing of a victim at the stake by savage Indians, dancing and shouting wildly round him, than the trial of a prisoner in a court of law. At length the verdict was delivered; to which, when he heard it, the archbishop simply answered: “ *Deo gratias* ” Then he was sentenced to be drawn on a hurdle to Tyburn, there and then to be hanged, cut down while alive, his body quartered, and the entrails burned in fire. He heard this infamous decree with serene composure.

“ But looking upward full of grace,  
God’s glory smote him on the face”.

Even amongst the governing party there were many who felt greatly shocked by this conviction. The thing was *too* glaring. The Protestant archbishop of Dublin (who seems to have been a humane and honourable man) expressed aloud his horror, and fearlessly declared the Catholic primate as innocent of the crimes alleged as an unborn child. But no one durst take on himself at the moment to stem the tide of English popular fury. The Earl of Essex, indeed, hurried to the king and vehemently besought him to save the Irish primate by a royal pardon. Charles, terribly excited, declared that he, as well as every one of them, knew the primate to be innocent, "but", cried he, with passionate earnestness, "*ye* could have saved him; *I* cannot—you know well *I dare not*".

Then, like Pontius Pilate, he desired "the blood of this innocent man" to be on their heads, not his. The law should take its course.

"The law" did "take its course". The sainted Plunkett was dragged on a hurdle to Tyburn amidst the yells of the London populace. There he was hanged, beheaded, quartered, and disembowelled, "according to law", July 1st, 1681.

Soon after, as I have already intimated, the popular delirium cooled down, and every body began to see that rivers of innocent Catholic blood had been made to flow without cause, crime, or offence. But what of that? A most salutary check had been administered to the apprehended design of restoring to Catholic royalists the lands they had lost through their devotion to the late king. The "Popish Plot" story of 1678, like the great massacre story of 1641, had accomplished its allotted work.

LXII.—HOW KING JAMES THE SECOND, BY ARBITRARILY ASSERTING LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE, UTTERLY VIOLATED THE WILL OF THE ENGLISH NATION. HOW THE ENGLISH AGREED, CONFEDERATED, COMBINED, AND CONSPIRED TO DEPOSE THE KING, AND BEAT UP FOR “FOREIGN EMISARIES” TO COME AND BEGIN THE REBELLION FOR THEM.



IN the 6th February, 1685, Charles the Second closed a life the chronicles of which may be searched in vain for a notable act of goodness, wisdom, valour, or virtue. On his death-bed he openly professed the faith which for years past, if not at all times, he had secretly believed in, but dared not publicly avow—Catholicity. The man, however, on whom now devolved the triple crown of England, Scotland, and Ireland—Charles’s brother, James, Duke of York—was one who had neither dissembled nor concealed his religious convictions. He was a sincere Catholic, and had endured much of trouble and persecution in consequence of his profession of that faith. He was married to the young and beautiful princess Mary of Modena, an ardent Catholic like himself,\* and the ultra-Protestant party witnessed his accession to the throne with undisguised chagrin and sullen discontent.

All writers have agreed in attributing to James the Second a disregard of the plainest dictates of prudence, if not of the plainest limits of legality, in the measures he adopted for the accomplishment of a purpose unquestionably equitable, laudable, and beneficent—namely, the abolition of proscription and persecution for conscience sake, and the establishment of religious freedom and equality. It may be said, and with perfect truth, that though this was so, though James was rash and headlong, it mattered little after all, for the end he aimed at was so utterly opposed to

\* She was his second wife, and had been married to him at the age of fifteen. By his first wife, Ann, daughter of Chancellor Hyde, he had two daughters, who were brought up Protestants by their mother. They were married, one, Mary, to Prince William of Orange; the other, Ann, to Prince George of Denmark.

the will of the English people, so inconsistent with "vested interests" throughout all three kingdoms, that it was out of all possibility he could have succeeded, whether he were politic and cautious, or straightforward, arbitrary, and rash. For the English nation was too strongly bent on thorough persecution, to be barred in its course, or diverted into tolerance or humanity by any power of king or queen; and already the English people had made it plain that no man should be ruler over them who would not be of their mind on this subject. But James's conduct rendered his overthrow simply inevitable. Before he was well seated on the throne, he had precipitated conflicts with the judges, the bishops, and parliament; the point of contention, to be sure, being mainly his resolution of granting freedom of conscience to all creeds. It was in Ireland, however, that this startling programme evoked the wildest sensation of alarm on the one hand, and rejoicing on the other; and it was there that, inevitably, owing to the vast preponderance of the Catholic population, relative equality appeared to the Protestant eye as absolute Catholic dominance. Two Catholic judges and one Protestant may have been even short of the Catholic proportion; yet the Protestant colony would not look at the question in this way at all, and they called it intolerable Popish ascendancy. James had selected for the carrying out of his views in Ireland a man whose faults greatly resembled his own, Richard Talbot, subsequently Earl and Duke of Tyrconnel. He was devotedly attached to the king; a courtier, not a statesman; rash, vain, self-willed; a faithful and loyal friend, but a famous man to lose a kingdom with.

If the Irish Catholics had indulged in hopes on the accession successively of James's grandfather, father, and brother, what must have been their feelings now? Here, assuredly, there was no room for mistake or doubt. A king resolved to befriend the ~~man~~ was on the throne! The land burst forth into universal rejoicing. Out from hiding place in cellar and garret, cavern and fastness, came hunted prelate and priest, the surplice and the stole, the chalice and the patten; and once more, in the open day and in the public churches, the ancient rites

were seen. The people, awakened as if from a long trance of sorrow, heaved with a new life, and with faces all beaming and radiant went about in crowds chanting songs of joy and gratitude. One after one, the barriers of exclusion were laid low, and the bulk of the population admitted to equal rights with the colonist-Protestants. In fine, all men were declared equal in the eye of the law, irrespective of creed or race; an utter reversion of the previous system, which constituted the "colony" the jailors of the fettered nation.

Ireland and England accordingly seethed with Protestant disaffection, but there was an idea that the king would die without legitimate male issue,\* and so the general resolution seemed to be that in a few years all would be right, and these abominable ideas of religious tolerance swept away once more. To the consternation and dismay of the anti-tolerance party, however, a son was born to James in June, 1688. There was no standing this. It was the signal for revolt.

On this occasion no native insurrection initiated the revolution. In this crisis of their history—this moment in which was moulded and laid down the basis of the English constitution as it exists to our own time—the English nation asserted by precept and practice the truly singular doctrine, that even for the purpose of overthrowing a legitimate native sovereign, conspiring malcontents act well and wisely in depending upon "foreign emissaries" to come and begin the work—and complete it too! So they invited the Dutch, and the Danes, and the Swedes, and the French Calvinists—and indeed, for that matter, foreign emissaries from every country or any country who would aid them—to come and help them in their rebellion against their king. To the Stadtholder of Holland, William Prince of Orange, they offered the throne, having ascertained that he would accept it without any qualms, on the ground

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\* Four children born to him by his second wife, all died young, and some years had now elapsed without the birth of any other.

that the king to be beheaded or driven away was at once his own uncle and father-in-law.

This remarkable man has been greatly misunderstood, owing to the fact of his name being made the shibboleth of a faction whose sanguinary fanaticism he despised and repudiated. William Henry Prince of Orange was now in his thirty-seventh year. An impartial and discriminating Catholic historian justly describes him to us as "fearless of danger, patient, silent, imperious to his enemies, rather a soldier than a statesman, indifferent in religion, and personally adverse to persecution for conscience sake", his great and almost his only public passion being the humiliation of France through the instrumentality of a European coalition. In the great struggle against French preponderance on the continent then being waged by the league of Augsburg, William was on the same side with the rulers of Austria, Germany, and Spain, and even with the Pope; James, on the other hand, being altogether attached to France. In his designs on the English throne, however, the Dutch prince practised the grossest deceit on his confederates of the league, protesting to them that he was coming to England solely to compose in a friendly way a domestic quarrel, one of the results of which would be to detach James from the side of France and add England to the league. By means of this duplicity he was able to bring to the aid of his English schemes, men, money, and material contributed for league purposes by his continental colleagues.

On the 5th of November, 1688, William landed at Torbay in Devonshire. He brought with him a Dutch fleet of twenty-two men of war, twenty-five frigates, twenty-five fire-ships, and about four hundred transports; conveying in all about fifteen thousand men. If the royal army could have been relied upon, James might easily have disposed of these "invaders" or "liberators"; but the army went over wholesale to the "foreign emissaries". Thus finding himself surrounded by treason, and having the fate of his hapless father in remembrance, James took refuge in France, where he arrived on 25th December, 1688; the Queen and infant Prince of Wales, much to the

rage of the rebels, having been safely conveyed thither some short time previously. The revolutionary party affected to think the escape of the king an abdication, the theory being, that by not waiting to be beheaded he had forfeited the throne.

England and Scotland unmistakably declared for the revolution. Ireland as unquestionably—indeed enthusiastically—declared for the king ; any other course would be impossible to a people amongst whom ingratitude has been held infamous, and against whom want of chivalry or generosity has never been alleged. In proportion as the Catholic population expressed their sympathy with the king, the “colony” Protestants and Cromwellianite garrisons manifested their adhesion to the rebel cause, and began to flock from all sides into the strong places of Ulster, bringing with them their arms and ammunition. Tyrconnel, who had vainly endeavoured to call in the government arms in their hands (as militia), now commissioned several of the Catholic nobility and gentry to raise regiments of more certain loyalty for the king’s service. Of recruits there was no lack, but of the use of arms or knowledge of drill or discipline, these recruits knew absolutely nothing ; and of arms, of equipments, or of war material—especially of cannon—Tyrconnel found himself almost entirely destitute. The malcontents, on the other hand, constituted that class which for at least forty years past had enjoyed by law the sole right to possess arms, and who had from childhood, of necessity, been trained to use them. The royalist force which the viceroy sent to occupy Derry (a Catholic regiment newly raised by Lord Antrim), incredible as it may appear, had for the greater part no better arms than clubs and skians. It is not greatly to be wondered at that the Protestant citizens—an ongst whom, as well as throughout all the Protestant districts in Ireland, anonymous letters had been circulated, giving out an “intended Popish massacre”\* of all the Protestants on the 9th December—feared to admit such a gathering within their walls. “The

\* The old, old story, always available, always efficacious !

impression made by the report of the intended massacre, and the contempt naturally entertained for foes armed in so rude a fashion", were as a matter of fact the chief incentives to the "closing of the gates of Derry", which event we may set down as the formal inauguration of the rebellion in Ireland.

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LXIII.—HOW WILLIAM AND JAMES MET FACE TO FACE AT THE BOYNE. A PLAIN SKETCH OF THE BATTLE FIELD AND THE TACTICS OF THE DAY.



IGHTEEN months afterwards, two armies stood face to face on the banks of the Boyne. King James and Prince William for the first time were to contest in person the issues between them.

The interval had not been without its events. In England the revolution encountered no opposition, and William was free to bring against Ireland and Scotland the full strength of his British levies, as well as of his foreign auxiliaries. Ireland, Tyrconnel was quite sanguine of holding for King James, even though at the worst England should be lost; and to arouse to the full the enthusiasm of the devoted Gaels, nay possibly to bring back to their allegiance the rebellious Ulster Protestants, he urged the king to come to Ireland and assume in person the direction of affairs. King Louis of France concurred in those views, and a squadron was prepared at Brest to carry the fugitive back to his dominions. "Accompanied by his natural sons, the Duke of Berwick and the Grand Prior Fitzjames, by Lieutenant-Generals de Rosen and de Maumont, Majors-General de Persignan and de Lery (or Geraldine), about a hundred officers of all ranks, and one thousand two hundred veterans, James sailed from Brest with a fleet of thirty-three vessels, and landed at Kinsale on the 12th day of March (old style). His reception by the southern

population was enthusiastic in the extreme. From Kinsale to Cork, from Cork to Dublin, his progress was accompanied by Gaelic songs and dances, by Latin orations, loyal addresses, and all the demonstrations with which a popular favourite can be welcomed. Nothing was remembered by that easily pacified people but his great misfortunes, and his steady fidelity to his and their religion. The royal entry into Dublin was the crowning pageant of this delusive restoration. With the tact and taste for such demonstrations hereditary in the citizens, the trades and arts were marshalled before him. Two venerable harpers played on their national instruments near the gate by which he entered; a number of religious in their robes, with a huge cross at their heads, chanted as they went; forty young girls dressed in white, danced the ancient *Rinka*, scattering flowers as they danced. The Earl of Tyrconnel, lately raised to a dukedom, the judges, the mayor and corporation, completed the procession which marched over newly sanded streets beneath arches of evergreens, and windows hung with 'tapestry and cloth of Arras'. But, of all the incidents of that striking ceremonial, nothing more powerfully impressed the popular imagination than the green flag floating from the main tower of the castle, bearing the significant inscription: '*Now or never—now and for ever*'".

So far well; but when he came to look into the important matter of material for war, a woful state of things confronted James. As we have already seen, for forty years past, in pursuance of acts of parliament rigorously enforced, no Catholic or native Irishman had been allowed to learn a trade, to inhabit walled towns, or to possess arms. As a consequence, when the Protestants, whom alone for nearly half a century the law allowed to learn to make, repair, or use firearms, fled to the north, there was in all the island scarcely a gunsmith or armourer on whom the king could rely. Such Protestant artizans as remained, "when obliged to set about repairing guns or forging spears, threw every possible obstacle in the way, or executed the duty in such a manner as to leave the weapon next to useless in the hour of action;

while night and day the fires blazed and the anvils rang in the preparation of the best arms for the Williamites". The want of cannon was most keenly felt on the king's side. At the time of the so-called siege of Derry (progressing when James arrived), "there was not a single battering cannon fit for use in Ireland; and there were only twelve field pieces". As a consequence, there was, as there could have been, no real *siege* of Derry. The place was *blockaded* more or less loosely for some months—closely towards the end. The inhabitants bore the privations of the blockade with great endurance and heroism; though certainly not greater than that exhibited by the besieged in severer blockades elsewhere during the war.\* It were pitiful and unworthy to deny to the brave rebels of Derry all that such heroic perseverance as theirs deserves. Such qualities as they displayed—such sufferings cheerfully borne for a cause they judged just and holy—deserve honour and acclaim wherever found. But, after all, as I have pointed out, it was a blockade, not a siege, they endured; and their courage was put to no such test as that which tried the citizens of Limerick two or three years subsequently.

"Meanwhile a splendidly appointed Williamite army had been collected at Chester. It was commanded by the veteran Duke Schonberg, and amounted to ten thousand men. They landed at Bangor, county Down, 13th August, 1689, and on the 17th took possession of Belfast". Little was accomplished on either side up to the summer following, when the news that William himself had resolved to take the field in Ireland, flung the Ulster rebels into

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\* Notably, for instance, Fort Charlemont, held for the king by the gallant O'Regan with eight hundred men; besieged by Schomberg at the head of more than as many thousands, with a splendid artillery train. The garrison, we are told, were reduced by hunger to the last extremity, and at length offered to surrender if allowed to march out with all the honours of war. Schomberg complied, and then, says a chronicler, "eight hundred men, with a large number of women and children, came forth, eagerly gnawing pieces of dry hides with the hair on; a small portion of filthy meal and a few pounds of tainted beef being the only provisions remaining in the fort".

a state of enthusiastic rejoicing, and filled the royalists with concern. All felt now that the crisis was at hand. On the 14th June William landed at Carrickfergus, surrounded by a throng of veteran generals of continental fame, princes and peers, English and foreign. "At Belfast, his first headquarters, he ascertained the forces at his disposal to be upwards of forty thousand men, 'a strange medley of all nations'—Scandinavians, Swiss, Dutch, Prussians, Huguenot-French, English, Scotch, 'Scotch-Irish', and Anglo-Irish". "On the 16th June, James, informed of William's arrival, marched northward at the head of twenty thousand men, French and Irish, to meet him. On the 22nd James was at Dundalk, and William at Newry. As the latter advanced, the Jacobites retired, and finally chose their ground at the Boyne, resolved to hazard a battle (even against such odds) for the preservation of Dublin and the safety of the province of Leinster".\*

No military opinion has ever been uttered of that resolution, save that it never should have been taken. The wonder is not that William forced the Boyne; all the marvel and the madness was that such an army as James's (especially, when commanded by such a man) ever attempted to defend it. Not merely had William nearly 50,000 men against James's 23,000; but whereas the former force, all save a few thousand of the Ulster levies (and these, skilful and experienced sharpshooters), were veteran troops, horse and foot, splendidly equipped, and supported by the finest park of artillery perhaps ever seen in Ireland; the latter army, with the exception of a few thousand French, were nearly all raw recruits hastily collected within a few months past from a population unacquainted with the use of firearms, and who had, of course, never been under fire in the field, and now had of artillery but six field pieces to support them. But even if this disparity had never existed, the contrast between the commanders would in itself have made all the difference possible. Wil-

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\* M'Gee.

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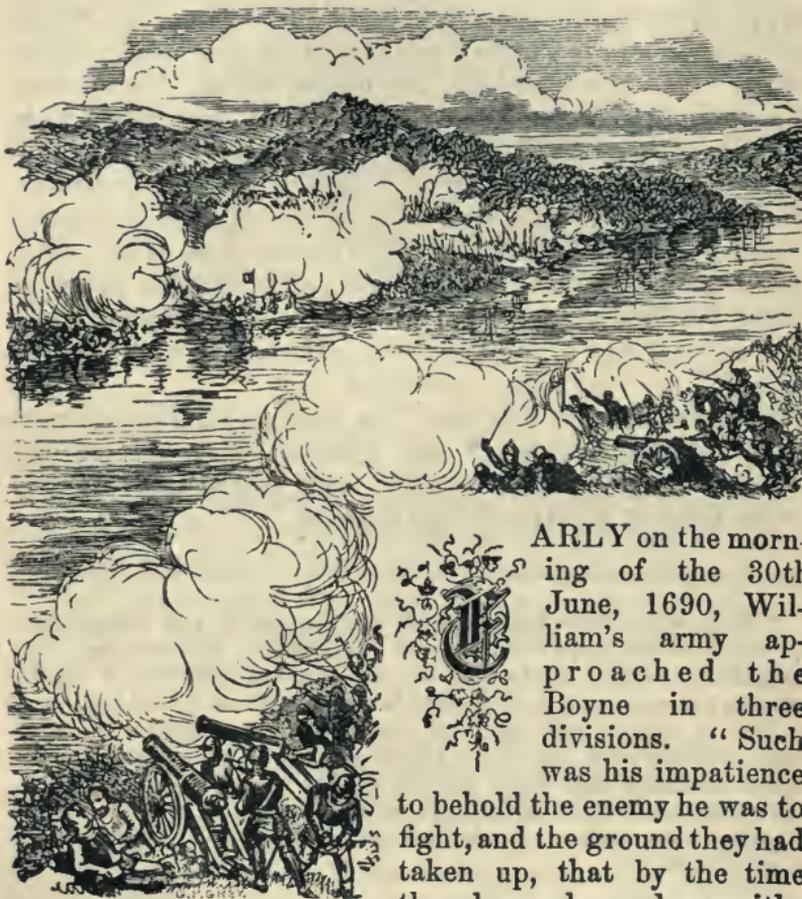
liam was an experienced military tactician, brave, cool, prescient, firm, and resolute. James, as duke of York, had distinguished himself bravely and honourably on land and sea, so that the charges of absolute cowardice often urged against him can scarcely be just. But his whole conduct of affairs in this Irish campaign was simply miserable. Weak, vacillating, capricious, selfish, it is no wonder one of the French officers, stung to madness by his inexplicable pusillanimity and disgraceful bungling, should have exclaimed aloud to him: "Sire, if you had a hundred kingdoms, you would lose them all". A like sentiment found utterance in the memorable words of an Irish officer when brought a prisoner after the battle into the presence of the Williamite council of war: "*Exchange commanders with us, gentlemen, and even with all the other odds against us, we'll fight the battle over again*".

But now the die was cast. The resolve, on James's part most falteringly taken,\* was fixed at last. Uncle and nephew, sovereign and invader, were to put their quarrel to the issue of a battle on the morrow.

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\* Even when the whole of such arrangements and dispositions for battle as he (after innumerable vacillations) had ordered, had been made, James, at the last moment, on the very eve of battle, once again capriciously changed his mind, said he would fall back to Dublin, and actually sent off thither on the moment the baggage, together with six of the twelve cannon which constituted his entire artillery, and some portion of his troops! Then, again, after these had gone off beyond recal, he as capriciously changed his mind once more, and resolved to await battle then and there at the Boyne!

## LXIV.—“BEFORE THE BATTLE”.



EARLY on the morning of the 30th June, 1690, William's army approached the Boyne in three divisions. "Such was his impatience

to behold the enemy he was to fight, and the ground they had taken up, that by the time the advanced guard was with-

in view of the Jacobite camp, he was in front of them, having ridden forward from the head of his own division. Then it was that he beheld a sight which, yet unstirred by soldier shout or cannon shot, unstained by blood or death, might well gladden the heart of him who gazed, and warm with its glorious beauties even a colder nature than his! He stood upon a height, and beheld beneath him and beyond him, with the clearness of a map and the gorgeous

beauty of a dream, a view as beautiful as the eye can scan. Doubly beautiful it was then; because the colours of a golden harvest were blended with green fields and greener trees, and a sweet river flowing calmly on in winding beauty through a valley whose banks rose gently from its waters, until in lofty hills they touched the opposite horizon, bending and undulating into forms of beauty".\* "To the south-east, the steeples and castle of Drogheda, from which floated the flags of James and Louis, appeared in the mid-distance; whilst seaward might be seen the splendid fleet which attended the motions of the Williamite army. But of more interest to the phlegmatic but experienced commander, whose eagle eye now wandered over the enchanting panorama, were the lines of white tents, the waving banners, and moving bodies of troops, which, to the south-west, between the river and Donore Hill, indicated the position of James's camp".†

Having viewed the ground carefully, William selected the Oldbridge fords for the principal attack, and fixed upon sites for batteries to command the opposite or Jacobite bank. He then rode a short way up the river, and alighted to take some refreshment. On his return he was fired upon by some field pieces at the other side of the river, the first shot striking to the earth one of the group beside the prince. A second shot followed; the ball struck the river bank, glanced upwards, and wounded William slightly. He sank upon his horse's neck, and a shout of exultation burst from the Irish camp, where it was believed he was killed. He was not much hurt, however, and rode amongst his own lines to assure his troops of his safety; and shouts of triumph and defiance from the Williamite ranks soon apprised the Irish of their error.

That night—that anxious night!—was devoted by William to the most careful planning and arrangement for the morrow's strife. But ere we notice these plans or ap-

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\* *Williamite and Jacobite Wars in Ireland*, by Dr. Cane.

† *The Harp* for March, 1859; *The "Battle of the Boyne"*, by M. J. M'Cann.

proach that struggle, it may be well to describe for young readers with all possible simplicity the battlefield of the Boyne, and the nature of the military operations of which it was the scene.

The Boyne enters the Irish sea a mile or more to the east of Drogheda, but for a mile or two above or to the west of that town, the sea-tides reach and rise and fall in the river. Two miles and a half up the river from Drogheda, on the southern bank, is the little village of Oldbridge. About five miles in a direct line due west of Oldbridge (but considerably more by the curve of the river, which between these points bends deeply southward), stands the town of Slane on the northern bank. The ground rises rather rapidly from the river at Oldbridge, sloping backwards, or southwards, about a mile, to the hill of Donore, on the crest of which stand a little ruined church (it was a ruin even in 1690) and a grave-yard; three miles and a-half further southward than Donore, on the road to Dublin from Oldbridge, stands Duleek.

James's camp was pitched on the northern slopes of Donore, looking down upon the river at Oldbridge. James himself slept and had his headquarters in the little ruined church already mentioned.

Directly opposite to Oldbridge, on the northern side of the river, the ground, as on the south side, rises rather abruptly, sloping backward, forming a hill called Tullyallen. This hill is intersected by a ravine north and south, leading down to the river, its mouth on the northern brink being directly opposite to Oldbridge. The ravine is now called King William's Glen. On and behind Tullyallen Hill, William's camp was pitched, looking southwards, towards, but not altogether in sight of James's, on the other side of the river.

At this time of the year, July, the Boyne was fordable at several places up the river towards Slane. The easiest fords, however, were at Oldbridge, where, when the sea-tide was at lowest ebb, the water was not three feet deep.

To force these fords, or some of them, was William's task. To defend them, was James's endeavour.

The main difficulty in crossing a ford in the face of an

opposing army, is that the enemy almost invariably has batteries to play on the fords with shot and shell, and troops ready at hand to charge the crossing party the instant they attempt to "form" on reaching the bank, if they succeed in reaching it. If the defending party have not batteries to perform this service, and if the assailants have batteries to "cover" the passage of their fording parties by a strong cannonade, *i.e.* to prevent (by shot and shell fired over their heads at the bank they rush for) the formation there of any troops to charge them on reaching the shore, the ford is, as a general rule, sure to be forced.

James had not a single cannon or howitzer at the fords. From fifty splendid field pieces and mortars William rained shot and shell on the Jacobite bank.

William's plan of attack was to outflank James's left by sending a strong force up the river towards Slane, where they were to cross and attack the Jacobite flank and rear; while he, with the full strength of his main army (the centre under Schomberg senior, the extreme left under himself), would, under cover of a furious cannonade, force all the fords at and below Oldbridge.

It was only at the last moment that James was brought to perceive the deadly danger of being flanked from Slane, and he then detailed merely a force of five hundred dragoons under the gallant Sir Neal O'Neill to defend the extreme left there. His attention until the mid-hour of battle next day, was mainly given to the (Oldbridge) fords in his front, and his sole reliance for their defence was on some poor breastworks and farm-buildings to shelter musketry-men; trusting for the rest to hand-to-hand encounters when the enemy should have come across! In fact, he had no other reliance, since he was without artillery to defend the fords.

All else being settled, ere the anxious council-holders on each side sought their couches, the pass-word for the morning and the distinguishing badges were announced. The Jacobite soldiers wore white cockades. William chose *green* for his colours. Every man on his side was ordered to wear a green bough or sprig in his hat, and the word was to be "Westminster".

## LXV.—THE BATTLE OF THE BOYNE.



UESDAY the 1st July, 1690, dawned cloudlessly on those embattled hosts, and as the early sunlight streamed out from over the eastern hills, the stillness of that summer morning was broken by the Williamite drums and bugles sounding the *generale*. In accordance with the plan of battle arranged the previous night, the first move on William's side was the march of ten thousand men (the Scotch foot-guards under Lieutenant-General Douglas, and the Danish horse under Meinhart Schomberg), with five pieces of artillery, for the bridge of Slane, where, and at the fords between it and Ross-na-ree (two miles nearer to Oldbridge), they were to cross the river, and turn the left flank of James's army. The infantry portion of this force crossing at Slane, while the horse were getting over at Ross-na-ree, came upon Sir Neal O'Neill and his five hundred dragoons on the extreme left of the Jacobite position. For fully an hour did the gallant O'Neill hold this force in check, he himself falling mortally wounded in the thick of the fight. But soon, the Danish horse crossing at Ross-na-ree, the full force of ten thousand men united and advanced upon the Jacobite flank, endeavouring to get between the royalist army and Duleek. Just at this moment, however, there arrived a force of French and Swiss infantry, and some Irish horse and foot, with six pieces of cannon under Lauzun, sent up hurriedly from Oldbridge by James, who now began to think all the fight would be on his left. Lauzun so skillfully posted his checking force on the slope of a hill with a marsh in front, that Douglas and Schomberg, notwithstanding their enormous numerical superiority, halted and did not venture on an attack until they had sent for and obtained an additional supply of troops. Then only did their infantry advance, while the cavalry, amounting to twenty-four squadrons, proceeded round the bog and extended on towards Duleek, completely overlapping or flanking the Jacobite left wing.

Meanwhile, about ten o'clock in the forenoon, Schom-

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berg the elder (in charge of the Williamite centre), finding that his son and Douglas had made good their way across on the extreme right, and had the Jacobites well engaged there, gave the word for the passage of Oldbridge fords. Tyrconnel's regiment of foot guards, with other Irish foot (only a few of them being armed with muskets), occupied the ruined breastwork fences and farm buildings on the opposite side; having some cavalry drawn up behind the low hills close by to support them. But the Williamites had a way for emptying these breastworks and clearing the bank for their fording parties. Fifty pieces of cannon that had during the morning almost completely battered down the temporary defences on the southern bank, now opened simultaneously, shaking the hills with their thunders, and sweeping the whole of the Irish position with their iron storm; while the bombs from William's mortar batteries searched every part of the field. Under cover of this tremendous fire, to which the Irish had not even a single field-piece to reply,\* the van of the splendidly-appointed Williamite infantry issued from king William's Glen, and plunged into the stream. "Count Solme's Dutch Blue Guards, two thousand strong, reputed the best infantry regiment in the world, led the way at the principal ford opposite Oldbridge, followed by the Brandenburgers. Close on their left were the Londonderries and Enniskillen foot; below whom entered a long column of French Huguenots, under the veteran Calimotte. A little below the Huguenots were the main body of the English, under Sir John Hanmer and Count Nassau; and still lower down, the Danes, under Colonel Cutts. In all about ten thousand of the flower of the infantry of Europe, struggling through a quarter of a mile of the river, and almost hidden beneath flashing arms and green boughs".† As

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\* The six retained by James had been forwarded to Lauzun on the extreme left.

† *Battle of the Boyne*, by M. J. M'Cann. No one desiring to trace closely, and fully understand the events of this memorable battle, should omit to read (Sir William) Wilde's beautiful and valuable work the *Boyne and Blackwater*. I follow as closely as

they neared the southern bank, the roar of cannon ceased—a breathless pause of suspense ensued. Then a wild cheer rung from the Irish lines; and such of the troops as had guns opened fire. An utterly ineffective volley it was; so ill-directed, that the Williamite accounts say it did not kill a man; and then the veterans of a hundred continental battle-fields knew they had only raw Irish peasant levies on the bank before them. There being no artillery (as already frequently noted) to play on the fording parties while crossing, and there being so little water in the river, the passage of the fords was easily effected.

The Dutch guards were the first to the bank, where they instantly formed. Here they were charged by the Irish foot; but before the withering fire of the cool and skilful foreign veterans, these raw levies were cut up instantly, and driven flying behind the fences. The truth became plain after two or three endeavours to bring them to the charge, that they were not fit for such work. Now, however was the time for Hamilton, at the head of the only well-disciplined Irish force on the field—the horse—to show what his men could do. The hedges, which had not been levelled for the purpose, did not prevent their charge. The ground literally trembled beneath the onset of this splendid force. Irresistible as an avalanche, they struck the third battalion of Dutch Blues while yet in the stream, and hurled them back. The Brandenburghers turned and fled. The Huguenots, who were not so quick in escape, were broken through, and their commander Calimotte cut down.

Schomberg had remained on the northern bank with a chosen body of foot as a reserve. He saw with excitement the sudden crash of the Irish horse, and its effects; and was prepared to push forward the reserve, when word reached him that his old friend Calimotte had fallen! Without waiting for helmet or cuirass he dashed forward,

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possible the briefer accounts of the battle by Mr. M'Cann in the *Harp*, and by Dr. Cane in his *Williamite Wars*, with occasional corrections from *Macariae Excidium*, from Sir William Wilde's work, and other authorities.

his white hair floating in the wind. In the river he met and strove to rally the flying Huguenots. "Come on, come on, messieurs; behold your persecutors", cried the old warrior, alluding to the French infantry on the other side. They were the last words he ever spoke. Tyrconnel's Irish horse-guards, returning from one of their charges, again broke clear through and through the Huguenots, cleaving Schomberg's head with two fearful sabre wounds, and lodging a bullet in his neck. When the wave of battle had passed, the lifeless body of the old general lay amongst the human debris that marked its track. He had quickly followed, not only across the Boyne but to another world, his brave companion in arms whose fall he had sought to avenge.

All this time William, at the head of some five thousand of the flower of his cavalry, lay behind the slopes of Tullyallen, close by the lowest ford on the extreme left of his army, waiting anxiously for news of Schomberg's passage at Oldbridge. But now learning that his centre had been repulsed, he disengaged his wounded arm from its sling, and calling aloud to his troops to follow him, plunged boldly into the stream. The water was deepest at this ford, for it was nearest to the sea, and the tide, which was out at the hour fixed for crossing in the morning, was now beginning to rise. William and his five thousand cavalry reached the south bank with difficulty. Marshalling his force on the shore with marvellous celerity, he did not wait to be charged, but rushed furiously forward upon the Irish right flank. The Irish command at this point was held by the young Duke of Berwick with some squadrons of Irish horse, some French infantry, and Irish pikemen. The Irish were just starting to charge the Williamites at the back, when the latter, as already noted, dashed forward to anticipate such a movement by a charge upon them, so that both bodies of horse were simultaneously under way, filled with all the vehemence and fury which could be imparted by consciousness of the issues depending on the collision now at hand. As they neared each other the excitement became choking, and above the thunder of the horses' feet on the

sword could be heard bursting from a hundred hearts, the vehement passionate shouts of every troop-officer, "Close—close up; for God's sake, closer! closer!" On they came, careering like the whirlwind—and then!—What a crash! Like a thunder-bolt the Irish horse broke clear through the Williamites. Those who watched from the hill above, say that when both those furious billows met, there was barely a second of time (a year of agonised suspense it seemed at the moment to some of the lookers-on) during which the wild surges rendered it uncertain which one was to bear down the other. But in one instant the gazers beheld the white plumed form of young Berwick at the head of the Irish cavalry far into the middle of the Williamite mass; and soon, with a shout—a roar that rose over all the din of battle—a frantic peal of exultation and vengeance—the Irish absolutely swept the Dutch and Enniskillen cavalry down the slopes upon the river, leaving in their track only a broken crowd of unhorsed or ridden-down foes, whom the Irish pike-men finished.

But now the heavy firing from Oldbridge announced that the Williamite centre was crossing once more, and soon it became clear that even though the Irish repulsed man for man, there still were enough of their foes to make a lodgment on the bank too powerful to be resisted. Bodies of his troops streaming down to him from the centre, gladly proclaimed to William that they were across again there. Rallying his left wing with these aids he advanced once more. He now had infantry to check the ever-dreaded charges of the Irish horse, and so pressing steadily onward, he drove the Irish back along the lane leading from the river to Sheephouse, a small hamlet half way between Donore and the Boyne. Here the Irish were evidently prepared to make a stand. William, who throughout this battle exhibited a bravery—a cool, courageous recklessness of personal peril, which no general ever surpassed, now led in person a charge by all his left wing forces. But he found himself flanked by the Irish foot posted in the hedges and cabins, and confronted by the invincible cavalry. He turned a moment from the

head of the Enniskillens rode to the rear to hurry up the Dutch. The Enniskillens, seeing Berwick in front about to charge, allege that they thought the king's movement was to be followed by them, so they turned, and William coming up with the Dutch, met them flying pell mell. He now handed over the Dutch to Ginckel, and took himself the unsteady Ulstermen in charge. He appealed entreatingly to them to rally and stand by him, and not to ruin all by their weakness at such a critical moment. By this time the Huguenot horse also came up, and the whole combining, William a third time advanced. The Williamite accounts describe to us the conflict that now ensued at this point as one of the most desperate cavalry combats of the whole war. According to the same authorities the Dutch recoiled, and Ginckel had to throw himself in their rear to prevent a disordered flight.\* William, dauntless and daring, was in the thickest of the fight, cheering, exhorting, leading his men. The gallant Berwick and Sheldon, on the other hand, now assisted by some additional Irish hurried up from the centre, pressed their foes with resistless energy. Brave and highly disciplined those foes were undoubtedly; nevertheless, once more down the lane went the Williamite horse and foot, with the Irish cavalry in full pursuit.

This time, "like Rupert at the battle of Edge Hill", the Irish "pursued too far". While all that has been described so far was occurring on the Jacobite right, at the centre (Oldbridge), overwhelming masses of William's cavalry and infantry had, notwithstanding the best efforts of the French and Irish foot, forced all the fords and mastered everything at that point. In detached masses they were now penetrating all the approaches to Donore, in the direction of Sheephouse, driving the Jacobites before them. While the Irish cavalry on the right, as above described, were in pursuit of the Williamites, the lane leading to Sheephouse was left unoccupied. This being observed by two regiments of Williamite dragoons, they quickly dismounted and lined the hedges of the lane, at the same

time sending word to Ginckel to take advantage of what they were about to do. The Irish cavalry after their charge now returned slowly through the lane to resume their position. Suddenly and to their utter consternation they found themselves assailed by a close and deadly fusillade from the ambuscade around them, so close, so deadly, the guns almost touched each horseman; and there was no room for evolution in the narrow place. While they were thus disordered, whole masses of troops were flung upon them; Ginckel in their rear, their lately routed but now rallied foes on the right, and all combining, pressed the overborne but not outbraved heroes up the lane upon Donore.

Here the Irish turned doggedly for a resolute stand; and William saw that though forced indeed from the river, they considered themselves far from being beaten yet. After a few ineffectual charges, he suspended the attack, in order to re-form his ranks for a grand assault in full force.

It was at this moment—while his devoted little army, still all undaunted, were nerving themselves for the crisis of their fate—that James, yielding readily to the advice of Tyrconnel and Lauzun (which quite accorded with his own anxiety), fled precipitately for Dublin; taking with him as a guard for his person the indignant and exasperated Sarsfield and his splendid cavalry regiment, at that moment so sorely needed on the field!

Some Irish writers, embittered against James for this flight, go so far as to contend that had he remained and handled his troops skilfully, it was still within possibility to turn the fortunes of the day, and drive William beyond the river. The point is untenable. The Jacobite left, right, and centre had been driven in, and the Williamite forces were all now in full conjunction in front. It was possible to hold William in check; to dispute with him each mile of ground to Dublin; but Napoleon himself could not (*with only six field-pieces*) have beaten William at the Boyne.

It is certain, however, that the Irish troops themselves were not of this mind; for when they heard that Donore was to be relinquished, and that they must fall back on

Duleek they murmured and groaned aloud, and passionately declared it was snatching from them a certain victory!\* Nevertheless, to fall back was now essential to their safety; for already bodies of Williamite troops were streaming away on the Jacobite left towards Duleek, designing to get in the Irish rear. To meet this movement, the Irish left was swung round accordingly, and pushed on also, mile for mile, with the flanking Williamites; until eventually the struggle in front was virtually abandoned by both parties, and the competition was all as to the manœuvres and counter-manœuvres on the Duleek road; the Irish falling back, yet facing the enemy, and making their retreat the retiring movement of an overpowered army, by no means the flight of one routed. At Duleek they turned to bay, taking up a strong position on the south of the little stream which passes the town. The Williamites came on, and having looked at the ground and the disposition of the Jacobite forces, deemed it well to offer battle no further, but to rest content, as well they might, with the substantial victory of having forced the Boyne and vanquished the Stuart king.

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LXVI.—HOW JAMES ABANDONED THE STRUGGLE; BUT THE IRISH WOULD NOT GIVE UP.



WITH all the odds at which this battle was fought, and important as were its ultimate consequences, the immediate gain for William was simply that he had crossed the Boyne. He had not a captured gun, and scarcely a standard,† to show for his victory. The vanquished had, as we have seen, effected a retreat in almost perfect order, bringing off

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\* *Macariae Excidium*, page 51.

† Story, the Williamite chaplain, says: "Only one or two", and complains of "the incompleteness of the victory"

the few guns they possessed at the beginning of the fight. In fine, of the usual tokens of a victory—namely, captured guns, standards, baggage, or prisoners—William's own chroniclers confess he had nought to show; while, according to the same accounts, his loss in killed and wounded nearly equalled that of the royalists.

This was almost entirely owing to the Irish and French cavalry regiments. They saved the army. They did more—their conduct on that day surrounded the lost cause with a halo of glory which defeat could not dim.

Could there have been any such "exchange of commanders" as the captured Irish officer challenged—had the Irish a general of real ability, of heart and courage, zeal and determination, to command them,—all that had so far been lost or gained at the Boyne would have proved of little account indeed. But James seemed imbecile. He fled early in the day, reached Dublin before evening; recommended that no further struggle should be attempted in Ireland; and advised his adherents to make the best terms they could for themselves. He had seen a newly raised and only half-armed Irish foot regiment, it seems, torn by shot and shell, break and fly in utter confusion when charged by cavalry; and the miserable man could talk of nothing but of their bad conduct that had lost him the crown! While he, most fleet at flying, was thus childishly scolding in Dublin Castle, the devoted Irish were even yet keeping William's fifty thousand men at bay, retreating slowly and in good order from Donore!

At five o'clock next morning he quitted Dublin; and, leaving two troops of horse "to defend the bridge at Bray as long as they could, should the enemy come up", he fled through Wicklow to the south of Ireland. At Kinsale he hurriedly embarked on board the French squadron, and sailed for Brest, where he arrived on the 20th July; being himself the first messenger with the news of his defeat.

The Irish army on reaching Dublin found they were without king or captain-general. They had been abandoned and advised to make favour with the conqueror.

This, however, was not their mind. James mistook his men. *He* might fly and resign if he would; but the cause—the country—*La Patrie*—remained. So the Irish resolved not to surrender. They had fought for James at the Boyne; they would now fight for Ireland on the Shannon.

“To Limerick! To Limerick!” became the cry. The superior wisdom of the plan of campaign advised by Sarsfield from the beginning—defence of the line of the Shannon—was now triumphantly vindicated. Freely surrendering as indefensible, Dublin, Kilkenny, Waterford, and Dungannon, to Limerick the Irish now turned from all directions. The chronicles of the time state that the soldiers came to that rallying point from the most distant places, “in companies, in scores, in groups; nay, in twos and threes”, without any order or command to that effect. On the contrary, James had directed them all to surrender, and every consideration of personal safety counselled them to disband and seek their homes. But no! They had an idea that on the Shannon Sarsfield would yet make a gallant stand beneath the green flag; and so thither their steps were bent!

All eyes now turned to Athlone and Limerick. The former place was at this time held by an old hero, whose name deserved to be linked with that of Sarsfield—Colonel Richard Grace, a confederate Catholic royalist of 1641, now laden with years, but as bold of heart and brave of spirit as when first he drew a sword for Ireland. To reduce Athlone, William detached from his main army at Dublin, Lieutenant-General Douglas with twelve thousand men, a train of twelve cannon, and two mortars. The town stood then, as it stands now, partly on the Leinster, and partly on the Connacht side of the Shannon river, or rather of the short and narrow neck of water, which at that point links two of the “loughs” or wide expanses of the river, that like a great chain of lakes runs north and south for fifty miles between Limerick and Lough Allen. That portion of Athlone on the west, or Connacht side of the river, was called the “Irish town”; that on the east or Leinster side, the “English town”. The castle and

chief fortifications lay on the west side. The governor deemed the English town untenable against Douglas's artillery, so he demolished that entire suburb, broke down the bridge, and put all defences on the western side of the river into the best condition possible to withstand assault.

On the 17th July, 1690, Douglas arrived before Athlone, and sent an insolent message to the governor demanding immediate surrender. Veteran Grace drew a pistol from his belt, and firing over the head of the affrighted envoy, answered to the effect that "that was his answer" *this* time, but something severer would be his reply to any such message repeated. Next day Douglas with great earnestness planted his batteries, and for two days following played on the old castle walls with might and main. But he received in return such compliments of the same kind from Colonel Grace as to make him more than dubious as to the result of his bombardment. After a week had been thus spent, news full of alarm for Douglas reached him. Sarsfield—name of terror already—was said to be coming up from Limerick to catch him at Athlone! If old Grace would only surrender now; just to let him, Douglas, get away in time, it would be a blessed relief! But lo! So far from thinking about surrendering, on the 24th the old hero on the Connacht side *hung out the red flag*.\* Douglas, maddened at this, opened on the instant a furious cannonade, but received just as furious a salute from Governor Grace, accompanied moreover by the most unkind shouts of derision and defiance from the western shore. Douglas now gave up: there was nothing for it but to run! Sarsfield might be upon him if he longer delayed. So he and his ten thousand fled from Athlone, revenging themselves for their discomfiture there by ravaging the inhabitants of all the country through which they passed. Old Governor Grace made a triumphal circuit of Athlone walls, amidst the enthusiastic ovations of the garrison and townspeople.

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\* Which betokens resistance *a l'outrance*; refusal of capitulation or quarter.

Athlone was saved—this time. Once again, however, it was to endure a siege as memorable, and to make a defence still more glorious, though not, like this one, crowned with victory !

LXVII.—HOW WILLIAM SAT DOWN BEFORE LIMERICK AND BEGAN THE SIEGE. SARSFIELD'S MIDNIGHT RIDE—THE FATE OF WILLIAM'S SIEGE TRAIN.

PON Limerick now all interest centred. On the 7th of August William reached Cahirclish, about seven miles south-east of the city, where he encamped, his force amounting to about twenty-eight thousand men. On the evening of the 8th, Douglas, with the ten thousand runaway besiegers of Athlone, joined him, raising his force to thirty-eight thousand. At this time there were, on the other hand, in the city barely ten thousand infantry ; about four thousand cavalry being encamped on the Clare side. When the courtier commanders, Tyrconnel and Lauzun, had estimated William's forces, and viewed the defences of the city, they absolutely scoffed at the idea of defending it, and directed its surrender. Sarsfield and the Irish royalists, however, boldly declared they would not submit to this, and said they would themselves defend the city. In this they were thoroughly and heartily seconded and supported by the gallant Berwick. Lauzun again inspected the walls, gates, bastions, etc., and as his final opinion declared that the place " could be taken *with roasted apples*". Hereupon Tyrconnel, Lauzun, and all the French and Swiss departed for Galway, taking with them everything they could control of stores, arms, and ammunition !

This looked like desertion and betrayal indeed. The taking away of the stores and ammunition, after Sarsfield and Berwick, and even *the citizens themselves*, had declared they would defend the city, was the most scandalous part

of the proceeding. Nevertheless, undismayed, Sarsfield, assisted by a French officer of engineers, De Boisseleau, who, dissenting from Lauzun's estimate of the defences, volunteered to remain, boldly set about preparing Limerick for siege. Happily for the national honour of Ireland, the miserable court party thus cruelly deserted Limerick. That base abandonment left all the glory of its defence to the brave heroes who remained.

De Boisseleau was named governor of the city, and Sarsfield commander of the horse. It was decided that the latter force should be posted on the Clare side of the Shannon, opposite the city (with which communication was kept up by the bridges), its chief duty being at all hazards to prevent the Williamites from crossing to that shore at any of the fords above the city. De Boisseleau meanwhile was to conduct the engineering operations of the defence.

It was true enough that Lauzun, when he scoffed at those defences, saw very poor chance for the city, as far as ramparts of stone and mortar were concerned. "The city", we are told, "had neither outworks, glacis, fosses, half-moons, or horn works. An old wall flanked with a few tottering towers, but without either ditch or parapet, was its only defence".\* However, De Boisseleau soon set to work to improve upon these, mounting batteries, and digging covered ways or counterscraps; the citizens, gentle and simple, and even the women and children, working from sunrise to sunset at the construction or strengthening of defences.

Early on the 9th of August, 1690, William drew from his encampment at Cahirconlish, and, confident of an easy victory, sat down before Limerick. That day he occupied himself in selecting favourable sites for batteries to command the city, and in truth, owing to the formation of the ground, the city was at nearly every point nakedly exposed to his guns. He next sent in a summons to surrender, but De Boisseleau courteously replied that "he

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\* *First Siege of Limerick*: M. J. M'Cann.

hoped he should merit his opinion more by a vigorous defence than a shameful surrender of a fortress which he had been entrusted with".\*

The siege now began. William's bombardment, however, proceeded slowly; and the Limerick gunners, on the other hand, were much more active and vigorous than he had expected. On Monday, the 11th, their fire compelled him to shift his field train entirely out of range; and on the next day, as if intent on following up such practice, their balls fell so thickly about his own tent, killing several persons, that he had to shift his own quarters also. But in a day or two he meant to be in a position to pay back these attentions with heavy interest, and to reduce those old walls despite all resistance. In fine, there was coming up to him from Waterford a magnificent battering train, together with immense stores of ammunition, and, what was nearly as effective for him as the siege train, a number of pontoon-boats of tin or sheet copper, which would soon enable him to pass the Shannon where he pleased. So he took very coolly the resistance so far offered from the city. For in a day more Limerick would be absolutely at his mercy!

So thought William; and so seemed the inevitable fact. But there was a bold heart and an active brain at work at that very moment planning a deed destined to immortalize its author to all time, and to baffle William's now all-but accomplished designs on Limerick!

On Sunday, the 10th, the battering train and its convoy had reached Cashel. On Monday, the 11th, they reached a place called Ballyneety, within nine or ten miles of the Williamite camp. The country through which they had passed was all in the hands of their own garrisons or patrols; yet they had so important and precious a charge that they had watched it jealously so far; but now they were virtually at the camp—only a few miles in its rear; and so the convoy, when night fell, drew the siege train and the vast line of ammunition wagons, the pontoon

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\* *Memoirs of King James the Second.*

boats and store-loads, into a field close to an old ruined castle, and, duly posting night sentries, gave themselves to repose.

That day, an Anglicised Irishman, one Manus O'Brien, a Protestant landlord in the neighbourhood of Limerick, came into the Williamite camp with a piece of news. Sarsfield at the head of five hundred picked men, had ridden off the night before on some mysterious enterprise in the direction of Killaloe; and the informer, from Sarsfield's character, judged rightly that something important was afoot, and earnestly assured the Williamites that nothing was too desperate for that commander to accomplish.

The Williamite officers made little of this. They thought the fellow was only anxious to make much of a trifle, by way of securing favour for himself. Besides, they knew of nothing in the direction of Killaloe that could affect them. William, at length, was informed of the story. He, too, failed to discern what Sarsfield could be at; but his mind anxiously reverting to his grand battering train—albeit it was now barely a few miles off—he, to make safety doubly sure, ordered Sir John Lanier to proceed at once with five hundred horse to meet the convoy. By some curious chance, Sir John—perhaps deeming his night ride quite needless—did not greatly hurry to set forth. At two o'clock, Tuesday morning, instead of at nine o'clock on Monday evening, he rode leisurely off. His delay of five hours made all the difference in the world, as we shall see.

It was indeed true that Sarsfield, on Sunday night, had secretly quitted his camp on the Clare side, at the head of a chosen body of his best horsemen; and, true enough, also, that it was upon an enterprise worthy of his reputation he had set forth. In fine, he had heard of the approach of the siege train, and had planned nothing less than its surprise, capture, and destruction!

On Sunday night he rode to Killaloe, distant twelve miles above Limerick on the river. The bridge here was guarded by a party of the enemy; but favoured by the darkness, he proceeded further up the river until he came to a ford near Ballyvally, where he crossed the Shannon,

Sarsfield captures the Siege Train.



see Page 436.



and passed into Tipperary county. The country around him now was all in the enemy's hands; but he had one with him as guide on this eventful occasion, whose familiarity with the locality enabled Sarsfield to evade all the Williamite patrols, and but for whose services it may be doubted if his ride this night had not been his last. This was Hogan, the rapparee chief, immortalised in local traditions as "Gallopig Hogan". By paths and passes known only to riders "native to the sod", he turned into the deep gorges of Silver Mines, and ere day had dawned was bivouacked in a wild ravine of the Keeper Mountains. Here he lay *perdu* all day on Monday. When night fell there was anxious tightening of horsegirths and girding of swords with Sarsfield's five hundred. They knew the siege train was at Cashel on the previous day, and must by this time have reached near to the Williamite lines. The midnight ride before them was long, devious, difficult, and perilous; the task at the end of it was crucial and momentous indeed. Led by their trusty guide, they set out southward, still keeping in by-ways and mountain roads. Meanwhile, as already mentioned, the siege train and convoy had that evening reached Ballyneety, where the guns were parked and convoy bivouacked. It was three o'clock in the morning when Sarsfield, reaching within a mile or two of the spot, learnt from a peasant that the prize was now not far off ahead of him. And here we encounter a fact which gives the touch of true romance to the whole story! It happened, by one of those coincidences that often startle us with their singularity, that the pass-word with the Williamite convoy on that night was "*Sarsfield!*" That Sarsfield obtained the pass-word before he reached the halted convoy, is also unquestionable, though how he came by his information is variously stated. The painstaking historian of Limerick states that from a woman, wife of a sergeant in the Williamite convoy, unfeelingly left behind on the road by her own party in the evening, but most humanely and kindly treated by Sarsfield's men, the word was obtained.\*

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\* Lenihan's *History of Limerick*, p. 232.

Riding softly to within a short distance of the place indicated, he halted and sent out a few trusted scouts to scan the whole position narrowly. They returned reporting that besides the sentries there were only a few score troopers drowsing beside the watch fires, on guard; the rest of the convoy being sleeping in all the immunity of fancied safety. Sarsfield now gave his final orders—silence or death, till they were in upon the sentries; then, forward like a lightning flash upon the guards. One of the Williamite sentries fancied he heard the beat of horse-hoofs approaching him; he never dreamt of foes; he thought it must be one of their own patrols. And truly enough, through the gloom he saw the figure of an officer evidently at the head of a body of cavalry, whether phantom or reality he could not tell. The sentry challenged, and, still imagining he had friends, demanded the "word". Suddenly, as if from the spirit land, and with a wild, weird shout that startled all the sleepers, the "phantom troop" shot past like a thunderbolt; the leader crying as he drew his sword, "*Sarsfield is the word, and Sarsfield is the man!*" The guards dashed forward, the bugles screamed the alarm, the sleepers rushed to arms, but theirs was scarcely an effort. The broadswords of Sarsfield's five hundred were in their midst; and to the affrighted gaze of the panic-stricken victims that five hundred seemed thousands! Short, desperate, and bloody was that scene; so short, so sudden, so fearful, that it seemed like the work of incantation. In a few minutes the whole of the convoy were cut down or dispersed; and William's splendid siege train was in Sarsfield's hands! But his task was as yet only half accomplished. Morning was approaching; William's camp was barely eight or ten miles distant, and thither some of the escaped had hurriedly fled. There was scant time for the important work yet to be done. The siege guns and mortars were filled with powder, and each muzzle buried in the earth; upon and around the guns were piled the pontoon boats, the contents of the ammunition wagons, and all the stores of various kinds, of which there was a vast quantity. A train of powder was laid to this huge pyre, and Sarsfield, removing all the wounded

Williamites to a safe distance,\* drew off his men, halting them while the train was being fired. There was a flash that lighted all the heavens and showed with dazzling brightness the country for miles around. Then the ground rocked and heaved beneath the gazers' feet, as, with a deafening roar that seemed to rend the firmament, the vast mass burst into the sky; and as suddenly all was gloom again! The sentinels on Limerick walls heard that awful peal. It rolled like a thunder storm away by the heights of Cratloe, and wakened sleepers amidst the hills of Clare. William heard it too; and he at least needed no interpreter of that fearful sound. He knew in that moment that his splendid siege train had perished, destroyed by a feat that only one man could have so planned and executed; an achievement destined to surround with unfading glory the name of Patrick Sarsfield!

Sir John Lanier's party, coming up in no wise rapidly, saw the flash that, as they said, gave broad daylight for a second, and felt the ground shake beneath them as if by an earthquake, and then their leader found he was just in time to be too late. Rushing on he sighted Sarsfield's rear-guard; but there were memories of the Irish cavalry at the Boyne in no way encouraging him to force an encounter. From the Williamite camp two other powerful bodies of horse were sent out instantly on the explosion being heard, to surround Sarsfield and cut him off from the Shannon. But all was vain, and on Tuesday evening he and his Five Hundred rode into camp amidst a scene such as Limerick had not witnessed for centuries. The whole force turned out; the citizens came with laurel boughs to line the way, and as he marched in amidst a conqueror's ovation, the gunners on the old bastions across the river gave a royal salute to him whom they all now hailed as the saviour of the city!

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\* Even the Williamite chroniclers make mention of Sarsfield's kindness to the wounded at Ballyneety.

LXVIII.—HOW WILLIAM PROCURED A NEW SIEGE TRAIN AND BREACHED THE WALL. HOW THE WOMEN OF LIMERICK WON THEIR FAME IN IRISH HISTORY. HOW THE BREACH WAS STORMED AND THE MINE SPRUNG. HOW WILLIAM FLED FROM “UNCONQUERED LIMERICK”.



In the Williamite camp the event caused proportionate dismay, depression, and discouragement. But William was not a man easily thwarted or disconcerted. A week later he had another siege train of thirty-six guns and four mortars brought up from Waterford, pouring red hot shot into the devoted city. A perfect storm of bombs, “fire-balls”, carcasses”, and other diabolical contrivances, rained upon every part of the town, firing it in several places. Sarsfield and De Boisselcau now ordered that all the women and children should withdraw into the Clare suburb. The women *en masse* rebelled against the order! They vehemently declared that no terrors should cause them to quit their husbands and brothers in this dreadful hour, fighting for God and country. They had already bravely aided in erecting the defences; they were now resolved to aid in the struggle behind them, ready to die in the breach or on the walls beside their kindred, ere the hated foe should enter Limerick.

And the women of Limerick were true to that resolve! Then might be seen, say the chroniclers, day after day, women, old and young, full of enthusiasm and determination, labouring in the breaches, mines, and counterscarps, digging the earth, filling the gabions, piling the shot, and drawing up ammunition, while around them showered balls, bombs, and grenades.

By this time the surface of the whole of the surrounding suburbs on the southern side was cut up into a vast maze of “zig-zags”, trenches, and galleries, by the besiegers. On the 26th their trenches were within a few feet of the pallisades, and a breach had been made in the walls at St. John’s Gate. William moreover pursued mining to a great extent. But if he mined, Sarsfield countermined, and it turned out that the Irish mines were far beyond any-

thing the siegers could have credited. In fact the scientific skill, the ingenuity and fertility of engineering resorts, appliances, and devices, exhibited by the defenders of Limerick have seldom been surpassed. The miraculous magic of devoted zeal and earnest activity transformed the old city wall into a line of defences such as Toddleben himself in our own day might gaze upon with admiration.\* Food, however, was lamentably scarce, but in truth none of the besieged gave thought to any privation; their whole souls were centred in one great object—defence of the walls, defeat of the foe.

On Wednesday, the 27th August, the breach having been still further increased by a furious bombardment, William gave orders for the assault. Ten thousand men were ordered to support the storming party; and at half-past three in the afternoon, at a given signal, five hundred grenadiers leaped from the trenches, fired their pieces, flung their grenades, and in a few moments had mounted the breach. The Irish were not unprepared, although at that moment the attack was not expected. Unknown to the besiegers, Boisselean had caused an intrenchment to be made inside the breach. Behind this intrenchment he had planted a few pieces of cannon, and from these a cross fire now opened with murderous effect on the assailants, after they had filled the space between the breach and the entrenchment. For a moment they halted—staggered by this fatal surprise; but they next pushed forward with the courage and fury of lions. A bloody hand-to-hand struggle ensued. Spear and dagger, sword and butted musket could alone be used, and they were brought into deadly requisition. The instant William found his storming party had fastened well upon the breach, the supports in thousands were flung forward. On the Irish side, too, aids were hurried up; but eventually, with a tremen-

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\* Among numerous other happy resorts and ingenious adaptations of the means at hand to the purpose of defence, we read that, wool stores being numerous in the city, the wool was packed into strong sacks and cases, a lining of which was hung out over the weakest of the walls, completely deadening the effect of the enemy's shot.

dous rush, the assaulting party burst through their opponents, and in a moment more poured into the town.

That feat which usually gives victory to an assault, was, however, in this instance, only the sure occasion of repulse and utter defeat for William's regiments. The news that the foe had penetrated into the town, so far from causing dismay to inhabitants or garrison, seemed to act like the summons of a magician on the countless hosts of enchantment. Down through street, and lane, and alley, poured the citizens, women and men; the butcher with his axe, the shipwright with his adze; each man with such weapon as he had been able most readily to grasp; the women, "like liberated furies", flinging stones, bricks, glass bottles, delft-ware, and other missiles, with fury on the foe. Some of the Irish cavalry on the Clare side, hearing the news, dashed across the bridges, "the pavements blazing beneath the horses' hoofs as they galloped to Ball's Bridge, where dismounting and flinging their horses loose, they charged into Broad Street, and sword in hand joined their countrymen in the *melée*". Even the phlegmatic William, under whose eye the assault was made, became excited as he gazed on the struggle from "Cromwell's Fort", ever and anon ordering forward additional troops to the sustainment of his assaulting column. For *three hours* this bloody hand-to-hand fight in the streets and the breach went on. The women, says Story (the Williamite chaplain), rushed boldly into the breach, and stood nearer to our men than to their own, hurling stones and broken bottles right into the faces of the attacking troops, regardless of death by sword or bullet, which many of them boldly met. Before defenders thus animated it was no disgrace to the assailants to give way. By seven o'clock in the evening they had been completely driven out of the streets and back into the counterescarp. Here the contest was for a moment renewed; but only for a moment. At the point of sword and pike the assailants were driven into their own trenches, and a shout of victory arose from the besieged as they hurled from the walls, as they thought, the last remnant of the Dutch battalions. But William had yet a grip upon those walls. In the

wild confusion of the three hours' struggle, the Brandenburgers, when being pressed back upon the breach, got in at the rear of one of the Irish batteries, into, and over which, we are told, they now swarmed in a dense black mass. In a moment, however, the whole struggle was suddenly and decisively terminated by the crowning feat of the defence. At the very instant when the Brandenburgers—little knowing that the ground beneath them was every rood a *mine*—were exulting over what they thought at least an instalment of success, the earth heaved and yawned under their feet, and with a roar like thunder, mingled with a thousand despairing death-shrieks, battery and Brandenburgers went flying into the air! For a moment there was a pause; each side alike seeming to feel the awfulness of the fate that had so suddenly annihilated the devoted regiment. Then, indeed, a shout wild and high went up from the walls, wafted from end to end of the city, and caught up on the Thomond shore, and a final salvo from the unconquered battlements, by way of parting salute to the flying foe, proclaimed that patriotism and heroism had won the victory.

Far more honourable at all times than conquering prowess in battle—far more worthy of admiration and fame—is humanity to the fallen and the wounded, generosity to the vanquished. Let the youth of Ireland, therefore, know, when with bounding heart they read or relate so far this glorious story of Limerick, that there remains to be added the brightest ray to the halo of its fame. At the moment when the last overwhelming rush of the garrison and inhabitants swept the assailants from the breach, in the impetuosity of the onset the pursuing Irish penetrated at one point into the Williamite camp, and in the *melée* the Williamite hospital took fire. What follows deserves to be recorded in letters of gold. The Irish instantaneously turned from all pursuit and conflict—some of them rushed into the flames to bear away to safety from the burning building its wounded occupants, while others of them with devoted zeal applied themselves to the task of quenching the flames! It was only when all danger from the conflagration was over, that they gave

thought to their own safety, and fought their way back to the town!

William resolving to renew the assault next day, could not persuade his men to advance, though he offered to lead them in person! "Whereupon", says the Protestant historian who relates the fact, "in all rage he left the camp, and never stopped till he came to Waterford, where he took shipping for England, his army in the meantime retiring by night from Limerick".\*

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LXIX.—HOW THE FRENCH SAILED OFF, AND THE DESERTED IRISH ARMY STARVED IN RAGS, BUT WOULD NOT GIVE UP THE RIGHT. ARRIVAL OF "ST. RUTH, THE VAIN AND BRAVE".



WHILE William's cowed and beaten army were flying from Limerick, and the queen city of the Shannon was holding high carnival of rejoicing, a French fleet was anchoring in Galway to take off Lauzun and the French auxiliaries! James had represented in France that all was lost—that the struggle was over—that the Irish would not fight; so King Louis sent a fleet imperatively to bring away his men. Accordingly, Lauzun and his division embarked and sailed from Galway. Tyrconnel, however, proceeded to France at the same time, to represent to James his error as to the condition of affairs in Ireland, and to obtain from King Louis a new expedition in aid of the struggle.

An army in the field is a costly engine. Who was to supply the Irish with a "military chest"? How were the forces to be paid, supported, clothed? And above all, how were military stores, ammunition, arms, and the myriad of other necessities for the very existence of an army, to be had? The struggle was not merely against so many thousand Williamites—Dutch, Danish, or English—on

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\* Cassell's (Godkin's) *History of Ireland*, vol. ii. p. 114.

Irish soil; but against so many as a wing of the English nation, or mercenaries in its pay, with the constituted government, the wealth, the taxes, the levies, the arsenals and foundries of powerful England behind them. We need hardly wonder that while, every day, transports arrived from England with arms, ammunition, and military stores, new uniform, tents, baggage, and transport appliances, for the Williamite army, the hapless Irish garrisons were literally in rags, unpaid, unsupplied, short of food, and wretchedly off for ammunition. Matters were somewhat mended by the arrival of Tyrconnel at Limerick, in February of the following year (1691) with a small supply of money and some shiploads of provisions, but no men. He brought, however, news, which to the half-famished and ragged garrisons was more welcome than piles of uniform clothing, or chests of gold—the cheering intelligence that King Louis was preparing for Ireland military assistance on a scale beyond anything France had yet afforded!

On the 8th of May following, a French fleet arrived in the Shannon, bringing some provisions, clothing, arms, and ammunition for the Irish troops, but no money and no troops. In this fleet, however, came Lieutenant-General St. Ruth, a French officer of great bravery, ability, energy, and experience, sent to take the chief command of the Irish army". This appointment, it may be remarked, in effect reduced to a fifth subordinate position Sarsfield, the man to whom was mainly owing the existence of any army at all in Ireland at this juncture, and on whom during the past winter had practically devolved all the responsibilities of the chief military and civil authority.

"Every fortunate accident", says one of our historians, "had combined to elevate that gallant cavalry officer into the position of national leadership. He was the son of a member of the Irish commons proscribed for his patriotism and religion in 1641; his mother being Anna O'Moore, daughter of the organizer of the Catholic Confederation. He was a Catholic in religion; spoke Gaelic as fluently as English; was brave, impulsive, handsome, and generous to

a fault, like the men he led. During Tyrconnel's absence every sincere lover of his country came to him with intelligence and looked to him for direction".

The viceroy had brought him from France the rank and title of Earl of Lucan; "a title drawn from that pleasant hamlet in the valley of the Liffey, where he had learned to lisp the catechism of a patriot at the knee of Anna O'Moore". But it was not for titles or personal honours Sarsfield fought. More dear to him was the cause he had at heart; and though unquestionably the denial to him of a higher position of command in this campaign led to the bitterest feelings in the army—with the worst of results ultimately—in his own breast there rested no thought but how to forward that cause, no ambition but to serve it, whether as commoner or earl, as subaltern or as chief.

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LXX.—HOW GINCKLE BESIEGED ATHLONE. HOW THE IRISH "KEPT THE BRIDGE", AND HOW THE BRAVE CUSTUME AND HIS GLORIOUS COMPANIONS "DIED FOR IRELAND". HOW ATHLONE, THUS SAVED, WAS LOST IN AN HOUR!

 HE Williamite army rendezvoused at Mullingar towards the end of May, under Generals De Ginckle, Talmash, and Mackay. On the 7th June, they moved westward for Athlone, "the ranks one blaze of scarlet, and the artillery such as had never before been seen in Ireland".\* They were detained ten days besieging an Irish out-post, Ballymore castle, heroically defended by Lieutenant-Colonel Ulick Burke and a force of twelve hundred men against Ginckle's army of thirteen thousand, and that artillery described for us by Macaulay. On the 18th Ginckle was joined by the Duke

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\* Macaulay.

of Wirtemberg, the Prince of Hesse, and the Count of Nassau, with seven thousand foreign mercenaries. On the 19th their full force appeared before Athlone and summoned the town to surrender.

On the previous occasion, when besieged by Douglas, the governor (Colonel Grace) relinquished as untenable the Leinster (or "English") side of the town, and made his stand successfully from the Connacht (or "Irish") side. The governor on this occasion—Colonel Fitzgerald—resolved to defend both the "English" and "Irish" sides, St. Ruth having strongly counselled him so to do, and promised to reach him soon with the bulk of the Irish army from Limerick. Colonel Fitzgerald had not more than three hundred and fifty men as a garrison; nevertheless, knowing that all depended on holding out till St. Ruth could come up, he did not wait for Ginckle to appear in sight, but sallied out with his small force, and disputed with the Williamite army the approaches to the town, thus successfully retarding them for five or six hours. But Ginckle had merely to plant his artillery, and the only walls Athlone possessed—on *that* side at least—were breached and crumbled like pastry. Towards evening, on the 17th June, the whole of the bastion at the "Dublin Gate", near the river on the north side, being levelled, the (English) town was assaulted. The storming party, as told off, were four thousand men, headed by three hundred grenadiers, under Mackay, and with profuse supports besides. To meet these, Fitzgerald had barely the survivors of his three hundred and fifty men, now exhausted after forty-eight hours' constant fighting. In the breach, when the assault was delivered, *two hundred* of that gallant band fell to rise no more. The remainder, fiercely fighting, fell back inch by inch towards the bridge, pressed by their four thousand foes. From the Williamites shouts now arose on all sides of, "*the bridge—the bridge*"; and a furious rush was made to get over the bridge along with, if not before, the retreating Irish. In this event, of course, all was lost; but the brave Fitzgerald and his handful of heroes knew the fact well. Turning to bay at the bridge-end, they opposed themselves like an impenetrable wall to

the mass of the enemy ; while above the din of battle and the shouts of the combatants could be heard sounds in the rear that to Mackay's ear needed no explanation—the Irish were breaking down the arches behind, while yet they fought in front ! “ *They are desroying the bridge*”, he shouted wildly : “ On ! on ! save the bridge—the bridge !” Flinging themselves in hundreds on the few score men now resisting them, the stormers sought to clear the way by freely giving man for man, life for life, nay four for one ; but it wou'd not do. There Fitzgerald and his companions stood like adamant ; the space at the bridge-end was small ; one man could keep five at bay ; and a few paces behind, wielding pick, and spade, and crowbar, like furies, were the engineers of the Irish garrison. Soon a low rumbling noise was heard, followed by a crash ; and a shout of triumph broke from the Irish side ; a yell of rage from the assailants ; a portion, but a portion only, of two arches had fallen into the stream ; the bridge was still passable ! Again a wild eager shout from Mackay. “ On ! on ! Now ! now ! the bridge !” But still there stood the decimated defenders, with clutched guns and clenched teeth, resolved to die but not to yield. Suddenly a cry from the Irish rear : “ Back, back, men, *for your lives !*” The brave band turned from the front, and saw the half-broken arches behind them tottering. Most of them rushed with lightning speed over the falling mass ; but the last company—it had wheeled round even at that moment to face and keep back the enemy—were too late ! As they rushed for the passage, the mass of masonry heaved over with a roar into the boiling surges, leaving the devoted band on the brink in the midst of their foes ! There was a moment's pause, and almost a wail burst from the Irish on the Connacht side ; but just as the enemy rushed with vengeance upon the doomed group, they were seen to draw back a pace or two from the edge of the chasm, fling away their arms, then dash forward and plunge into the stream. Like a clap of thunder broke a volley from a thousand guns on the Leinster shore, tearing the water into foam. There was a minute of suspense on each side, and then a cheer rang out—of defiance, exultation, victory—as the

brave fellows were seen to reach the other bank, pulled to land by a hundred welcoming hands !

St. Ruth, at Ballinasloe, on his way up from Limerick, heard next day that the English town had fallen. "He instantly set out at the head of fifteen hundred horse and foot, leaving the main army to follow as quickly as possible. On his arrival, he encamped about two miles west of the town, and appointed Lieutenant-General D'Usson governor instead of the gallant Fitzgerald, as being best skilled in defending fortified places".\* Now came the opportunity for that splendid artillery, "the like of which", Macaulay has told us, "had never been seen in Ireland". For seven long days of midsummer there poured against the Irish town such a storm of iron from seven batteries of heavy siege guns and mortars, that by the 27th the place was literally a mass of ruins, amongst which, we are told, "two men could not walk abreast". On that day "a hundred wagons arrived in the Williamite camp from Dublin, laden with a further supply of ammunition for the siege guns". That evening the enemy by grenades set on fire the fascines of the Irish breastwork at the bridge, and that night, under cover of a tremendous bombardment, they succeeded in flinging some beams over the broken arches, and partially planking them. Next morning—it was Sunday, the 28th June—the Irish saw with consternation that barely a few planks more laid on would complete the bridge. Their own few cannon were now nearly all buried in the ruined masonry, and the enemy beyond had battery on battery trained on the narrow spot—it was *death* to show in the line of the all but finished causeway !

Out stepped from the ranks of Maxwell's regiment, a sergeant of dragoons, Custume by name. "Are there ten men here who will die with me for Ireland?" A hundred eager voices shouted Aye. "Then", said he, "we will save Athlone; *the bridge must go down*".

Grasping axes and crow-bars, the devoted band rushed from behind the breastwork, and dashed forward upon

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\* M'Cann.

the newly-laid beams. A peal of artillery—a fusillade of musketry—from the other side, and the space was swept with grape-shot and bullets. When the smoke cleared away, the bodies of the brave Custume and his ten heroes lay on the bridge, riddled with balls. They had torn away some of the beams, but *every man of the eleven had perished!*

Out from the ranks of the same regiment dashed as many more volunteers. “There are eleven men more who will die for Ireland”. Again across the bridge rushed the heroes. Again the spot is swept by a murderous fusillade. The smoke lifts from the scene; nine of the second band lie dead upon the bridge—two survive, but the work is done! The last beam is gone; Athlone once more is saved!

I am not repeating a romance of fiction, but narrating a true story, recorded by lookers on, and corroborated in all its substance by writers on the Williamite and on the Jacobite side. When, therefore, young Irishmen read in Roman history of Horatius Cocles and his comrades, who

“kept the bridge  
In the brave days of old”,

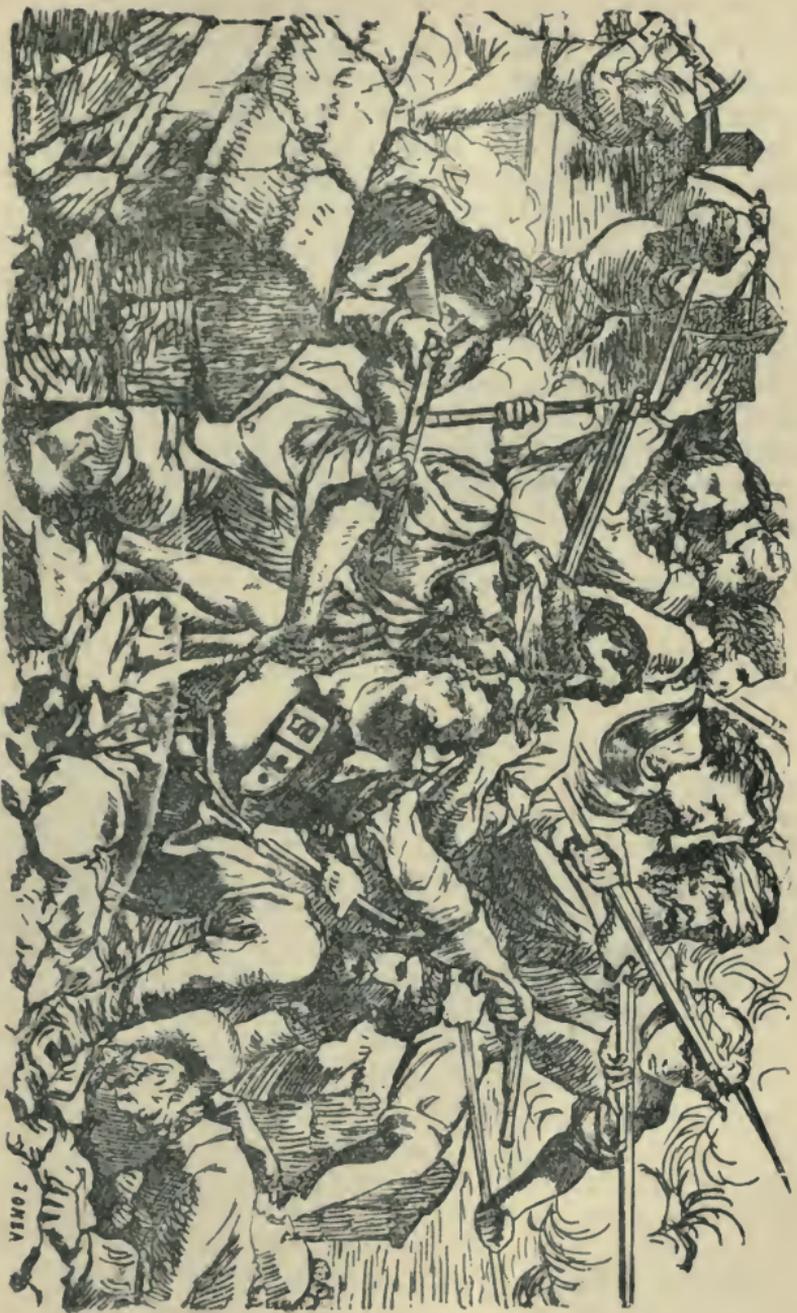
let them remember that the authentic annals of Ireland record a scene of heroism not dissimilar in many of its features, not less glorious in aught! And when they read also of the fabled Roman patriot who plunged into the abyss at the forum, to save the city, let them remember that such devotion, not in fable, but in fact, has been still more memorably exhibited by Irishmen; and let them honour beyond the apocryphal Curtius, the brave Custume and his glorious companions, who died for Ireland at Athlone.

The town was saved once more—yet awhile. “Ginckle, thus a second time defeated in striving to cross the Shannon, resolved to renew his approaches over the bridge by the more cautious method of a covered walk, or ‘close gallery’, and to support the new mode of attack by several others in different directions”.\* The whole of that day he

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\* O’Callaghan’s *Green Book*, p. 32.

How they kept the Herd at Ethloma.



ZONIA



cannonaded the Irish town with great violence, "as I believe never town was", writes a spectator. Nevertheless, the Irish, burrowing and trenching amidst the chaotic mass of ruins and piles of rubbish once called the town of Athlone, continued to form new defences as fast as the old were levelled, and Ginckle was at his wit's end what to rely upon if his "close gallery" should fail. A council of war in the Williamite camp decided that on the morning of the 29th, the passage of the river should be a third time attempted, and in greater force than ever. A bridge of boats was to be thrown across the river some distance below the old stone structure, and it occurred to some one to suggest that as the summer had been exceedingly dry, and as the water in the river appeared to be unprecedentedly low, it might be worth while to try sounding for a *ford*.

This hap-hazard thought—this apparently fugitive suggestion—won Athlone.

"Three Danish soldiers, under sentence of death for some crime, were offered their pardon if they would undertake to try the river. The men readily consented, and, putting on armour, entered at three several places. The English in the trenches were ordered to fire seemingly at them, but in reality over their heads, whence the Irish naturally concluded them to be *deserters*, and did not fire till they saw them returning, when the English by their great and small shot, obliged the Irish to be covered. It was discovered that the deepest part of the river did not reach their breasts".\* Thereupon it was decided to assault the town next morning suddenly and by surprise at three points; one party to go over the bridge by the "close gallery"; a second to cross by the pontoons or boat bridge; the third, by one of the fords. Once more Mackay was to lead the assault, which was fixed for ten o'clock next morning; again, as at the Boyne, each Williamite soldier was to mount a green bough or sprig in his hat; and this time the word was to be "Kilkenny".

That night a deserter swam the river below the town,

and revealed to St. Ruth that an assault was to be made by a boat-bridge and "close gallery" early next morning; and lo! when day dawned, the Williamites could descry the *main army* of the Irish defiling into the town, and detachments stationed at every point to contest the assault which was to have been "a surprise". To make matters worse, the boats were not ready till ten o'clock, instead of at six. Nevertheless the assault was proceeded with, and the storm of grenades began to fly. It had been decided to begin the conflict at or on the bridge, close to the broken arches, where (on their own side) the English had a breastwork, up to which the "close gallery" had been advanced, and upon the attack at this point the other operations were to depend. After an hour's hot work the Irish set on fire the fascines of the English breastwork. There being a strong breeze blowing, in a few minutes the flames spread rapidly; the breastwork had to be abandoned; the "close gallery" was almost destroyed; and the storming columns were called off. The Williamite assault upon Athlone a third time had proved a total failure.

Great was the exultation on the Irish side of the river at the triumphant defeat and utter abandonment of this, the final attempt, as they regarded it, on the part of the foe. After waiting till near five o'clock to behold the last of the Williamites called to the rere, and every other sign of defeat exhibited on their side, St. Ruth drew off the victorious Irish army to the camp three miles distant, and, over-confidently, if not vaingloriously, declaring the siege as good as raised, invited the resident gentry of the neighbourhood and the officers of the army to a grand ball at his quarters that evening.

Meanwhile Ginckle, a prey to the most torturing reflections, wavered between a hundred conflicting resolutions or momentary impulses. At last he decided to raise the siege, but wishing for the decision of a council to shield him somewhat from the outcry he apprehended in Dublin and in London, a meeting was held to consider the point. After a hot and bitter disputation, a resolution, at first laughed at by the majority, was adopted—namely, to try

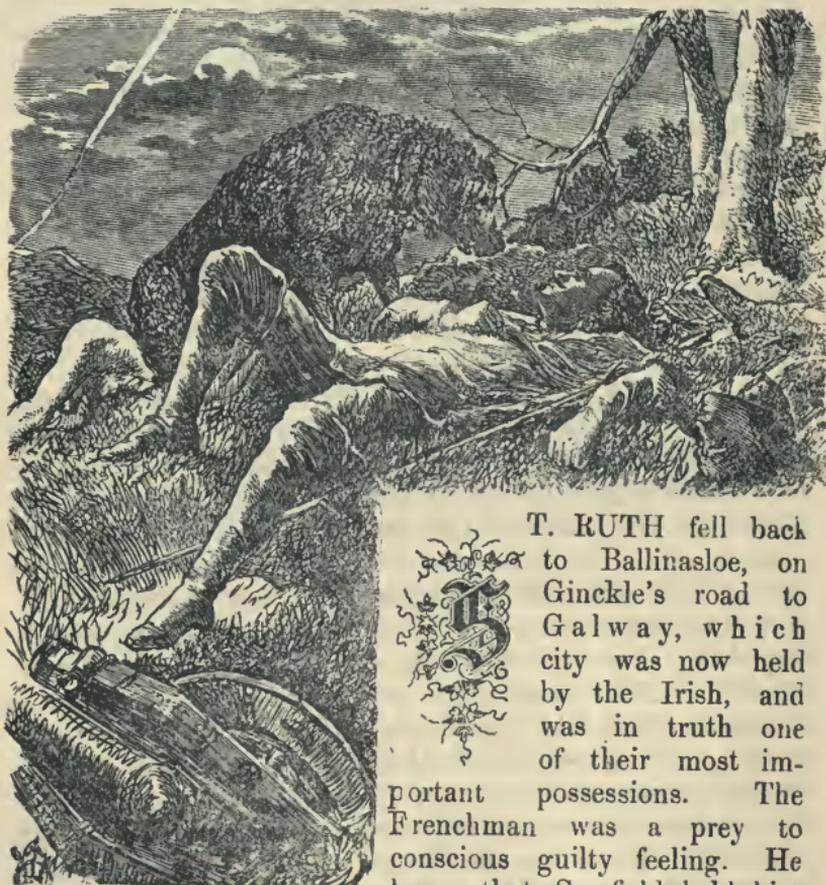
*that very evening, nay that very hour,* a sudden dash across the river *by the fords*, as (it was rightly conjectured) the Irish would now be off their guard. As a last refuge from disgrace, Ginckle resolved to try this chance.

Towards six o'clock the Irish officer on guard on the Athlone side, sent word to the General (St. Ruth) that he thought there was something up on the opposite bank, and begging some detachments to be sent in, as only a few companies had been left in the town. St. Ruth replied by a sharp and testy remark, reflecting on the courage of the officer, to the effect, that he was frightened by fancy. By the time this hurtful answer reached him, the officer saw enough to convince him that infallibly an assault was about to be made, and he sent with all speed to the camp entreating the general to credit the fact. St. Ruth replied by saying that if the officer in charge was afraid of such attacks, he might turn over the command to another. Sarsfield was present at this last reply, and he at once judged the whole situation correctly. He implored St. Ruth not to treat so lightly a report so grave from an officer of undoubted bravery. The Frenchman—courageous, energetic, and highly-gifted as he unquestionably was—unfortunately was short-tempered, imperious, and vain. He and Sarsfield exchanged hot and angry words; St. Ruth resenting Sarsfield's interference, and intimating that the latter henceforth should "know his place". While yet this fatal altercation was proceeding, an *aid de camp* galloped up all breathless from the town—*the English were across the river and into the defences of Athlone!* Even now St. Ruth's overweening self-confidence would not yield. "Then let us drive them back again", was his answer, at the same time directing troops to hurry forward for that purpose. But it was too late. The lodgment had been made in force. The English were now in the defences. The walls of the town on the camp side had been left standing, and only a siege could now dispossess the new occupants. Athlone was lost!\*

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\* Amongst the slain on the Irish side in this siege was the glorious old veteran, Colonel Richard Grace, who was governor the preceding

LXXI.—“THE CULLODEN OF IRELAND”. HOW AUGHHRIM WAS FOUGHT AND LOST. A STORY OF THE BATTLE-FIELD; “THE DOG OF AUGHHRIM”, OR, FIDELITY IN DEATH!



T. RUTH fell back to Ballinasloe, on Ginckle's road to Galway, which city was now held by the Irish, and was in truth one of their most important possessions. The Frenchman was a prey to conscious guilty feeling. He knew that Sarsfield held him. Athlone, and his pride was

accountable for the loss

year. His great age—he was now nearly ninety years of age—caused him to be relieved of such a laborious position in this siege, but nothing could induce him to seek, either in retirement or in less exposed and dangerous duty, that quiet which all his compeers felt to be the old man's right. He would insist on remaining in the thickest of the fighting, and he died “with his harness on his back”. He was one of the most glorious characters to be met with in Irish history. The erudite author of the *Green Book* supplies a deeply interesting sketch of his life and career

painfully mortified. How often do dire events from trivial causes spring ! This estrangement between St. Ruth and Sarsfield was fated to affect the destinies of Ireland, for to it may be traced the loss of the battle of Aughrim, as we shall see.

At a council of war in the Irish camp it was at first resolved to give battle in the strong position which the army had now taken up, but St. Ruth moved off to Aughrim, about three miles distant, on the road to Galway. The new position was not less strong than that which had just been quitted. In truth its selection, and the uses to which St. Ruth turned each and all of its natural advantages, showed him to be a man of consummate ability.

Close to the little village of Aughrim—destined to give name to the last great battle between Catholic and Protestant royalty on the soil of Ireland—is the Hill of Kilcommedan. The hill slopes gradually and smoothly upward to a height of about three hundred feet from its base, running lengthways for about two miles from north to south. On its east side or slope, looking towards the way by which Ginckle must approach on his march westward to Galway, the Irish army was encamped, having on its right flank the pass or causeway of Urrachree, and its left flank resting on the village of Aughrim. A large morass lay at foot of Kilcommedan (on the east, sweeping round the northern end of the hill) which might be crossed in summer by footmen, but was impracticable for cavalry. Through its centre, from south to north, ran a little stream, which with winter rains flooded all the surrounding marsh. Two narrow causeways, “passes”, or roads, ran across the morass to the hill; one at Urrachree, the other at the town of Aughrim; the latter one being defended or commanded by an old ruin, Aughrim Castle, at the hill base.\* Along the slopes of the hill, parallel with its base, ran two or three lines of

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\* The most intelligible, if not the only intelligible, descriptions of this battle are those of Mr. M. J. M'Cann, in the *Harp* for June, 1859; and in a work recently issued in America. *Battle-fields*

whitethorn hedge-rows, growing out of thick earth fences, affording admirable position and protection for musketeers. It may be questioned if the genius of a Wellington could have devised or directed aught that St. Ruth had not done to turn every feature of the ground and every inch of this position to advantage. Yet by one sin of omission he placed all the fortunes of the day on the hazard of his own life; he communicated his plan of battle to *no one*. Sarsfield was the man next entitled and fitted to command, in the event of anything befalling the general; yet he in particular was kept from any knowledge of the tactics or strategy upon which the battle was to turn. Indeed he was posted at a point critical and important enough in some senses, yet away from, and out of sight of the part of the field where the main struggle was to take place; and St. Ruth rather hurtfully gave him imperative instructions not to stir from the position thus assigned him, without a written order from himself. "At Aughrim", says an intelligent Protestant literary periodical, "three apparent accidents gave the victory to Ginckle. The musketeers defending the pass at the old castle found themselves supplied with cannon balls instead of bullets; the flank movement of a regiment was mistaken for a retreat; and St. Ruth lost his life by a cannon shot".\* The last mentioned, which was really the accident that wrested undoubted victory from the Irish grasp, would have had no such disastrous result had St. Ruth confided his plan of battle to his lieutenant-general, and taken him heartily and thoroughly into joint command on the field.

I know of no account of this battle, which, within the same space, exhibits so much completeness, clearness, and simplicity of narration, as Mr. Haverty's, which accordingly I here borrow with very little abridgment:—

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*of Ireland*, unquestionably the most attractive and faithful narrative hitherto published of the Jacobite struggle.

\* *Dublin University Magazine* for February, 1867.—"Some Episodes of the Irish Jacobite Wars".

“ The advanced guards of the Williamites came in sight of the Irish on the 11th of July, and the following morning, which was Sunday, 12th of July, 1691, while the Irish army was assisting at mass, the whole force of the enemy drew up in line of battle on the high ground to the east beyond the morass. As nearly as the strength of the two armies can be estimated, that of the Irish was about fifteen thousand horse and foot, and that of the Williamites from twenty to twenty-five thousand, the latter having besides a numerous artillery, while the Irish had but nine field pieces.

“ Ginckle, knowing his own great superiority in artillery, hoped by the aid of that arm alone to dislodge the Irish centre force from their advantageous ground; and as quickly as his guns could be brought into position, he opened fire upon the enemy. He also directed some cavalry movements on his left at the pass of Urraghee, but with strict orders that the Irish should not be followed beyond the ‘pass’, lest any fighting there should force on a general engagement, for which he had not then made up his mind. His orders on this point, however, were not punctually obeyed; the consequence being some hot skirmishing, which brought larger bodies into action, until about three o’clock, when the Williamites retired from the pass.

“ Ginckle now held a council of war, and the prevalent opinion seemed to be that the attack should be deferred until an early hour next morning, but the final decision of the council was for an immediate battle. At five o’clock accordingly, the attack was renewed at Urraghee, and for an hour and a half there was considerable fighting in that quarter; several attempts to force the pass having been made in the interval, and the Irish cavalry continuing to maintain their ground gallantly, although against double their numbers.

“ At length, at half-past six, Ginckle, having previously caused the morass in front of the Irish centre to be sounded, ordered his infantry to advance on the point where the line of the fences at the Irish side projected most into the marsh, and where the morass was, conse-

quently, narrowest. This, it appears, was in the Irish right centre, or in the direction of Urraghree. The four regiments of colonels Erle, Herbert, Creighton, and Brewer, were the first to wade through the mud and water, and to advance against the nearest of the hedges, where they were received with a smart fire by the Irish, who then retired behind their next line of hedges, to which the assailants in their turn approached. The Williamite infantry were thus gradually drawn from one line of fences to another, up the slope from the morass, to a greater distance than was contemplated in the plan of attack, according to which they were to hold their ground near the morass until they could be supported by reinforcements of infantry in the rear, and by cavalry on the flanks. The Irish retired by such short distances, that the Williamites pursued what they considered to be an advantage, until they found themselves face to face with the main line of the Irish, who now charged them in front; while by passages cut specially for such a purpose through the line of hedges by St. Ruth, the Irish cavalry rushed down with irresistible force and attacked them in the flanks. The effect was instantaneous. In vain did Colonel Erle endeavour to encourage his men by crying out that 'there was no way to come off but to be brave'. They were thrown into total disorder, and fled towards the morass, the Irish cavalry cutting them down in the rear, and the infantry pouring in a deadly fire, until they were driven beyond the quagmire, which separated the two armies. Colonels Erle and Herbert were taken prisoners; but the former, after being taken and retaken, and receiving some wounds, was finally rescued.

"Whilst this was going forward towards the Irish right, several other Williamite regiments crossed the bog nearer to Aughrim, and were in like manner repulsed; but, not having ventured among the Irish hedges, their loss was not so considerable, although they were pursued so far in their retreat, that the Irish, says Story, 'got almost in a line with some of our great guns', or, in other words, had advanced into the English battle-ground. It was no wonder that at this moment St. Ruth should have ex-

claimed with national enthusiasm, 'The day is ours, *mes enfants!*'

"The manœuvres of the Dutch general on the other side evinced consummate ability, and the peril of his present position obliged him to make desperate efforts to retrieve it. His army being much more numerous than that of the Irish, he could afford to extend his left wing considerably beyond their right, and this causing a fear that he intended to flank them at that side, St. Ruth ordered the second line of his left to march to the right, the officer who received the instructions taking with him also a battalion from the centre, which left a weak point not unobserved by the enemy. St. Ruth had a fatal confidence in the natural strength of his left, owing to the great extent of bog, and the extreme narrowness of the causeway near Aughrim Castle. The Williamite commander perceived this confidence, and resolved to take advantage of it. Hence his movement at the opposite extremity of his line, which was a mere feint, the troops which he sent to his left not firing a shot during the day, while some of the best regiments of the Irish were drawn away to watch them. The point of weakening the Irish left having been thus gained, the object of doing so soon became apparent. A movement of the Williamite cavalry to the causeway at Aughrim was observed. Some horsemen were seen crossing the narrow part of the causeway with great difficulty, being scarcely able to ride two abreast. St. Ruth still believed that pass impregnable, as indeed it would have been, but for the mischances which we have yet to mention, and he is reported to have exclaimed, when he saw the enemy's cavalry scrambling over it, 'They are brave fellows, 't is a pity they should be so exposed'. They were not, however, so exposed to destruction as he then imagined. Artillery had come to their aid, and as the men crossed, they began to form in squadrons on the firm ground near the old castle. What were the garrison of the castle doing at this time? and what the reserve of cavalry beyond the castle to the extreme left? As to the former, an unlucky circumstance rendered their efforts nugatory. It was found on examining the ammunition

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with which they had been supplied, that while the men were armed with French firelocks, the balls that had been served to them were cast for English muskets, of which the calibre was larger, and that they were consequently useless! In this emergency the men cut the small globular buttons from their jackets, and used them for bullets, but their fire was ineffective, however briskly it was sustained, and few of the enemy's horse crossing the causeway were hit. This was but one of the mischances connected with the unhappy left of St. Ruth's position. We have seen how an Irish officer, when ordered with reserves to the right wing, removed a battalion from the left centre. This error\* was immediately followed by the crossing of the morass at that weakened point by three Williamite regiments, who employed hurdles to facilitate their passage, and who, meeting with a comparatively feeble resistance at the front line of fences, succeeded in making a lodgment in a corn field on the Irish side".

It was, however—as the historian just quoted remarks in continuation—still very easy to remedy the effects of these errors or mishaps thus momentarily threatening to render questionable the victory already substantially won by the Irish; and St. Ruth, for the purpose of so doing—and, in fact, delivering the *coup de grace* to the beaten foe—left his position of observation in front of the camp on the crest of the hill, and, placing himself in joyous pride at the head of a cavalry brigade, hastened down the slope to charge the confused bodies of Williamite horse gaining a foot-hold below. Those who saw him at this moment say that his face was aglow with enthusiasm and triumph. He had, as he thought, at last vindicated his name and fame; he had shown what St. Ruth could do. And, indeed, never for an instant had he doubted the result of this battle, or anticipated for it any other issue than a victory. He had attired himself, we are told, in his

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\* Many Irish authorities assert it was no "error", but downright treason. The officer who perpetrated it being the traitor Luttrell, subsequently discovered to have long been working out the betrayal of the cause.

most gorgeous uniform, wearing all his decorations and costly ornaments, and constantly told those around him that he was to-day about to win a battle that would wrest Ireland from William's grasp. About half-way down the hill he halted a moment to give some directions to the artillerymen at one of the field batteries. Then, drawing his sword, and giving the word to advance for a charge, he exclaimed to his officers: "They are beaten, gentlemen; let us drive them back to the gates of Dublin". With a cheer, rising above the roar of the artillery—which, from the other side, was playing furiously on this decisive Irish advance—the squadron made reply; when, suddenly, louder still, at its close, there arose a cry—a shriek—from some one near the general. All eyes were turned upon the spot, and for an instant many failed to discern the cause for such a startling utterance. There sat the glittering uniformed figure upon his charger. It needed, with some, a second glance to detect the horrible catastrophe that had befallen. There sat the body of St. Ruth indeed, but it was his *lifeless corpse*—a headless trunk. A cannon shot from the Williamite batteries had struck the head from his body, as if the Tyburn axe and block had done their fearful work. St. Ruth, the vain, the brave, was no more!

The staff crowded around the fallen commander in sad dismay. The brigade itself, ignorant at first of the true nature of what happened, but conscious that some serious disaster had occurred, halted in confusion. Indecision and confusion in the face of the enemy, and under fire of his batteries, has ever but one result. The brigade broke, and rode to the right. No one knew on whom the command devolved. Sarsfield was next in rank; but every one knew him to be posted at a distant part of the field, and it was unhappily notorious that he had not been made acquainted with any of the lost general's plan. This indecision and confusion was not long spreading from the cavalry brigade which St. Ruth had been leading to other bodies of the troops. The Williamites plainly perceived that something fatal had happened on the Irish side, which, if taken advantage of promptly, might give them

victory in the very moment of defeat. They halted, rallied, and returned. A general attack in full force on all points was ordered. "Still the Irish centre and right wing maintained their ground obstinately, and the fight was renewed with as much vigour as ever. The Irish infantry were so hotly engaged, that they were not aware either of the death of St. Ruth, or of the flight of the cavalry, until they themselves were almost surrounded. A panic and confused flight were the result. The cavalry of the right wing, who were the first in action that day, were the last to quit their ground. Sarsfield, with the reserve horse of the centre, had to retire with the rest without striking one blow, 'although', says the Williamite captain Parker, 'he had the greatest and best part of the cavalry with him'. St. Ruth fell about sunset; and about nine, after three hours' hard fighting, the last of the Irish army had left the field. The cavalry retreated along the high road to Loughrea, and the infantry, who mostly flung away their arms, fled to a large red bog on their left, where great numbers of them were massacred unarmed and in cold blood; but a thick misty rain coming on, and the night setting in, the pursuit was soon relinquished".

The peasantry to this day point out a small gorge on the hill side, still called "Gleann-na-Fola",\* where two of the Irish regiments, deeming flight vain, or scorning to fly, halted, and throughout the night waited their doom in sullen determination. There they were found in the morning, and *were slaughtered to a man*. The slogan of the conqueror was: "No quarter".†

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\* The Glen of Slaughter.—The Bloody Glen.

† Moore, who seems to have been powerfully affected by the whole story of Aughrim—"the Culloden of Ireland"—is said to have found in this mournful tragedy the subject of his exquisite song "After the Battle":—

Night closed around the conqueror's way,  
 And lightning showed the distant hill,  
 Where those who lost that dreadful day  
 Stood few and faint—but fearless still

Above five hundred prisoners, with thirty-two pairs of colours, eleven standards, and a large quantity of small arms, fell into the hands of the victors. The English loss in killed and wounded was about three thousand; the Irish lost over four thousand, chiefly in the flight, as the Williamites gave no quarter, and the wounded, if they were not, in comparative mercy, shot as they lay on the field, were allowed to perish unfriended where they fell.

To the music of one of the most plaintive of our Irish melodies—"The Lamentation of Anghrim"—Moore (a second time touched by this sad theme) has wedded the well-known verses here quoted:—

Forget not the field where they perished—  
The truest, the last of the brave;  
All gone—and the bright hopes we cherished  
Gone with them, and quenched in the grave.

Oh! could we from death but recover  
Those hearts as they bounded before,  
In the face of high Heaven to fight over  
The combat for freedom once more;

Could the chain for a moment be riven  
Which Tyranny flung round us then—  
No!—'t is not in Man, nor in Heaven,  
To let Tyranny bind it again!

But 't is past; and though blazoned in story  
The name of our victor may be;  
Accurst is the march of that glory  
Which treads o'er the hearts of the free!

The soldier's hope—the patriot's zeal,  
For ever dimmed, for ever crossed!  
Oh! who can say what heroes feel  
When all but life and honour 's lost!

The last sad hour of freedom's dream  
And valour's task moved slowly by;  
And mute they watched till morning's beam  
Should rise and give them light to die!  
There's yet a world where souls are free,  
Where tyrants taint not nature's bliss:  
If death that world's bright op'ning be,  
Oh! who would live a slave in this?

Far dearer the grave or the prison  
 Illumed by one patriot name,  
 Than the trophies of all who have risen  
 On Liberty's ruins to fame!

We cannot take leave of the field of Aughrim and pass unnoticed an episode connected with that scene which may well claim a place in history; a true story, which, if it rested on any other authority than that of the hostile and unsympathizing Williamite chaplain, might be deemed either the creation of poetic fancy or the warmly tinged picture of exaggerated fact.

The bodies of the fallen Irish, as already mentioned, were for the most part left unburied on the ground, "a prey to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field". "There is", says the Williamite chronicler, "a true and remarkable story of a grayhound,\* belonging to an Irish officer. The gentleman was killed and stripped in the battle,† whose body the dog remained by night and day; and though he fed upon *other* corpses with the rest of the dogs, yet he would not allow them or anything else to touch that of his master. When all the corpses were consumed, the other dogs departed; but this one used to go in the night to the adjacent villages for food, and presently return to the place where his master's bones only were then left. And thus he continued (from July when the battle was fought) till January following, when one of Colonel Foulkes's soldiers, being quartered nigh hand, and going that way by chance, the dog *fearing he came to disturb his master's bones*, flew upon the soldier, who, being surprised at the suddenness of the thing, unslung his piece then upon his back, and shot the poor dog".‡ "He expired", adds Mr. O'Callaghan, "with the same fidelity to the remains of his unfortunate master, as that master

\* It was a wolf-hound or wolf-dog.

† Meaning to say, killed in the battle and stripped after it by the Williamite camp-followers, with whom stripping and robbing the slain was a common practice. They did not spare even the corpse of their own lieutenant-colonel, the Right Rev. Dr. Walker, Protestant Bishop of Derry, which they stripped naked at the Boyne.

‡ Story's *Cont. Imp. Hist.* p. 147.

had shown devotion to the cause of his unhappy country. In the history of nations there are few spectacles more entitled to the admiration of the noble mind and the sympathy of the generous and feeling heart, than the fate of the gallant men and the faithful dog of Aughrim".\*

LXII.—HOW GLORIOUS LIMERICK ONCE MORE BRAVED THE ORDEAL. HOW AT LENGTH A TREATY AND CAPITULATION WAS AGREED UPON. HOW SARSFIELD AND THE IRISH ARMY SAILED INTO EXILE.

 ALWAYS surrendered on favourable terms ten days after the battle. Sligo also, the last western garrison, succumbed soon after, and its governor, the brave Sir Teige O'Regan, the hero of Charlemont, marched his six hundred survivors southward to Limerick".

"Thus once more all eyes and hearts in the British Islands were turned towards the well-known city of the lower Shannon".†

On the 25th of August, Ginckle, reinforced by all the troops he could gather in with safety, invested the place on three sides. It appears he had powers, and indeed urgent directions, from William long previously, to let no hesitation in granting favourable terms keep him from ending the war, if it could be ended by such means, and it is said he apprehended serious censure for not having proclaimed such dispositions before he assaulted Athlone. He now resolved to use without stint the powers given to him, in the anxious hope of thereby averting the necessity of trying to succeed where William himself had failed—beneath the unconquered walls of Limerick.

Accordingly, a proclamation was issued by Ginckle, offering a full and free pardon of all "treasons" (so-called—meaning thereby loyalty to the king, and resistance of the foreign emissaries), with restoration for all to their

\* *Green Book*, p. 459.

† M'Gee.

estates "forfeited" by such "treason", and employment in his majesty's service for all who would accept it, if the Irish army would abandon the war.

It is not to be wondered at that this proclamation developed on the instant a "peace party" within the Irish lines. Not even the most sanguine could now hope to snatch the crown from William's head, and replace it on that of the fugitive James. For what object, therefore, if not simply to secure honourable terms, should they prolong the struggle? And did not this proclamation afford a fair and reasonable basis for negotiation? The Anglo-Irish Catholic nobles and gentry, *whose estates were thus offered to be secured to them*, may well be pardoned, if they exhibited weakness at this stage. To battle further was, in their judgment, to peril all for a shadow.

Nevertheless, the national party, led by Sarsfield, prevailed, and Ginckle's summons to surrender was courteously but firmly refused. Once more glorious Limerick was to brave the fiery ordeal. Sixty guns, none of less than twelve pounds calibre, opened their deadly fire against it. An English fleet ascended the river, hurling its missiles right and left. Bombardment by land and water showered destruction upon the city—in vain! Ginckle now gave up all hope of reducing the place by assault, and resolved to turn the siege into a *blockade*. Starvation must, in time, effect what fire and sword had so often and so vainly tried to accomplish. The treason of an Anglo-Irish officer long suspected, Luttrell, betrayed to Ginckle the pass over the Shannon above the city; and one morning the Irish, to their horror, beheld the foe upon the Clare side of the river. Ginckle again offered to grant almost any terms, if the city would but capitulate; for even still he judged it rather a forlorn chance to await its capture. The announcement of this offer placed further resistance out of the question. It was plain there was a party within the walls so impressed with the madness of refusing such terms, that, any moment, they might, of themselves, attempt to hand over the city.

Accordingly, on the 23rd September (1691)—after a day of bloody struggle from early dawn—the Irish gave

the signal for a parley, and a cessation of arms took place. Favourable as were the terms offered, and even though Sarsfield now assented to accepting them, the news that the struggle was to be ended, was received by the soldiers and citizens with loud and bitter grief. They ran to the ramparts, from which they so often had hurled the foe, and broke their swords in pieces. "Muskets that had scattered fire and death amidst the British grenadiers, were broken in a frenzy of desperation, and the tough shafts of pikes that had resisted William's choicest cavalry, crashed across the knees of maddened rapparees". The citizens, too, ran to the walls, with the arms they had treasured proudly as mementoes of the last year's glorious struggle, and shivered them into fragments, exclaiming with husky voices: "We need them now no longer. *Ireland is no more!*"

On the 26th September the negotiations were opened, hostages were exchanged, and Sarsfield and Major-General Wauchop dined with Ginckle in the English camp. The terms of capitulation were settled soon after; but the Irish, happily—resolved to leave no pretext for subsequent repudiation of Ginckle's treaty, even though he showed them his formal powers—demanded that *the lords justices* should come down from Dublin and ratify the articles. This was done; and on the 3rd of October, 1691, the several contracting parties met in full state at a spot on the Clare side of the river, to sign and exchange the treaty. That memorable spot is marked by a large stone, which remains to this day, proudly guarded and preserved by the people of that city, for whom it is a monument more glorious than the Titan arch for Rome. The visitor who seeks it on the Shannon side, needs but to name the object of his search, when a hundred eager volunteers, their faces all radiant with pride, will point him out that memorial of Irish honour and heroism, that silent witness of English troth—*punica fides*—the "Treaty Stone of Limerick".

The treaty consisted of military articles, or clauses, twenty-nine in number; and civil articles, thirteen. Set out in all the formal and precise language of the original

document, those forty-two articles would occupy a great space. They were substantially as follows: The military articles provided that all persons willing to expatriate themselves, as well officers and soldiers, as rapparees and volunteers, should have free liberty to do so, to any place beyond seas, except England and Scotland; that they might depart in whole bodies, companies, or parties; that, if plundered by the way, William's government should make good their loss; that fifty ships, of two hundred tons each, should be provided for their transportation, besides two men-of-war for the principal officers; that the garrison of Limerick might march out with all their arms, guns, and baggage, colours flying, drums beating, and matches lighting! The garrison of Limerick, moreover, were to be at liberty to take away any six brass guns they might choose, with two mortars, and half the ammunition in the place. It was also agreed that those who so wished might enter the service of William, retaining their rank and pay.

“The civil articles were thirteen in number. Article I. guaranteed to members of that denomination remaining in the kingdom, ‘such privileges in the exercise of their religion as are consistent with the law of Ireland, or as they enjoyed in the reign of King Charles the Second’; this article further provided that, ‘their majesties, as soon as their affairs will permit them to summon a parliament in this kingdom, will endeavour the said Roman Catholics such further security in that particular as may preserve them from any disturbance’”. Article II. guaranteed pardon and protection to all who had served king James, on taking the oath of allegiance prescribed in Article IX., as follows:—

“I, A. B., do solemnly promise and swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to their majesties, King William and Queen Mary; so help me God”.

Articles III., IV., V., and VI., extended the provisions of Articles I. and II. to merchants and other classes of men. Article VII. permits “every nobleman and gentleman compromised in the said articles” to carry side arms, and keep “a gun in their houses”. Article VIII. gives

the right of removing goods and chattels without search. Article IX. is as follows :—

“The oath to be administered to such Roman Catholics as submit to their majesties’ government shall be the oath aforesaid, and no other”.

Article X. guarantees that “no person or persons who shall hereafter break these articles, or any of them, shall thereby make or cause any other person or persons to forfeit or lose the benefit of them”. Articles XI. and XII. relate to the ratification of the articles “within eight months or sooner”. Article XIII. refers to the debts of “Colonel John Brown, commissary of the Irish army, to several Protestants”, and arranges for their satisfaction.

On the morning of the 5th of October, 1691, a singular scene was witnessed on the northern shore of the Shannon, beyond the city walls. On that day the Irish regiments were to make their choice between exile for life, or service in the armies of their conqueror. At each end of a gently rising ground beyond the suburbs, were planted on one side the royal standard of France, and on the other that of England. It was agreed that the regiments, as they marched out—“with all the honours of war; drums beating, colours flying, and matches lighting”—should, on reaching this spot, wheel to the left or to the right beneath that flag under which they elected to serve. At the head of the Irish marched the foot guards—the finest regiment in the service—fourteen hundred strong. All eyes were fixed on this splendid body of men. On they came, amidst breathless silence and acute suspense; for well both the English and Irish generals knew that the choice of the first regiment would powerfully influence all the rest. The guards marched up to the critical spot and—in a body wheeled to the colours of France; barely *seven* men turning to the English side! Ginckle, we are told, was greatly agitated as he witnessed the proceeding. The next regiment, however (Lord Iveagh’s), marched as unanimously to the Williamite banner, as did also portions of two others. But the bulk of the Irish army defiled under the *Fleur de*

lis of king Louis ; only one thousand and forty-six, out of nearly fourteen thousand men, preferring the service of England !

A few days afterwards a French fleet sailed up the Shannon with an aiding army, and bringing money, arms, ammunition, stores, food, and clothing ! Ginckle, affrighted, imagined the Irish would now disclaim the articles, and renew the war. But it was not *the Irish* who were to break the Treaty of Limerick. Sarsfield, when told that a powerful fleet was sailing up the river, seemed stunned by the news ! He was silent for a moment, and then, in mournful accents, replied : “ *Too late. The treaty is signed ; our honour is pledged—the honour of Ireland. Though a hundred thousand Frenchmen offered to aid us now, we must keep our plighted troth !*”

He forbade the expedition to land, with a scrupulous sense of honour contending that *the spirit* if not *the letter* of the capitulation extended to any such arrival ! The French ships, accordingly, were used only to transport to France the Irish army that had volunteered for foreign service. Soldiers and civilians, nobles, gentry, and clergy, there sailed in all nineteen thousand and twenty-five persons. Most of the officers, like their illustrious leader, Sarsfield,\* gave up fortune, family, home, and friends, refusing the most tempting offers from William, whose anxiety to enrol them in his own service was earnestly and perseveringly pressed upon them to the last. Hard was their choice ; great was the sacrifice. Full of anguish was that parting, whose sorrowful spirit has been so faithfully expressed by Mr. Aubrey de Vere, in the following simple and touching verses—the soliloquy of a brigade soldier sailing away from Limerick :—

I snatched a stone from the bloodied brook,  
And hurled it at my household door !  
No farewell of my love I took :  
I shall see my friend no more.

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\* His patrimonial estates near Lucan, county Dublin, were, even at that day, worth nearly three thousand pounds per annum.

I dashed across the church-yard bound :  
I knelt not by my parents' grave :  
There rang from my heart a clarion's sound,  
That summoned me o'er the wave.

No land to me can native be  
That strangers trample, and tyrants stain :  
When the valleys I loved are cleansed and free,  
They are mine, they are mine again !

Till then, in sunshine or sunless weather,  
By Seine and Loire, and the broad Garonne  
My war-horse and I roam on together  
Wherever God will. On ! on !

These were not wholly lost to Ireland, though not a man of them ever saw Ireland more. They served her abroad when they could no longer strike for her at home. They made her sad yet glorious story familiar in the courts of Christendom. They made her valour felt and respected on the battle fields of Europe. And as they had not quitted her soil until they exacted terms from the conqueror, which, if observed, might have been for her a charter of protection, so did they in their exile take a terrible vengeance upon that conqueror for his foul and treacherous violation of that treaty.

No ! These men were not, in all, lost to Ireland. Their deeds are the proudest in her story. History may parallel, but it can adduce nothing to surpass, the chivalrous devotion of the men who comprised this second great armed migration of Irish valour, faith, and patriotism.

LXIII.—HOW THE TREATY OF LIMERICK WAS BROKEN AND TRAMPLED UNDER FOOT BY THE “PROTESTANT INTEREST”, YELLING FOR MORE PLÜNDER AND MORE PERSECUTION.



HERE is no more bitter memory in the Irish breast, than that which tells how the Treaty of Limerick was violated; and there is not probably on record a breach of public faith more nakedly and confessedly infamous than was that violation.

None of this damning blot touches William—now king *de facto* of the two islands. *He* did *his* part; and the truthful historian is bound on good evidence to assume for him that he saw with indignation and disgust the shameless and dastardly breach of that treaty by the dominant and all-powerful Protestant faction. We have seen how the lords justices came down from Dublin and approved and signed the treaty at Limerick.\* The king bound public faith to it still more firmly, formally, and solemnly, by the issue of royal letters patent confirmatory of all its articles, issued from Westminster, 24th February, 1692, in the name of himself and queen Mary.

We shall now see how this treaty was *kept* towards the Irish Catholics.

The “Protestant interest” of Ireland, as they called themselves, no sooner found the last of the Irish regiments shipped from the Shannon, than they openly announced

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\* Here it may be well to note an occurrence which some writers regard as a deliberate and foul attempt to overreach and trick Sarsfield in the treaty, but which might, after all, have been accident. The day after the treaty was signed in “fair copy”, it was discovered that *one line*—containing however one of the most important stipulations in the entire treaty—had been omitted in the “fair copy” by the Williamites, though duly set out in the “first draft” signed by both parties. The instant it was discovered, Sarsfield called on Ginckle to answer for it. The latter, and all the Williamite “contracting parties”, declared the omission purely accidental—inserted the line in its right place, and, by a supplemental agreement, solemnly covenanted that this identical line should have a special confirmation from the king and parliament. The king honourably did so. The parliament tore it into shreds!

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that the treaty would not, and ought not to be kept! It was the old story. Whenever the English sovereign or government desired to pause in the work of persecution and plunder, if not to treat the native Irish in a spirit of conciliation or justice, the "colony", the "plantation", the garrison, the "Protestant interest", screamed in frantic resistance. It was so in the reign of James the First; it was so in the reign of Charles the First; it was so in the reign of Charles the Second; it was so in the reign of James the Second; it was so in the reign of William and Mary. Any attempt of king or government to mete to the native Catholic population of Ireland any measure of treatment save what the robber and murderer metes out to his helpless victim, was denounced—absolutely complained of—as a daring wrong and grievance against what was, and is still, called the "Protestant interest", or "*our* glorious rights and liberties".\* Indeed, no sooner had the lords justices returned from Limerick, than the Protestant pulpits commenced to resound with denunciations of those who would observe the treaty; and Dopping, titular Protestant bishop of Meath, as Protestant historians record, preached before the lords justices themselves a notable sermon on "*the crime of keeping faith with Papists*".

The "Protestant interest" party saw with indignation that the king meant to keep faith with the capitulated Catholics; nay, possibly to consolidate the country by a comparatively conciliatory, just, and generous policy; which was, they contended, *monstrous*. It quickly occurred to them, however, that as they were sure to be a strong majority in the parliament, they could take into their own hands the work of "reconstruction", when they might freely wreak their will on the vanquished, and laugh to scorn all treaty faith.

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\* An occurrence ever "repeating itself". Even so recently as the year 1867, on the rumour that the English government intended to grant some modicum of civil and religious equality in Ireland, this same "Protestant interest" faction screamed and yelled after the old fashion, complained of such an intention as a grievance, and went through the usual vows about "*our* glorious rights and liberties"

There was some danger of obstruction from the powerful Catholic minority entitled to sit in both houses of parliament; but, for this danger the dominant faction found a specific. By an unconstitutional straining of the theory that each house was judge of the qualification of its members, they framed test oaths to exclude the minority. In utter violation of the treaty of Limerick—a clause in which, as we have seen, covenanted that no oath should be required of a Catholic other than the oath of allegiance therein set out—the parliamentary majority framed a test oath explicitly denying and denouncing the doctrines of transubstantiation, invocation of saints, and the sacrifice of the Mass, as “damnable and idolatrous”. Of course the Catholic peers and commoners retired rather than take these tests, and the way was now all clear for the bloody work of persecution.

In the so-called “Catholic parliament”—the parliament which assembled in Dublin in 1690, and which was opened by king James in person—the Catholics greatly preponderated (in just such proportion as the population was Catholic or Protestant); yet no attempt was made by *that* majority to trample down or exclude the minority. Nay, the Protestant prelates all took their seats in the peers chamber, and debated and divided as stoutly as ever throughout the session, while *not a Catholic prelate* sat in that “Catholic parliament” at all. It was the Catholics’ day of power, and they used it generously, magnanimously, nobly. Sustainment of the king, suppression of rebellion, were the all-pervading sentiments. *Tolerance of all creeds—freedom of conscience* for Protestant and for Catholic—were the watchwords in that “Catholic parliament”.

And now, how was all this required? Alas! We have just seen how! Well might the Catholic in that hour, exclaim in the language used for him by Mr. De Vere in his poem:—

We, too, had our day—it was brief: it is ended—

When a king dwelt among us, no strange king but ours:  
When the shout of a people delivered ascended,

And shook the broad banner that hung on his tow’rs.

We saw it like trees in a summer breeze shiver

We read the gold legend that blazoned it o'er :  
 "To-day!—now or never! To-day and for ever!"  
 O God! have we seen it, to see it no more?

How fared it that season, our lords and our masters,  
 In that spring of our freedom, how fared it with you?  
 Did we trample your faith? Did we mock your disasters?  
 We restored but his own to the leal and the true.  
 Ye had fallen! 'T was a season of tempest and troubles  
 But against you we drew not the knife ye had drawn;  
 In the war-field we met: but your prelates and nobles  
 Stood up mid the senate in ermine and lawn!

It was even so, indeed. But *now*. What a contrast! Strangers to every sentiment of magnanimity, justice, or compassion, the victorious majority went at the work of proscription wholesale. The king, through lord justice Sydney, offered some resistance; but, by refusing to vote him adequate supplies, they soon taught William that he had better not interfere with their designs. After four years' hesitancy, he yielded in unconcealed disgust. Forthwith ample supplies were voted to his majesty, and the parliament proceeded to practise freely the doctrine of "no faith to be kept with Papists".

Of course they began with confiscations. Plunder was ever the beginning and the end of their faith and practice. Soon 1,060,792 acres were declared "escheated to the crown". Then they looked into the *existing* powers of persecution, to see how far they were capable of extension. These were found to be atrocious enough; nevertheless, the new parliament added the following fresh enactments:—"1. An act to deprive Catholics of the means of educating their children at home or abroad, and to render them incapable of being guardians of their own or any other person's children; 2. An act to disarm the Catholics; and 3. Another to banish all the Catholic priests and prelates. Having thus violated the treaty, they gravely brought in a bill 'to confirm the Articles of Limerick'. 'The very title of the bill', says Dr. Crooke Taylor, 'contains evidence of its injustice. It is styled, "A Bill for the confirmation of Articles (not *the* articles) made at the surrender of Limerick". And the preamble shows that the little word '*the*' was not accidentally omitted. It runs

thus:—"That the said articles, or *so much of them as may consist with the safety and welfare of your majesty's subjects in these kingdoms*, may be confirmed", etc The parts that appeared to these legislators inconsistent with 'the safety and welfare of his majesty's subjects', was the first article, which provided for the security of the Catholics from all disturbances on account of their religion; those parts of the second article which confirmed the Catholic gentry of Limerick, Clare, Cork, Kerry, and Mayo, in the possession of their estates, and allowed all Catholics to exercise their trades and professions without obstruction; the fourth article, which extended the benefit of the peace to certain Irish officers then abroad; the seventh article, which allowed the Catholic gentry to ride armed; the ninth article, which provides that the oath of allegiance shall be the only oath required from Catholics, and one or two others of minor importance. All of these are omitted in the bill for 'The confirmation of articles made at the surrender of Limerick'.

"The Commons passed the bill without much difficulty. The House of Lords, however, contained some few of the ancient nobility and some prelates, who refused to acknowledge the dogma, 'that no faith should be kept with Papists', as an article of their creed. The bill was strenuously resisted, and when it was at length carried, a strong protest against it was signed by lords Londonderry, Tyrone, and Duncannon, the barons of Ossory, Limerick, Killaloe, Kerry, Howth, Kingston, and Strabane, and, to their eternal honour be it said, the Protestant bishops of Kildare, Elphin, Derry, Clonfert, and Killala!"\*

Thus was that solemn pact, which was in truth the treaty of the Irish nation with the newly set-up English *regime*, torn and trampled under foot by a tyrannic bigotry.

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\* McGee.

LXXIV.—“THE PENAL TIMES”. HOW “PROTESTANT ASCENDANCY” BY A BLOODY PENAL CODE ENDEAVOURED TO BRUTIFY THE MIND, DESTROY THE INTELLECT, AND DEFORM THE PHYSICAL AND MORAL FEATURES OF THE SUBJECT CATHOLICS.



It was now there fell upon Ireland that night of deepest horror—that agony the most awful, the most prolonged, of any recorded on the blotted page of human suffering.

It would be little creditable to an Irish Catholic to own himself capable of narrating this chapter of Irish history with calmness and without all-conquering emotion. For my part I content myself with citing the descriptions of it supplied by Protestant and English writers.

“The eighteenth century”, says one of these, writing on the penal laws in Ireland, “was the era of persecution, in which the law did the work of the sword more effectually and more safely. Then was established a code framed with almost *diabolical ingenuity to extinguish natural affection—to foster perfidy and hypocrisy—to petrify conscience—to perpetuate brutal ignorance—to facilitate the work of tyranny*—by rendering the vices of slavery inherent and natural in the Irish character, and to make Protestantism almost irredeemably odious as the monstrous incarnation of all moral perversions.

“Too well”, he continues, “did it accomplish its deadly work of debasement on the intellects, morals, and physical condition of a people sinking in degeneracy from age to age, till all manly spirit, all virtuous sense of personal independence and responsibility, was nearly extinct, and the very features—vacant, timid, cunning, and unreflective—betrayed the crouching slave within !”\*

In the presence of the terrible facts he is called upon to chronicle, the generous nature of the Protestant historian whom I am quoting, warms into indignation. Unable to endure the reflection, that they who thus laboured to deform and brutify the Irish people are for ever reproach-

\* Cassell's (Godkin's) *History of Ireland*, vol. ii., p. 116.

ing them before the world for bearing traces of the infamous effort, he bursts forth into the following noble vindication of the calumniated victims of oppression :

“ Having no rights or franchises—no legal protection of life or property—disqualified to handle a gun, even as a common soldier or a gamekeeper—forbidden to acquire the elements of knowledge at home or abroad—forbidden even to render to God what conscience dictated as His due—what could the Irish be but abject serfs ? What nation in their circumstances could have been otherwise ? Is it not amazing that any social virtue could have survived such an ordeal ?—that any seeds of good, any roots of national greatness, could have outlived such a long tempestuous winter ?”

“ These laws”, he continues, “ were aimed not only at the religion of the Catholic, but still more at his liberty and his property. He could enjoy no freehold property, nor was he allowed to have a lease for a longer term than thirty-one years ; but as even this term was long enough to encourage an industrious man to reclaim waste lands and improve his worldly circumstances, it was enacted that if a Papist should have a farm producing a profit greater than one-third of the rent, his right to such should immediately cease, and pass over to the first Protestant who should discover the rate of profit !”\*

This was the age that gave to Irish topography the “ Corrig-an-Affrion”, found so thickly marked on every barony map in Ireland. “ The Mass Rock !” What memories cling around each hallowed moss-clad stone or rocky ledge on the mountain side, or in the deep recess of some desolate glen, whereon, for years and years, the Holy Sacrifice was offered up in stealth and secrecy, the death-penalty hanging over priest and worshipper ! Not unfrequently Mass was interrupted by the approach of the bandogs of the law ; for, quickened by the rewards to be earned, there sprang up in those days the infamous trade of priest-hunting, “ five pounds” being equally the government price for the head of a priest as for the head of a

\* Cassell's (Godkin's) *History of Ireland*, vol. ii. p. 119.

wolf. The utmost care was necessary in divulging intelligence of the night on which Mass would next be celebrated; and when the congregation had furtively stolen to the spot, sentries were posted all around before the Mass began. Yet in instances not a few, the worshippers were taken by surprise, and the blood of the murdered priest wetted the altar stone.

Well might our Protestant national poet, Davis, exclaim, contemplating this deep night-time of suffering and sorrow :

Oh ! weep those days—the penal days,  
 When Ireland hopelessly complained :  
 Oh ! weep those days—the penal days,  
 When godless persecution reigned.

\* \* \* \*

They bribed the flock, they bribed the son,  
 To sell the priest and rob the sire ;  
 Their dogs were taught alike to run  
 Upon the scent of wolf and friar.

Among the poor,  
 Or on the moor,  
 Were hid the pious and the true—  
 While traitor knave  
 And recreant slave

Had riches, rank, and retinue ;  
 And, exiled in those penal days,  
 Our banners over Europe blaze.

A hundred years of such a code in active operation, ought, according to all human calculations, to have succeeded in accomplishing its malefic purpose. But again, all human calculations, all natural consequences and probabilities, were set aside, and God, as if by a miracle, preserved the faith, the virtue, the vitality, and power of the Irish race. He decreed that they should win a victory more glorious than a hundred gained on the battle-field—more momentous in its future results—in their triumph over the penal code. After three half centuries of seeming death, Irish Catholicity has rolled away the stone from its guarded sepulchre, and walked forth full of life ! It could be no human faith that, after such a crucifixion and burial, could thus arise glorious and immortal ! This triumph, the greatest, has been Ireland's ; and God, in

His own good time, will assuredly give her the fulness of victory.

LXV.—THE IRISH ARMY IN EXILE. HOW SARSFIELD FELL ON LANDEN PLAIN. HOW THE REGIMENTS OF BURKE AND O'MAHONY SAVED CREMONA, FIGHTING IN "MUSKETS AND SHIRTS". THE GLORIOUS VICTORY OF FONTENOY! HOW THE IRISH EXILES, FAITHFUL TO THE END, SHARED THE LAST GALLANT EFFORT OF PRINCE CHARLES EDWARD.



HE glory of Ireland was all abroad in those years. Spurned from the portals of the constitution established by the conqueror, the Irish slave followed with eager gaze the meteor track of "the Brigade". Namur, Steenkirk, Staffardo, Cremona, Ramillies, Fontenoy—each, in its turn, sent a thrill through the heart of Ireland. The trampled captive furtively lifted his head from the earth, and looked eastward, and his face was lighted up as by the beam of the morning sun.

For a hundred years, that magnificent body, the Irish Brigade—(continuously recruited from home, though death was the penalty by English law)—made the Irish name synonymous with heroism and fidelity throughout Europe. Sarsfield was amongst the first to meet a soldier's death. But he fell in the arms of victory, and died, as the old annalists would say, with his mind and his heart turned to Ireland. In the bloody battle of Landen, fought 29th July, 1693, he fell mortally wounded, while leading a victorious charge of the Brigade. The ball had entered near his heart, and while he lay on the field his corslet was removed in order that the wound might be examined. He himself, in a pang of pain, put his hand to his breast as if to staunch the wound. When he took away his hand, it was full of blood. Gazing at it for a moment sorrowfully, he faintly gasped out: "*Oh! that this were for Ireland!*" He never spoke again!

His place was soon filled from the ranks of the exiles



Mass on the Mountain, in the *Jernal Times*.

See page 478



Irish nobles—those illustrious men whose names are emblazoned on the glory roll of France--and the Brigade went forward in its path of victory. At Cremona, 1702, an Irish regiment, most of the men fighting *in their shirts*—(the place had been surprised in the dead of night by treachery)—saved the town under most singular circumstances. Duke Villeroy, commanding the French army, including two Irish regiments under O'Mahony and Bourke, held Cremona; his adversary, Prince Eugene, commanding the Germans, being encamped around Mantua. Treason was at work, however, to betray Cremona. One night a partisan of the Germans within the walls, traitorously opened one of the gates to the Austrian troops. Before the disaster was discovered, the French general, most of the officers, the military chests, etc., were taken, and the German horse and foot were in possession of the town, excepting one place only—the Po Gate, which was guarded by the two Irish regiments. In fact, Prince Eugene had already taken up his head-quarters in the town hall, and Cremona was virtually in his hands. The Irish were called on to surrender the Po Gate. They answered with a volley. The Austrian general, on learning they were Irish troops, desired to save brave men from utter sacrifice—for he had Irish in his own service, and held the men of Ireland in high estimation. He sent to expostulate with them, and show them the madness of sacrificing their lives where they could have no probability of relief, and to assure them that if they would enter into the imperial service, they should be directly and honourably promoted. “The first part of this proposal”, says the authority I have been following, “they heard with impatience; the second, with disdain. ‘Tell the prince’, said they, ‘that we have hitherto preserved the honour of our country, and that we hope this day to convince him we are worthy of his esteem. *While one of us exists, the German eagles shall not be displayed upon these walls*’”. The attack upon them was forthwith commenced by a large body of foot, supported by five thousand cuirassiers. As I have already noted, the Irish, having been aroused from their sleep, had barely time to clutch their arms and rush forth undressed. Davis,

in his ballad of Cremona, informs us, indeed (very probably more for "rhyme" than with "reason") that

—— the major is drest ;

adding, however, the undoubted fact—

But *muskets and shirts* are the clothes of the rest.

A bloody scene of street fighting now ensued, and before the morning sun had risen high, the naked Irish had recovered nearly half the city !

"In on them", said Friedberg—"and Dillon is broke,  
Like forest flowers crushed by the fall of the oak".  
Through the naked battalions the cuirassiers go ;—  
But the man, not the dress, makes the soldier, I trow.  
Upon them with grapple, with bay'net, and ball,  
Like wolves upon gaze-hounds the Irishmen fall—  
Black Friedberg is slain by O'Mahony's steel,  
And back from the bullets the cuirassiers reel.

Oh ! hear you their shout in your quarters, Eugene ?  
In vain on Prince Vaudemont for succour you lean !  
The bridge has been broken, and mark ! how pell-mell  
Come riderless horses and volley and yell !  
He's a veteran soldier—he clenches his hands,  
He springs on his horse, disengages his bands—  
He rallies, he urges, till, hopeless of aid,  
He is chased through the gates by the *Irish Brigade*".

It was even so. "Before evening", we are told, "the enemy were completely expelled the town, and the general and military chests recovered!" Well might the poet undertake to describe as here quoted the effects of the news in Austria, England, France, and Ireland—

News, news in Vienna !—King Leopold's sad.  
News, news in St. James's !—King William is mad.  
News, news in Versailles !—'Let the Irish Brigade  
Be loyally honoured, and royally paid'.  
News, news in old Ireland !—high rises her pride,  
And loud sounds her wail for her children who died ;  
And deep is her prayer—'God send I may see  
MacDonnell and Mahony fighting for me !'

Far more memorable, however, far more important, was the ever-glorious day of Fontenoy—a name which to this day thrills the Irish heart with pride. Of this great

battle—fought 11th May, 1745—in which the Irish Brigade turned the fortunes of the day, and saved the honour of France, I take the subjoined account, prefixed to Davis's well-known poem, which I also quote:—

“A French army of seventy-nine thousand men, commanded by Marshal Saxe, and encouraged by the presence of both the King and the Dauphin, laid siege to Tournay, early in May, 1745. The Duke of Cumberland advanced at the head of fifty-five thousand men, chiefly English and Dutch, to relieve the town. At the Duke's approach, Saxe and the King advanced a few miles from Tournay with forty-five thousand men, leaving eighteen thousand to continue the siege, and six thousand to guard the Scheldt. Saxe posted his army along a range of slopes thus: his centre was on the village of Fontenoy, his left stretched off through the wood of Barri, his right reached to the town of St. Antoine, close to the Scheldt. He fortified his right and centre by the villages of Fontenoy and St. Antoine, and redoubts near them. His extreme left was also strengthened by a redoubt in the wood of Barri; but his left centre, between that wood and the village of Fontenoy, was not guarded by anything save slight lines. Cumberland had the Dutch, under Waldeck, on his left, and twice they attempted to carry St. Antoine, but were repelled with heavy loss. The same fate attended the English in the centre, who thrice forced their way to Fontenoy, but returned fewer and sadder men. Ingoldsby was then ordered to attack the wood of Barri with Cumberland's right. He did so, and broke into the wood, when the artillery of the redoubt suddenly opened on him, which, assisted by a constant fire from the French tirailleurs (light infantry), drove him back.

“The Duke now resolved to make one great and final effort. He selected his best regiments, veteran English corps, and formed them into a single column of six thousand men. At its head were six cannon, and as many more on the flanks, which did good service. Lord John Hay commanded this great mass. Everything being now ready, the column advanced slowly and evenly as if on the parade ground. It mounted the slope of Saxe's position,

and pressed on between the wood of Barri and the village of Fontenoy. In doing so, it was exposed to a cruel fire of artillery and sharpshooters, but it stood the storm, and got behind Fontenoy!

“The moment the object of the column was seen, the French troops were hurried in upon them. The cavalry charged; but the English hardly paused to offer the raised bayonet, and then poured in a fatal fire. On they went, till within a short distance, and then threw in their balls with great precision, the officers actually laying their canes along the muskets to make the men fire low. Mass after mass of infantry was broken, and on went the column, reduced but still apparently invincible! Duc Richelieu had four cannon hurried to the front, and he literally battered the head of the column, while the household cavalry surrounded them, and in repeated charges, wore down their strength. But these French were fearful sufferers. The day seemed virtually lost, and King Louis was about to leave the field. In this juncture, Saxe ordered up his last reserve—the *Irish Brigade*. It consisted that day of the regiments of Clare, Lally, Dillon, Berwick, Roth, and Buckley, with Fitzjames’s horse. O’Brien, Lord Clare, was in command. Aided by the French regiments of Normandy and Vaisseany, they were ordered to charge upon the flank of the English with fixed bayonets without firing. Upon the approach of this splendid body of men, the English were halted on the slope of a hill, and up that slope the Brigade rushed rapidly and in fine order; the stimulating cry of ‘Cuimhnigidh ar Liamneac, agus ar fheilena Sacsanach’, ‘*Remember Limerick and British faith*’, being re-echoed from man to man. The fortune of the field was no longer doubtful. The English were weary with a long day’s fighting, cut up by cannon, charge, and musketry, and dispirited by the appearance of the Brigade. Still they gave their fire well and fatally; but they were literally stunned by the shout, and shattered by the Irish charge. They broke before the Irish bayonets, and tumbled down the far side of the hill disorganized, hopeless, and falling by hundreds. The victory was bloody and complete. Louis is said to have ridden down to the

Irish bivouac, and personally thanked them; and George the Second, on hearing it, uttered that memorable imprecation on the penal code, 'Cursed be the laws which deprive me of such subjects'. The one English volley and the short struggle on the crest of the hill cost the Irish dear. One fourth of the officers, including Colonel Dillon, were killed, and one-third of the men. The capture of Ghent, Bruges, Ostend, and Oudenard, followed the victory of Fontenoy".

Thrice, at the huts of Fontenoy, the English column failed,  
And thrice the lines of St. Antoine the Dutch in vain assailed;  
For town and slope were filled with foot and flanking battery,  
And well they swept the English ranks and Dutch auxiliary.  
As vainly, through De Barri's Wood the British soldier burst,  
The French artillery drove them back, diminished and dispersed.  
The bloody Duke of Cumberland beheld with anxious eye,  
And ordered up his last reserve, his latest chance to try.  
On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, how fast his generals ride!  
And mustering come his chosen troops, like clouds at eventide.

Six thousand English veterans in stately column tread;  
Their cannon blaze in front and flank; Lord Hay is at their head;  
Steady they step adown the slope—steady they climb the hill,  
Steady they load—steady they fire, moving right onward still.  
Betwixt the wood and Fontenoy, as through a furnace blast,  
Through rampart, trench, and pallisade, and bullets showering fast;  
And on the open plain above they rose and kept their course,  
With ready fire and grim resolve, that mocked at hostile force.  
Past Fontenoy, past Fontenoy, while thinner grow their ranks—  
They break as broke the Zuyder Zee through Holland's ocean banks.

More idly than the summer flies, French tirailleurs rush round;  
As stubble to the lava tide, French squadrons strew the ground;  
Bombshell and grape, and round shot tore, still on they marched and  
fired—

Fast from each volley grenadier and voltigeur retired.  
"Push on my household cavalry!" King Louis madly cried.  
To death they rush, but rude their shock—not unavenged they died.  
On through the camp the column trod—King Louis turns his rein:  
"Not yet, my liege", Saxe interposed, "*the Irish troops remain*";  
And Fontenoy, famed Fontenoy, had been a Waterloo,  
Were not these exiles ready then, fresh, vehement, and true.

'Lord Clare', he says, "you have your wish: there are your Saxon  
foes!"

The Marshal almost smiles to see, so furiously he goes!  
How fierce the smile these exiles wear, who're wont to look so gay;  
The treasured wrongs of fifty years are in their hearts to-day.

The treaty broken ere the ink wherewith 't was writ could dry,  
Their plundered homes, their ruined shrines, their women's parting  
cry,

Their priesthood hunted down like wolves, their country overthrown!  
Each looks as if revenge for all were staked on him alone.

On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, nor ever yet elsewhere,  
Pushed on to fight a nobler band than those proud exiles were.

O'Brien's voice is hoarse with joy, as halting he commands,  
"Fix bay'nets—charge".—Like mountain storm rush on these fiery  
bands!

Thin is the English column now, and faint their volleys grow,  
Yet must'ring all they strength they have, they made a gallant show.

They dress their ranks upon the hill to face that battle wind;  
Their bayonets the breakers' foam; like rocks the men behind!

One volley crashes from their line, when through the surging smoke,  
With empty guns clutched in their hands, the headlong Irish broke,  
On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, hark to that fierce huzza!

"Revenge! remember Limerick! dash down the Sassenagh!"

Like lions leaping at a fold when mad with hunger's pang,  
Right up against the English line the Irish exiles sprang.

Bright was their steel, 't is bloody now, their guns are filled with  
gore;

Through shattered ranks, and severed piles, and trampled flags  
they tore;

The English strove with desperate strength, paused, rallied, stag-  
gered, fled—

The green hill-side is matted close with dying and with dead.

Across the plain and far away passed on that hideous wrack,

While cavalier and fantassin dash in upon their track.

On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, like eagles in the sun,

With bloody plumes the Irish stand—the field is fought and won!

In the year of Fontenoy, 1745, Prince Charles Edward made his bold and romantic attempt to recover the lost crown of the Stuarts. His expedition, we are told, "was undertaken and conducted by Irish aid, quite as much as by French or Scottish". His chief of command was Colonel O'Sullivan; the most of the funds were supplied by the two Waters—father and son—Irish bankers at Paris, "who advanced one hundred and eighty thousand livres between them"; another Irishman, Walsh, a merchant at Nantes, putting "a privateer of eighteen guns into the venture". Indeed, one of Charles' English adherents, Lord Elcho, who kept a journal of the campaign, notes complainingly the Irish influence under which the prince

acted. On the 19th July, he landed near Moidart, in the north of Scotland. "Clanronald, Cameron of Lochiel, the Laird of M'Leod, and a few others having arrived, the royal standard was unfurled on the 19th August at Glenfinan, where, that evening, twelve thousand men—the entire army, so far—were formed into camp under the orders of O'Sullivan. From that day until the day of Culloden, O'Sullivan seems to have manœuvred the prince's forces. At Perth, at Edinburgh, at Manchester, at Culloden, he took command in the field or in the garrison; and even after the sad result, he adhered to his sovereign's son with an honourable fidelity which defied despair".\*

In Ireland no corresponding movement took place. Yet this is the period which has given to native Irish minstrelsy, as it now survives, its abiding characteristic of deep, fervent, unchangeable, abiding devotion to the Stuart cause. The Gaelic harp never gave forth richer melody, Gaelic poetry never found nobler inspiration, than in its service. In those matchless songs, which, under the general designation of "Jacobite Relics", are, and ever will be, so potential to touch the Irish heart with sadness or enthusiasm, under a thousand forms of allegory the coming of Prince Charles, the restoration of the ancient faith, and the deliverance of Ireland by the "rightful prince", are prophesied and apostrophied. Now it is "Dark Rosaleen"; now it is "Kathaleen-na-Houlahan"; now it is the "Blackbird", the "Drimin Don Deelish", the "Silk of the Kine", or "Ma Chreivin Evin Algan Og". From this rich store of Gaelic poetry of the eighteenth century I quote one specimen, a poem written about the period of Charles Edward's landing at Moidart, by William Heffernan "Dall" ("the Blind") of Shronehill, county Tipperary, and addressed to the Prince of Ossory, Michael Mac Giolla Kerin, known as Mehal Dhu, or Dark Michael. The translation into English is by Mangan:—

Lift up the drooping head,  
Meehal Dhu Mac-Giolla-Kierin;

Her blood yet boundeth red  
 Through the myriad veins of Erin  
 No! no! she is not dead—  
 Meehal Dhu Mac-Giolla-Kierin!  
 Lo! she redeems  
 The lost years of bygone ages—  
 New glory beams  
 Henceforth on her history's pages!  
 Her long penitential Night of Sorrow  
 Yields at length before the reddening morrow!

You heard the thunder-shout,  
 Meehal Dhu Mac-Giolla-Kierin,  
 Saw the lightning streaming out  
 O'er the purple hills of Erin!  
 And bide you still in doubt,  
 Meehal Dhu Mac-Giolla-Kierin?  
 Oh! doubt no more!  
 Through Ulidia's voiceful valleys,  
 On Shannon's shore,  
 Freedom's burning spirit rallies.  
 Earth and heaven unite in sign and omen  
 Bodeful of the downfall of our foemen.

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Charles leaves the Grampian hills,  
 Meehal Dhu Mac-Giolla-Kierin,  
 Charles, whose appeal yet thrills  
 Like a clarion-blast through Erin.  
 Charles, he whose image fills  
 Thy soul too, "Mac-Giolla-Kierin!  
 Ten thousand strong  
 His clans move in brilliant order,  
 Sure that ere long  
 He will march them o'er the border,  
 While the dark-haired daughters of the Highlands  
 Crown with wreaths the monarch of these islands.

But it was only in the passionate poesy of the native minstrels that any echo of the shouts from Moidart resounded midst the hills of Erin. During all this time the hapless Irish Catholics resigned themselves utterly to the fate that had befallen them. For a moment victory gleamed on the Stuart banner, and the young prince marched southward to claim his own in London. Still Ireland made no sign. Hope had fled. The prostrate and exhausted nation slept heavily in its blood-clotted chain!

LXXVI.—HOW IRELAND BEGAN TO AWAKEN FROM THE SLEEP OF SLAVERY. THE DAWN OF LEGISLATIVE INDEPENDENCE.



IRELAND lay long in that heavy trance. The signal for her awakening came across the western ocean. "A voice from America", says Flood, "shouted 'Liberty'; and every hill and valley of this rejoicing island answered, 'Liberty!'"

For two centuries the claim of the English parliament to control, direct, and bind the Irish legislature, had been the subject of bitter dispute. The claim was first formally asserted and imposed in the reign of Henry the Seventh, when a servile "parliament", gathered at Drogheda, in November, 1495, by lord deputy Poynings, amongst other acts of self-degradation, at the bidding of the English official, enacted that henceforth no law could be originated in the Irish legislature, or proceeded with, until the heads of it had first been sent to England, submitted to the king and council there, and returned with their approbation under seal. This was the celebrated "Poynings' Act", or "Poynings' Law", which readers of Grattan's *Life and Times* will find mentioned so frequently. It was imposed as a most secure chain—a ponderous curb—at a crisis when resistance was out of the question. It was, in moments of like weakness or distraction, submitted to; but ever and anon in flashes of spirit, the Irish parliaments repudiated the claim as illegal, unconstitutional, and unjust. On the 16th February, 1640, the Irish House of Commons submitted a set of queries to the judges, the nature of which may be inferred from the question—"Whether the subjects of this kingdom be a free people, and to be governed only by the *common law of England and statutes passed in this kingdom?*" When the answers received were deemed insufficient, the House turned the questions into the form of resolutions, and proceeded to vote on them, one by one, affirming in every point the

rights, the liberties, and the privileges of their constituents. The Confederation of Kilkenny still more explicitly and boldly enunciated and asserted the doctrine that Ireland was a distinct, free, sovereign, and independent nation, subject only to the triple-crown of the three kingdoms. The Cromwellian rebellion tore down this, as it trampled upon so many other of the rights and liberties of all three kingdoms. The "restoration" came; but in the reign of the second Charles, the Dublin parliament was too busy in scrambling for retention of plunder and resistance of restitution, to utter an aspiration for liberty; it bowed the neck to "Poynings' law". To the so-called "Catholic Parliament" of Ireland in James the Second's reign belongs the proud honour of making the next notable declaration of independence; amongst the first acts of this legislature being one declaring the complete and perfect freedom of the Irish parliament. "Though they were 'Papists'", says Grattan, "these men were not slaves; they wrung a constitution from King James before they accompanied him to the field". Once more, however, came successful rebellion to overthrow the sovereign and the parliament, and again the doctrine of national independence disappeared. The Irish legislature in the first years of the new *regime* sunk into the abject condition of a mere committee of the English parliament.

Soon, however, the spirit of resistance began to appear. For a quarter of a century, the Protestant party had been so busy at the work of persecution—so deeply occupied in forging chains for their Catholic fellow-countrymen—that they never took thought of the political thralldom being imposed upon themselves by the English parliament. "The Irish Protestant", says Mr. Wyse, "had succeeded in excluding the Catholics from power, and for a moment held triumphant and exclusive possession of the conquest; but he was merely a *locum tenens* for a more powerful conqueror, a jackal for the lion, an Irish steward for an English master. The exclusive system was turned against him; he made the executive exclusively *Protestant*; the Whigs of George the First made it almost entirely *English*. His victory paved the way for another far easier

and far more important. Popery fell, but Ireland fell with it".\* In 1719, the question came to a direct issue. In a lawsuit between Hester Sherlock, appellant, and Maurice Annesley, respondent, relating to some property in the county Kildare, the Irish Court of Exchequer decided in favour of the respondent. On an appeal to the *Irish* House of Peers, this judgment was reversed. The respondent, Annesley, now appealed to the *English* House of Peers in England, which body annulled the decision of the Irish peers, and confirmed that of the Exchequer Court. The sheriff of Kildare, however, recognizing the decision of the Irish peers, and declining to recognize the jurisdiction of the English tribunal, refused to obey an order calling on him to put Annesley into possession of the estate. The Irish Court of Exchequer thereupon inflicted a fine upon the sheriff. The Irish peers removed the fine, and voted that the sheriff "had behaved with integrity and courage". This bold course evoked the following galling enactment by the English House:—

"Whereas, . . . . . the lords of Ireland have of late, against law, assumed to themselves a power and jurisdiction to examine and amend the judgments and decrees of the courts of justice in Ireland; therefore, etc., it is declared and enacted, etc. . . . . that the King's Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal and commons of *Great Britain* in parliament assembled, had, hath, and of right ought to have, full power and authority to make laws and statutes of sufficient force and validity to bind the people of the kingdom of Ireland. And it is further enacted and declared, that the House of Lords of Ireland have not, nor of right ought to have, any jurisdiction to judge of, affirm, or reverse any judgment, etc., made in any court in the said kingdom".

Here was "Poynings' law" reënacted with savage explicitness; a heavy bit set between the jaws of the restive Irish legislature.

This rough and insulting assertion of subjugation stung

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\* *His. Cath. Association*, page 27.

the Protestants to the quick. They submitted; but soon there began to break forth from amongst them men who commenced to utter the words Country and Patriotism. These "rash" and "extreme" *doctrinaires* were long almost singular in their views. Wise men considered them insane when they "raved" of recovering the freedom of parliament. "Repeal Poyning's law!—*restore the heptarchy!*" cried one philosopher. "Liberate the parliament!—a splendid phantom!" cried another. Nevertheless, the so called *doctrinaires* grew in popularity. Their leader was the Very Rev. Jonathan Swift, Protestant dean of St. Patrick's. His precursor was William Molyneux, member for the Dublin University, who, in 1691, published the first great argumentative vindication of Irish legislative independence—*The Case of Ireland Stated*. Immediately on its appearance, the English parliament took alarm, and ordered the book to be "burned by the hands of the common hangman". Swift took up the doctrines and arguments of Molyneux, and made them all-prevalent amongst the masses of the people. But the "upper classes" thought them "visionary" and "impracticable"; nay, seditious and disloyal. Later on—in the middle of the century—Dr. Charles Lucas, a Dublin apothecary, became the leader of the anti-English party. Of course, he was set down as disaffected. A resolution of the servile Irish House of Commons declared him "an enemy to his country"; and he had to fly from Ireland for a time. His popularity, however, increased, and the popular suspicion and detestation of the English only required an opportunity to exhibit itself in overt acts. In 1759, a rumour broke out in Dublin that a legislative union (on the model of the Scoto-English amalgamation just accomplished) was in contemplation. "On the 3rd December, the citizens rose *en masse* and surrounded the houses of parliament. They stopped the carriages of members, and obliged them to swear opposition to such a measure. Some of the Protestant bishops and the chancellor were roughly handled; a privy councillor was thrown into the river; the attorney-general was wounded and obliged to take refuge in the College; Lord Inchiquin was abused

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till he said his name was O'Brien, when the rage of the people was turned into acclamations. The speaker, Mr. Ponsonby, and the chief secretary, Mr. Rigby, had to appear in the porch of the House of Commons, solemnly to assure the citizens that no union was dreamed of, and if it was proposed that they would be the first to oppose it".\*

The union scheme had to be abandoned; and Lucas soon after returned from exile, to wield increased power. The "seditious agitator", the solemnly declared "enemy of his country", was triumphantly returned to parliament by the citizens of Dublin, having as fellow-labourers, returned at the same time, Hussey Burgh and Henry Flood. Lucas did not live to enjoy many years his well-earned nonours. In 1770 he was followed to the grave by every demonstration of national regret. "At his funeral the pall was borne by the Marquis of Kildare, Lord Charlemont, Mr. Flood, Mr. Hussey Burgh, Sir Lucius O'Brien, and Mr. Ponsonby". And the citizens of Dublin, to perpetuate the memory of the once banished "disloyalist", set up his marble statue in their civic forum, where it stands to this day.†

While the country was thus seething with discontent, chafing under the "Poyning" yoke, there rolled across the Atlantic the echoes of Bunker's Hill; Protestant dominancy paused in its work of persecution, and bowed in homage to the divine spirit of Liberty!

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\* M'Gee.

† Lucas was, politically, a thorough nationalist, but, religiously, a bigot. The Irish nation he conceived to be the Irish Protestants. The idea of admitting the Catholics—the mass of the population—within the constitution, found in him a rabid opponent. Yet the Catholics of Ireland, to their eternal honour, have ever condoned his rabid bigotry against themselves, remembering his labours for the principle of nationality.

LXXVII.—HOW THE IRISH VOLUNTEERS ACHIEVED THE LEGISLATIVE INDEPENDENCE OF IRELAND ; OR, HOW THE MORAL FORCE OF A CITIZEN ARMY EFFECTED A PEACEFUL, LEGAL, AND CONSTITUTIONAL REVOLUTION.



HE first effort of the "patriot party", as for some years past they had been called, was to limit the duration of parliaments (at this time elected for the life of the king), so that the constituents might oftener have an opportunity—even by such cumbrous and wretchedly ineffective means as the existing electoral system provided—of judging the conduct of their members. In 1760, Lucas and his fellow-nationalists succeeded in carrying resolutions for "heads of a bill", limiting the parliaments to seven years. In accordance with "Poyning's law", the "heads" were transmitted to London for sanction, but were never heard of more. In 1763, they were again carried in the Irish house, again sent to London, again cancelled there. Irish popular feeling now began to be excited. Again, a third time, the "Septennial Bill" was carried through the Irish parliament, again sent to London, and again ignominiously vetoed there. But now the infatuation of England had overleaped itself. A spirit was aroused in Ireland before which the government quailed. A *fourth* time, amidst ominous demonstrations of popular determination, the thrice rejected "heads of a bill" were sent across. This time they were returned approved; but the *seven* years were altered to *eight* years, a paltry and miserable assertion of mastery, even while yielding under fear. But the impartial student will note that by some malign fatality it happens that even up to the present hour every concession granted by England to Irish demands was invariably refused till passion was inflamed, and has been conceded only on compulsion. The concession that, had it been made cheerfully and graciously at first, might have elicited good will and gratitude, has always been denied as long as it durst for safety be withheld, and been granted only when some

home or foreign difficulty rendered Irish discontent full of danger.

Concessions thus made are taken without thanks, and only give strength and determination to further demands. The patriot party followed up their first decisive victory by campaigns upon the pension list, the dependence of the judges, the voting of supply, etc.; the result being continuous, violent, and bitter conflict between the parliament and the viceroy; popular feeling rising and intensifying, gaining strength and force every hour.

Meanwhile America, on issues almost identical, had taken the field, and, aided by France, was holding England in deadly struggle. Towards the close of the year 1779, while Ireland as well as England was denuded of troops, government sent warning that some French or American privateers might be expected on the Irish coast, but confessing that no regular troops could be spared for local defence. The people of Belfast were the first to make a significant answer to this warning, by enrolling volunteer corps. The movement spread rapidly throughout the island, and in a short time the government with dismay beheld the patriot party in parliament surrounded by a volunteer army filled with patriotic ardour and enthusiasm. Every additional battalion of volunteers enrolled added to the moral power wielded by those leaders, whose utterances grew in boldness amidst the flashing swords and bayonets of a citizen army one hundred thousand strong. The nation by this time had become unanimous in its resolution to be free; a corrupt or timid group of courtiers or placemen alone making a sullen and half-hearted fight against the now all-powerful nationalists. Under the healing influence of this sentiment of patriotism, the gaping wounds of a century began to close. The Catholic slave, though still outside the pale of the constitution, forgot his griefs and his wrongs for the moment, and gave all his energies in aid of the national movement. He bought the musket which law denied to himself the right to bear, and placing it in the hand of his Protestant fellow-countryman, bade him go forward in the glorious work of liberating their common fatherland.

Free trade became now the great object of endeavour. The trade of Ireland at this time had been almost extinguished by repressive enactments passed by the English parliament in London, or by its shadow in Dublin in by-gone years. Immediately on the accession of William the Third, the English lords and commons addressed the king, praying his majesty to declare to his Irish subjects that "the growth and increase of the woollen manufacture hath long been, and will ever be looked upon with great jealousy", and threatening very plainly that they might otherwise have to enact "*very strict laws totally to abolish the same*".\* William answered them, promising to do "all that in him lay" to "discourage the woollen manufacture there". 'T were long to trace and to recapitulate the multifarious laws passed to crush manufacture and commerce of *all* kinds in Ireland in accordance with the above-cited address and royal promise. Englishmen in our day are constantly reproaching Ireland with absence of manufactures and commerce, and inviting this country to "wake up" and compete with England in the markets of the world. This may be malignant sarcasm, or it may be the ignorance of defective information. When one country has been by law forbidden to engage in manufactures or commerce, until the other has protected and nursed her own into vigour and maturity, and has secured possession of the world's markets, the invitation to the long-restricted and now crippled country to "compete" on the basis of free-trade, is as much of a mockery, as to call for a race between a trained athlete and a half-crippled captive, who has, moreover, been forcibly and foully detained till the other had neared the winning post.

To liberate Irish trade from such restraints was now the resolve of the patriot party in the Irish parliament. On the 12th October, 1779, they carried an address to the viceroy, declaring that "by free trade alone" could the nation be saved from impending ruin. Again England ungraciously and sourly complied, and once more clogged her compliance with embittering addenda! These con-

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\* *English Lords' Journal*, 1698, pp. 314, 315.

cessions, which the secretary of state was assuring the Irish parliament were freely bestowed by English generosity, were no sooner made public in England than Mr. Pitt had to send circular letters to the manufacturing towns, assuring them "that nothing effectual had been granted in Ireland".

But the Irish leaders were now about to crown their liberating efforts by a work which would henceforth place the destinies of Irish trade beyond the power of English jealousy, and beneath the protecting ægis of a free and independent native legislature. On the 19th April, 1780, Grattan moved that resolution which is the sum and substance in its simple completeness of the Irish national constitutional doctrine:—"That no power on earth, save that of the king, lords, and commons of Ireland, has a right to make laws to bind this kingdom".

The motion was unsuccessful; but this was the commencement of the great struggle; and over the vital issue now raised—complete legislative independence—the government fought with an unscrupulous energy. Throughout two years the contest was pursued with unintermitting severity, when suddenly Europe was electrified by the intelligence that the British armies had capitulated to the "rebel colonists", and the "star-spangled banner" appeared on the western horizon, proclaiming the birth of a new power destined to be the terror of tyrants, the hope of the oppressed, all over the world.

It was England's day of humiliation and dismay. By clutching at the right of oppression in her hour of fancied strength, she had lost America. It was not clear that through the same course she was not about to drive Ireland also from the demand for legislative independence into the choice of complete separation.

The Ulster volunteers now decided to hold a national convention of delegates from every citizen regiment in the province. On the day fixed—Friday, 15th February, 1782—and at the appointed place of meeting—the Protestant church of Dungannon, county Tyrone, the convention assembled; and there, amidst a scene the most glorious witnessed in Ireland for years, the delegates of

the citizen army solemnly swore allegiance to the charter of national liberty, denouncing as "unconstitutional, illegal, and a grievance" "the claim of any body of men, other than the king, lords, and commons of *Ireland*, to make laws to bind this kingdom". The Dungannon resolutions were enthusiastically ratified and reasserted by the several volunteer corps, the municipal corporations, and public meetings, all over the island; and soon, outside the circle of corrupt and servile castle placemen, no voice durst be raised against the demand for liberty.

A conciliatory, that is, a temporising ministry now came into power in London, and in their choice of lord lieutenant for Ireland—the duke of Portland—they found a very suitable man, apparently, for their designs or experiments. But the duke "on his arrival found the nation in a state in which neither procrastination nor evasion was any longer practicable". He reported to England the danger of resistance and the advisability of temporizing, that is, of yielding as little as possible, but yielding *all* if necessary. Accordingly, a message was delivered by the king to the British parliament, setting forth "that mistrusts and jealousies had arisen in Ireland, and that it was highly necessary to take the same into immediate consideration in order to a *final* adjustment". Meanwhile the viceroy in Dublin was plausibly endeavouring to wheedle Grattan and the other patriot leaders into procrastination, or, failing this, to tone down, to "moderate", the terms of the popular demand. Happily Grattan was sternly firm. He would not consent to even a *day's* postponement of the question, and he refused to alter a jot of the national ultimatum. An eye-witness has described for us the great scene of the 16th of April, 1782:

"Whoever has individually experienced the sensation of ardent expectation, trembling suspense, burning impatience, and determined resolution, and can suppose all those sensations possessing an entire nation, may form some, but yet an inadequate idea of the feelings of the Irish people on the 16th of April, 1782, which was the day peremptorily fixed by Mr. Grattan for moving that declaration of rights, which was the proximate cause of Ireland's

short-lived prosperity, and the remote one of its final overthrow and annexation. So high were the minds of the public wound up on the eve of that momentous day, that the volunteers flew to their arms without having an enemy to encounter, and, almost breathless with impatience, inquired eagerly after the probability of events, which the close of the same day must certainly determine.

“Early on the 16th of April, 1782, the great street before the house of parliament was thronged by a multitude of people, of every class and description, though many hours must elapse before the house would meet, or business be proceeded with. The parliament had been summoned to attend this momentous question by an unusual and special call of the house, and by four o'clock a full meeting took place. The body of the House of Commons was crowded with its members, a great proportion of the peerage attended as auditors, and the capacious gallery which surrounded the interior magnificent dome of the house contained above four hundred ladies of the highest distinction, who partook of the same national fire which had enlightened their parents, their husbands, and their relatives, and by the sympathetic influence of their presence and zeal they communicated an instinctive chivalrous impulse to eloquence and patriotism.

“A calm but deep solicitude was apparent on almost every countenance when Mr. Grattan entered, accompanied by Mr. Brownlow and several others, the determined and important advocates for the declaration of Irish independence. Mr. Grattan's preceding exertions and anxiety had manifestly injured his health; his tottering frame seemed barely sufficient to sustain his labouring mind, replete with the unprecedented importance and responsibility of the measure he was about to bring forward”.\*

“For a short time”, continues Sir Jonah Barrington, “a profound silence ensued”. It was expected that Grattan would rise; but, to the mortification and confusion of the government leaders, he kept his seat, putting on them

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\* Sir Jonah Barrington's *Rise and Fall of the Irish Nation*.

the responsibility of opening the proceedings and of fixing their attitude before being allowed to "feel their way", as they greatly desired to do. The secretary of state, resigning himself to the worst, thought it better to declare for concession. He announced that "his majesty, being concerned to find that discontents and jealousies were prevailing amongst his loyal subjects in Ireland upon matters of great weight and importance, recommended to the house to take the same into their most serious consideration, in order to effect such a *final* adjustment as might give satisfaction to both kingdoms". The secretary, however, added, that he was not officially authorized to say more than to deliver the message.

After an interval of embarrassing silence and curiosity, Mr. George Ponsonby rose, and moved a weak and procrastinating reply, "thanking the king for his goodness and condescension". But it would not do. The national determination was not to be trifled with. At length, after a solemn pause, Grattan, slowly rising from his seat, commenced "the most luminous, brilliant, and effective oration ever delivered in the Irish parliament"; a speech which, "rising in its progress, applied equally to the sense, the pride, and the spirit of the nation". "Amidst an universal cry of approbation", he concluded by moving as an amendment to Mr. Ponsonby's inconsequential motion, the ever-memorable DECLARATION OF IRISH INDEPENDENCE:

"That the kingdom of Ireland is a distinct kingdom, with a parliament of her own, the sole legislature thereof; that there is no body of men competent to make laws to bind the nation, but the king, lords, and commons of Ireland, nor any parliament which hath any authority or power of any sort whatever in this country, save only the parliament of Ireland; to assure his majesty, that we humbly conceive that in this right the very essence of our liberty exists, a right which we, on the part of all the people of Ireland, do claim as their birthright, and which we cannot yield but with our lives".

Grattan's amendment was seconded by Mr. Brownlow, member for Armagh county, in point of wealth and reputation one of the first country gentlemen in Ireland. "The whole house", says Barrington, "in a moment caught the patriotic flame. All further debate ceased; the speaker

put the question on Mr. Grattan's amendment; an *unanimous* shout of 'aye' burst from every quarter of the house. He repeated the question. The applause redoubled. A moment of tumultuous exultation followed: and after centuries of oppression, Ireland at length declared herself an independent nation".

Word of the event no sooner reached the impatient crowd outside the building, than a cry of joy and triumph burst forth all over the city. "The news soon spread through the nation, and the rejoicings of the people were beyond all description; every city, town, and village in Ireland blazed with the emblems of exultation, and resounded with the shouts of triumph".

"Never was a new nation more nobly heralded into existence! Never was an old nation more reverently and tenderly lifted up and restored! The houses adjourned to give England time to consider Ireland's ultimatum. Within a month it was accepted by the new British administration". The "visionary" and "impracticable" idea had become an accomplished fact. The "splendid phantom" had become a glorious reality. The heptarchy had not been restored; yet Ireland had won complete legislative independence!

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LXVIII.—WHAT NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE ACCOMPLISHED FOR IRELAND. HOW ENGLAND ONCE MORE BROKE FAITH WITH IRELAND, AND REPAID GENEROUS TRUST WITH BASE BETRAYAL.



If mankind needed at so late a period of the world's age as the close of the eighteenth century, any experiment to prove the substantial benefits of national freedom, the progress of Ireland during this brief but bright and glorious era of independence would suffice to establish the fact for ever. Happily, when referring to the events of that time, we treat of no remote period of history. Living men remember it. Irishmen of this generation have listened at their parent's knee to reminiscences

and relations, facts and particulars, that mark it as the day of Ireland's true, real, and visible prosperity. Statistics—invulnerable—irrefragable—full of eloquence—momentous in their meaning—attest the same truth. Manufacture, trade, and commerce developed to a greater extent in *ten* years of native rule than they had done in the previous *hundred* under English mastery, and in a much greater proportion than they have developed in the *sixty-seven* years of subsequent "union" legislation.

Ireland's freedom and prosperity did not mean England's injury, nor England's pause in the like onward march. The history of the period we are now treating of disposes of more than one fallacy used by the advocates of Irish national extinction. It proves that Ireland's right does not involve England's wrong. Never before were the two countries more free from jealousy, rivalry, or hostility. Never before was discontent banished from Ireland—as never since has disaffection been absent.

Lust of dominion—sheer covetousness of mastery—has in all ages been the source and origin of the most wanton invasions and most wicked subjugations. Not even amongst Englishmen themselves does any writer now hesitate to characterize as nefarious, treacherous, and abominable, the scheme by which England invaded and overthrew in 1800 the happily established freedom of Ireland.\*

Scarcely had the rusty chain of "Poynings' Act" been wrenched off, than the English minister began to consider how a stronger one might be forged and bound on the liberated Irish nation! The king's voice characterized the happy and amicable settlement just concluded as "*final*".

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\* English readers as yet uninformed on the subject, and disposed to receive with hesitation the statements of Irish writers as to the infamous means resorted to by the English government to overthrow the Irish constitution in 1800, may be referred to the Castlereagh Papers and the Cornwallis Correspondence—the private letters of the chief agents in the scheme. Mr. Massey, chairman of committees in the English House of Commons, published, a few years ago, a volume which exposes and characterizes that nefarious transaction in language which might be deemed too strong if used by an Irishman feeling the wrong and suffering from it.

The British minister and the British parliament in the most solemn manner declared the same; and surely nothing but morbid suspiciousness could discover fair ground for crediting that England would play Ireland false upon that promise—that she would seize the earliest opportunity of not merely breaking that “final adjustment”, and shackling the Irish parliament anew, but of destroying it utterly and for ever! Yet there were men amongst the Irish patriots who did not hesitate to express such suspicions at the moment, and foremost amongst these was Flood. He pressed for further and more specific and formal renunciation. Grattan, on the other hand, violently resisted this, as an ungenerous effort to put England “on her knees”—to humiliate her—to plainly treat her as a suspected blackleg. On this issue the two patriot leaders violently, acrimoniously, and irreconcilably quarreled; Flood and his following contending that England would surely betray Ireland on the “final adjustment”, and Grattan, with the bulk of the national party, vehemently refusing to put such ungenerous insult and indignity on England as to suppose her capable of such conduct!

Alas! *At that very moment*—as the now published correspondence of the English statesmen engaged in the transaction discloses—the British ministers were discussing, devising, and directing preparations for accomplishing, by the most iniquitous means, that crime against Ireland of which Grattan considered it ungenerous and wicked to express even a suspicion!

It was with good reason the national party, soon after the accomplishment of legislative independence, directed their energies to the question of parliamentary reform. The legislative body, which in a moment of great public excitement and enthusiasm, had been made for a moment to reflect correctly the national will, was after all returned by an antique electoral system, which was a gross farce on representation. Boroughs and seats were at the time openly and literally *owned* by particular families or persons, the voting “constituency” sometimes not being more than a dozen in number. As a matter of fact, less than a hun-

dred persons *owned* seats or boroughs capable of making a majority in the commons.

The patriot party naturally and wisely judged that with such a parliament the retention of freedom would be precarious, and the representation of the national will uncertain; so the question of parliamentary reform came to be agitated with a vehemence second only to that of parliamentary independence in the then recent campaign. By this time, however, the British minister had equally detected, that while with such a parliament he might accomplish his treacherous designs, with a parliament really amenable to the people, he never could. Concealing the real motive and the remote object, the government, through its myriad devious channels of influence, as well as openly and avowedly, resisted the demand for reform. Apart from the government, the "vested interests" of the existing system were able to make a protracted fight. Ere long both these sections were leagued together, and they hopelessly outnumbered the popular party.

The government now began to feel itself strong, and it accordingly commenced the work of deliberately destroying the parliament of Ireland. Those whom it could influence, purchase, or corrupt, were one by one removed or bought in market overt. Those who were true to honour and duty, it insolently threatened, insulted, and assailed. The popular demands were treated with defiance and contumely by the minister and his co-conspirators. Soon a malign opportunity presented itself for putting Ireland utterly, hopelessly, helplessly into their hands—the sheep committed to the grasp of the wolf for security and protection!

LXXIX.—HOW THE ENGLISH MINISTER SAW HIS ADVANTAGE  
IN PROVOKING IRELAND INTO AN ARMED STRUGGLE; AND  
HOW HEARTLESSLY HE LABOURED TO THAT END.



WHILE these events were transpiring in Ireland the French revolution had burst forth, shaking the whole fabric of European society, rending old systems with the terrible force of a newly-appeared explosive power. Everywhere its effects were felt. Everywhere men were struck with wonder. Everywhere the subtle intoxication of the revolutionary doctrines symbolized by the terrible *drapeau rouge*, fired the blood of political enthusiasts. Some hailed the birth of the French republic as the avatar of freedom;\* others saw in it the incarnation

\* The sentiments evoked in the breasts of most Irish patriots by the first outburst and subsequent proceedings of the French revolution—enthusiasm, joy, and hope, followed by grief, horror, and despair—have been truthfully expressed by Moore in the following matchless verses:—

'T is gone and for ever—the light we saw breaking  
Like heaven's first dawn o'er the sleep of the dead;  
When man from the slumber of ages awaking,  
Looked upward and blessed the pure ray ere it fled.  
'T is gone—and the gleam it has left of its burning  
But deepens the long night of bondage and mourning  
That dark o'er the kingdoms of earth is returning,  
But darkest of all, hapless Erin, o'er thee.

How high was thy hope when those glories were darting  
Around thee through all the gross clouds of the world;  
When Truth, from her fetters indignantly starting,  
At once like a sunburst her banner unfurled!  
Oh! never shall earth see a moment so splendid.  
Then—then—had one Hymn of Deliverance blended  
The tongues of all nations, how sweet had ascended  
The first note of liberty, Erin, from thee!

But shame on those tyrants who envied the blessing,  
And shame on the light race unworthy its good,  
Who at Death's reeking altar, like furies caressing  
The young hope of Freedom, baptized it in blood!  
Then vanished for ever that fair sunny vision  
Which, spite of the slavish, the cold heart's derision,  
Shall long be remembered—pure, bright, and elysian,  
As first it arose, my lost Erin, on thee!

of anarchy and infidelity; an organized war upon social order and upon the Christian religion. It instantly arrayed all Europe in two fiercely hostile camps. Each side spoke and acted with a passionate energy. Old parties and schools of political thought were broken up; old friendships and alliances were sundered for ever, on the question whether the French revolution was an emanation from hell or an inspiration from heaven.

Ireland, so peculiarly circumstanced, could not fail to be powerfully moved by the great drama unfolded before the world in Paris. Side by side with the march of events there, from 1789 to 1795, was the revelation of England's treason against the "final adjustment" of Irish national rights, and the exasperating demeanour, language, and action of the government in its now avowed determination to conquer right by might.

Towards the close of 1791, Theobald Wolfe Tone—a young Protestant barrister of great ability, who had devoted himself to the service of the Catholics in their efforts for emancipation—visiting Belfast (then the centre and citadel of democratic and liberal, if not indeed of republican opinions),\* met there some of the popular leaders. They had marked the treacherous conduct of the government, and they saw no hope for averting the ruin designed for Ireland, save in a union of *all* Irishmen, irrespective of creed or class, in an open, legal, and constitutional organization for the accomplishment of *parliamentary reform* and *Catholic emancipation*. Such an organization they forthwith established. Tone, on his return to Dublin, pushed its operations there, and it soon embraced every man of note on the people's side in politics. The association thus established was called the Society of United Irishmen. For some time it pursued its labours zealously, and, as its first principles exacted, openly, legally, and constitutionally towards the attainment of its most legitimate objects. But the government was winning against the United Irish

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\* In July of that year (1791), the French revolution was celebrated with military pomp in Belfast by the armed volunteers and townspeople.

leaders by strides—pandering to the grossest passions and vices of the oligarchical party, now sedulously inflamed against all popular opinions by the mad-dog cry of “French principles”. One by one the popular leaders tired in the hopeless struggle—were overpowered by despair of resisting the gross and naked tyranny of the government, which was absolutely and designedly pushing them out of constitutional action. Some of them retired from public life. Others of them yielded to the conviction that outside the constitution, if not within it, the struggle might be fought, and the United Irishmen gradually became an oath-bound secret society.

From the first hour when an armed struggle came to be contemplated by the United Irish leaders, they very naturally fixed their hopes on France; and envoys passed and repassed between them and the French Directory. The government had early knowledge of the fact. It was to them news the most welcome. Indeed they so clearly saw their advantage—their certain success—in arraying on their side all who feared a Jacobin revolution, and in identifying in the minds of the property classes anti-Englishism with revolution and infidelity, that their greatest anxiety was to make sure that the United Irishmen would go far enough and deep enough into the scheme. And the government left nothing undone to secure that result.

Meanwhile the society in its new character extended itself with marvellous success. Its organization was ingenious, and of course its leaders believed it to be “spy-proof”. Nearly *half a million* of earnest and determined men were enrolled, and a considerable portion of them were armed either with pikes or muskets. Indeed, for a moment it seemed not unlikely that the government conspirators might find they had over-shot their own purpose, and had allowed the organization to develop too far. Up to 1796 they never took into calculation as a serious probability that France would really cast her powerful aid into the scale with Ireland. In the instant when England, startled beyond conception, was awakened to her error on this point by the appearance in Bantry Bay, in December,

1796, of a formidable expedition under Hoche\*—a sense of danger and alarm possessed her, and it was decided to burst up the insurrectionary design—to *force* it into conflict at once;—the peril now being that the armed and organized Irish might “bide their time”.

To drive the Irish into the field—to goad them into action in the hour of England’s choice, not their own—was the problem. Its accomplishment was arrived at by proceedings over which the historical writer or student shudders in horror. Early in 1796, an Insurrection Act was passed, making the administration of an oath identical with or similar to that of the United Irishmen punishable with *death!* An army of fifty thousand men, subsequently increased to eighty thousand, was let loose upon the country on the atrocious system of “free quarters”. Irresponsible power was conferred on the military officers and local magistracy. The yeomanry, mainly composed of Orangemen, were quartered on the most Catholic districts, while the Irish militia regiments suspected of any sympathy with the population were shipped off to England in exchange for foreign troops. “The military tribunals did not wait for the idle formalities of the civil courts. Soldiers and civilians, yeomen and townsmen, against whom the informer pointed his finger, were taken out and summarily executed. Ghastly forms hung upon the thick-set gibbets, not only in the market places of the country towns and before the public prisons, but on all the bridges of the metropolis. The horrid torture of picketing, and the blood-stained lash, were constantly resorted to, to extort accusations or confessions”.† Lord Holland gives us a like picture of “burning cottages, tortured backs, and frequent executions”. “The fact is incontrovertible”, he says, “that the people of Ireland were driven to resistance (which, possibly, they meditated before) by the free

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\* This expedition had been obtained from the French Directory by the energy and perseverance of Wolfe Tone, who had been obliged to fly from Ireland. It was dispersed by a storm—a hurricane—as it lay in Bantry Bay waiting the arrival of the commander’s ship. This storm saved the English power in Ireland.

† M’Gee.

quarters and excesses of the soldiery, which were such as are not permitted in civilised warfare even in an enemy's country. Dr. Dickson, Lord Bishop of Down, assured me that he had *seen* families returning peaceably from Mass, assailed without provocation by drunken troops and yeomanry, and their wives and daughters exposed to every species of indignity, brutality, and outrage, from which neither his (the bishop's) remonstrances, nor those of other Protestant gentlemen, could rescue them".\*

No wonder the gallant and humane Sir John Moore—appalled at the infamies of that lustful and brutal soldiery, and unable to repress his sympathy with the hapless Irish peasantry—should have exclaimed, "*If I were an Irishman, I would be a rebel!*"

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LXXX.—HOW THE BRITISH MINISTER FORCED ON THE RISING. THE FATE OF THE BRAVE LORD EDWARD.—HOW THE BROTHERS SHEARES DIED HAND-IN-HAND—THE RISING OF NINETY-EIGHT.



HILE the government, by such frightful agencies, was trying to *force* an insurrection, the United Irish leaders were straining every energy to keep the people in restraint until such time as they could strike and not strike in vain. But in this dreadful game the government was sure to win eventually. By a decisive blow at the Society, on the 12th March, 1798, it compelled the United Irishmen to take the field forthwith or perish. This was the seizure, on that day, in one swoop, of the Supreme Council or Directory, with all its returns, lists, and muster-rolls, while sitting in deliberation, at the house of Mr. Oliver Bond (one of the council) in Bridge Street, Dublin.

This terrible stroke was almost irreparable. One man, however, escaped by the accident of not having attended, as he intended, that day's council meeting; and him of

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\* Lord Holland, *Memoirs of the Whig Party*.

all others the government desired to capture. This was Lord Edward Fitzgerald, son of the Duke of Leinster, commander-in-chief of the United Irish military organization.

Of all the men who have given their lives in the fatal struggle against the English yoke, not one is more endeared to Irish popular affection than "Lord Edward". While he lived he was idolized; and with truth it may be said his memory is embalmed in a nation's tears. He had every quality calculated to win the hearts of a people like the Irish. His birth, his rank, his noble lineage, his princely bearing, his handsome person, his frank and chivalrous manner, his generous, warm-hearted nature, his undaunted courage, and, above all, his ardent patriotism, combined to render Lord Edward the *beau ideal* of a popular leader. "He was", says a writer whose labours to assure the fame and vindicate in history the gallant band of whom the youthful Geraldine was amongst the foremost, should never be forgotten by Irishmen—"as playful and humble as a child, as mild and timid as a lady, and, when necessary, as brave as a lion".\*

Such was the man on whose head a price of one thousand pounds was now set by the government. On the arrest of the directory at Bond's, three men of position and ability stepped forward into the vacant council-seats; the brothers John and Henry Sheares, and Doctor Lawless; and upon these and Lord Edward now devolved the responsibility of controlling the organization. Lord Edward insisted on an immediate rising. He saw that by the aid of spies and informers the government was in possession of their inmost secrets, and that every day would be ruining their organization. To wait further for aid from France would be utter destruction to all their plans. Accordingly, it was decided that on the 23rd May next following, the standard of insurrection should be unfurled, and Ireland appeal to the *ultima ratio* of oppressed nations.

The government heard this, through their spies, with a sense of relief and of diabolical satisfaction. Efforts to

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\* Dr. R. R. Madden, *Lives and Times of the United Irishmen.*



Capture of Lord Edward.

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secure Lord Edward were now pursued with desperate activity; yet he remained in Dublin eluding his enemies for eight weeks after the arrests at Bond's, guarded, convoyed, sheltered by the people with a devotion for which history has scarcely a parallel. The 23rd of May was approaching fast, and still Lord Edward was at large. The Castle conspirators began to fear that after all their machinations they might find themselves face to face with an Irish Washington. Within a few days, however, of the ominous 23rd, treason gave them the victory, and placed the noble Geraldine within their grasp.

On the night of the 18th May, he was brought to the house of a Mr. Nicholas Murphy, a feather merchant, of 153 Thomas Street. He had been secreted in this same house before, but had been removed, as it was deemed essential to change his place of concealment very frequently. After spending some short time at each of several other places in the interval, he was, on the night already mentioned, a second time brought to Mr. Murphy's house. On the evening of the next day, Lord Edward, after dining with his host, retired to his chamber, intending to lie down for a while, being suffering from a cold. Mr. Murphy followed him up stairs to speak to him about something, when the noise of feet softly but quickly springing up the stair caught his ear, and instantly the door was thrown open and a police magistrate named Swan, accompanied by a soldier, rushed into the room. Lord Edward was lying on the bed with his coat and vest off. He sprang from the bed, snatching from under the pillow a dagger. Swan thrust his right hand into an inside breast pocket where his pistols were; but Lord Edward, divining the object, struck at that spot, and sent his dagger through Swan's hand, penetrating his body. Swan shouted that he was "murdered"; nevertheless, with his wounded hand he managed to draw his pistol and fire at Lord Edward. The shot missed; but at this moment another of the police party, named Ryan (a yeomanry captain), rushed in, armed with a drawn cut-throat sword, and Major Sirr, with half a-dozen soldiers, hurried up stairs. Ryan flung himself on Lord Edward, and

tried to hold him down on the bed, but he could not, and the pair, locked in deadly combat, rolled upon the floor. Lord Edward received some deadly thrusts from Ryan's sword, but he succeeded in freeing his right hand, and quick as he could draw his arm, plunged the dagger again and again into Ryan's body. The yeomanry captain, though wounded mortally all over, was still struggling with Lord Edward on the floor when Sirr and the soldiers arrived. Sirr, pistol in hand, feared to grapple with the enraged Geraldine; but, watching his opportunity, took deliberate aim at him and fired. The ball struck Lord Edward in the right shoulder; the dagger fell from his grasp, and Sirr and the soldiers flung themselves upon him in a body. Still it required their utmost efforts to hold him down, some of them stabbing and hacking at him with shortened swords and clubbed pistols, while others held him fast. At length, weakened from wounds and loss of blood, he fainted. They took a sheet off the bed and rolled the almost inanimate body in it, and dragged their victim down the narrow stair. The floor of the room, all over blood, an eye-witness says, resembled a slaughter-house, and even the walls were dashed with gore.

Meantime a crowd had assembled in the street, attracted by the presence of the soldiers around the house. The instant it became known that it was Lord Edward that had been captured, the people flung themselves on the military, and after a desperate struggle had overpowered them but for the arrival of a large body of cavalry, who eventually succeeded in bringing off Lord Edward to the Castle.

Here his wounds were dressed. On being told by the doctor that they were not likely to prove fatal, he exclaimed: "I am sorry to hear it". He was removed to Newgate, none of his friends being allowed access to him until the 3rd of June, when they were told *that he was dying!* His aunt, Lady Louisa Connolly, and his brother, Lord Henry Fitzgerald, were then permitted to see him. They found him delirious. As he lay on his fever pallet in the dark and narrow cell of that accursed bastille, his ears were dinned with horrid noises that his brutal jailors took care

to tell him were caused by the workmen erecting barriers around the gallows fixed for a forthcoming execution.

Next day, 4th June, 1798, he expired. As he died unconvicted, his body was given up to his friends, but only on condition that no funeral would be attempted. In the dead of night they conveyed the last remains of the noble Lord Edward from Newgate to the Kildare vault beneath St. Werburgh's Protestant Church, Dublin, where they now repose.

A few days after Lord Edward's capture—on Monday, 21st May—the brothers Sheares were arrested, one at his residence in Lower Baggot Street, the other at a friend's house in French Street, having been betrayed by a government agent named Armstrong, who had wormed himself into their friendship and confidence for the purpose of effecting their ruin. On the evening previous to their capture he was a guest in the bosom of their family, sitting at their fireside, fondling on his knee the infant child of one of the victims, whose blood was to drip from the scaffold in Green Street, a few weeks later, through his unequalled infamy!

On the 12th July, John and Henry Sheares were brought to trial, and the fiend Armstrong appeared on the witness table and swore away their lives. Two days afterwards the martyr-brothers were executed, side by side. Indeed they fell through the drop *hand clasped in hand*, having, as they stood blindfolded on the trap, in the brief moment before the bolt was drawn, by an instinct of holy affection strong in death, each one reached out as best he could his pinioned hand, and grasped that of his brother!

The capture of Lord Edward, so quickly followed by the arrest of the brothers Sheares, was a death-blow to the insurrection, as far as concerned any preconcerted movement. On the night of the appointed day an abortive rising took place in the neighbourhood of the metropolis. On the same day Kildare, Lord Edward's county, took the field, and against hopeless disadvantages made a gallant stand. Meath also kept its troth, as did Down and Antrim in the north keep theirs, but only to a like bloody sacrifice, and in a few days it seemed that all was over. But a county almost free from complicity in the organiza-

tion, a county in which no one on either side had apprehended revolt, was now about to show the world what Irish peasants, driven to desperation, defending their homes and altars, could dare and do. Wexford, heroic and glorious Wexford, was now about to show that even *one* county of Ireland's *thirty-two* could engage more than half the available army of England!

Wexford rose, not in obedience to any call from the united Irish organization, but purely and solely from the instinct of self-preservation. Although there was probably no district in Ireland so free from participation in the designs of that association (there were scarcely two hundred enrolled United Irishmen amongst its entire population), all the horrors of free-quarters and martial law had been let loose on the county. Atrocities that sicken the heart in their contemplation, filled with terror the homes of that peaceful and inoffensive people. The midnight skies were reddened with the flames of burning cottages, and the glens resounded with shrieks of agony, vengeance, and despair. Homes desolated, female virtue made the victim of crimes that cannot be named, the gibbet and the triangle erected in every hamlet, and finally, the temples of God desecrated and given to the torch, left manhood in Wexford no choice but that which to its eternal honour it made.

Well and bravely Wexford fought that fight. It was the wild rush to arms of a tortured peasantry, unprepared, unorganized, unarmed. Yet no Irishman has need to "hang his head for shame" when men speak of gallant Wexford in Ninety-eight. Battle for battle, the men of that county beat the best armies of the king, until their relative forces became out of all proportion. Neither Tell in Switzerland nor Hofer in the Tyrol earned immortality more gloriously than that noble band of the "the sister-counties", Wexford and Wicklow—Beauchamp Bagenal Harvey; Colclough of Tintern Abbey; Fitzgerald of Newpark; Miles Byrne, and Edmond Kyan, in the one; and the patriot brothers Byrne of Ballymanus, with Holt, Hackett, and "brave Michael Dwyer", in the other. And, as he who studies the history of this country will note, in all its

struggles for seven hundred years, the priests of Ireland, ever fearless to brave the anger of the maddened people, restraining them while conflict might be avoided, were ever readiest to die,

Whether on the scaffold high  
Or in the battle's van—

side by side with the people, when driven to the last resort. Fathers John and Michael Murphy, Father Roche, and Father Clinch, are names that should ever be remembered by Irishmen when tempters whisper that the voice of the Catholic pastor, raised in warning or restraint, is the utterance of one who cannot feel for, who would not *die* for, the flock he desires to save.

Just as the short and bloody struggle had terminated, there appeared in Killala Bay the first instalment of that aid from France for which the United Irish leaders had desired to wait! If they could have resisted the government endeavours to precipitate the rising for barely three or four months longer, it is impossible to say how the movement might have resulted. On the 22nd August, the French general, Humbert, landed at Killala with barely one thousand men. Miserable as was this force, a few months earlier it would have counted for twenty thousand; but now, ten thousand, much less ten hundred, would not avail. They came too late, or the rising was too soon. Nevertheless, with this handful of men, joined by a few thousand hardy Mayo peasantry, Humbert literally chased the government troops before him across the island; and it was not until the viceroy himself, Lord Cornwallis, hurrying from Dublin, concentrated around the Franco-Irish army of *three thousand* men a force of nearly *thirty thousand*, enveloping them on all sides—and, of course, hopelessly overpowering them—that the victorious march of the daring Frenchman was arrested by the complete defeat and capitulation of Ballinamuck, on the morning of the 8th September, 1798.

It was the last battle of the insurrection. Within a fortnight subsequently two further and smaller expeditions from France reached the northern coast; one accom-

panied by Napper Tandy (an exiled United Irish leader), and another under Admiral Bompert with Wolfe Tone on board. The latter one was attacked by a powerful English fleet and captured. Tone, the heroic and indefatigable, was sent in irons to Dublin, where he was tried by court-martial and sentenced to be hung. He pleaded hard for a soldier's death; but his judges were inexorable. It turned out, however, that his trial and conviction were utterly illegal, as martial law had ceased, and the ordinary tribunals were sitting at the time. At the instance of the illustrious Irish advocate, orator, and patriot, Curran, an order was obtained against the military authorities to deliver Tone over to the civil court. The order was at first resisted, but ultimately the official of the court was informed that the prisoner "had committed suicide". He died a few days after, of a wound in his throat, possibly inflicted by himself, to avert the indignity he so earnestly deprecated; but not improbably, as popular conviction has it, the work of a murderous hand; for fouler deeds were done in the government dungeons in "those dark and evil days".

The insurrection of '98 was the first *rebellion* on the part of the Irish people for hundreds of years. The revolt of the Puritan colonists in 1641, and that of their descendants, the Protestant rebels of 1690, were not *Irish* movements in any sense of the phrase. It was only after 1605 that the English government could, by any code of moral obligations whatever, be held entitled to the obedience of the Irish people, whose struggles previous to that date were lawful efforts in defence of their native and legitimate rulers against the English invaders. And never, subsequently to 1605, up to the period at which we have now arrived—1798—did the Irish people revolt or rebel against the new sovereignty. On the contrary, in 1641, they fought for the king, and lost heavily by their loyalty. In 1690 once more they fought for the king, and again they paid a terrible penalty for their fidelity to the sovereign. In plain truth, the Irish are, of all peoples, the most disposed to respect constituted authority where it is entitled to respect, and the most ready to repay even the

shortest measure of justice on the part of the sovereign, by generous, faithful, enduring, and self-sacrificing loyalty. They are a law-abiding people—or rather a justice-loving people; for their contempt for law becomes extreme when it is made the antithesis of justice. Nothing but terrible provocation could have driven such a people into rebellion.

Rebellion against just and lawful government is a great crime. Rebellion against constituted government of any character is a terrible responsibility. There are circumstances under which resistance is a duty, and where, it may be said, the crime would be rather in slavish or cowardly acquiescence; but awful is the accountability of him who undertakes to judge that the measure of justification is full, that the moral duty of resistance is established by the circumstances, and that, not merely in figure of speech, but in solemn reality, no other resort remains.

But, however all this may be, the public code of which it is a part rightly recognizes a great distinction in favour of a people who are driven into the field to defend their homes and altars against brutal military violence. Such were the heroic men of Wexford; and of the United Irishmen it is to be remembered that if they pursued an object unquestionably good and virtuous in itself, outside, not within, the constitution, it was not by their own choice. They were no apostles of anarchy, no lovers of revolution, no "rebels for a theory". They were not men who decried or opposed the more peaceful action of moral force agencies. They would have preferred them, had a choice fairly been left them. There was undoubtedly a French Jacobinical spirit tinging the views of many of the Dublin and Ulster leaders towards the close, but under all the circumstances this was inevitable. With scarcely an exception, they were men of exemplary moral characters, high social position, of unsullied integrity, of brilliant intellect, of pure and lofty patriotism. They were men who honestly desired and endeavoured, while it was permitted to them so to do, by lawful and constitutional means, to save and serve their country, but who, by an infamous conspiracy of the government, were deliberately forced upon resistance

as a patriot's duty, and who at the last sealed with their blood their devotion to Ireland.

"More than twenty years have passed away", says Lord Holland; "many of my political opinions are softened, my predilections for some men weakened, my prejudices against others removed; but my approbation of Lord Edward Fitzgerald's actions remains unaltered and unshaken. His country was bleeding under one of the hardest tyrannies that our times have witnessed. He who thinks that a man can be even excused in such circumstances by any other consideration than that of despair from opposing by force a pretended government, seems to me to sanction a principle which would insure impunity to the greatest of all human delinquents, or at least to those who produce the greatest misery among mankind".\*

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LXXXI.—HOW THE GOVERNMENT CONSPIRACY NOW ACHIEVED ITS PURPOSE. HOW THE PARLIAMENT OF IRELAND WAS EXTINGUISHED.



ORRORS, says Sir Jonah Barrington, "were everywhere recommenced, executions were multiplied. The government had now achieved the very climax of public terror on which they had so much counted for inducing Ireland to throw herself into the arms of the 'protecting' country. Mr. Pitt conceived that the moment had arrived to try the effect of his previous measures, to promote a legislative union, and annihilate the parliament of Ireland".

"On the 22nd January, 1799, the Irish legislature met under circumstances of great interest and excitement. The city of Dublin, always keenly alive to its metropolitan interests, sent its eager thousands by every avenue

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\* Lord Holland, *Memoirs of the Whic Party*.

towards College Green. The viceroy went down to the houses with a more than ordinary guard, and being seated on the throne in the House of Lords, the Commons were summoned to the bar. The viceregal speech congratulated both houses on the suppression of the late rebellion, on the defeat of Bompert's squadron, and the recent French victories of Lord Nelson; then came, amid profound expectation, this concluding sentence:—

“‘The unremitting industry’, said the viceroy, ‘with which our enemies persevere in their avowed design of endeavouring to effect a separation of this kingdom from Great Britain must have engaged your attention, and his Majesty commands me to express his anxious hope that this consideration, joined to the sentiment of mutual affection and common interest, may dispose the parliaments in both kingdoms to provide the most effectual means of maintaining and improving a connection essential to their common security, and of consolidating, as far as possible, into one firm and lasting fabric, the strength, the power, and the resources of the British empire’.

“ On the paragraph of the address reëchoing this sentiment (which was carried by a large majority in *the lords*), a debate ensued in the commons which lasted till one o'clock of the following day, above twenty consecutive hours. The galleries and lobbies were crowded all night by the first people of the city, of both sexes, and when the division was being taken the most intense anxiety was manifested within doors and without”.\*

“ One hundred and eleven members had declared against the Union, and when the doors were opened, one hundred and five were discovered to be the total number of the minister's adherents. The gratification of the anti-Unionists was unbounded; and as they walked deliberately in, one by one, to be counted, the eager spectators, ladies as well as gentlemen, leaning over the galleries ignorant of the result, were panting with expectation. Lady Castlereagh, then one of the finest women of the court, appeared in the serjeant's box, palpitating for her husband's fate. The desponding appearance and

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\* M'Gee.

fallen crests of the ministerial benches, and the exulting air of the opposition members as they entered, were intelligible. The murmurs of suppressed anxiety would have excited an interest even in the most unconnected stranger, who had known the objects and importance of the contest. How much more, therefore, must every Irish breast which panted in the galleries, have experienced that thrilling enthusiasm which accompanies the achievement of patriotic actions, when the minister's defeat was announced from the chair! A due sense of respect and decorum restrained the galleries within proper bounds; but a low cry of satisfaction from the female audience could not be prevented, and no sooner was the event made known out of doors, than the crowds that had waited during the entire night with increasing impatience for the vote which was to decide on the independence of their country, sent forth loud and reiterated shouts of exultation, which, resounding through the corridors, and penetrating to the body of the house, added to the triumph of the conquerors, and to the misery of the adherents of the conquered minister".\*

The minister was utterly and unexpectedly worsted in his first attack; but he was not shaken from his purpose. He could scarcely have credited that, notwithstanding his previous laborious machinations of terror and seduction, there could still be found so much of virtue, courage, and independence in the parliament. However, this bitter defeat merely caused him to fall back for the purpose of approaching by mine the citadel he had failed to carry by assault. The majority against him was narrow. The gaining of twenty or thirty members would make a difference of twice that number on a division. "All the weapons of seduction were in his hands", says Sir Jonah Barrington, "and to acquire a majority, he had only to overcome the wavering and the feeble". "Thirty-two new county judgeships", says another writer, "were created; a great number of additional inspectorships were

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\* Sir Jonah Barrington, *Rise and Fall of the Irish Nation*.

also placed at the minister's disposal; thirteen members had peerages for themselves or for their wives, with remainder to their children, and nineteen others were presented to various lucrative offices".

Both parties—Unionists and anti-Unionists, traitors and patriots—felt that during the parliamentary recess the issue would really be decided; for by the time the next session opened the minister would have secured his majority if such an end was possible. The interval, accordingly, was one of painfully exciting struggle, each party straining every energy. The government had a persuasive story for every sectional interest in the country. It secretly assured the Catholic bishops, nay, solemnly pledged itself, that if the Union were carried, one of the first acts of the imperial parliament should be Catholic emancipation. "An *Irish* parliament will never grant it, can never afford to grant it", said the Castle tempter. "The fears of the Protestant minority in this country will make them too much afraid of you. *We* alone can afford to rise above this miserable dread of your numbers". To the Protestants, on the other hand, the minister held out arguments just as insidious, as treacherous, and as fraudulent. "Behold the never-ceasing efforts of these Catholics! Do what you will, some day they must overwhelm you, being seven to one against you. There is no safety for you, no security for the Irish Protestant Church establishment, unless in a union with us. In Ireland, as a kingdom, you are in a miserable minority, sure to be some day overwhelmed and destroyed. United to Great Britain, you will be an indivisible part of one vast Protestant majority, and can afford to defy the Papists".

Again, to the landed gentry, the terrors of "French principles", constant plots and rebellions, were artfully held forth. "No safety for society, no security for property, except in a union with Great Britain". Even the populace, the peasantry, were attempted to be overreached also, by inflaming them against the landlords as base yeomanry tyrants, whose fears of the people would ever make them merciless oppressors!

And it is curious to note that in that day—1799 and

1800—the identical great things that in our own time are still *about* to happen, and have always been *about* to happen, (but are *never happening*) since 1800, were loudly proclaimed as the inevitable first fruits of a union. “*English capital*” was to flow into Ireland by the million, “owing”, as the ministerialists sagaciously put it, “to the stability of Irish institutions when guaranteed by the union”. Like infallible arguments were ready to show that commerce must instantaneously expand beyond calculation, and manufactures spring up as if by magic, all over the island. Peace, tranquillity, prosperity, contentment, and loyalty, must, it was likewise sagely argued, flow from the measure; for the Irish would see the uselessness of rebelling against an united empire, and would be so happy that disaffection must become utterly unknown. Nay, whosoever consults the journals of that period, will find even the “government dockyard at Cork”, and other stock jobs of promised “concession”, figuring then just as they figure now.\*

But the endeavour to influence public opinion proved futile, and the minister found he must make up his mind to go through with a naked, unsparing, unscrupulous, and unblushing corruption of individuals. Many of the Catholic bishops were overreached by the solemn pledge of emancipation; but the overwhelming majority of the clergy, and the laity almost unanimously, scouted the idea of expediting their emancipation by an eternal betrayal of their country. The Orangemen on the other hand were equally patriotic. All the Protestant bishops but two were gained over by the minister; yet the Protestant organizations everywhere passed resolutions, strong almost to sedition, against the union. Most important of all was the patriotic conduct of the Irish Bar. They held a meeting to discuss the proposition of a “union”, and notwithstanding the open threats of government vengeance, and

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\* The vote of Mr. Robert Fitzgerald, of Corkabeg, was secured by “Lord Cornwallis assuring him that in the event of the union a royal dock-yard would be built at Cork, which would double the value of his estates”. Barrington's *Rise and Fall of the Irish Nation*.

public offers of "reward" or bribe, there were found but thirty-two members of the bar to support the ministerial proposition, while one hundred and sixty-six voted it a treason against the country.

The next session, the last of the Irish parliament, assembled on the 15th January, 1800. The minister had counted every man, and by means the most iniquitous secured the requisite majority. Twenty-seven new peers had been added to the House of Lords, making the union project all safe there. In the Commons some thirty or forty seats had been changed by bargain with the owners of the boroughs. It was doubtful that any *bona fide* constituency in Ireland—even one—could be got to sanction the union scheme; so the minister had to carry on his operations with what were called "patronage boroughs", or "pocket-boroughs".

The patriot party felt convinced that they were outnumbered, but they resolved to fight the battle vehemently while a chance remained. At the worst, if overborne in such a cause, they could expose the real nature of the transaction, and cause its illegality, infamy, and fraud, to be confessed; so that posterity might know and feel the right and the duty of appealing against, and recovering against, the crime of that hour. They persuaded Grattan to reënter parliament\* to aid them in this last defence of his and their country's liberties. He was at the moment lying on a bed of sickness, yet he assented, and it was decided to have him returned for Wicklow town, that borough being the property of a friend. The writ was duly applied for, but the government withheld its issue up to the last moment allowed by law, designing to prevent Grattan's return in time for the debate on the address to the throne, the first trial of strength. Nevertheless, by a feat almost unprecedented in parliamentary annals, that object was attained. "It was not until the day of the meeting of parliament that the writ was delivered to the returning

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\* Three years before, he and many others of the patriot party had quitted parliament in despair.

officer. By extraordinary exertions, and perhaps by following the example of government in overstraining the law, the election was held immediately on the arrival of the writ; a sufficient number of votes were collected to return Mr. Grattan before midnight. By one o'clock the return was on its road to Dublin; it arrived by five; a party of Mr. Grattan's friends repaired to the house of the proper officer, and making him get out of bed, compelled him to present the writ in parliament before seven in the morning, when the house was in warm debate on the Union. A whisper ran through every party that Mr. Grattan was elected, and would immediately take his seat. The ministerialists smiled with incredulous derision, and the opposition thought the news too good to be true.

"Mr. Egan was speaking strongly against the measure, when Mr. George Ponsonby and Mr. Arthur Moore walked out, and immediately returned, leading, or rather helping, Mr. Grattan, in a state of feebleness and debility. The effect was electric. Mr. Grattan's illness and deep chagrin had reduced a form never symmetrical, and a visage at all times thin, nearly to the appearance of a spectre. As he feebly tottered into the house, every member simultaneously rose from his seat. He moved slowly to the table; his languid countenance seemed to revive as he took those oaths that restored him to his preëminent station; the smile of inward satisfaction obviously illuminated his features, and reanimation and energy seemed to kindle by the labour of his mind. The house was silent. Mr. Egan did not resume his speech. Mr. Grattan, almost breathless, as if by instinct attempted to rise, but was unable to stand; he paused, and with difficulty requested permission of the house to deliver his sentiments without moving from his seat. This was acceded to by acclamation, and he who had left his bed of sickness to accord as he thought his last words in the parliament of his country, kindled gradually till his language glowed with an energy and feeling which he had seldom surpassed. After nearly two hours of the most powerful eloquence, he concluded with an undiminished vigour miraculous to those who were unacquainted with his intellect".

The debate lasted for sixteen consecutive hours. It commenced at seven o'clock on the evening of the 15th, continued throughout the entire night, and did not terminate until eleven o'clock of the forenoon on the 16th, when the division was taken. Then the minister's triumph was made clear. The patriots reckoned one hundred and fifteen votes; the government one hundred and fifty-eight. There were twenty-seven absent from various causes, nearly every man an anti-Unionist; but even these, if present, could not have turned the scale. The discussion clearly showed that Ireland's doom was sealed.

There now commenced that struggle in the Irish senate house in College Green, over which the Irish reader becomes irresistibly excited. The minister felt that the plunge was taken, and now there must be no qualms, no scruples, as to the means of success. Strong in his purchased majority, he grew insolent, and the patriot minority found themselves subjected to every conceivable mode of assault and menace. The houses of parliament were invariably surrounded with soldiery. The debates were protracted throughout the entire night, and far into the forenoon of the next day. In all this, the calculation was, that in a wearying and exhausting struggle of this kind, men who were on the weak and losing side, and who had no personal interest to advance, must surely give way before the perseverance of men on the strong and winning side, who had each a large money price from the minister. But that gallant band, with Grattan, Ponsonby, Parsons, and Plunkett at their head, fought the struggle out with a tenacity that seemed to experience no exhaustion. In order to be at hand in the house, and to sit out the eighteen and twenty hour debates, the ministerialists formed a "dining club", and ate, drank, dined, slept, and breakfasted, like a military guard, in one of the committee rooms. The patriot party followed the same course; and through various other manœuvres met the enemy move for move.

But the most daring and singular step of all was now taken by the government party—the formation of a *duelling club*. The premier (Lord Castlereagh) invited to a din-

ner party, at his own residence, a picked band of twenty of the most noted duellists amongst the ministerial followers; and then and there it was decided to form a club, the members of which should be bound to "call out" any anti-Unionist expressing himself "immoderately" against the conduct of the government! In plain words, Grattan and his colleagues were to be shot down in designedly provoked duels!

Even this did not appal the patriot minority. With spirit undaunted they resolved to meet force by force. Grattan proposed that they should not give the ministerial "shooting club" any time for choosing its men, but that they themselves should forestal the government by a bold assumption of the offensive. He was himself the first to lead the way in the daring course he counselled. On the 17th February, the House went into committee on the articles of union, which, after a desperate struggle, as usual, were carried through by a majority of *twenty* votes; one hundred and sixty to one hundred and forty. It was on this occasion Corry, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, made, for the third or fourth time that session, a virulent attack on the enfeebled and almost prostrate Grattan. But soon Corry found that though physically prostrated, the glorious intellect of Grattan was as proud and strong as ever, and that the heart of a lion beat in the patriot leader's breast. Grattan answered the chancellor by "that famous philippic, unequalled in our language for its well-suppressed passion and finely condensed denunciation". A challenge passed on the instant, and Grattan, having the choice of time, insisted on fighting *that moment* or rather *that morning*, as soon as daylight would admit. Accordingly, leaving the house in full debate, about day dawn the principals and their seconds drove to the Phoenix Park. Before half-an-hour Grattan had shot his man, terminating, in one decisive encounter, the Castlereagh campaign of "fighting down the opposition". The ministerial "duelling club" was heard of no more.

"Throughout the months of February and March, with an occasional adjournment, the constitutional battle was fought on every point permitted by the forms of the house".

On the 25th March the committee finally reported the Union resolutions, which were passed in the house by forty-seven of a majority. After six weeks of an interval, to allow the British parliament to make like progress, the Union Bill was (25th May, 1800) introduced into the Irish Commons, and on the 7th of June the Irish parliament met for the last time. "The closing scene", as Mr. M'Gee truly remarks, "has been often described, but never so graphically as by the diamond pen of Sir Jonah Barrington". That description I quote unabridged:

"The Commons House of Parliament on the last evening afforded the most melancholy example of an independent people, betrayed, divided, sold, and as a state annihilated. British clerks and officers were smuggled into her parliament to vote away the constitution of a country to which they were strangers, and in which they had neither interest nor connection. They were employed to cancel the royal charter of the Irish nation, guaranteed by the British government, sanctioned by the British legislature, and unequivocally confirmed by the words, the signature, and the great seal of their monarch!

"The situation of the Speaker on that night was of the most distressing nature. A sincere and ardent enemy of the measure, he headed its opponents, he resisted it with all the power of his mind, the resources of his experience, his influence, and his eloquence.

"It was, however, through his voice that it was to be proclaimed and consummated. His only alternative (resignation) would have been unavailing, and could have added nothing to his character. His expressive countenance bespoke the inquietude of his feelings; solicitude was perceptible in every glance, and his embarrassment was obvious in every word he uttered.

"The galleries were full, but the change was lamentable; they were no longer crowded with those who had been accustomed to witness the eloquence and to animate the debates of that devoted assembly. A monotonous and melancholy murmur ran through the benches, scarcely a word was exchanged amongst the members, nobody seemed at ease, no cheerfulness was apparent, and the or-

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dinary business for a short time proceeded in the usual manner.

“At length the expected moment arrived, the order of the day for the third reading of the bill for a ‘Legislative Union between Great Britain and Ireland’, was moved by Lord Castlereagh. Unvaried, tame, cold-blooded, the words seemed frozen as they issued from his lips, and as if a simple citizen of the world, he seemed to have no sensation on the subject. At that moment he had no country, no god but his ambition. He made his motion, and resumed his seat, with the utmost composure and indifference.

“Confused murmurs again ran through the house; it was visibly affected; every character in a moment seemed involuntarily rushing to its index; some pale, some flushed, some agitated; there were few countenances to which the heart did not despatch some messenger. Several members withdrew before the question could be repeated, and an awful momentary silence succeeded their departure. The Speaker rose slowly from that chair which had been the proud source of his honours and his high character; for a moment he resumed his seat, but the strength of his mind sustained him in his duty, though his struggle was apparent. With that dignity which never failed to signalize his official actions, he held up the bill for a moment in silence: he looked steadily around him on the last agony of the expiring parliament. He at length repeated in an emphatic tone, ‘As many as are of opinion that this bill do pass, say aye’. The affirmative was languid but indisputable; another momentary pause ensued, again his lips seemed to decline their office; at length with an eye averted from the object which he hated, he proclaimed with a subdued voice, ‘*The ayes have it*’. The fatal sentence was now pronounced; for an instant he stood statue-like, then indignantly, and with disgust, flung the bill upon the table, and sunk into his chair with an exhausted spirit. An independent country was thus degraded into a province: Ireland as a nation was extinguished”.\*

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\* In their private correspondence at the time the ministers were very candid as to the villany of their conduct. The letters of Lord

The subjoined verses, written on the night of that sorrowful scene—by some attributed to the pen of Moore, by others to that of Furlong—immediately made their appearance; a Dirge and a Prophecy we may assuredly call them:—

O Ireland! my country, the hour  
 Of thy pride and thy splendour is past;  
 And the chain that was spurned in thy moment of power,  
 Hangs heavy around thee at last.  
 There are marks in the fate of each clime—  
 There are turns in the fortunes of men;  
 But the changes of realms, and the chances of time,  
 Can never restore thee again.

Thou art chained to the wheel of thy foe  
 By links which the world shall not sever.  
 With thy tyrant, thro' storm and thro' calm shalt thou go,  
 And thy sentence is—bondage for ever.  
 Thou art doom'd for the thankless to toil,  
 Thou art left for the proud to disdain,  
 And the blood of thy sons and the wealth of thy soil  
 Shall be wasted, and wasted in vain.

Thy riches with taunts shall be taken,  
 Thy valour with coldness repaid;  
 And of millions who see thee thus sunk and forsaken  
 Not one shall stand forth in thine aid.  
 In the nations thy place is left void,  
 Thou art lost in the list of the free.  
 Even realms by the plague or the earthquake destroy'd  
 May revive: but no hope is for thee.

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Castlereagh and Lord Cornwallis abound with the most startling revelations and admissions. The former (Lord Castlereagh) writing to Secretary Cook, 21st June, 1800 (expostulating against an intention of the government to break some of the bargains of corruption, as too excessive, now that the deed was accomplished), says: "It will be no secret what has been promised, *and by what means the Union had been carried*. Disappointment will encourage, not prevent disclosures, and the only effect of such a proceeding on their (the ministers) part will be to add the weight of their testimony to that of the anti-Unionists in proclaiming *the profligacy of the means by which the measure was accomplished*".

## LXXXII.—IRELAND AFTER THE UNION. THE STORY OF ROBERT EMMET.



HE peasants of Podolia, when no Russian myrmidon is nigh, chant aloud the national hymn of their captivity—“*Poland is not dead yet*”. Whoever reads the story of this *western* Poland—this “Poland of the seas”—will be powerfully struck with the one all-prominent fact of *Ireland’s indestructible vitality*. Under circumstances where any other people would have succumbed for ever, where any other nation would have resigned itself to subjugation and accepted death, the Irish nation scorns to yield, and refuses to die.

It survived the four centuries of war from the second to the eighth Henry of England. It survived the exterminations of Elizabeth, by which Froude has been so profoundly appalled. It survived the butcheries of Cromwell, and the merciless persecutions of the Penal Times. It survived the bloody policy of Ninety-eight. Confiscations, such as are to be found in the history of no other country in Europe, again and again tore up society by the roots in Ireland, trampling the noble and the gentle into poverty and obscurity. The mind was sought to be quenched, the intellect extinguished, the manners debased and brutified. “The perverted ingenuity of man” could no further go in the untiring endeavour to kill out all aspirations for freedom, all instinct of nationality in the Irish breast. Yet this indestructible nation has risen under the blows of her murderous persecutors, triumphant and immortal. She has survived even England’s latest and most deadly blow, designed to be the final stroke—the Union.

Almost on the threshold of the new century, the conspiracy of Robert Emmet startled the land like the sudden explosion of a mine. In the place assigned in Irish memory to the youthful and ill-fated leader of this enterprise, is powerfully illustrated the all-absorbing, all-indulging love of a people for those who purely give up life on the altar of Country. Many considerations might seem to

invoke on Emmet the censure of stern judgment for the apparently criminal hopelessness of his scheme. Napoleon once said that "nothing consolidates a new dynasty like an unsuccessful insurrection"; and unquestionably Emmet's *emeute* gave all possible consolidation to the "Union" regime. It brought down on Ireland the terrible penalty of a *five years'* suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and a contemporaneous continuance of the bloody "Insurrection Act", aggravating tenfold all the miseries of the country. Nevertheless, the Irish nation has canonized his memory—has fondly placed his name on the roll of its patriot martyrs. His extreme youth, his pure and gentle nature, his lofty and noble aims, his beautiful and touching speech in the dock, and his tragic death upon the scaffold, have been all-efficacious with his countrymen to shield his memory from breath of blame.

Robert Emmet was the youngest brother of Thomas Addis Emmet, one of the most distinguished and illustrious of the United Irish leaders. He formed the daring design of surprising the castle of Dublin, and, by the seizure of the capital, the inauguration of a rebellion throughout the provinces. Indeed it was, as Mr. M'Gee remarks, the plan of Roger O'More and Lord Maguire in 1641. In this project he was joined by several of the leaders in the recent insurrection, amongst them being Thomas Russell, one of the bravest and noblest characters that ever appeared on the page of history, and Michael Dwyer, of Wicklow, who still, as for the past five years, held his ground in the defiles of Glenmalure and Imall, defying and defeating all attempts to capture him. But, beside the men whose names were openly revealed in connection with the plot, and these comprised some of the best and worthiest in the land, it is beyond question that there were others not discovered, filling high positions in Ireland, in England, and in France, who approved, counselled, and assisted in Emmet's design.

Although the conspiracy embraced thousands of associates in Dublin alone, not a man betrayed the secret to the last; and Emmet went on with his preparations of arms and ammunition in two or three depôts in the city.

Even when one of these exploded accidentally, the government failed to divine what was afoot, though their suspicions were excited. On the night of the 23rd of July, 1803, Emmet sallied forth from one of the depôts at the head of less than a hundred men. But the whole scheme of arrangements—although it certainly was one of the most ingenious and perfect ever devised by the skill of man—like most other conspiracies of the kind, crumbled in all its parts at the moment of action. “There was failure everywhere”; and to insure defeat, a few hours before the moment fixed for the march upon the Castle, intelligence reached the government from *Kildare*, that some outbreak was to take place that night, as bodies of the disaffected peasantry from that county had been observed making towards the city. The authorities were accordingly on the *qui vive* to some extent when Emmet reached the street. His expected musters had not appeared; his own band dwindled to a score; and, to him the most poignant affliction of all, an act of lawless bloodshed, the murder of Lord Justice Kilwarden, one of the most humane and honourable judges, stained the short-lived *emeute*. Incensed beyond expression by this act, and perceiving the ruin of his attempt, Emmet gave peremptory orders for its instantaneous abandonment. He himself hurried off towards Wicklow in time to countermand the rising there and in Wexford and Kildare. It is beyond question that his prompt and strenuous exertions, his aversion to the useless sacrifice of life, alone prevented a protracted struggle in those counties.

His friends now urged him to escape, and several means of escape were offered to him. He, however, insisted on postponing his departure for a few days. He refused to disclose his reason for this perilous delay; but it was eventually discovered. Between himself and the young daughter of the illustrious Curran there existed the most tender and devoted attachment, and he was resolved not to quit Ireland without bidding her an eternal farewell. This resolve cost him his life. While awaiting an opportunity for an interview with Miss Curran, he was arrested on the 25th August, 1803, at a house on the east side of

Harold's Cross Road, a few perches beyond the canal bridge. On the 19th of the following month he was tried at Green Street; upon which occasion, after conviction, he delivered that speech which has probably more than aught else tended to immortalize his name. Next morning, 20th September, 1803, he was led out to die. There is a story that Sarah Curran was admitted to a farewell interview with her hapless lover on the night preceding his execution, but it rests on slender authority, and is opposed to probabilities. But it is true that as he was being led to execution, a last farewell was exchanged between them. A carriage, containing Miss Curran and a friend, was drawn up on the roadside, near Kilmainham, and, evidently by preconcert, as the vehicle containing Emmet passed by on the way to the place of execution, the unhappy pair exchanged their last greeting on earth.\*

In Thomas Street, at the head of Bridgefoot Street, and directly opposite the Protestant church of St. Catherine, the fatal beam and platform were erected. It is said that Emmet had been led to expect a rescue at the last, either by Russell (who was in town for that purpose), or by Michael Dwyer and his mountain band. He mounted the scaffold with firmness, and gazed about him long and wistfully, as if he expected to read the signal of hope from some familiar face in the crowd. He protracted all the arrangements as much as possible, and even when at length the fatal noose was placed upon his neck, he begged a little pause. The executioner again and again asked him was he ready, and each time was answered: "Not yet, not yet". Again the same question, and, says one who was present, while the words "Not yet" were still being uttered by Emmet, the bolt was drawn, and he was launched into eternity. The head was severed from his body, and "according to law", held up to the public gaze by the executioner as the "head of a traitor". An hour afterwards, as an eyewitness tells us, the dogs of the street were lapping from the ground the blood of the pure and gentle Robert Emmet!

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\* Madden's *Lives and Times of the United Irishmen*.

Moore was the fellow-student and companion of Emmet, and, like all who knew him, ever spoke in fervent admiration of the youthful patriot-martyr as the impersonation of all that was virtuous, generous, and exalted! More than once did the minstrel dedicate his strains to the memory of that friend whom he never ceased to mourn. The following verses are familiar to most Irish readers ;

Oh ! breathe not his name; let it sleep in the shade  
Where cold and unhonoured his relics are laid.  
Sad, silent, and dark be the tear that is shed,  
Like the night dew that falls on the grass o'er his head.

But the night-dew that falls, though in secret it weeps,  
Still freshens with verdure the grave where he sleeps;  
So the tear that is shed, while in secret it rolls,  
Shall long keep his memory green in our souls!

Soon afterwards the gallant and noble-hearted Russell was executed at Downpatrick, and for months subsequently the executioner was busy at his bloody work in Dublin. Michael Dwyer, however, the guerilla of the Wicklow hills, held his ground in the fastnesses of Luggielaw, Glendalough, and Glenmalure. In vain regiment after regiment was sent against him. Dwyer and his trusty band defeated every effort of their foes. The military detachments, one by one, were wearied and worn out by the privations of campaigning in that wild region of dense forest and trackless mountain. The guerilla chief was apparently ubiquitous, always invisible when wanted by his pursuers, but terribly visible when not expected by them. In the end some of the soldiers\* became nearly as friendly to him as the peasantry, frequently sending him word of any movement intended against him. More than a year passed by, and the powerful British government, that could suppress the insurrection at large in a few months, found itself, so far, quite unable to subdue the indomitable Outlaw of Glenmalure. At length it was de-

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\* They were Highland regiments. Through the insurrections of 1798 and 1803, the Highland regiments behaved with the greatest humanity and, where possible, kindness towards the Irish peasantry.

cided to "open up" the district which formed his stronghold, by a series of military roads and a chain of mountain forts, barracks, and outposts. The scheme was carried out, and the tourist who now seeks the beauties of Glencree, Luggielaw, and Glendalough, will travel by the "military roads", and pass the mountain forts or barracks, which the government of England found it necessary to construct before it could wrest from Michael Dwyer the dominion of those romantic scenes.

The well authenticated stories of Dwyer's hairbreadth escapes by flood and field would fill a goodly volume. One of them reveals an instance of devoted heroism—of self-immolation—which deserves to be recorded in letters of gold.

One day the Outlaw Chief had been so closely pursued that his little band had to scatter, the more easily to escape, or to distract the pursuers, who, on this occasion, were out in tremendous force scouring hill and plain. Some hours after nightfall, Dwyer, accompanied by only four of his party (and fully believing that he had successfully eluded his foes), entered a peasant's cottage in the wild and picturesque solitude of Imall. He was, of course, joyously welcomed; and he and his tired companions soon tasted such humble hospitality as the poor mountaineer's hut could afford. Then they gave themselves to repose.

But the Outlawed Patriot had *not* shaken the foe from his track that evening. He had been traced to the mountain hut with sleuth-hound patience and certainty; and now, while he slept in fancied security, the little sheeling was being stealthily surrounded by the soldiery!

Some stir on the outside, some chance rattle of a musket, or clank of a sabre, awakened one of the sleepers within. A glance through a door-chink soon revealed all; and Dwyer, at the first whisper springing to his feet, found that after nearly five years of proud defiance and successful struggle, he was at length in the toils! Presently the officer in command outside knocked at the door "in the name of the king". Dwyer answered, demanding his business. The officer said he knew that Michael Dwyer the Outlaw was inside. "Yes", said Dwyer, "I am the

man". "Then", rejoined the officer, "as I desire to avoid useless bloodshed, surrender. This house is surrounded; we must take you, alive or dead" "If you are averse to unnecessary bloodshed", said Dwyer, "first let the poor man whose house this is, and his innocent wife and children, pass through. I came into this house unbidden, unexpectedly. They are guiltless. Let them go free, and then I shall consider your proposition as regards myself".

The officer assented. The poor cottager, his wife, and children were passed through.

"Now, then", cried the officer, "surrender in the name of the king".

"Never!" shouted Dwyer; "we defy you in the name of Ireland".

The hills echoed to the deafening peals that followed on this response. For *nearly an hour* Dwyer and his four companions defended the sheeling, keeping their foes at bay. But by this time one of them lay mortally wounded. Soon a shout of savage joy from the soldiery outside was followed by a lurid glare all around. They had set the cabin on fire over the heads of the doomed outlaws!

Then spoke up Dwyer's wounded companion, Alexander MacAlister: "My death is near; my hour is come. Even if the way was clear, there is no hope for me. Promise to do as I direct, and I will save you all". Then the poor fellow desired them to prop him up; gun in hand, immediately inside the door. "Now", continued he, "they are expecting you to rush out, and they have their rifles levelled at the door. Fling it open. Seeing me, they will all fire at me. Do you then quickly dash out through the smoke, before they can load again!"

They did as the dying hero bade them. They flung the door aside. There was an instantaneous volley, and the brave MacAlister fell pierced by fifty bullets. Quick as lightning, Dwyer and his three comrades dashed through the smoke. He alone succeeded in breaking through the encircling soldiers; and once outside in the darkness, on those trackless hills he was lost to all pursuit!

Nor was he ever captured. Long afterwards, every

effort to that end having been tried for years in vain, he was offered honourable conditions of surrender. He accepted them; but, when was a treaty kept towards the Irish brave? Its specific terms were basely violated by the government, and he was banished to Australia.

The mountaineers of Wicklow to this day keep up the traditions of Michael Dwyer—of his heroism, his patriotism—of his daring feats, his marvellous escapes. But it is of the devoted MacAlister that they treasure the most tender memory; and around their firesides in the winter evenings the cottagers of Glenmalure, in rustic ballad or simple story, recount with tearful eyes and beating hearts how he died to save his chief in the sheeling of Imall.

The following ballad, by Mr. T. D. Sullivan, follows literally the story of the hero-martyr MacAlister:

“ At length, brave Michael Dwyer, you and your trusty men  
Are hunted o'er the mountains and tracked into the glen.  
Sleep not, but watch and listen; keep ready blade and ball;  
The soldiers know you 're hiding to-night in wild Imaal”.

The soldiers searched the valley, and towards the dawn of day  
Discovered where the outlaws, the dauntless rebels, lay.  
Around the little cottage they formed into a ring,  
And called out, “ Michael Dwyer! surrender to the king !”

Thus answered Michael Dwyer: “ Into this house we came,  
Unasked by those who own it—they cannot be to blame.  
Then let these peaceful people unquestioned pass you through,  
And when they 're placed in safety, I 'll tell you what we 'll do”.

‘T was done, “ And now”, said Dwyer, “ your work you may begin:  
You are a hundred outside—we 're only four within.  
We 've heard your haughty summons, and this is our reply -  
We 're true United Irishmen, we 'll fight until we die”.

Then burst the war's red lightning, then poured the leaden rain,  
The hills around reëchoe'd the thunder peals again.  
The soldiers falling round him, brave Dwyer sees with pride  
But, ah! one gallant comrade is wounded by his side.

Yet there are three remaining good battle still to do;  
Their hands are strong and steady, their aim is quick and true—  
But hark that furious shouting the savage soldiers raise!  
The house is fired around them! the roof is in a blaze!

And brighter every moment the lurid flame arose,  
 And louder swelled the laughter and cheering of their foes.  
 Then spake the brave M'Alister, the weak and wounded man:  
 "You can escape, my comrades, and this shall be your plan:

"Place in my hands a musket, then lie upon the floor:  
 I'll stand before the soldiers, and open wide the door:  
 They'll pour into my bosom the fire of their array;  
 Then, whilst their guns are empty, dash through them and away".

He stood before his foemen revealed amidst the flame.  
 From out their levelled pieces the wished-for volley came;  
 Up sprang the three survivors for whom the hero died,  
 But only Michael Dwyer broke through the ranks outside.

He baffled his pursuers, who followed like the wind;  
 He swam the river Slaney, and left them far behind;  
 But many an English soldier he promised soon should fall,  
 For these, his gallant comrades, who died in wild Imaal.

The surrender of Michael Dwyer was the last event of the insurrection of 1798—1803. But, for several years subsequently, the Habeas Corpus Act continued suspended and an insurrection act was in full force. Never up to the hour of Napoleon's abdication at Fontainebleau, did the spectre of a French invasion of Ireland cease to haunt the mind of England.

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LXXXIII.—HOW THE IRISH CATHOLIOS, UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF O'CONNELL, WON CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION.



EMMET'S insurrection riveted the Union chain on Ireland. It was for a time the death-blow of public life in the country. When political action reappeared, a startling change, a complete revolution, had been wrought. An entirely new order of things appeared in politics—an entirely new phase of national life and effort; new forces in new positions and with new tactics. Everything seemed changed.

Hitherto political Ireland meant the Protestant minority of the population alone. Within this section there were

nationalists and anti-nationalists, whigs and tories, emancipationists and anti-emancipationists. They talked of, and at, and about the Catholics (the overwhelming mass of the population) very much as parties in America, previous to 1860, debated the theoretical views and doctrines relating to negro emancipation. Some went so far as to maintain that a Catholic was "a man and a brother". Others declared this a revolutionary proposition, subversive of the crown and government. The parties discussed the matter as a speculative subject. But now the Catholic millions themselves appeared on the scene, to plead and agitate their own cause, and alongside the huge reality of their power, the exclusively Protestant political fabric sunk into insignificance, and as such disappeared for ever. In *theory*—legal theory—no doubt the Protestant minority were for a long time subsequently "The State", but men ignored the theory and dealt with the fact. From 1810 to 1829, the politics of Ireland were bound up in the one question—emancipation or no emancipation. The Catholics had many true and staunch friends amongst the Protestant patriots. Grattan, Curran, Plunkett, Burke, are names that will never be forgotten by enfranchised Catholic Irishmen. But by all British parties and party leaders alike they found themselves in turn deceived, abandoned, betrayed. Denounced by the king, assailed by the tories, betrayed by the whigs; one moment favoured by a premier, a cabinet, or a section of a cabinet; the next, forbidden to hope, and commanded to desist from further effort, on the peril of fresh chains and scourges—the enslaved millions at length took the work of their redemption out of the hands of English party chiefs and cliques, and resolved to make it a question of national emergency, not of party expediency.

The great victory of Catholic Emancipation was won outside of the Parliament, but within the lines of constitutional action. It was mainly the work of one man, whose place in the hearts of his countrymen was rarely, if ever before, reached, and probably will be rarely reached again by king or commoner. The people called him "Liberator". Others styled him truly the "Father of his

Country"—the "Uncrowned Monarch of Ireland". All the nations of Christendom, as the simplest yet truest homage to his fame, recognize him in the world's history as "O'Connell".

It may well be doubted if any other man or any other tactics could have succeeded, where the majestic genius, the indomitable energy, and the *protean strategy* of O'Connell were so notably victorious. Irishmen of this generation can scarcely form an adequate conception of the herculean task that confronted the young barrister of 1812. The condition of Ireland was unlike that of any other country in the world in any age. The Catholic nobility and old gentry had read history so mournfully that the soul had quietly departed from them. They had seen nothing but confiscation result from past efforts, and they had learned to fear nothing more than new agitation that might end similarly. Like the lotus-eater, their cry was, "Let us alone". By degrees some of them crept out a little into the popular movement; but at the utterance of an "extreme" doctrine or "violent" opinion by young O'Connell, or other of those "inflammatory politicians", they fled back to their retirement with terrified hearts, and called out to the government that, for their parts, they reprobated anything that might displease the king or embarrass the ministry.

Nor was it the Catholic nobility and gentry alone whose unexampled pusillanimity long thwarted and retarded O'Connell. The Catholic bishops for a long time received him and the "advanced" school of emancipationists with unconcealed dislike and alarm. They had seen the terrors and rigors of the penal times; and "leave to live", even by mere connivance, seemed to them a great boon. The "extreme" ideas of this young O'Connell and his party could only result in mischief. Could he not go on in the old slow and prudent way? What could he gain by "extreme" and "impracticable" demands?

In nothing did O'Connell's supreme tact and prudence manifest itself more notably than in his dealings with the Catholic bishops who were opposed to and unfriendly to him. He never attempted to excite popular indignation

against them as "Castle politicians"; he never allowed a word disrespectful towards them to be uttered; he never attempted to degrade them in public estimation, even on the specious plea that it was "only in the capacity of politicians" he assailed them. Many and painful were the provocations he received; yet he never was betrayed from his impregnable position of mingled firmness and prudence. It was hard to find the powers of an oppressive government—fines and penalties, proclamations and prosecutions—smiting him at every step, and withal behold not only the Catholic aristocracy, but the chief members of the hierarchy also arrayed against him, negatively sustaining and encouraging the tyranny of the government. But he bore it all; for he well knew that, calamitous as was the conduct of those prelates, it proceeded from no corrupt or selfish consideration, but arose from weakness of judgment, when dealing with such critical legal and political questions. He bore their negative if not positive opposition long and patiently, and in the end had the triumph of seeing many converts from amongst his early opponents zealous in action by his side, and of feeling that no word or act of his had weakened the respect, veneration, and affection due from a Catholic people to their pastors and prelates.

From the outset he was loyally sustained by the Catholic mercantile classes, by the body of the clergy, and by the masses of the population in town and country. Owing to the attitude of the bishops, the secular or parochial clergy for a time deemed it prudent to hold aloof from any very prominent participation in the movement, though their sentiments were never doubted. But the regular clergy—the religious orders—flung themselves ardently into the people's cause. When every other place of meeting, owing to one cause or another, was closed against the young Catholic leaders, the Carmelite Church in Clarendon Street became their rallying point and place of assembly in Dublin, freely given for the purpose by the community.

O'Connell laid down as the basis of his political action in Ireland this proposition, "*Ire' and cannot fight England*". From this he evolved others "If Ireland try to fight

England, she will be worsted. She has tried too often. She must not try it any more". That acumen, that prescience, in which he excelled all men of his generation, taught him that a change was coming over the world, and that superior might—brute force—would not always be able to resist the power of opinion, could not always afford to be made odious and rendered morally weak. Above all, he knew that there remained, at the worst, to an oppressed people unable to match their oppressors in a military struggle, the grand policy of *Passive Resistance*, by which the weak can drag down the haughty and the strong.

Moulding all his movements on these principles, O'Connell resolved to show his countrymen that they could win their rights by action strictly within the constitution. And, very naturally, therefore, he regarded the man who would even ever so slightly tempt them outside of it, as their direst enemy. He happily combined in himself all the qualifications for guiding them through that system of guerilla warfare in politics, which alone could enable them to defeat the government, without violating the law; quick to meet each dexterous evolution of the foe by some equally ingenious artifice; evading the ponderous blow designed to crush him—disappearing in one guise, only to start up in another. No man but himself could have carried the people, as he did, safely and victoriously through such a campaign, with the scanty political resources then possessed by Irish Catholics. It was scarcely hyperbole to call him the Moses of the modern Israel.

His was no smooth and straight road. Young Irishmen can scarcely realise the discouragements and difficulties, the repeated failures—*seeming* failures—the reverses, that often flung him backward, apparently defeated. But with him there was no such word as fail. The people trusted him and followed him with the docile and trustful obedience of troops obeying the commands of a chosen general. For them—for the service of Ireland—he gave up his professional prospects. He laboured for them, he thought for them, he lived but for them; and he was ready

to die for them. A trained shot—a chosen bravo—D’Esterre—was set on by the Orange Corporation of Dublin to shoot him down in a duel. O’Connell met his adversary at eighteen paces, and laid him mortally wounded on the field. By degrees even those who for long years had held aloof from the Catholic leader began to bow in homage to the sovereignty conferred by the popular will; and English ministries, one by one, found themselves powerless to grapple with the influence he wielded. If, indeed, they could but goad or entrap him into a breach of the law; if they could only persuade the banded Irish millions to obligingly meet England in the arena of *her* choice—namely, the field of war—then the ministerial anxieties would be over. They could soon make an end of the Catholic cause there. But, most provokingly, O’Connell was able to baffle this idea—was able to keep the most high-spirited, impetuous, and war-loving people in the world *deaf*, as it were to all such challenges; callous, as it were, to all such provocations. They would, most vexatiously, persist in choosing their own ground, their own tactics, their own time and mode of action, and would not allow England to force hers upon them at all. Such a policy broke the heart and maddened the brain of English oppression. In vain the king stormed and the Duke of York swore. In vain the old “saws” of “utopian dreams” and “splendid phantoms” were flung at the emancipationists. Men sagely pointed out that emancipation was “inconsistent with the coronation oath”, was “incompatible with the British constitution”; that it involved “the severance of the countries”, “the dismemberment of the empire”, and that “England would spend her last shilling, and her last man, rather than grant it”. Others, equally profound, declared that in a week after emancipation, Irish Catholics and Protestants “would be cutting each other’s throats”; that there would be a massacre of Protestants all over the island, and that it was England’s duty, in the interests of good order, civilization, and humanity, not to afford an opportunity for such anarchy.

There is a most ancient and fish-like smell about these precious arguments. They are indeed very old and much decayed; yet my young readers will find them always used

whenever an Irish demand for freedom cannot be encountered *on the merits*.

But none of them could impose upon or frighten O'Connell. He went on, rousing the whole people into one mass of fierce earnestness and enthusiasm, until the island glowed and heaved like a volcano. Peel and Wellington threatened war. Coercion acts followed each other in quick succession. Suddenly there appeared a sight as horrific to English oppression, as the hand upon the wall to Belshazzar—*Irish regiments cheering for O'Connell!* Then, indeed, the hand that held the chain shook with the palsy of mortal fear. Peel and Wellington—those same ministers whose especial “platform” was resistance *a l'outrance* to Catholic emancipation—came down to the House of Commons, and told the assembled parliament that Catholic emancipation *must* be granted. The “Man of the People” had conquered!

LXXXIV.—HOW THE IRISH PEOPLE NEXT SOUGHT TO ACHIEVE  
THE RESTORATION OF THEIR LEGISLATIVE INDEPENDENCE.  
HOW ENGLAND ANSWERED THEM WITH A CHALLENGE TO  
THE SWORD.



EMANCIPATION was won; yet there was a question nearer and dearer even than emancipation to O'Connell's heart; the question of national independence—the repeal of the iniquitous Union. It might be thought that as an emancipated Catholic he would be drawn towards the legislature that had freed him, rather than to that which had forged the shackles thus struck off. But O'Connell had the spirit and the manhood of a patriot. While yet he wore those penal chains, he publicly declared that he would willingly forfeit all chance of emancipation from the British parliament for the certainty of repeal. His first public speech had been made against the Union; and even so early as 1812, he contemplated relinquishing the agitation for emancipation, and devoting all his energies to a movement for

repeal, but was dissuaded from that purpose by his colleagues.

Now, however, his hands were free, and scarcely had he been a year in parliamentary harness, when he unfurled the standard of repeal. His new organization was instantaneously suppressed by proclamation—the act of the Irish secretary, Sir Henry Hardinge. The proclamation was illegal, yet O'Connell bowed to it. He denounced it however as “an atrocious Polignac proclamation”, and plainly intimated his conviction that Hardinge designed to force the country into a fight. Not that O'Connell “abjured the sword and stigmatised the sword” in the abstract; but, as he himself expressed it, the time had not come. “Why”, said he, “I would rather be a dog, and bay the moon, than the Irishman who would tamely submit to so infamous a proclamation. I have not opposed it hitherto, because that would implicate the people, and give our enemies a triumph. But I will oppose it, and that, too, not in the way that the paltry Castle scribe would wish—by force. No. Ireland is not in a state for repelling force by force. Too short a period has elapsed since the cause of contention between Protestants and Catholics was removed—too little time has been given for healing the wounds of factious contention, to allow Ireland to use physical force in the attainment of her rights or her punishment of wrong”.

Hardly had his first repeal society been suppressed by the “Polignac proclamation”, than he established a second, styled “The Irish Volunteers for the Repeal of the Union”. Another government proclamation as quickly appeared suppressing this body also. O'Connell, ever fertile of resort, now organized what he called “Repeal breakfasts”. “If the government”, said he, “think fit to proclaim down breakfasts, then we'll resort to a political lunch. If the luncheon be equally dangerous to the peace of the great Duke (the viceroy), we shall have political dinners. If the dinners be proclaimed down, we must, like certain sanctified dames, resort to ‘tea and tracts’”. The breakfasts were “proclaimed”, but, in defiance of the proclamation, went on as usual. Whereupon O'Connell was arrested

and held to bail to await his trial. He was not daunted. "Were I fated to-morrow", said he, "to ascend the scaffold or go down to the grave, I should bequeath to my children *eternal hatred of the Union*".

The prosecution was subsequently abandoned, and soon afterwards it became plain that O'Connell had been persuaded by the English reform leaders that *the* question for Ireland was what they called "the great cause of reform".—and that from a reformed parliament Ireland would obtain full justice. Accordingly he flung himself heartily into the ranks of the English reformers. Reform was carried; and almost the first act of the reformed parliament was to pass a Coercion Bill for Ireland more atrocious than any of its numerous predecessors!

All the violence of the English Tories had failed to shake O'Connell. The blandishments of the Whigs fared otherwise. "Union with English liberals"—union with "the great liberal party"—was now made to appear to him the best hope of Ireland. To yoke this giant to the Whig chariot, the Whig leaders were willing to pay a high price. Place, pension, emolument to any extent, O'Connell might have had from them at will. The most lucrative and exalted posts—positions in which he and all his family might have lived and died in ease and affluence—were at his acceptance. But O'Connell was neither corrupt nor selfish, though in his alliance with the Whigs he exhibited a lack of his usual firmness and perspicuity. He would accept nothing for himself, but he demanded the nomination in great part of the Irish executive, and a veto on the selection of a viceroy. The terms were granted, and it is unquestioned and unquestionable that the Irish executive thus chosen—the administration of Lord Mulgrave—was the only one Ireland had known for nigh two hundred years—the first, and the only one in the present century—that possessed the confidence and commanded the respect, attachment, and sympathy of the Irish people.

"*Men, not measures*", however, was the sum total of advantage O'Connell found derivable from his alliance with the great liberal party. Excellent appointments were made, and numerous Catholics were, to the horror of the

Orange faction, placed in administrative positions throughout the country. But this modicum of good (which had moreover, as we shall see, its counterbalancing evil) did not, in O'Connell's estimation, compensate for the inability or indisposition of the administration to pass adequate remedial *measures* for the country. He had given the Union system a fair trial under its most favourable circumstances, and the experiment only taught him that in Home Rule alone could Ireland hope for just or protective government.

Impelled by this conviction, on the 15th April, 1840, he established the Loyal National Repeal Association, a body destined to play an important part in Irish politics.

The new association was a very weak and unpromising project for some time. Men were not, at first, convinced that O'Connell was in earnest. Moreover, the evil that eventually tended so much to ruin the association, was now, even in its incipient stages, beginning to be felt. The appointment by government of popular leaders to places of emolument—an apparent boon—a flattering concession, as it seemed, to the spirit of emancipation—opened up to the administration an entirely new field of action in their designs against any embarrassing popular movement. O'Connell himself was a tower of personal and public integrity, but amongst his subordinates were men who by no means possessed his adamant virtue. It was only when the Melbourne (whig) ministry fell, and the Peel (tory) ministry came into power, that (government places for Catholic agitators being no longer in the market) the full force of his old following rallied to O'Connell's side in his repeal campaign. It would have been well for Ireland, if most of them had never taken such a step. Some of them were at best intrinsically rude, and almost worthless, instruments, whom O'Connell in past days had been obliged in sheer necessity to use. Others of them, of a better stamp, had had their day of usefulness and virtue, but now it was gone. Decay, physical and moral, had set in. A new generation was just stepping into manhood, with severer ideas of personal and public morality, with purer tastes and loftier ambitions, with more intense and fiery

ardour. Yet there were also amongst the adherents of the great tribune, some who brought to the repeal cause a fidelity not to be surpassed, integrity beyond price, ability of the highest order, and a matured experience, in which, of course, the new growth of men were entirely deficient.

In three years the movement for national autonomy swelled into a magnitude that startled the world. Never did a nation so strikingly manifest its will. About three million of associates paid yearly towards the repeal association funds. As many more were allied to the cause by sympathy. Meetings to petition against the Union were at several places attended by six hundred thousand persons; by eight hundred thousand at two places; and by nearly a million at one—Tara hill. All these gigantic demonstrations about forty in number, were held without the slightest accident, or the slightest infringement of the peace. Order, sobriety, respect for the laws, were the watchwords of the millions. England was stripped of the slightest chance of deceiving the world as to the nature of her relations with Ireland. The people of Israel, with one voice, besought Pharaoh to let them go free: but the heart of Pharaoh was hard as stone.

O'Connell was not prepared for the obduracy of tyrannic strength which he encountered. So completely was he impressed with the conviction that the ministry *must* yield to the array of an almost unanimous people, that in 1843 he committed himself to a specific promise and solemn undertaking that "within six months" repeal would be an accomplished fact.

This fatal promise—the gigantic error of his life—suggested to the minister the sure means to effect the overthrow of O'Connell and his movement. To break the spell of his magic influence over the people—to destroy their hitherto unshaken confidence in him—to publicly discredit his most solemn and formal covenant with them—(that if they would but keep the peace and obey his instructions, he would as surely as the sun shone on them, obtain repeal within six months)—it was now necessary merely to hold out for six or twelve months longer, and by some bold stroke, even at the risk of a civil war, to fall upon O'Con-

nell and his colleagues with all the rigours of the law, and publicly degrade them.

This daring and dangerous scheme Peel carried out. First he garrisoned the country with an overwhelming force, and then, so far from yielding repeal, trampled on the constitution, challenged the people to war, prepared for a massacre at Clontarf—averted only by the utmost exertions of the popular leaders—and, finally, he had O'Connell and his colleagues publicly arraigned, tried, and convicted as conspirators, and dragged to jail as criminals.

O'Connell's promise was defeated. His spell was broken from that hour. All the worse for England.

All the worse for England, as crime is always, even where it wins present advantage, all the worse for those who avail of it. For, what had England done? Here was a man, the corner-stones of whose policy, the first principles of whose public teaching, were—loyalty, firm and fervent, to the throne; respect, strict and scrupulous, for the laws; confidence in the prevalence of reasoning force; reliance, complete and exclusive, upon the efficacy of peaceful, legal, and constitutional action.

Yet this was the man whom England prosecuted as a *conspirator!* These were the teachings she punished with fine and imprisonment.

The Irish people, through O'Connell, had said to England: "Let us reason this question. Let there be an end of resort to force". England answered by a flourish of the mailed hand. She would have no reasoning on the subject. She pointed to her armies and fleets, her arsenals and dockyards, her shotted gun and whetted sabre.

In that hour a silent revolution was wrought in the popular mind of Ireland. Up to that moment a peaceable, an amicable, a friendly settlement of 'he question between the two countries, was easy enough. But now!

The law lords in the British house of peers, by three votes to two, decided that the conviction of O'Connell and his colleagues was wrongful. Every one knew that. There was what the minister judged to be a "state necessity" for showing that the government could and would publicly defy and degrade O'Connell by conviction and imprison-

ment, innocent or guilty; and as this had been triumphantly accomplished, Peel cared not a jot that the full term of punishment was thus cut short. O'Connell left his prison cell a broken man. Overwhelming demonstrations of unchanged affection and personal attachment poured in upon him from his countrymen. Their faith in his devotion to Ireland was increased a hundred fold, but their faith in the efficacy of his policy, or the surety of his promises, was gone.

He himself saw and felt it, and, marking the effect the government course had wrought upon the new generation of Irishmen, he was troubled in soul. England had dared them to grapple with her power. He trembled at thought of what the result might be in years to come. Already the young crop of Irish manhood had become recognizable as a distinct political element—a distinct school of thought and action. At the head of this party blazed a galaxy of genius—Poets, Orators, Scholars, Writers, and Organisers. It was the party of Youth with its generous impulses, its roseate hopes, its classic models, its glorious daring, its pure devotion. The old man feared the issue between this hot blood and the cold stern tyranny that had shown its disregard for law and conscience. Age was now heavily upon him, and moreover there were those around him full of jealousy against the young leaders of the Irish Gironde—full of envy of their brilliant genius, their public fame, their popular influence. The gloomiest forebodings arose to the old man's mind, or were sedulously conjured up before it by those who surrounded him.

Soon a darker shade came to deepen the gloom that was settling on the horizon of his future. Famine—terrible and merciless—fell upon the land. Or rather, one crop, out of the many grown on Irish soil—that one on which the masses of the people fed—perished; and it became plain the government would let the people perish too. In 1846 the long spell of conservative rule came to a close, and the whigs came into office. Place was once more to be had by facile Catholic agitators; and now the Castle backstairs was literally thronged with the old hacks of Irish agitation, filled with a fine glowing indignation against

those "purists" of the new school who denied that it was a good thing to have friends in office. Here was a new source of division between the old and new elements in Irish popular politics. O'Connell himself was as far as ever from bending to the acceptance of personal favour from the government; but some of his near relatives and long-time colleagues or subordinates in agitation, were one by one being "placed" by the Viceroy, amidst fierce invectives from the "Young Ireland" party, as they were called.

All these troubles seemed to be shaking from its foundations the mind of the old Tribune, who every day sunk more and more into the hands of his personal adherents. He became at length fully persuaded of the necessity of fettering the young party. He framed a test declaration for members of the association, repudiating, disclaiming, denouncing, and abhorring the use of physical force *under any possible circumstances or in any age or country*. This monstrous absurdity showed that the once glorious intellect of O'Connell was gone. In his constant brooding over the dangers of an insurrection in which the people would be slaughtered like sheep, he struck upon this resort, apparently unable to see that it was opposed to all his own past teaching and practice—nay, opposed to all law, human and divine, that it would conserve and enthrone the most iniquitous tyrannies, and render man the abject slave of power.

The young party offered to take this test as far as related to the *present* or the *future of Ireland*; but they refused to stigmatize the patriot brave of all history, who had bled and died for liberty. This would not suffice, and the painful fact became clear enough that the monstrous test resolutions were meant to drive them from the association. On the 27th of July, 1846, the Young Ireland leaders, refusing a test which was a treason against truth, justice, and liberty, quitted Conciliation Hall, and Irish Ireland was rent into bitterly hostile parties.

Not long afterwards the insidious disease, the approach of which was proclaimed clearly enough in O'Connell's recent proceedings—softening of the brain—laid the old

chieftain low. He had felt the approach of dissolution, and set out on a pilgrimage that had been his lifelong dream—a visit to Rome. And assuredly a splendid welcome awaited him there; the first Catholic Layman in Europe, the Emancipator of seven millions of Catholics, the most illustrious Christian patriot of his age. But heaven decreed otherwise. A brighter welcome in a better land awaited the toil-worn soldier of faith and fatherland. At Marseilles, on his way to Rome, it became clear that a crisis was at hand; yet he would fain push onward for the Eternal City. In Genoa the Superb he breathed his last; bequeathing, with his dying breath, his body to Ireland, his heart to Rome, his soul to God. All Christendom was plunged into mourning. The world poured its homage of respect above his bier. Ireland, the land for which he had lived and laboured, gave him a funeral nobly befitting his title of Uncrowned Monarch. But more honouring than funeral pageant, more worthy of his memory, was the abiding grief that fell upon the people who had loved him with such a deep devotion.

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LXXXV.—HOW THE HORRORS OF THE FAMINE HAD THEIR EFFECT ON IRISH POLITICS. HOW THE FRENCH REVOLUTION SET EUROPE IN A FLAME. HOW IRELAND MADE A VAIN ATTEMPT AT INSURRECTION.



MIDST the horrors of "Black Forty-seven", the reason of strong men gave way in Ireland. The people lay dead in hundreds on the high ways and in the fields. There was food in abundance in the country;\* but the government said it should not be touched, unless in accordance with the teachings of Adam Smith and the "laws of political economy".

The mechanism of an absentee government utterly

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\* The corn *exported* from Ireland that year would, alone, it is computed have sufficed to feed a larger population.

broke down, even in carrying out its own tardy and inefficient measures. The charity of the English people towards the end generously endeavoured to compensate for the inefficiency or the heartlessness of the government. But it could not be done. The people perished in thousands. Ireland was one huge charnel pit.

It is not wonderful that amidst scenes like these some passionate natures burst into rash resolves. Better, they cried, the people died bravely with arms in their hands, ridding themselves of such an imbecile *regime*; better Ireland was reduced to a cinder, than endure the horrible physical and moral ruin being wrought before men's eyes. The daring apostle of these doctrines was John Mitchel. Men called him mad. Well might it have been so. Few natures like his could have calmly looked on at a people perishing—rotting away—under the hands of blundering and incompetent, if not callous and heartless foreign rulers. But he protested he was “not mad, most noble Festus”. An unforeseen circumstance came to the aid of the phrensied leader. In February, 1848, the people rose in the streets of Paris, and in three days' struggle pulled down one of the strongest military governments in Europe. All the continent burst into a flame. North, south, east, and west, the peoples rose, thrones tottered, and rulers fell. Once again the blood of Ireland was turned to fire. What nation of them all, it was asked, had such maddening wrongs as Ireland? While all around her were rising in appeals to the god of battles, was she alone to crouch and whine like a beggar? Was England stronger than other governments that now daily crumbled at the first shock of conflict?

Even a people less impulsive and hot-blooded than the Irish would have been powerless to withstand these incitements. The Young Ireland leaders had almost unanimously condemned Mitchel's policy when first it had been preached; but this new state of things was too much for them. They were swept off their feet by the fierce billows of popular excitement. To resist the cry for war was deemed “cowardly”. Ere long even the calmest of the Young Ireland chiefs yielded to the epidemic, and

became persuaded that the time at length had come when Ireland might safely and righteously appeal for justice to God and her own strong right arm.

Alas! all this was the fire<sup>o</sup>f fever in the blood, not the strength of health in that wasted famine-stricken nation!

Nevertheless, the government was filled with alarm. It fell upon the popular leaders with savage fury. Mitchel was the first victim. He had openly defied government to the issue. He had openly said and preached that English government was murdering the people, and ought to be swept away at once and for ever. So prevalent was this conviction—at all events its first proposition\*—in Ireland at the time, that the government felt that according to the rules of fair constitutional procedure, Mitchel would be sustained in a court of justice. That is to say a “jury of his countrymen” *fairly* empannelled, would, considering all the circumstances, declare him a patriot, not a criminal. So the government was fain to collect twelve of its own creatures, or partizans, and send them into a jury box to convict him in imitation of a “trial”. Standing in the dock where Emmet stood half a century before, he gloried in the sacrifice he was about to consummate for Ireland, and like another Scævola, told his judges that three hundred comrades were ready to dare the same fate. The court rang with shouts from the crowding auditors, that each one and all were ready to follow him—that not three hundred, but three hundred thousand, were his companions in the “crime” of which he stood convicted. Before the echoes had quite died away in Green Street, John Mitchel, loaded with irons, was hurried on board a government transport ship, and carried off into captivity.

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\* So distressingly obvious was the callousness of the government to the horrors of the famine—so inhuman its policy in declaring that the millions should perish rather than the corn market should be “disturbed” by the action of the State—that coroners’ juries in several places, empannelled in the cases of famine victims, found as their verdict, on oath, “Wilful murder against Lord John Russell” (the premier) and his fellow cabinet ministers.

He had not promised all in vain. Into his vacant place there now stepped one of the most remarkable men—one of the purest and most devoted patriots—Ireland ever produced. Gentle and guileless as a child, modest and retiring, disliking turmoil, and naturally averse to violence, his was, withal, true courage, and rarest, noblest daring. This was "John Martin of Loughorne", a Presbyterian gentleman of Ulster, who now, quitting the congenial tranquillity and easy independence of his northern home, took his place, all calmly, but lion-hearted, in the gap of danger. He loved peace, but he loved truth, honour, and manhood, and he hated tyranny, and was ready to give his life for Ireland. He now as boldly as Mitchel proclaimed that the English usurpation was murderous in its result, and hateful to all just men. Martin was seized also, and like Mitchel, was denied real trial by jury. He was brought before twelve government partizans selected for the purpose, convicted, sentenced, and hurried off in chains.

Seizures and convictions now multiplied rapidly. The people would have risen in insurrection immediately on Mitchel's conviction, but for the exhortations of other leaders, who pointed out the ruin of such a course at a moment when the food question alone would defeat them. In harvest, it was resolved on all sides to take the field, and the interval was to be devoted to energetic preparation.

But the government was not going to permit this choice of time nor this interval of preparation. In the last week of June a bill to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act was suddenly hurried through parliament, and the Young Ireland leaders, scattered through the country in the work of organization, taken utterly by surprise, and without opportunity or time for communication or concert, were absolutely flung into the field.

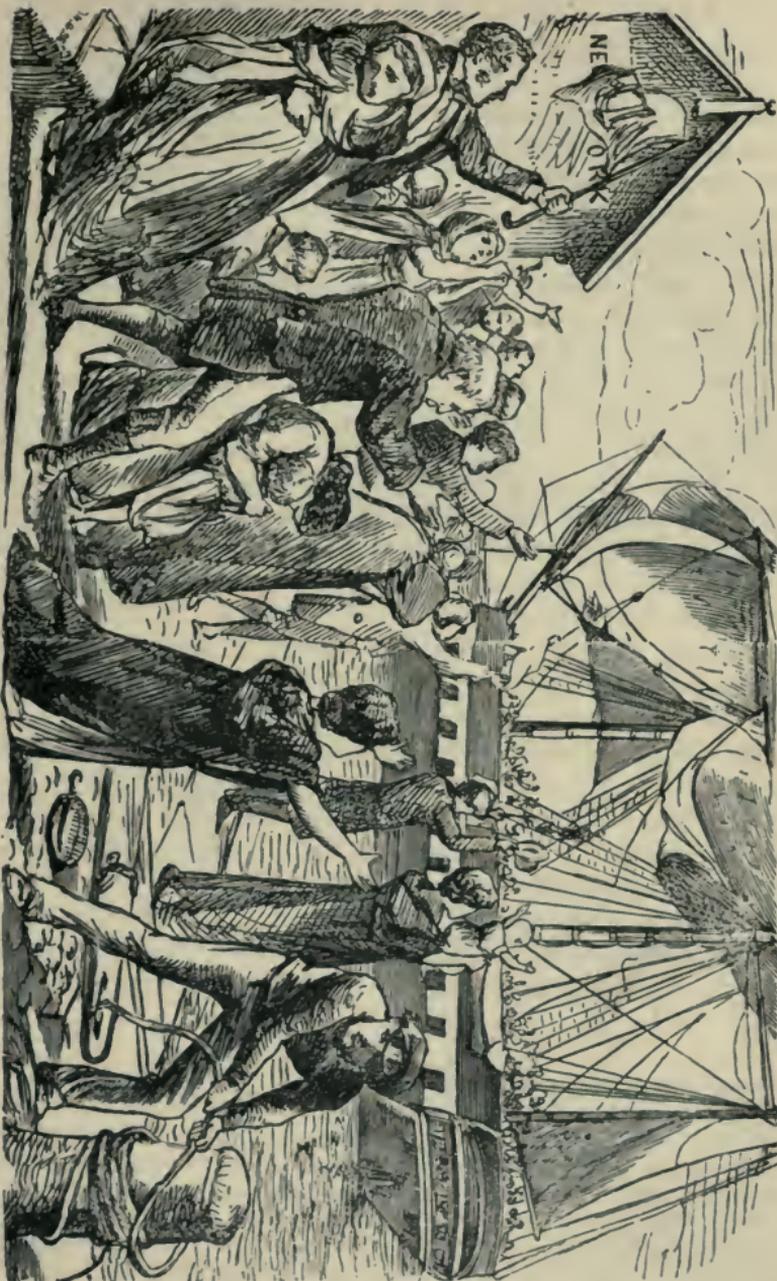
The result was what might be expected: no other result was possible, as human affairs are ordinarily determined. An abortive rising took place in Tipperary, and once more some of the purest, the bravest, and the best of Irishmen were fugitives or captives for "the old crime of their race"—high treason against England.

The leader in this movement was William Smith O'Brien,

brother of the present Earl of Inchiquin, and a lineal descendant of the victor of Clontarf. Like some other of the ancient families of Ireland of royal lineage, O'Brien's had, generations before his time, become completely identified with the Anglo-Irish nobility in political and religious faith. He was, therefore, by birth an aristocrat, and was by early education a "conservative" in politics. But he had a thoroughly Irish heart withal, and its promptings, seconded by the force of reason, brought him in 1844 into the ranks of the national movement. This act—the result of pure self-sacrificing conviction and sense of duty—sundered all the ties of his past life, and placed him in utter antagonism with his nearest and dearest relatives and friends. He was a man endowed with all the qualities of soul that truly ennoble humanity; a lofty integrity, a proud dignity, a perfect *inability*, so to speak, to fall into an ignoble or unworthy thought or action. Unfriendly critics called him haughty, and said he was proud of his family; and there was a proportion of truth in the charge. But it was not a failing to blush for, after all, and might well be held excusable in a scion of the royal house of Thomond, filled with the glorious spirit of his ancestors.

Such was the man—noble by birth, fortune, education, and social and public position—who, towards the close of 1848, lay in an Irish dungeon awaiting the fate of the Irish patriot who loves his country "not wisely but too well".

In those days the Irish peasantry—the wreck of that splendid population, which a few years before were matchless in the world—were enduring all the pangs of famine, or the humiliations of "out-door" pauper life. Amidst this starving peasantry scores of political fugitives were now scattered, pursued by all the rigours of the government, and with a price set on each head. Not a man—not one—of the proscribed patriots who thus sought asylum amidst the people was betrayed. The starving peasant housed them, sheltered them, shared with them his own scanty meal, guarded them while they slept, and guided them safely on their way. He knew that hundreds of pounds were on their heads but he shrank as from perdition from the thought of selling for blood-money men whose



A Scene from the Irish Exodus.

See page 17



crime was that they had dared and lost all for poor Ireland.\*

Dillon, Doheny, and O'Gorman, made good their escape to America. O'Brien, Meagher, and MacManus, were sent to follow Mitchel, Martin, and O'Doherty into the convict chain-gangs of Van Diemen's Land. One man alone came scathless, as by miracle, out of the lions' den of British law; Gavan Duffy, the brain of the Young Ireland party. *Three times* he was brought to the torture of trial, each time defying his foes as proudly as if victory had crowned the venture of his colleagues. Despite packing of juries, the crown again and again failed to obtain a verdict against him, and at length had to let him go free. "Free"—but broken and ruined in health and fortune, yet not in hope.

Thus fell that party whose genius won the admiration of the world, the purity of whose motives, the chivalry of whose actions, even their direst foes confessed. They were wrecked in a hurricane of popular enthusiasm, to which they fatally spread sail. It is easy for us now to discern and declare the huge error into which they were impelled—the error of meditating an insurrection—the error of judging that a famishing peasantry, unarmed and undisciplined, could fight and conquer England at peace with all the world. But it is always easy to be wise after the fact. At the time—in the midst of that delirium of excitement, of passionate resolve and sanguine hope—it was not easy for generous natures to choose and determine otherwise than as they did. The verdict of public opinion—the judgment of their own country—the judg-

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\* This devotedness, this singular fidelity, was strikingly illustrated in the conduct of some Tipperary peasants brought forward compulsorily by the crown as witnesses on the trial of Smith O'Brien for high treason. They were marched in between files of bayonets. The crown were aware that they could supply the evidence required, and they were now called upon to give it. One and all, they refused to give evidence. One and all they made answer to the warnings of the court that such refusal would be punished by lengthened imprisonment:—"Take us out and shoot us if you like, but a word we won't swear against the noble gentleman in the dock". The threatened punishment was inflicted, and was borne without flinching.

ment of the world—has done them justice. It has proclaimed their unwise course, the error of noble, generous, and self-sacrificing men.

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LXXXVI.—HOW THE IRISH EXODUS CAME ABOUT, AND THE ENGLISH PRESS GLOATED OVER THE ANTICIPATED EXTIRPATION OF THE IRISH RACE.

IGHTEEN hundred and forty-nine found Ireland in a plight as wretched as had been hers for centuries. A year before, intoxicated with hope, delirious with enthusiasm—now, she endured the sickening miseries of a fearful reaction. She had vowed daring deeds—deeds beyond her strength—and now, sick at heart, she looked like one who wished for death's relief from a lot of misery and despair. Political action was utterly given up. No political organization of any kind survived Mr. Birch and Lord Clarendon. There was not even a whisper to disturb the repose of the 'Jailer-General':—

Even he, the tyrant Arab, slept;  
Calm while a nation round him wept.\*

The parliament, for the benefit of the English people, had recently abolished the duty on imported foreign corn. Previously Ireland had grown corn extensively for the English market; but now, obliged to compete with corn-growing countries where the land was not weighted with such oppressive rents as had been laid on and exacted in Ireland under the old system, the Irish farmer found himself ruined by "tillage" or grain-raising. Coincidentally came an increased demand for cattle to supply the English meat-market. *Corn* might be safely and cheaply brought

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\* *Irish Political Associations.*

to England from even the most distant climes, but *cattle* could not. Ireland was close at hand, destined by nature, said one British statesman, to grow meat for "our great hives of human industry"; "clearly intended by Providence", said another, "to be the fruitful mother of flocks and herds". That is to say, if high rents cannot be paid in Ireland by growing corn, in consequence of "free trade", they can by raising cattle.

But turning a country from *grain*-raising to *cattle*-raising meant the annihilation of the agricultural population. For, bullock-ranges and sheep-runs needed the consolidation of farms and the sweeping away of the human occupants. Two or three herdsmen or shepherds would alone be required throughout miles of such "ranges" and "runs", where, under the tillage system, thousands of peasant families found employment and lived in peaceful contentment.

Thus, *cleared-farms* came to be desirable with the landlords. For, as a consequence of "free-trade", either the old rents must be abandoned, or the agricultural population be swept away *en masse*.

Then was witnessed a monstrous proceeding. In 1846 and 1847—the famine years—while the people lay perishing, the land lay wasted. Wherever seed was put in the ground, the hunger-maddened victims rooted it out and ate it raw. No crops were raised, and of course no rents were paid. In any other land on earth the first duty of the state would be to remit, or compound with the landowners for any claims advanced for the rents of those famine years. But, alas! in cruelties of oppression endured, Ireland is like no other country in the world. With the permission, concurrence, and sustainment of the government, the landlords now commenced to demand what they called the arrears of rent for the past three years! And then—the object for which this monstrous demand was made—failing payment, "notices to quit" by the thousand carried the sentence of expulsion through the homesteads of the doomed people! The ring of the crowbar, the crash of the falling roof-tree, the shriek of the evicted, flung on the road-side to die, resounded all over the island. Thou-

sands of families, panic-stricken, did not wait for receipt of the dread mandate at their own door. With breaking hearts they quenched the hearth, and bade eternal farewell to the scenes of home, flying in crowds to the Land of Liberty in the West. The streams of fugitives swelled to dimensions that startled Christendom; but the English press burst into a poean of joy and triumph: for now at last the Irish question would be settled. Now at last England would be at ease. Now at last this turbulent, disaffected, untameable race would be cleared out. "In a short time", said the *Times*, "*a Catholic Celt will be as rare in Ireland as a Red Indian on the shores of Manhattan*".

Their own countrymen who remained—their kindred—their own flesh and blood—their pastors and prelates—could not witness unmoved this spectacle, unexampled in history, the flight *en masse* of a population from their own beautiful land, not as adventurous emigrants, but as heart-crushed victims of expulsion. Some voices, accordingly, were raised to deplore this calamity—to appeal to England, to warn her that evil would come of it in the future. But as England did not see this—did not see it *then*—she turned heartlessly from the appeal, and laughed scornfully at the warning. There were philosopher statesmen ready at hand to argue that the flying thousands were "*surplus population*". This was the cold-blooded official way of expressing it. The English press, however, went more directly to the mark. They called the sorrowing cavalcade wending their way to the emigrant ship, a race of assassins, creatures of superstition, lazy, ignorant, and brutified. Far in the progress of this exodus—even long after some of its baleful effects began to be felt—the London *Saturday Review* answered in the following language to a very natural expression of sympathy and grief wrung from an Irish prelate witnessing the destruction of his people:—

"The Lion of St. Jarlath's surveys with an envious eye the Irish exodus, and sighs over the departing demons of assassination and murder. So complete is the rush of departing marauders, whose lives were profitably occupied in shoot-

*ing Protestants from behind a hedge, that silence reigns over the vast solitude of Ireland".\**

Pages might be filled with extracts of a like nature from the press of England; many still more coarse and brutal. There may, probably, be some Englishmen who *now* wish such language had not been used; that such blistering libels had not been rained on a departing people, to nourish in their hearts the terrible vow of vengeance with which they landed on American shores. But *then*—in that hour, when it seemed *safe* to be brutal and merciless—the grief-stricken, thrust-out people

“Found not a generous friend, a pitying foe”.

And so they went into banishment in thousands and tens of thousands, with hands uplifted to the just God who saw all this; and they cried aloud, *Quousque Domine? Quousque?*

An effort was made in Ireland to invoke legislative remedy for the state of things which was thus depopulating the country. A parliamentary party was formed to obtain some measure of protection for the agricultural population. For even where *no* arrears—for “famine years”, or any other years—were due, even where the rent was paid to the day, the landlords stepped in, according to law, swept off the tenant, and confiscated his property. To terminate this shocking system, to secure from such robbery the property of the tenant, while strictly protecting that of the landlord, it was resolved to press for an Act of Parliament.

At vast sacrifices the suffering people, braving the anger of their landlords, returned to the legislature a number of representatives pledged to their cause. But the English minister, as if bent on teaching Irishmen to despair of redress by constitutional agencies, resisted those most just and equitable demands, and deliberately set himself to corrupt and break up that party. To humiliate and exasperate the people more and more, to mock them and insult them, the faithless men who had be-

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\* *Saturday Review*, 28th Nov., 1863.

trayed them were set over them as judges and rulers. And when, by means as nefarious as those that had carried the union, this last attempt of the Irish people to devote themselves to peaceful and constitutional action was baffled, defeated, trampled down, when the "Tenant League" had been broken up, and its leaders scattered—when Gavan Duffy had been driven into despairing exile, when Lucas had been sent broken-hearted into the grave, and Moore, the intrepid leader, the unequalled orator, had been relegated to private life, a shout of victory again went up from the press of England, as if a Trafalgar had been won.

LXXXVII.—HOW SOME IRISHMEN TOOK TO "THE POLITICS OF DESPAIR". HOW ENGLAND'S REVOLUTIONARY TEACHINGS "CAME HOME TO ROOST". HOW GENERAL JOHN O'NEILL GAVE COLONEL BOOKER A TOUCH OF FONTENOY AT RIDGEWAY.



All may deplore, but none can wonder, that under circumstances such as those, a considerable section of the Irish people should have lent a ready ear to "the politics of despair".

In vain the hero's heart had bled,  
The sage's voice had warned in vain.

In the face of all the lessons of history they would conspire anew, and dream once more of grappling England on the battlefield !

They were in the mood to hearken to any proposal, no matter how wild ; to dare any risk, no matter how great ; to follow any man, no matter whom he might be, promising to lead them to vengeance. Such a proposal presented itself in the shape of a conspiracy, an oath-bound secret society, designated the "Fenian Brotherhood", which made its appearance about this time. The project was strenuously reprehended by every one of the "Forty-eight" leaders with scarcely an exception, and by the Catholic clergy universally ; in other words, by every patriotic influence in

Ireland not left of reason by despair. The first leaders of the conspiracy were not men well recommended to Irish confidence, and in the venomous manner in which they assailed all who endeavoured to dissuade the people from their plot, they showed that they had not only copied the forms, but imbibed the spirit of the continental secret societies. But the maddened people were ready to follow and worship *any* leader whose project gave a voice to the terrible passions surging in their breasts. They were ready to believe in him in the face of all warning, and at his bidding to distrust and denounce friends and guides whom, ordinarily, they would have followed to the death.

In simple truth the fatuous conduct of England had so prepared the soil and sown the seed, that the conspirator had but to step in and reap the crop. In 1843 she had answered to the people that their case *would not be listened to*. To the peaceful and amicable desire of Ireland to reason the questions at issue, England answered in the well-remembered words of the *Times*: "*Repeal must not be argued with*"—"If the Union were galled it must be maintained". In other words, England, unable to rely on the weight of any other argument, flung the sword into the scale, and cried out: "Væ Victis!"

In the same year she showed the Irish people that loyalty to the throne, respect for the laws, and reliance exclusively on moral force, did not avail to save them from violence. When *O'Connell* was dragged to jail as a "conspirator"—a man notoriously the most loyal, peaceable, and law-respecting in the land—the people unhappily seemed to conclude that they might as well be *real* conspirators, for any distinction England would draw between Irishmen pleading the just cause of their country.

But there was yet a further reach of infatuation, and apparently England was resolved to leave no incitement unused in driving the Irish upon the policy of violence—of hate and hostility implacable.

At the very time when the agents of the secret society were preaching to the Irish people the doctrines of revolution, the *English press resounded with like teachings*. The

sovereign and her ministers proclaimed them; parliament reëchoed them; England with unanimous voice shouted them aloud. The right, nay, the *duty* of a people considering themselves, or *fancying* themselves, oppressed, to conspire and revolt against their rulers—even native and legitimate rulers—was day by day thundered forth by the English journals. Yet more than this. The most blistering taunts were flung against peoples who, fancying themselves oppressed, hoped to be righted by any means save by conspiracy, revolt, war, bloodshed, eternal resistance and hostility. “Let all such peoples know”, wrote the *Times*, “that *liberty is a thing to be fought out with knives and swords and hatchets*”.

To be sure these general propositions were formulated for the express use of the *Italians* at the time. So utterly had England’s anxiety to overthrow the papacy blinded her, that she never once recollected that those incitements were being hearkened to by a hot-blooded and passionate people like the Irish. At the worst, however, she judged the Irish to be too completely cowed to dream of applying them to their own case. At the very moment when William Smith O’Brien was freely sacrificing or perilling his popularity in the endeavour to keep his countrymen from the revolutionary secret society, the *Times*—blind, stone-blind, to the state of the facts—blinded by intense national prejudice—assailed him truculently, as an antiquated traitor who could not get *one man—not even one man*—in all Ireland to share his “crazy dream” of national autonomy.

Alas! So much for England’s ability to understand the Irish people! So much for her ignorance of a country which she insists on ruling!

Up to 1864 the Fenian enterprise—the absurd idea of challenging England (or rather accepting *her* challenge) to a war-duel—strenuously resisted by the Catholic clergy and other patriotic influences, made comparatively little headway in Ireland. In America, almost from the outset it secured large support. For England had filled the western continent with an Irish population burning for vengeance upon the power that had hunted them from their own

land. On the termination of the great civil war of 1861-1864, a vast army of Irish soldiers, trained, disciplined, and experienced—of valour proven on many a well-fought field, and each man willing to cross the globe a hundred times for “a blow at England”—were disengaged from service.

Suddenly the Irish revolutionary enterprise assumed in America a magnitude that startled and overwhelmed its originators. It was no longer the desperate following of an autocratic chief-conspirator, blindly bowing to his nod. It grew into the dimensions of a great national confederation with an army and a treasury at its disposal. The expansion in America was not without a corresponding effect in Ireland; but it was after all nothing proportionate. There was up to the last a fatuous amount of delusion maintained by the “Head Centre” on this side of the Atlantic, James Stephens, a man of marvellous subtlety and wondrous powers of plausible imposition; crafty, cunning, and quite unscrupulous as to the employment of means to an end. However, the army ready to hand in America, if not utilised at once, would soon be melted away and gone, like the snows of past winters. So in the middle of 1865 it was resolved to take the field in the approaching autumn.

It is hard to contemplate this decision or declaration, without deeming it either insincere or wicked on the part of the leader or leaders, who at the moment knew the *real* condition of affairs in Ireland. That the enrolled members, howsoever few, would respond when called upon, was certain at any time; for the Irish are not cowards; the men who joined this desperate enterprise were sure to prove themselves courageous, if not either prudent or wise. But the pretence of the revolutionary chief, that there was a force able to afford the merest chance of success, was too utterly false not to be plainly criminal.

Towards the close of 1865 came almost contemporaneously the government swoop on the Irish revolutionary executive, and the deposition—after solemn judicial trial, as prescribed by the laws of the society—of O’Mahony, the American “Head Centre”, for crimes and offences alleged to be worse than mere imbecility, and the election in his stead

of Colonel William R. Roberts, an Irish-American merchant of high standing and honourable character, whose fortune had always generously aided Irish patriotic, charitable, or religious purposes. The deposed official, however, did not submit to the application of the society rules. He set up a rival association, a course in which he was supported by the Irish Head Centre; and a painful scene of factious and acrimonious contention between the two parties thus antagonised, caused the English government to hope—nay, for a moment, fully to believe—that the disappearance of both must soon follow.

This hope quickly vanished when, on reliable intelligence, it was announced that the Irish-Americans, under the Roberts' presidency, were substituting for the unreal or insincere project of an expedition to Ireland, as the first move, the plainly practicable scheme of an invasion of British North America in the first instance. The *Times* at once declared that now indeed England had need to buckle on her armour, for that the adoption of this new project showed the men in America to be in earnest, and to have sound military judgment in their councils. An invasion of Ireland by the Irish in the United States all might laugh at, but an invasion of Canada from the same quarter was quite another matter; the southern frontier of British North America being one impossible to defend in its entirety, unless by an army of one hundred thousand men. Clearly a vulnerable point of the British empire had been discovered.

This was a grievous hardship on the people of Canada. They had done no wrong to Ireland or to the Irish people. In Canada Irishmen had found friendly asylum, liberty, and protection. It seemed, therefore, a cruel resolve to visit on Canada the terrible penalty of war for the offences of the parent country. To this the reply from the confederate Irish in the States was, that they would wage no war on the Canadian people; that it was only against British power their hostility would be exercised; and that Canada had no right to expect enjoyment of all the advantages, without experiencing, on the other hand, the disadvantages, of British connection.

It seemed very clear that England stood a serious chance of losing her North American dependencies. One hope alone remained. If the American government would but defend the frontier on its own side, and cut the invading parties from their base of supplies, the enterprise must naturally and inevitably fail. It seemed impossible, however, that the American government could be prevailed upon thus to become a British preventive police. During the civil war the Washington executive, and, indeed, the universal sentiment and action of the American people, had plainly and expressly encouraged the Fenian organization; and even so recently as the spring of 1866, the American government had sold to the agents of Colonel Roberts thousands of pounds worth of arms and munitions of war, with the clear, though unofficial, knowledge that they were intended for the projected Canadian enterprise. Nevertheless, as we shall see, the American executive had no qualms about adopting the outrageously inconsistent course.

By the month of May, 1866, Roberts had established a line of depots along the Canadian frontier, and in great part filled them with the arms and material of war sold to him by the Washington government. Towards the close of the month the various "circulars" throughout the Union received the command to start their contingents for the frontier. Never, probably, in Irish history was a call to the field more enthusiastically obeyed. From every state in the Union there was a simultaneous movement northwards of bodies of Irishmen; the most intense excitement pervading the Irish population from Maine to Texas. At this moment, however, the Washington government flung off the mask. A vehement and bitterly-worded proclamation called for the instantaneous abandonment of the Irish projects. A powerful military force was marched to the northern frontier; United States gunboats were posted on the lakes and on the St. Lawrence river; all the arms and war material of the Irish were sought out, seized, and confiscated, and all the arriving contingents, on mere suspicion of their destination, were arrested.

This course of proceeding fell like a thunderbolt on the

Irish ! It seemed impossible to credit its reality ! Despite all those obstacles, however—a British army on one shore, an American army on the other, and hostile cruisers, British and American, guarding the waters between—one small battalion of the Irish under Colonel John O'Neill succeeded in crossing to the Canadian side on the night of the 31st May, 1866. They landed on British ground close to Fort Erie, which place they at once occupied, hauling down the royal ensign of England, and hoisting over Fort Erie in its stead, amidst a scene of boundless enthusiasm and joy, the Irish standard of green and gold.

The news that the Irish were across the St. Lawrence—that once more, for the first time for half a century, the green flag waved in the broad sunlight over the serried lines of men in arms for “the good old cause”—sent the Irish millions in the States into wild excitement. In twenty-four hours fifty thousand volunteers offered for service, ready to march at an hour's notice. But the Washington government stopped all action on the part of the Irish organization. Colonel Roberts, his military chief officer, and other officials, were arrested, and it soon became plain the unexpected intervention of the American executive had utterly destroyed, for the time, the Canadian project, and saved to Great Britain her North American colonies.

Meanwhile O'Neill and his small force were in the enemy's country—in the midst of their foes. From all parts of Canada troops were hurried forward by rail to crush at once by overwhelming force the now isolated Irish battalion. On the morning of the 1st of June, 1866, Colonel Booker, at the head of the combined British force of regular infantry of the line and some volunteer regiments, marched against the invaders. At a place called Limestone Ridge, close by the village of Ridgeway, the advanced guard of the British found O'Neill drawn up in position ready for battle. The action forthwith commenced. The Irish skirmishers appeared to fall back slowly before their assailants, a circumstance which caused the Canadian volunteer regiments to conclude hastily that the day was going very easily in their favour. Suddenly, however, the

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Irish skirmishers halted, and the British, to their dismay, found themselves face to face with the main force of the Irish, posted in a position which evidenced consummate ability on the part of O'Neill. Booker ordered an assault in full force on the Irish position, which was, however, disastrously repulsed. While the British commander was hesitating as to whether he should renew the battle, or await reinforcements reported to be coming up from Hamilton, his deliberations were cut short by a shout from the Irish lines, and a cry of alarm from his own—the Irish were advancing to a charge. They came on with a wild rush and a ringing cheer, bursting through the British ranks. There was a short but desperate struggle, when some one of the Canadian officers, observing an Irish aide-camp galloping through a wood close by, thought it was a body of Irish horse, and raised the cry of "cavalry! cavalry!" Some of the regular regiments made a vain effort to form a square—a fatal blunder, there being no cavalry at hand; others, however, broke into confusion, and took to flight, the general, Booker, it is alleged, being the fleetest of the fugitives. The British route soon became complete, the day was hopelessly lost, and the victorious Irish, with the captured British standards in their hands, stood on Ridgeway heights as proudly as their comrades at Fontenoy—"The field was fought and won".

LXXXVIII.—THE UNFINISHED CHAPTER OF EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND SIXTY-SEVEN. HOW IRELAND, "OFT DOOMED TO DEATH," HAS SHOWN THAT SHE IS "FATED NOT TO DIE."



JUDGED by the forces engaged, Ridgeway was an inconsiderable engagement. Yet the effect produced by the news in Canada, in the States, in England, and of course, most of all in Ireland, could scarcely have been surpassed by the announcement of a second Fontenoy. Irish troops had met the levies of England in pitched battle and defeated them. English colours, trophies of victory, were in the hands of an Irish general. The green flag had come triumphant through the storm of battle. At home and abroad the Irish saw only these facts, and these appeared to be all-sufficient for national pride.

O'Neill, on the morrow of his victory, learned with poignant feelings that his supports and supplies had been all cut off by the American gun-boats. In his front the enemy were concentrating in thousands. Behind him rolled the *St. Lawrence*, cruised by United States war steamers. He was ready to fight the British, but he could not match the combined powers of Britain and America. He saw the enterprise was defeated hopelessly, for this time, by the action of the *Washington* executive, and, feeling that he had truly "done enough for valour", he surrendered to the United States naval commander.

This brief episode at Ridgeway was for the confederated Irish the one gleam to lighten the page of their history for 1866. That page was otherwise darkened and blotted by a record of humiliating and disgraceful exposures in connection with the Irish Head Centre. In autumn of that year he proceeded to America, and finding his authority repudiated and his integrity doubted, he resorted to a course which it would be difficult to characterize too strongly. By way of attracting a following to his own standard, and obtaining a flush of money, he publicly announced that in the winter months close at hand, and before the new year dawned, he would (sealing his undertaking with an awful invocation of the Most High) be in Ireland, lead-

ing the long promised insurrection. Had this been a mere "intention" which might be "disappointed," it was still manifestly criminal thus to announce it to the British government, unless, indeed, his resources in hand were so enormous as to render England's preparations a matter of indifference. But it was not as an "intention" he announced it, and swore to it. He threatened with the most serious personal consequences any and every man soever who might dare to express a doubt that the event would come off as he swore. The few months remaining of the year flew by; his intimate adherents spread the rumour that he had sailed for the scene of action, and in Ireland the news occasioned almost a panic. One day, towards the close of December, however, all New York rang with the exposure that Stephens had never quitted for Ireland, but was hiding from his own enraged followers in Brooklyn. The scenes that ensued were such as may well be omitted from these pages. In that bitter hour thousands of honest, impulsive, and self-sacrificing Irishmen endured the anguish of discovering that they had been deceived as never had men been before; that an idol worshipped with frenzied devotion was, after all, a thing of clay.

There was great rejoicing by the government party in Ireland over this exposure of Stephens's failure. Now, at least, it was hoped, nay, confidently assumed, there would be an end of the revolutionary enterprise!

And now, assuredly, there would have been an end of it, had Irish disaffection been a growth of yesterday; or had the unhappy war between England and the Irish race been merely a passing contention, a momentary flash of excitement. But it was not so; and these very exposures, and scandals, and recriminations seemed only fated to try in the fiery ordeal the strength, depth, and intensity of that disaffection.

In Ireland, where Stephens had been most implicitly believed in, the news of this collapse—which reached early in 1867—filled the circles with keen humiliation. The more dispassionate wisely rejoiced that he had not attempted to keep a promise, the making of which was in it

self a crime; but the desire to wipe out the reproach supposed to be cast on the whole enrolment by his public defection became so overpowering, that a rising was arranged to come off simultaneously all over Ireland on the 5th March, 1867.

Of all the insensate attempts at revolution recorded in history, this one assuredly was preëminent. The most extravagant of the ancient Fenian tales supplies nothing more absurd. The inmates of a lunatic asylum could scarcely have produced a more impossible scheme. The one redeeming feature in the whole proceeding was the conduct of the hapless men who engaged in it. Firstly, their courage in responding to such a summons at all, unarmed and unaided as they were. Secondly, their intense religious feeling. On the days immediately preceding the 5th March, the Catholic churches were crowded by the youth of the country, making spiritual preparations for what they believed would be a struggle in which many would fall and few survive. Thirdly, their noble humanity to the prisoners whom they captured, their scrupulous regard for private property, and their earnest anxiety to carry on their struggle without infraction in aught of the laws and rules of honourable warfare.

In the vicinity of Dublin, and in Tipperary, Cork, and Limerick counties, attacks were made on the police stations, several of which were captured by or surrendered to the insurgents. But a circumstance as singular as any recorded in history intervened to suppress the movement more effectually than the armies and fleets of England ten times told could do. On the next night following the rising—the 6th March—there commenced a snowstorm which will long be remembered in Ireland, as it was probably without precedent in our annals. For twelve days and nights without intermission, a tempest of snow and sleet raged over the land, piling snow to the depth of yards on all the mountains, streets, and highways. The plan of the insurrection evidently had for its chief feature desultory warfare in the mountain districts, but this intervention of the elements utterly frustrated the project, and saved Ireland from the horrors of a protracted struggle.

The last episode of the "rising" was one the immediate and remote effects of which on public feeling were of astonishing magnitude, the capture and death of Peter O'Neill Crowley in Killelooney Wood, near Mitchelstown. Crowley was a man highly esteemed, widely popular, and greatly loved in the neighbourhood; a man of respectable position, and of good education, and of character so pure and life so blameless, that the peasantry revered him almost as a saint. Towards the close of March, the government authorities had information that some of the leaders in the late rising were concealed in Killelooney Wood, and it was surrounded with military, "beating" the copse for the human game. Suddenly they came on Crowley and two comrades, and a bitter fusillade proclaimed the discovery. The fugitives defended themselves bravely, but eventually Crowley was shot down, and brought a corpse into the neighbouring town. Around his neck (inside his shirt) hung a small silver crucifix and a medal of the Immaculate Conception. A bullet had struck the latter, and dinged it into a cup shape. Another had struck the crucifix. It turned out that the fugitives, during their concealment in the wood, under Crowley's direction, never omitted compliance with the customary Lenten devotions. Every night they knelt around the embers of their watch-fire, and recited aloud the Rosary, and at the moment of their surprise by the soldiery they were at their morning prayers. All these circumstances—Crowley's high character, his edifying life, his tragic fate—profoundly impressed the public mind. While government was felicitating itself on the "final" suppression of its protean foe, Irish disaffection, and the English press was commencing anew the old vaunting story about how Ireland's "crazy dream" of nationality had been dispelled for ever, a startling change, a silent revolution, was being wrought in the feelings, the sentiments, the resolutions of the Irish nation. First came compassion and sympathy; then anger and indignation, soon changing into resentment and hostility. The people hear their abstention from the impossible project of "Fenianism" construed into an approbation and sustainment of the existing rule—an acceptance of provincialism. They heard

the hapless victims of the late rising reviled as "ruffians", "murderers", "robbers", "marauders", animated by a desire for plunder. They knew the horrible falseness, the baseness and cruelty of all this, coming as it did too from the press of a nation ready enough to hound on revolutionary cut-throats abroad, while venting such brutality upon Irishmen like Peter O'Neill Crowley. *Ireland could not stand this.* No people with a spark of manhood or of honour left, could be silent or neutral here. In the end proposed to themselves by those slain or captured Irishmen—the desire to lift their country up from her fallen state, to staunch her wounds, to right her wrongs—their countrymen *all* were at one with them; and the purity, the *virtue* of their motives, were warmly recognized by men who had been foremost in reprehending the hapless course by which they had immolated themselves. For whatever disorders had arisen from this conspiracy, for whatever there was to reprehend in it, the judgment of the Irish people held English policy and English acts and teachings to account. For, who made those men conspirators? Who taught them to look to violence? Who challenged them to a trial of force? When they who had done these things now turned round on the victims of a noble and generous impulse, and calumniated them, assuredly their fellow-countrymen could not stand by unmoved. And the conduct of "the men in the dock" brought all Ireland to their side. Never in any age, or in any country, did men bear themselves in such strait more nobly than those Men of '67. They were not men to blush for. Captured at hazard by the government from amongst thousands, yet did they one and all demean themselves with a dignity, a fortitude, a heroism worthy of

The holiest cause that tongue or sword  
Of mortal ever lost or gained.

Some of them were peasants, others were professional men, others were soldiers, many were artizans. Not a man of them all quailed in the dock. Not one of them spoke a word or did an act which could bring a blush to the cheek of a Christian patriot. Some of them—like

Peter O'Neill Crowley—had lived stainless lives, and met their fate with the spirit of the first Christian martyrs. Their last words were of God and Ireland. Their every thought and utterance seemed an inspiration of virtue, of patriotism, or of religion. As man after man of them was brought to his doom, and met it with bravery, the heart of Ireland swelled and throbbed with a force unknown for long years.

Meanwhile an almost permanent court-martial was sitting in Dublin for the trial of soldiers charged, some with sedition, others simply with the utterance of patriotic sentiments; and scenes which might be deemed incredible in years to come, had they not public witnesses and public record in the press, were filling to the brim the cup of public horror and indignation. The shrieks of Irish soldiers given over to the knout, resounded almost daily. Blood-clots from the lash sprinkled the barrack yards all over. Many of the Irishmen thus sentenced walked to the triangle, stripped themselves for the torture, bore it without a groan, and, when all was finished—while their comrades were turning away sickened and fainting—*cheered anew for "poor Ireland"*, or repeated the "seditious" aspiration for which they had just suffered!

Amidst such scenes, under such circumstances, a momentous transformation took place in Ireland. In the fires of such affliction the whole nation became fused. All minor political distinctions seemed to crumble or fade away, all past contentions seemed forgotten, and only two great parties seemed to exist in the island, those who loved the *regime* of the blood-clotted lash, the penal chain, and the gibbet, and those who hated it. Out of the ashes of "Fenianism", out of the shattered *debris* of that insane and hopeless enterprise, arose a gigantic power; and eighteen hundred and sixty-seven beheld Irish nationality more of a visible and potential reality than it had been for centuries.

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LXXXIX.—ENGLISH INCITEMENTS TO ASSASSINATION.  
WHAT THE FENIAN MOVEMENT DID FOR IRELAND.  
DISESTABLISHMENT OF THE IRISH CHURCH, AND THE  
LAND ACT OF 1870.

**I**F the year 1867 closed tragically for Ireland in many respects it brought its compensations. Her trusted leaders were in gaol, three innocent men had been martyred in Manchester for what was, however technically so, morally no crime, and the attempt at insurrection had been ignominiously crushed. But the English people became aware in a startling way that the Irish question was unsettled, that the grievances of the country demanded redress, and that the matter was urgent. The explosion at Clerkenwell gaol, which occurred in the attempt to rescue some of the Fenian prisoners then in the building, made an even greater impression on the English mind than anything which had happened in Ireland. There was, of course, the school which implicitly followed the *Times*, and which clamored for more coercion and no reform. But the general conclusion was that the state of Ireland was desperate, and that some measure of amelioration was imperatively called for. Curiously enough, the London papers were almost in the act of counselling a resort to force on the part of the disaffected on the Continent when the Irish storm arose. The *Times*, naturally, led the crusade in favour of the people's rights (when they did not happen to concern England), and in one of its leaders wrote :—

“That government should be for the good of the governed, and that whenever rulers wilfully and persistently postpone the good of their subjects, either to the interests of foreign states, or to abstract theories of religion or politics, the people have a right to throw off the yoke, are principles which have been too often admitted and acted upon to be any longer questioned.” And in another article the same paper declared :—

“It is quite time that all the struggling nationalities

should clearly understand that freemen have no sympathy with men who do nothing but howl and shriek in their fetters. Liberty is a game to be played out, as the Greek told the Persian, with knives and hatchets, and not with drawled epigrams and soft petitions."

But then that immaculate and consistent organ of English opinion was talking of Italian insurgents, and such views were not to be applied to the mere Irish.

England recognised that she had escaped a formidable danger in the failure of the Fenian movement, and prepared to throw sops to Cerberus. There is not the smallest question now that the disestablishment of the Irish Church and the Land Act of 1870 were hastened by the uprising against English rule.

The proof that the Fenian movement brought about the disestablishment of the State Church is to be found in Mr. Gladstone's own admissions, as well as in the reluctant tribute of more hostile witnesses.

In April, 1868, replying to Mr. Gathorne Hardy, Mr. Gladstone said: "The right honourable gentleman says, 'Why did you not deal with the Irish Church in 1866, when you asked for the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act?' My answer is, for a perfectly plain and simple reason. In the first place, circumstances were not ripe then as they are now. Circumstances, I repeat, were not ripe, in so far as we did not then know so much as we know now with respect to the intensity of Fenianism."

Again, at Dalkeith in 1879, more than ten years after, the same statesman reiterated his former opinion: "What happened in the case of the Irish Church? That down to the year 1865, and the dissolution of that year, the whole question of the Irish Church was dead; nobody cared about it, nobody paid attention to it in England. Circumstances occurred which drew the attention of the people to the Irish Church. I said myself, in 1865, and I believed, that it was out of the range of practical politics. When it came to this—that a great gaol in the heart of the metropolis was broken open under circumstances which drew the attention of the

English people to the state of Ireland, and when in Manchester a policeman was murdered in the execution of his duty, at once the whole country became alive to the Irish question, and the question of the Irish Church revived. It came within the range of practical politics."

Lord Dufferin also, in a speech on the Church question, said: "I entirely agree with the noble Earl (Granville) and with the late Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (Lord Kimberley), that the attention of the country and the conscience of England with respect to this question were much stimulated, if not altogether awakened by the fact of Fenianism."

An even more noteworthy admission is that of Lord Derby, who wrote, in 1881, as follows (in the *Nineteenth Century*):—"A few desperate men, applauded by the whole body of the Irish people for their daring, showed England what Irish feeling really was, made plain to us the depth of a discontent whose existence we had scarcely suspected, and the rest followed of course." He adds: "Few persons will now regret the disendowment of the Irish Church, or the passing of the Land Act of 1870; but it is regrettable that, for the third time in less than a century, agitation, accompanied with violence, should have been shown to be the most effective instrument for redeeming whatever Irishmen may be pleased to consider their wrongs."

Mr. Gladstone hesitated at the first suggestion of a disestablishment of the Church, and in 1866 the subject could hardly get a hearing. Later, even the Irish members were divided on the question of appointing a Committee of the whole House to consider the matter. In October, 1867, however, a Royal Commission, the usual futile and dishonest expedient, was constituted, and a leisurely view taken of the question. Meanwhile, however, events had moved in Ireland, and the Manchester Rescue, the attack on Chester Castle, and the Clerkenwell explosion had broadened the outlook, so much so, indeed, that on March 16th, 1868, in a great debate in the House of Commons, Mr. Gladstone declared that the establishment must cease. He vigorously

attacked the subject, and in May the Tory administrations were beaten on his memorable "Resolutions," and was forced to resign. Mr. Gladstone was returned to power with a large majority, notwithstanding the loudly-expressed rage and indignation of the extreme Protestant faction. One Orange clergyman warned the powers that were that another crown might be kicked into the Boyne if the Protestant interests were tampered with and the Papists received any concession. The chief argument of the more moderate was, of course, that the establishment was an integral part of the Act of Union, and not even the laws of the Medes and Persians were so sacred as that immortal enactment when it was proposed to extend popular rights in any direction. The fifth article of the Act of Union solemnly declared that the Church Establishment was to be maintained *for ever* as a "fundamental and essential" condition of the Union between the two countries. The Church party threatened that if the Act of Union were to be modified in one particular, it might in time lead to its modification in other particulars—an awful threat which did not impress their opponents overmuch. In December, Mr. Gladstone took up office, and in the following July the Disestablishment of the Irish Church was an accepted fact. To the intense gratification of the Irish people, one of the most intolerable of their grievances was wiped out, and an alien Church was dethroned amid every manifestation of enthusiasm. For what was this so-called Church of Ireland—this monstrous anomaly—

"The mere existence of this church," says Gustave De Beaumont, the eminent French publicist. "proves that there is in human institutions a degree of selfishness and folly to which it is impossible to ascribe a limit." An English divine, Archdeacon Glover, described it as "an anomaly unparalleled in the Christian Universe." "It is to Ireland," said M. Lemoigne, a notable Foreign observer, "the Church of the stranger, the badge of conquest, the personification of centuries of tyranny." It is, of course, unnecessary to give details of the preposterous and almost incredible injustice under which

the Irish Catholics laboured, but it may be noted that there were two hundred parishes, containing not one single Protestant, which had to maintain the clergymen and churches of that sect. In many other parishes the number of Protestants was very small. The annual income of this organisation was £600,000, £400,000 of which was tithes. The Disestablishing Act of July 26, 1869, deprived the bishops of their seats in the House of Lords, and diverted five out of the sixteen millions of church property to other Irish purposes. In 1871 the Act, a far too generous one in many ways to the Protestant Church, came into operation. But meantime another measure of far-reaching consequence to Ireland was being prepared—this was the Land Act of 1870—which did very little for the Irish tenant, but was the breaking of the ice. It was soon recognised that it was but a small step forward. The “three F’s,” for which the Irish farmers had agitated and fought for years were not included in this Act, which was to cure the agrarian ills of Ireland. Fixity of tenure, free sale, and fair rent were yet to come, but at least a beginning had been made, and the sapping of the fortress of landlordism was initiated. The farmers were grievously disappointed with the measure, and as their growing unrest synchronised with the discontent of those who had been defeated on the Church Question, a movement in favour of self-government was inaugurated, not by the tenants themselves, but by those who were at the time the recognised leaders of the people generally. Conservative and Nationalist, Protestant and Catholic, were more willing to meet to discuss the country’s needs than had been possible for many years previously. A movement was made to obtain the opinions of the leading citizens of Dublin on the momentous question of Ireland’s right to attend to her own domestic affairs, and a very moderate scheme was propounded—a scheme ridiculously inadequate, but revolutionary to the reactionaries—which was to be laid before Parliament by the accredited leader of the Irish Party in the House of Commons.

## XC.—THE HOME RULE MOVEMENT. THE DIFFICULTIES OF ISAAC BUTT. BEGINNING OF THE POLICY OF OBSTRUCTION.

 HIS scheme was broached at an historic meeting held in the Bilton Hotel, Dublin, on May 19, 1870. At this meeting all shades of political and religious opinion in Ireland were represented. Merchants and professional men formed the majority of those present, and Isaac Butt, William Shaw, John Martin, A. M. Sullivan, and other notable figures in political life were prominent in the gathering. The great speech of the meeting was made by Butt who, formerly a Conservative, had for some years been steadily advancing towards a more National standpoint. He had originally held strong Tory views, and was looked upon as one of the safest and soundest adherents of the Constitutional party. He was a great constitutional lawyer, with a natural dread and abhorrence of lawlessness in any shape. Coming from him, therefore, the conclusion that self-government was the only remedy for Irish grievances carried immense weight. It is instructive at this date to read the names of those who supported Butt's proposition—"That the true remedy for the evils of Ireland is the establishment of an Irish Parliament with full control over our domestic affairs." Some of them had no convictions of any sort, as their subsequent career proved; others were men who were too timid to be of use in any National movement; some were obviously insincere place-hunters, who were watching which way "the cat would jump"; but a fair proportion of those present on this historical occasion were true Irishmen, thoroughly patriotic, and only anxious to advance their country's interests, even against those of England. Butt's resolution was carried unanimously, and a committee was appointed to formulate the National demand. This committee suggested that the

association should be called "The Home Government Association of Ireland," and amongst the propositions laid down were that Ireland was entitled to a National Parliament; that such a Parliament should have the power of legislation on all purely Irish affairs, and control over all Irish revenue (on payment of a just proportion in aid of imperial purposes); that all matters relating to the British Empire (outside Ireland) were to be solely dealt with by the Imperial Parliament. A considerable body of opinion amongst the Protestants and Conservatives of Ireland supported this demand which, for the first time, was clearly placed before the English Government. Hitherto, there had been much talk about separation, and Repeal of the Union was the least of the remedies insisted upon for the removal of the broad National disabilities and grievances. O'Connell, however, carefully refrained from defining his programme, and the agitation for Repeal created as much alarm amongst the Protestant minority as would the demand for a separate republic or monarchy. It was not quite clear what Repeal might lead to. Here, however, was a perfectly unambiguous pronouncement emanating from a body which comprised men of every political and religious shade of opinion. It therefore found adherents where they were least expected, and, properly led, the movement might have achieved something. But the new leader, though in many ways a man of great capacity, of distinguished oratorical power, and of tried courage, was not of the type to carry a great national cause to victory. He was too slavishly devoted to the idea of law and order, a fetish which he worshipped with singular tenacity—the only subject upon which he was really tenacious—and was, of course, quite unfitted thereby for fighting a battle with people who, while pretending to keep to the Constitution in the letter, invariably broke it in spirit. No constitutional lawyer, such as Butt and O'Connell were, could ever prove successful leaders of a life and death struggle for liberty such as Ireland had been fighting for centuries. Moreover, Butt was lamentably weak and

vacillating in character; he could not possibly control a party which naturally included many ardent enthusiasts, not too sensitive as to the legality of every move in and out of Parliament. Consequently his soul was continually vexed by the conduct of several members of his party. He had other difficulties to face also. Many tame Catholics held that it was rather ungrateful, after Mr. Gladstone's successful attempt to deal with the Church question, and his honest, though unsuccessful, effort to help the Irish farmer, to harass him with new and almost revolutionary demands. The Orange section, on the other hand, though furious with the Liberals for interfering with any of the vested interests of the Ascendancy party, were as hostile to Butt's panacea as they had been to every reform of the previous fifty years. Then there were the extreme Nationalists who, while entertaining a kindly regard for Butt personally, and perhaps pleased at his more or less partial conversion to National principles, regarded the whole new movement as a mere trifling with the subject of the Irish National demand. Nevertheless, the elections which happened in Ireland in 1871 proved that the electors were prepared to rally to the banner of Butt. John Martin was returned for Meath, Mitchell Henry for Galway, P. J. Smyth for Westmeath, and Isaac Butt himself for Limerick, Butt and Smyth being returned unopposed. Evidently the Home Rule movement was to be reckoned with. The belief, largely held by the Catholic Bishops and Clergy, that Mr. Gladstone was about to produce a Catholic University scheme, threatened to destroy the power of the Home Rulers. They were told that their demand was quite just, but that it was decidedly inopportune. The electors, however, were not influenced by these beliefs, and in the famous Kerry election of the Spring of 1872, in which the Catholic nominee was beaten by a Protestant Home Ruler, a decided impetus was given to Home Rule.

In 1873, a national requisition for Home Rule was obtained in Ireland, signed by twenty-five thousand

representative people—merchants, professors, magistrates, and other persons of weight in the country, and on the 18th of November of that year, a great Conference was held in the Rotunda to ratify the popular claim. Mr. William Shaw, M.P., was chairman, and three days were occupied in the task of drawing up a formal demand. The name of the Association was changed to that of "The Home Rule League," and the Conference, one of the most notable ever held in Ireland, came to a close with the determination to fight the question out in the new House of Commons which would be certainly elected early in 1874. The dissolution, however, when it did come, came with extraordinary suddenness, and found the Home Rulers unprepared for the struggle at the polls. There was a great lack of candidates, or rather of suitable ones—"carpet-baggers" being plentiful—and it was largely due to this fact that the new Home Rule Party, when it was elected, was of a very mixed description. Owing to the want of organisation, various people posing as Home Rulers were returned, to the ultimate discredit of the movement, and several of the Anti-Home Rulers were left unopposed. Still, the result of the election was that for the first time since the Union the majority of the Irish members were nominally pledged to support the demand for a native Parliament. Altogether, they mustered sixty votes. Among the new members were Mr. Joseph Biggar, elected for Cavan, and Mr. A. M. Sullivan, elected for Co. Louth; but too many of the new party were of the place-hunting type—men who were ready to make any promises to electors for the sake of getting into Parliament. Butt was quite unable to control this nondescript party. The true patriots among his colleagues recognised his many virtues and his sincere love of Ireland and genuine desire to serve her, but even a greater leader than Butt could not have succeeded in welding such a party as he led into national effectiveness. Consequently, Butt's leadership was a failure. He was sixty-one years of age, and in feeble health, and it was clear that his leadership would be of short duration. Though a great Parliamentarian, and

intellectually of considerable weight, his influence in Parliament was singularly small. He introduced and supported many admirable bills for the reform of Irish land and other laws into the House of Commons, but the result can only be described as barren. He had too sensitive a regard for Parliamentary institutions, too reverent a respect for constitutional usage to accomplish anything for Ireland in an assembly which is only to be moved by violent means. Feeling in Ireland was rising against what was considered the supineness of the Irish party, and some of the members of the latter, though, as already stated, tenderly appreciative of Butt's personal qualities, were growing restive under his too benevolent method of dealing with the Government.

In 1875 another Coercion Act for Ireland was deemed necessary, and as even Butt favoured a mild policy of obstruction in such circumstances, he asked a member of his party to speak against time. The member in question wished to know how long he was required to speak. Butt replied that a considerable time might be occupied. Mr. Biggar—such was the young member's name—took this chief literally, and by the reading of blue-books and all kinds of documents, relevant and irrelevant, managed to occupy the better part of the sitting. Butt was somewhat astonished at the interpretation put on his instructions, but he had no reason to be dissatisfied with the result. On that evening the policy of obstruction, which did more for Irish reform than any other Parliamentary policy hitherto known, was formally inaugurated.

XCI.—APPEARANCE OF MR. PARNELL. THE OBSTRUCTIVE POLICY JUSTIFIED. THE LAND LEAGUE. MR. PARNELL BECOMES LEADER OF THE IRISH PEOPLE.

**S**OON after the famous talk against time of Mr. Biggar, a new member was added to the party. John Martin, the member for Meath, died, to the intense sorrow of the Irish people, following John Mitchel to the grave within a few days, and Charles Stewart Parnell succeeded him. Parnell was practically unknown to his countrymen. In 1874 he had been nominated for County Dublin against a Colonel Taylor, but was badly beaten at the polls. John Martin and A. M. Sullivan were the only two members of the Home Rule League who believed in the wisdom of giving the new member of that body his political opportunity. His hesitating, nervous, and timid manner of speech unfavourably impressed his first audience, and no one was surprised at his defeat. Few people, perhaps no one, recognised the latent force of this obscure country gentleman, or foresaw the development of a personality such as occurs only once in a century. However, after the death of Martin, Parnell was adopted and returned for Meath. He had been but a short time in the House when he grasped the whole situation, and with Biggar alone to support him he formulated and carried out, despite the protests and alarm of Butt, a deadly, persistent and merciless system of obstruction in the House of Commons. If nothing was to be done for Ireland, then no business whatever was to be done, or at least, no English reform was to be permitted to pass without endless difficulty. This policy entailed enormous activity, constant attendance, and an all-pervading interest in every class of legislation, and a profound knowledge of the procedure of the House. Mr. Parnell proceeded with the terrible intensity characteristic of him, but in the calmest possible way, to perform his part of the compact; Mr.

Biggar made himself as ostentatiously disagreeable as he could, even clearing the House of strangers on a celebrated occasion when the present King (then Prince of Wales) was present, such privilege being, needless to say, hardly ever exercised, and when availed of to the annoyance or inconvenience of an exalted personage, causing wonder and indignation. Biggar was certainly the best-hated Irishman in England at that time. Annoyance was increased when it was observed that he rather enjoyed his great unpopularity among Englishmen. Mr. Butt was finally induced to censure his too obstinate and rebellious followers. In July, 1877, a very stormy scene took place—a scene unprecedented in the annals of the “assembly of gentlemen.” Mr. Parnell was called to order and an attempt made to suspend him, but owing to a flaw in the proposition it failed. The incident led to the all-night sittings, which afterwards became a common feature of Irish debates. At first, feeling in Ireland did not quite respond to the policy of Parnell and Biggar. But gradually, to the dismay of Butt and the anger of the more Whiggish of the Irish members, it became evident that the heart of the people at home had been gained. Distrusting, as so many of them did, all Parliamentary agitation, remembering the betrayal of Keogh, Sadlier, and the Brass Band, it was not wonderful that for some time the Irish electorate did not seem to have appreciated the new movement. When the far-reaching consequences of the policy were really grasped the popular sentiment in favour of obstruction was unmistakable. Butt endeavoured at a Conference in Dublin to obtain a mandate from the people which empowered the majority of the members to prevent the continuance of “any course of action” which they did not approve of—an obvious attempt to restrain Messrs. Parnell and Biggar. This attempt, however, failed, and those who had hitherto taken no interest in Parliamentary affairs began to watch them closely, and it was discovered that Butt frequently voted with the Government on matters to which Ireland, though not directly concerned in them, was decidedly opposed. The Irish in England,

who had from the first applauded Parnell and Biggar's views, had formed the Home Rule Confederation—a body analogous to the Irish Association—and in 1877 it deposed Butt from its presidency and elected in his stead Mr. Parnell. Worse still, the proposer of Mr. Parnell was a particular friend of Butt's, and one who had for the new discredited leader a deep personal affection. Virtually, this was the end of Butt's leadership. He did not long survive the blow, dying in February, 1879. He had done good service to Ireland, and his name will live in affectionate remembrance in the hearts of Irishmen; but other times, other manners, and even his splendid gifts as an orator, as a lawyer, and even, in some respects, as a politician, only serve to magnify his failure as a popular leader. Perhaps this failure was largely due to the miserable party which was supposed to be under his control; but a more resolute course of action would have made even that party tolerably National.

Meanwhile, distress was looming before the Irish people. Rumours were already afloat that a famine was impending, and though these vague reports were discouraged, it was plain that Ireland was about to pass through one of the crises of poverty which the nineteenth century had made familiar to her inhabitants. The Government had shown a chastened spirit as a result of the policy of obstruction, and were inclined to view Irish grievances with a more favourable and reforming eye. Mr. Parnell was able to convince the people that his policy was the most likely to succeed of any which had been tried, and he successfully appealed for a further trial of it. Mr. Shaw was selected as chairman of the Irish party in succession to Butt, but though an able man his term of office was neither long nor specially distinguished. The outlook in Ireland was growing desperate, and before the end of the year it was generally admitted that something very like famine was in the land. Now was the time, if ever, for vigorous action, and Mr. Parnell, the virtual leader, was clearly prepared to take it. Eviction notices were being showered on the

unfortunate tenants in various parts of the country, and drastic measures were necessary to convince the Government that the distress was appalling. The densely stupid and ignorant Chief Secretary of the time, a horsey individual named Lowther, denied that the distress was very acute, and declared that greater poverty prevailed in England. His studied indifference to the question, and the general inattention of the Government, which was well aware that a dissolution was not far off, roused considerable feeling in Ireland, and one of the results was a meeting held at Irishtown on April 20th, 1879, of which a figure who was to occupy a prominent position in the Irish agrarian movement of subsequent years was the principal promoter. Michael Davitt, who may be justly called the founder of the Land League, was not actually present, but since his release from prison, after nearly eight years imprisonment for Fenianism, he had practically devoted all his time to the inauguration of a land movement which would organise the farmers of Ireland in their own interests against the brutal exactions of some landlords, and the callous disregard of many others. This meeting, and others which followed fast, put a new spirit in the people, and the beginnings of a mighty uprising were apparent even to the most sceptical. Mr. Parnell hesitated at first to throw in his lot with the agrarian revolutionists—for such they were—who sought to create a peasant proprietary in Ireland. But he speedily saw that it was the way to victory, and in a speech at Westport in June, 1879, he enunciated the memorable advice to the tenants to “keep a firm grip of their holdings,” to refuse to pay an unjust rent, and to resist eviction by force. Directly Mr. Parnell accepted the situation and endorsed the views of the Land League, the movement made astonishing progress. He was elected its President, and he was deputed to visit America to obtain financial support—the first time in history that a constitutional movement had ventured to appeal to the Irish in America. His visit was a triumphal progress, and he collected over seventy thousand pounds from the Irish exiles. The Duke of Marlborough, the

Lord Lieutenant of the day, seeing the necessity of repudiating the Chief Secretary's insolent disbelief in the distress, started a relief fund, and other prominent people helped, as far as possible, to alleviate the undoubted destitution. Even the Government were compelled to take note of the seriousness of the calamity, and a bill was introduced which gave the landlords the use of over a million pounds without interest for two years, in order, it was said, that they might assist their tenants by giving employment, and so on—that is to say, they were enabled to improve their properties by the help of their friends in power. Shortly after this useful piece of legislation, Lord Beaconsfield thought it necessary to dissolve Parliament, and in March, 1880, he resigned. In the general election which ensued, the Irish party returned with sixty-eight members, only a few of whom, however, were pledged to the Parnellite policy. But public opinion was ripening in Ireland, and even the most extreme Nationalists began to see that Mr. Parnell's leadership was likely to procure reforms which they had given up all hope of obtaining save by forcible methods. Notable adherents among the new members of Parliament strengthened Mr. Parnell's hands. Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. Thomas Sexton, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Mr. E. Dwyer Gray, and others of conspicuous ability forced the House of Commons to admit that the re-organised Irish party would form a powerful combination for the interests of Ireland. Their first act was to depose Mr. Shaw, M.P., from the chairmanship of the party and to elect Mr. Parnell in his stead.

The Liberals had returned to power with the intention of passing an adequate Land Bill for Ireland, but when the Queen's Speech was read it was discovered, to the indignation and disgust of the Irish people, that the land question was not even alluded to. The Irish members took immediate action by moving an amendment to the Address. The Liberals had received such a large majority of votes at the polls that they felt inclined to deal with the burning question as slowly as possible. The amendment was,

of course, defeated, and the Irish members forthwith introduced a bill for the suspension of evictions. The fighting qualities of the new Irish party were so obvious, their earnestness and determination were so noticeable, that Mr. Gladstone, in order to expedite the business of the House, was compelled to announce that the Government itself would deal with the subject of evictions in a separate bill. Accordingly, Mr. W. E. Forster, Chief Secretary for Ireland, brought in his Disturbance Bill, which provided for compensation in a certain class of evictions. Mr. Gladstone, in the debate on this measure, declared that many evictions were actual sentences of death. The bill was, however, fiercely opposed by the Tory party, and after their defeat in the House of Commons, the other section of the party in the House of Lords contemptuously threw out the Bill. For years, as was practically admitted by the Liberal party, the landlords had been engaged in unjustly evicting, wholesale, the wretched tenants who could not pay rack rents. But the House of Lords arrogated to itself the right of deciding whether these should be stopped or not, and thus the issue was knit between the two Houses. Gladstone, however, was not prepared to go to war over such a matter, and the Lords remained masters of the situation. At a great meeting at Ennis on September 19th, 1880, Mr. Parnell explained the state of affairs, and made use of memorable language in his advice to the tenants—advice which was absolutely necessary, but which has been more vehemently denounced than anything else Mr. Parnell ever said. The important words were these :—

“ Depend upon it that the measure of the Land Bill of next session will be the measure of your activity and energy this winter ; it will be the measure of your determination not to pay unjust rents ; it will be the measure of your determination to keep a firm grip of your homesteads ; it will be the measure of your determination not to bid for farms from which others have been evicted, and to use the strong force of public opinion to deter any unjust men amongst yourselves—and there are many such—from bidding for such farms.

If you refuse to pay unjust rents, if you refuse to take farms from which others have been evicted, the Land Question must be settled, and settled in a way that will be satisfactory to you. It depends, therefore, upon yourselves, and not upon any Commission or any Government. When you have made this question ripe for settlement, then, and not till then, will it be settled." He followed up those remarks by words which have not yet lost their impressiveness:—

"Now what are you to do to a tenant who bids for a farm from which another tenant has been evicted?" (Several voices—"Shoot him!") "I think I heard somebody say 'shoot him!' I wish to point out a very much better way—a more Christian and charitable way, which will give the lost man an opportunity of repenting. When a man takes a farm from which another has been unjustly evicted, you must show him on the roadside when you meet him; you must show him in the streets of the town; you must show him in the Press; you must show him in the fair-green and in the market-place, and even in the place of worship—by leaving him alone; by putting him into a moral Coventry; by isolating him from the rest of his country as if he were the leper of old—you must show him your detestation of the crime he has committed."

## XCII.—COERCION AND MORE COERCION. THE NEW LAND BILL. ARREST OF MR. PARNELL.

**T**HIS definition of boycotting, a defence and a privilege which all people utilise when necessary, this eminently valuable and practical advice, caused an immense sensation in and out of Parliament. It was angrily assailed as an incentive to crime, as an instigation to murder, as horribly immoral, as barbarous and uncivilised—in fact every epithet in the dictionary was brought into requisition for the purpose of holding up Mr. Parnell to the world's gaze as a public miscreant, and the Irish who would accept his advice as unfit for anything save, perhaps, martial law and the knout. Meanwhile, Mr. Parnell took not the slightest notice of the clamour, but repeated his good counsel whenever opportunity offered. And meanwhile, too, the gentry who recoiled at the idea of boycotting, proceeded to ostracise all those who did not agree with them, and everybody in England, from the trades union workman to the high-grade professional, practised exclusive dealing in its worst form. But in Ireland it was not only a crime in theory—before long the Irish people were to realise that it was a penal offence. Mr. Forster, who was one of those well-intentioned people who have ever been the worst enemies of Ireland, was speedily converted to a coercive policy. He had always posed as a reformer, and had been given considerable credit for his benevolent wishes to Ireland, and was thus enabled, without seeming violence to his humane reputation, to go further than even a statesman who would candidly admit hostility to reform in Ireland, and to a hatred of her people. The history of his brief career as an Irish administrator is melancholy and yet gratifying. With the colossal conceit and self-confidence of the Englishman who fancies he knows better how to govern others than they or anybody else could, he started

on his mission to subdue the Irish people. His plan was a very familiar one. "Be loyal, law-abiding, and contented, and you will get some small reforms,"; is a fair summary of the programme. The Irish people, however, have a proverb which is a daily sarcasm—"Live horse, and you'll get grass"—and Mr. Forster's implied threat that he would first coerce them into placidity and contentment, and then, possibly, ameliorate their condition, did not impress them in the least. They refused to give up their agitation for fair rents, fixity of tenure, and other desirable things. So Mr. Forster gaily set about his task of forcing the country into submission. Outrages had undoubtedly increased, and he had little difficulty in getting the Government to pass a drastic Coercion Act, but before this became law it was decided to prosecute Mr. Parnell, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Dillon, Mr. Biggar, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, and other prominent members of the Land League, and, accordingly, in Nov., 1880, the leaders above-mentioned were indicted for conspiracy to incite the tenantry to cancel their legal obligations, &c. There were nineteen counts in the indictment, and, although the usual attempt was made to pack the jury, the trial proved abortive by their disagreement. This was Mr. Forster's first fall, and he did not relish it. But to the Irish members it was a small matter. Knowing, as they now did, that the strength of Ireland was at their back, they developed if possible more determination, more ingenuity, more daring, and when Parliament assembled in January, 1881, to pass the Coercion Bill, they were braced up for the struggle. Their firm intention was to make all legislation impossible until a really adequate Land Bill was passed, and to resist coercion by every means in their power. As the League grew in strength and pecuniary power the rage of the enemies of Ireland doubled and trebled. The Irish members, who had gained a most valuable adherent in the shape of Mr. T. M. Healy, were prepared for all eventualities. Mr. Shaw, and others, less sincere, who were getting alarmed at what they considered revolutionary proposals and

tactics, withdrew from the party, which was really the stronger by their riddance. The Coercion Act was not passed without a terrible struggle—perhaps no measure ever brought before the House of Commons generated such passionate and tumultuous scenes as were witnessed night after night during the debates. One of the sittings lasted forty-one hours, and failing to get justice the Irish members withdrew in a body. The Coercion Bill became law, and one of the first acts of the Government was the arrest of Michael Davitt, who was on ticket-of-leave. This arrest caused intense indignation in Ireland, where it was regarded as vindictive and petty. In England it was regarded as a great victory for the British Empire. The Irish members raised the question at the following sitting of Parliament but were not allowed to debate it. Mr. Dillon was the first to challenge the decision. He was suspended after a stormy scene, and then Mr. Parnell rose in the same manner and was also suspended. Each refused to leave unless force was used. Finally, the whole of the Irish Nationalist members—twenty-eight—were suspended from the service of the House. A second Coercion Act—The Arms Bill—was next introduced, and was only passed after the fiercest opposition. Mr. Forster, with his almost diseased belief that he knew what Ireland wanted better than any Irishman, had the hardihood to declare that he was acting in the best interests of that country, and said he confidently appealed to the Irish electors generally on his policy. But as Mr. Forster is absolutely forgotten and discredited even in England, it would be waste of time to say much more concerning him. He was, perhaps by reason of his belief in himself and his blatant professions of humanity and charitableness towards Ireland, the very worst Chief Secretary Ireland ever had—the greatest failure, even from the English point of view, of all the ludicrous failures England has foisted into an administrative position in Ireland.

The Land Bill was introduced in April, 1881, and was found to be a rather more sweeping measure than the Irish party expected. They had even discussed whether

they should vote for it at all, or rather whether they should not vote against the second reading. The arrest of Mr. John Dillon, just before the second reading, had the effect of inducing the majority of the Irish party to abstain from voting on the Land Bill, which was unanimously rejected by all as a final settlement of the Land Question. It was regarded as a tardy instalment of a great debt due by the Government. Mr. Parnell did not actually advise the tenants to keep out of the Land Courts established by the Bill, but it may be admitted that he and the party generally discouraged them. His speeches on the subject greatly annoyed the Government, and eventually he was arrested in Dublin in October. An immense sigh of relief was heard all over England at this news, and a shout of exultation was uttered by the whole English press. The arrest was looked upon as a stupendous victory for the Government, which, in its foolishness, imagined that the land agitation was thereby crushed. Mr. Gladstone, who really believed that the Irish party and the League terrorised the farmers, announced the arrest at a great meeting in London amidst the delirious joy of the audience. Now, thought the Government and the English people, the Land Act will soon bring peace and contentment to the country. A few more "agitators," however, must be removed first. Consequently, many other prominent leaders were arrested—Messrs. Dillon (again), Sexton, Healy, Biggar, O'Kelly, and others among them—and finally the Land League was suppressed as an illegal association. Wholesale arrests followed, it being evidently the hope and intention to destroy the organisation by imprisoning all its prominent officials and supporters. When all were in gaol the Government breathed freely and waited for the tenants to accept what was thought to be the inevitable, and to repudiate the League and the men who were alleged to be "terrorising" them. To the blank amazement of Mr. Forster and other members of the Government the reply came in the shape of a "No Rent" manifesto, issued by the imprisoned Irish members and joyfully

welcomed by the people as a weapon of irresistible force in their defence. The Government tried every method of repression at their command, only to still further exasperate the people. Evictions to an enormous extent were carried out, Mr. Forster meanwhile assuring the English public and his own colleagues that crime was being kept down, outrages were prevented daily, and rents were being paid satisfactorily. He was especially sure that he was tranquillising the country and that in a very short time Ireland would be a haven of peace. The real truth was that outrages were increasing hourly, and that a secret conspiracy was being hatched which was to startle the world.

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XCHII.—THE NO-RENT MANIFESTO. THE PHENIX PARK MURDERS. DISMAL FAILURE OF CHIEF SECRETARY FORSTER. MR. GLADSTONE'S HOME RULE BILL.



HE No-Rent manifesto was a bombshell thrown into the English camp, and even the Conservatives, more, perhaps, from a desire to embarrass the Government than from a wish to improve the condition of the tenants, suggested larger schemes of land purchases. Rent was being repudiated in many districts in Ireland, and at last the Government allowed it to be known that they would not be unfriendly to an arrangement which would release Mr. Parnell from prison and relieve the existing tension. Mr. Parnell was to undertake to discourage outrage as far as possible, and conciliatory measures would be at once adopted—the general policy of the Government to be against eviction and such goading of the people as had been practised. The Kilmainham Treaty was consequently ratified. Mr. Parnell had been released temporarily on parole (for private family reasons), and the negotiations were there-

fore more easily entered into. Mr. Forster was practically thrown overboard, his policy having been an unmitigated failure, and Lord Frederick Cavendish was appointed in his stead, Lord Spencer remaining Viceroy. All looked fair and promising at the moment—the people were exultant at the release of their leader, who had successfully bargained for much-needed reform of the Land Act, the staying of unjust evictions, and the practical abandonment of the worst clauses of the Coercion Act.

On May 6th, however, a terrible tragedy occurred in the Phoenix Park, in the broad light of day, which threw back everything into the seething condition of the worst period of Irish history. Lord Frederick Cavendish had arrived in Dublin on that day to take up his new duties ; much was hoped from his known amiability and generally Liberal views, when the news was flashed all over the world that he and the Under-Secretary, Mr. T. H. Burke, had been assassinated before the very windows of the Viceregal Lodge. Consternation is a mild word to express the feeling with which even the more aggressive members of the party viewed this terrible crime. Mr. Parnell was the more staggered by the news on account of the unquestionable change for the better in the intentions of the Government, and the murder was universally deplored, particularly in view of Lord Frederick Cavendish's record. It was known that an extreme section had wished to compass the death of Mr. Forster, whose assassination had been constantly threatened, Mr. Burke, also, was believed to be in some danger. But Lord Frederick Cavendish was a perfect stranger who was expected to carry out the most benevolent of policies. It was subsequently discovered that the assassins did not know who he was, and that he lost his life in an attempt to shield Mr. Burke.

A savage cry for revenge went up from the whole British Empire, and requisals were immediately entered on. Mr. Parnell's public expression of abhorrence and offer to resign were treated with contempt and scorn, and the most stringent coercive measures were brought

into Parliament and passed in the greatest haste. Trial by jury was suspended, martial law was proclaimed in many districts, and Ireland was subjected to a repetition of some of the horrors of '98. Every attempt was made to discover the murderers, but a considerable time elapsed before they were found, convicted and hanged or imprisoned. The English people lost their heads completely, and forgetful of the open support ever given by themselves for political or diplomatic purposes to the most desperate of foreign revolutionaries, cried out for revenge in unmeasured language.

The Irish people deplored to the very utmost such a crime, not only for its wickedness and barbarity, but because they saw plainly how much it injured the national reputation. Mr. Parnell and the party had on the nation's behalf publicly repudiated it. Yet they were not willing to stand aside and see the country dragooned. It was decided to evade the law which suppressed the Land League and to found a new organisation to be called the National League. In reality there was no difference between the two Leagues ; but the severity of the Government repression was held to justify a fresh start. The priests, who had hitherto largely abstained from active association and sympathy with the Land League, joined the new movement in great numbers, and so matters continued, the Government alternating their coercive policy with a few amendments of the Land Act. But the condition of the country was not improving. Mr. Parnell's power had now grown so enormously that it was certain that his nominees would sweep the country at the next General Election, particularly if the new Franchise Act promised by the Government were made law. The Irish in America were welded into one body in support of Mr. Parnell, all conflicting opinions as to the value of Parliamentary agitation having been reconciled. In 1884 Mr. Gladstone brought in his famous bill for the extension of the franchise, and, though it was defeated by the Lords, it was so strongly supported at the polls when he appealed to the country that the Liberals were

returned to power with a large majority, empowered to carry out the reform. The Lords were obliged to give way in the face of the popular decision. The Irish party was triumphant at the elections—for the first time in history National principles prevailed over all other considerations, and Parnell led back to Westminster a solid phalanx of eighty-six members who were pledged to fight for Home Rule to the utmost extent of Parliamentary freedom, and also pledged to support whichever English party made the best terms with Ireland. Mr. Gladstone had asked the English electors to give him a majority over Tories and Irish members combined, but, though he had a good majority over his English opponents, the Irish vote, added to the Tory, could swamp him at any moment.

He wisely saw that the new situation required new treatment, and rumours began to be heard that some form of Home Rule would be among the planks of the Liberal programme. It began to be suggested that while, up to that time, Mr. Parnell only represented a minority of the Irish people, there could be no gainsaying the fact that he was now, undoubtedly, given a mandate by the majority. Once the rumour was set afloat whispers were not wanting that Mr. Gladstone had an actual scheme of Home Rule up his sleeve.

On April 8th, 1886, all doubts were set at rest by the introduction of a measure of Home Rule which, though it proposed to establish a separate Parliament for Ireland, in reality only proposed to set up what was described as a glorified vestry or local council, with very limited power. In England, however, it was regarded as a highly revolutionary proposal, and the Orange party thought the end of the world had come. They were rendered temporarily speechless by the idea. When they recovered from their stupefaction they proceeded to raise all the evil passions of their ignorant followers: Home Rule would be Rome Rule—the Protestants would be exterminated by the Papists, etc. Soon the Tories in England took up the cry, and all the worst prejudices of the population were inflamed. The Irish

party, though not regarding the measure as a really satisfactory one, were prepared to accept it, with certain reservations, as a solution of the problem. Mr. Parnell's declaration that, while he accepted the measure, neither he nor anybody else could set any bounds to the legitimate aspirations of a nation, was a correct statement of the Irish position. There was to be a House of Peers and House of Commons in the new Parliament; no power of interference with Imperial questions was to be given; the Customs and Excise were to remain under the control of the English Parliament, as also were the police; and all Irish legislation was to be subject to the veto of the Lord Lieutenant. Briefly, the above restrictions describe the scope of the measure, the minor details being of little importance. Finally, and this proved to be the death of the measure, no Irish representatives were to be elected to the English Parliament. With the Home Rule Bill, and as part and parcel of it, a Land Purchase Bill was to be passed which would enable those landlords who did not wish to be dealt with by an Irish Parliament to dispose of their estates, thus allaying the fear of many that an Irish Parliament would confiscate property on a large scale. When the first sensation caused by its introduction was passed the Home Rule Scheme found many supporters in unlikely places. The chief objection was, curiously enough, that England could never allow Ireland to be unrepresented in the Imperial Parliament. Those terrible people would actually be missed, and, sincerely or insincerely, a great clamour arose for the retention of the Irish members at Westminster. The value of the objection, as being what was considered absolute separation, was speedily recognised, and much capital was made out of it by the Tories and by certain so-called Liberals. They stumped the country against what they called the disrupting proposals of Mr. Gladstone, unscrupulously, as after events showed, bringing the Land Purchase Bill into their denunciation, which charged the Prime Minister with "handing over" fifty millions of money to the Irish landlords—the very

people these same gentry had been all along encouraging and abetting. As the British Exchequer was carefully guaranteed against any loss the Tory and Liberal Unionist allegations were thoroughly dishonest. One section of the Liberals, led by Mr. Chamberlain, insisted on the retention of the Irish members at Westminster—another section, equally opposed to the scheme, considered their exclusion one of the best features of the Bill. Mr. Chamberlain's group assailed Land Purchase as entailing a probable loss of "British" money; the other section, allied to the landlords, did not disapprove of that bribe. It is now certain that, without the Land Purchase Scheme, the Home Rule Bill would have fared better, but England was placarded from end to end with announcements to the ignorant electors that Mr. Gladstone proposed to spend hundreds of millions of pounds in buying out a class in whom the British elector had no special interest, and for whom, in any case, he had no affection. When the second reading of the Home Rule Bill was reached it was known that a large number of Liberals would join the Tories in opposing the measure. It was rejected by a majority of thirty votes, and Mr. Gladstone and the ministry resigned.

XCIV.—THE PLAN OF CAMPAIGN. COERCION AGAIN.  
 THE TIMES AND MR. PARNELL. THE FORGED LETTERS.  
 THE PARNELL COMMISSION. EXPOSURE OF THE FORGER.  
 DEATH OF MR. PARNELL. THE SECOND HOME RULE  
 BILL. THE PRESENT POSITION AND CONCLUSION.

**T**HE general election was a remarkable one in many ways—Liberals were opposed by Liberal Unionists, and Tories were largely assisted to capture or retain seats by those Liberals who opposed Mr. Gladstone's policy. This was the result of a bargain, a deal, the effect of which was to turn many a professing Liberal into a reactionary Tory. The result of the general election was a defeat of Mr. Gladstone, and the Tories again came into power. They had pledged themselves, while opposing Mr. Gladstone's scheme, to vote against coercion. But they were soon forced to resort to it.

Mr. Parnell immediately brought in a Bill enabling the Land Courts to further reduce rack-rents, but it was defeated by 297 votes to 202. Failing to obtain any satisfactory promise or performance from the Salisbury administrators a new plan was adopted in Ireland. It was known as the "Plan of Campaign," and the text of the proposals was published in October, 1886, in *United Ireland*—a powerful Nationalist organ, edited by William O'Brien, who had, in a very few years, risen to one of the highest places in the ranks of the Irish party as an organiser, orator, and journalist. It was proposed that the tenants should combine together to offer a certain rent to the landlord, that all should stand together in the offer, and not negotiate separately with landlord or agent, that in the event of a refusal to accept the rent offered, which was considered to be a fair one, the money was to be funded for the purpose of continuing the struggle. The country welcomed the Plan of Campaign as another valuable weapon in the

fight against landlordism, and it was put into operation on several estates with signal success. It led to the appointment of a Commission to inquire into the fall in prices of land produce, and this Commission was compelled to recommend (in spite of the continued Tory protestations that the rents fixed by the previous Land Acts could not be altered) a general revision of rents. Sir Michael Hicks Beach, the Tory Chief Secretary, who had, like all his predecessors, failed to settle the Irish Question, resigned, and was succeeded by Mr. Balfour. In a very short time this heaven-born statesman was obliged to bring in a more drastic Coercion Bill than ever, and the party which had declared that it did not regard Coercion as the only alternative to Home Rule, promptly swallowed its words and promises. Having passed their Coercion Bill, the Government calmly proceeded to adopt Mr. Parnell's rejected Bill for the reduction of rents as their own, and passed it with very little difficulty. They admitted his contention that the fall in prices made the existing rents impossible ones. Naturally, the usefulness of the Bill was hampered by absurd restrictions, but still it was an advance, and though the Irish party were not satisfied they contented themselves with an attempt to amend it. Its "eviction-made-easy" clauses were fiercely opposed by the Irish members, and even by the Liberals. Angered by the opposition of the Irish members, and the defiance of Coercion shown all over Ireland, more stringent measures than ever were taken to subdue the people. All public meetings were suppressed, blood was shed constantly by the police, and on the occasion of a demonstration in Mitchelstown some innocent persons were treacherously shot by the Constabulary from the windows of their barracks. This atrocious crime roused the people more than almost any act of the Government in modern times. "Remember Mitchelstown," became a war-cry of more than usual impressiveness. Failing to cow the people or their leaders by brutality of this sort Mr. Balfour tried the familiar expedient of suppressing the National news-

papers and imprisoning their editors. It was equally and ignominiously futile. The political prisoners who had been arrested under the provisions of the Coercion Act were barbarously treated, but still the hostility of the people was undiminished, their courage unquenched. Some of the victims died as a result of their prison treatment, others were permanently injured in health owing to the indignities heaped upon them. But it would be impossible to give an adequate idea of the state of Ireland under Mr. Balfour's régime. The real question is, was his policy more successful than the repressive policies of his predecessors? Of course it was not. It was but the prelude to a still greater victory for the Irish people over the forces of the English Crown.

But it is now time to mention one of the most sensational events of a time of sensation. A conspiracy had for some time been hatching to ruin Mr. Parnell, and on April 18th, 1886—the date of the second reading of Mr. Balfour's Coercion Bill—the *Times* published what purported to be a letter written by Mr. Parnell in reference to the Phoenix Park murders, applauding the crime so far as Burke's death was concerned, and, apparently suggesting that the League was at the back of the business. Mr. Parnell promptly declared the letter to be a forgery. The *Times*, which had been publishing articles seeking to identify the Irish party with murders of different periods, replied by giving more letters (in facsimile, like the first), signed by Mr. Parnell, and it stated that it had irrefragable proof that Mr. Parnell actually wrote the letters. Mr. Parnell and the Irish members, at first inclined to treat the matter with indifference, eventually asked for a committee of the House to investigate the matter of the forged letters. The Government, somewhat taken back by this request, made the extraordinary suggestion that the Irish members implicated in the whole of the attacks by the *Times* should criminally prosecute that paper, and offered to place the Attorney-General at their disposal for the prosecution. Having for weeks traded on the charges of the *Times* they now proposed a ridiculous

plan which they well knew the Irish members would reject at once. The result was that, while the charges were being published broadcast all over the country, the Irish members were placed in the position of refusing to prosecute the authors of them. A personal action by Mr. F. H. O'Donnell, one of the members implicated, against the *Times* brought about that investigation into the history of the attacks by the chief English organ which the *Times* professed to desire. Three judges were appointed by the Government to inquire into the whole subject of "Parnellism and Crime," and the memorable Parnell Commission began its labours. The purpose of the Government was plain—it was to keep the charges of the *Times* before the public, and, as the Commission lasted for some months, that object was certainly gained. But their attempt to calumniate Mr. Parnell recoiled upon themselves and their ally—the *Times*—in a way that was never contemplated. The main object of the Irish party was to discover the origin of the forged letters, the authorship of which was barely suspected. Sir Charles Russell, who defended the Irish members with consummate ability, at length dragged out the truth from the forger, a discredited Irish journalist named Richard Pigott, who had been living for some years by blackmailing various politicians by various threats, and as a begging-letter impostor. This wretched creature, grown old in treachery and villainy of all kinds, was produced after some hesitation by the *Times* (which implicitly believed in him) to prove their case, and, after one of the most ruthless cross-examinations in history, was shown to have himself forged the letters attributed to Mr. Parnell. After this dramatic incident, and the flight and suicide of Pigott in Spain, all further interest in the Commission vanished. A great speech by Sir Charles Russell for the defence finished the matter as far as the general public was concerned. The judges declared that there were evidences that the League and some of its members did not, at least, discourage crime, but nobody troubled themselves about the decision. Considerable sympathy was felt for Mr. Parnell, and his

entry into the House of Commons after the exposure of Pigott was a great historical triumph. The Irish party were assuredly avenged. The Tory party, which had stooped to such infamous methods to destroy their opponents, would, in any other country but England, have been eternally disgraced; but they held on to office as is their wont. Every bye-election showed that the country was utterly sick of them; but they were destined to secure one great triumph before their exit.

It is one of the most lamentable common-places of Irish history that the people of Ireland are never so near disaster as when they are most triumphant. What the Tory party could not accomplish—the ruin of Parnell—was compassed by himself. It became known soon after the close of the Commission that there was some scandal connected with his name which would certainly leap to light in the near future. When concealment was no longer possible the Irish party found that Mr. Gladstone could not carry Home Rule to victory under the circumstances, and when the more important statement of the Irish prelates proved that Mr. Parnell's leadership had become a danger to the Irish cause, it led to a serious split among the Irish members. Mr. Parnell refused to retire, even temporarily; a minority of the party supported him, and the majority proceeded to depose him and to elect Mr. Justin M'Carthy in his place. Then began a painful struggle between the two sections—Ireland was divided on the question, and though the section which followed Mr. Parnell was far the weakest they fought under his leadership most strenuously and bitterly. Messrs. Sexton, M'Carthy, Dillon, O'Brien, and Healy, and most of the notable members were in the majority; Messrs. Redmond, O'Kelly, Harrington, and others fought Mr. Parnell's battle to the end. That end was not far off. Mr. Parnell's health was broken down. His incessant meetings, his constant travelling, most seriously undermined his iron will and powerful constitution, and his death took place in Brighton on October 6, 1891.

This event, though foreseen by some of his friends, was quite unexpected. It is impossible to describe the sorrow which permeated all sections of Irish life at the announcement. The whole world recognised that a man of a century had passed out of existence; but the feeling in Ireland was peculiarly deep. His funeral in Dublin was, perhaps, the most remarkable one ever witnessed, even in that city. Unfortunately the division among the two sections was not healed even then. The bitterness was, perhaps, intensified. Meanwhile, many Liberals had taken advantage of the situation to abandon Home Rule. It was still retained on the Liberal programme, but many people believed it to be dead. Mr. Gladstone, however, like some of his chief followers, such as Mr. John Morley, had not faltered in his intention. In 1891 the Tories brought in and passed a great scheme of Land Purchase, a fuller measure than had yet been attempted, conveniently forgetting their former objections to spending what they called "British money" for such a purpose; but nothing could save them from extinction. At the General Election of the following year Mr. Gladstone was triumphantly returned to power, and one of his first measures was a Home Rule Bill. After a long and determined fight in the House of Commons the Bill was passed and sent up to the Lords, who promptly rejected it. It was a great and lasting tribute to Mr. Gladstone's influence, to his mighty power—that he was able to get this Bill passed through the Commons. It was, in some respects, a better measure than the first Bill. One cannot restrain one's admiration and astonishment at his success. But he was not in a position to fight the Lords on the question; his age and growing infirmities suggested retirement, and he withdrew from office, being succeeded by Lord Rosebery, whose convictions on Home Rule, as on many other Liberal doctrines, were of the feeblest, and who quietly shelved the question. His absurd administration was not long-lived; it had none of the elements of vigour in it, and the Tories, who were not unduly harassed by a divided

Liberal party and the two hostile elements among the Irish Nationalists, came back.

With the General Election of 1895, Home Rule, as an imminent reform, was almost obliterated. The Tories, once in power, have since remained at the helm. In their Land Act of 1896, and still more in that of 1904, and in the earlier Local Government Bill, they have carried out many of the more urgent reforms demanded by the Irish people. The report of a Government Commission that Ireland has been over taxed for many years to the extent of nearly three millions annually was one of the most notable features of their rule. Here was a magnificent opportunity for an united Ireland of Unionists and Nationalists alike to obtain restitution for Ireland of some of this spoil. But nothing came of a brief agitation on the subject. The recent rise of the Gaelic League and the revival of Irish art and industry have immensely strengthened the Irish position, and the next few years cannot fail to bring better things for Ireland. She has now a strong and united party whose power in Parliament cannot long be overborne. A united Irish people must eventually triumph, and a separate Parliament, a full measure of Catholic education, and a reduction of the Irish taxation are certainties of the soon-coming years.

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Here abruptly pauses "the Story of Ireland"; not ended, because "*Ireland is not dead yet.*" Like that faith to which she has clung through ages of persecution, it may be said of her that, though "oft doomed to death," she is fated "not to die."

Victory must be with her. Already it is with her. Other nations have bowed to the yoke of conquest, and been wiped out from history. Other peoples have given up the faith of their fathers at the bidding of the sword. Other races have sold the glories of their past and the hopes for their future for a mess of pottage, as if there was nothing nobler in man's destiny than to feed, and

sleep, and die. But Ireland, after centuries of suffering and sacrifice such as have tried no other nation in the world, has successfully, proudly, gloriously, defended and retained her life, her faith, her nationality. Well may her children, proclaiming aloud that "there is a God in Israel," look forward to a serene and happy future, beyond the tearful clouds of this troubled present. Assuredly a people who have survived so much, resisted so much, retained so much, are destined to receive the rich reward of such devotion, such constancy, such heroism.

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## VALEDICTORY.

DEAR YOUNG FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN,

The Story of our Country, which I have endeavoured to narrate for your instruction and entertainment, terminates here—for the present. Time as it rolls onward will always be adding to its chapters. Let us hope it may be adding to its glories.

The lesson which the "Story of Ireland" teaches is, Hope, Faith, Confidence in God. Tracing the struggles of the Irish people, one finds himself overpowered by the conviction that an all-wise Providence has sustained and preserved them as a nation for a great purpose, for a glorious destiny.

My task is done; and now I bid farewell to my young friends who have followed my story-telling so far. I trust I have not failed in the purpose, and shall not be disappointed in the hopes, which impelled me to this labour of love.

**God Save Ireland!**



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